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Monday	00.10	07.40	Sunday	13.20	22.35	
Thursday	00.10	07.40	Wednesday	13.20	22.35	
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DECENTRALIZATION: Yemen's Next Major Move in Political Evolution

Yemeni officials, community leaders, opinion makers, and intellectuals agree that steps towards decentralization are the next vital move in the country's political evolution. This was clearly spelled out in a seminar

organized by the Human Rights, Liberties and NGOs Committee of the Consultative Council, in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation of Germany.

Full story on p. 7



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Container Terminal of ADEN FREE ZONE Is Open for Business

Friday, March 19th, 1999, witnessed the official opening of the Container Terminal of the Aden Free Zone. After two years of sustained work, companies such as PSA, Hyundai, Shifa, etc. completed their excellent work, which covers 70% of the terminal.

The amount of material used in the construction of the quay is enormous - 5,000,000 cement blocks; 525,000 cubic meters of sand; 175,000 cubic meters of concrete; 60,000 tons of cement; etc.

See Supplement on Aden Free Zone

SEC-IFES Colloquium Concluded

A 4-day gathering of experts organized by the Supreme Elections Commission (SEC) in cooperation with the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), was successfully concluded on 18th March, 1999. Local and international experts and officials met to discuss means of improving the administration and procedures of the election process.

The 60 or so experts met in 6 election-related work groups - voter education and awareness; the election system; voter registration; election day procedures and vote count; independence and neutrality of the SEC; and election administration and training. In a well-thought out concluding statement, the experts



recommended incorporating voter education into the national educational curriculum; helping candidates finance their campaigns; opening branch offices of the SEC; including women in all levels of administration;

making the date for candidate withdrawal earlier to facilitate printing of ballots; and emphasizing comprehensive training for election workers. The SEC promised to consider these points in organizing the next elections.

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OUR VIEWPOINT

"Was it something I said?"

So the British authorities finally arrested the loud mouth called Abul-Hamza Al-Masri. This twisted person basked under the attention of the cameras and said a lot of things no normal human beings would say, even if they were involved in what he claimed to be involved with. Making such people pay for the heart-burn, and possibly other damage, they cause to others is necessary.

But let me address two other issues here.

As our civilization continues to evolve, the role of the state and that of the media also changes. I want to speak about the role of the state and the media in combatting terrorists and their evil.

A: The Role of State:

In general, I prefer small governments. The smaller they are, the more useful they are in my opinion. That means, state organs should not infringe on the rights of individuals and groups as they go about their lives. But, I do not think the state has a duty to protect society and its interests from those who break the law. In my opinion, the British Government is behaving in a lethargic way in handling terrorists. What I mean is that when people openly espouse and promote terror and violence, they should be reigned in. Even if there is no evidence that they engage in such activities, the state should not wait until the events occur. In my opinion, if an individual or group proclaim a philosophy that is dangerous and violent, something must be done.

Going beyond the Abul-Hamza Al-Masri example, the US government, as well as many other Western governments, tolerate militant groups which have their own training and arming camps. The creed of these groups is based on race, religion or some twisted political ideology. I feel that if an individual or group uses arms or espouses the use of arms against others outside of legal channels, then pre-emptive action against them is warranted.

B: Role of the Media:

The media plays an important role in bringing the truth to the public. That is very good. Sometimes authoritarian governments try to stop the media from bringing out certain information, and the media takes the heat for going against such official policy. Here I side with the media. But, what happens if the media is manipulated. For examples, some one month ago, the Yemen Times received a statement threatening American and British interests. We pondered over what to do with it, as the people behind it definitely wanted the publicity. We decided to pass the stuff to the authorities, and left it there. What is the moral position of the media in giving circulation to the bad guys? We don't want to pass judgement as to who is bad or good, but those who promote violence should not be given a free ride.

The line between providing information and promoting a cult or terrorism is a fine one. I believe the Schools of Journalism need to re-structure their curricula to better train the reporters to handle these new situations.

Now, will the British authorities put this Abdul-Hamza fellow on trial, or ship him to wherever he is wanted to stand a fair and open trial?

The Publisher
Signature

German Assistance Brings Clean Drinking Water to Manakha

The latest development project of the German Embassy was officially inaugurated by the Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Matthias Kiesler on Wednesday, 10th March, 1999.

This project involves the construction of a 1.9 kilometer pipe system along with the pump and other water drilling equipment financed by the micro project scheme of the embassy.

Now, some 1,000 people will have access to clean drinking water in the villages of Bait Al-Mudai, Al-Makrat, Al-Sidar, Zayfan and Bani Suwaid - all in the district of Manakha.

The project is executed in close cooperation with the local population and the Water Authority.

Anti-Qat Session at the Medical Cultural Center

At 5:00 pm on Sunday 21st March, 1999, a group of young men and women will make presentations on the damage done to our society by qat.

The talk will take place at the Mohammed Abdo Ghanim hall of the Medical Cultural Center in Sanaa. The event is open to all.

Yemeni Participation in 5th Financial Conference

A number of Yemeni investors and businessmen disclosed to Yemen Times their intention to participate in the Fifth Annual Conference for Markets and Capital to be held in Beirut, Lebanon, during 12-14 May, 1999. The Financial and Investment Exhibition will be held at the same time.

Both events are organized by the famous and specialized magazine, Al-Iktisad Wal-Aamal.

A month later, also in Beirut and also co-organized by Al-Iktisad Wal-Aamal, the Second Arab Conference for Food and Packaging Industries will be held. It will take place during 15-20 June, 1999.

Yemeni-Romanian Talks

Mr. Sorin Potanc, State Secretary at the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Romania, arrived in Sanaa last night. Yemeni-Romanian ministerial talks to boost trade and joint investments are expected to be held today and tomorrow.

Romania also has some companies working in the fields of energy - notably the electric supply grid and in oil exploration.

Growth in the Exhibition Industry

"Many Yemeni businessmen see more benefits in marketing their goods through exhibitions and fairs," according to Mr. Omar Al-Nihmi, General Manager of Apollo Exhibition Center. That is why his company has lined up fairs going all the way to 2001. International producers have also started to tap the Yemeni market through regular fairs in Sanaa, Aden and Taiz.

Yemen Times Weekly Opinion Poll

Yemen Times Weekly Poll question is placed at: <http://yementimes.com/#poll>

Question

In your view, would it be better for Yemen to adopt true decentralization?

Result

- Yes of course. Democracy is not complete without true Decentralization, which will make Yemen a federal country. (70%)
- Yes, but in a limited manner, so that Yemen would not one day become a federal state. (11%)
- Never! Yemen must be ruled by a central unit! (18%)
- What is decentralization anyway? (1%)

Successful ENT Seminar in Taiz

The 10th Scientific Seminar of Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists was held in Taiz on March 14th, 1999. It was co-chaired by Hassan Al-Udayni and Abdulaziz Al-Shaksi - both well-known ENT doctors.

A visiting Egyptian specialist Dr. M. Begermi, also participated with a lecture on Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery, a new improvement in the treatment of patients, and which is now available in Yemen.

The seminar was concluded with a speech by Dr. Gamal Katab, a representative of the Glaxo Welcome, which sponsored the event.



US Embassy Brings State Department Human Report to Public Debate

Ms. Angela Dickey, Political Officer at the US Embassy in Sanaa told the Yemen Times that she is inviting Yemeni human rights activists and other relevant persons to an open debate. The discussions will focus on the recent report by the US State Department on human rights conditions in Yemen.

The USIS office has meanwhile issued invitations for the same purpose. The debate will start at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 2nd, 1999. It will be at the Sheba Towers Hotel close to the Sheba (Saba) circle.

The report has been fairly critical of the deterioration of conditions in Yemen, and reported many violations in the country. Needless to say, the Yemeni authorities are neither happy with the report, nor with the debate.

Second Batch of Deminers

Brigadier Qassim Al Shaibani, Director of the National Demining Program, stated that a second training program for deminers was started on Saturday, 20 March. Some 200 Yemeni antipersonnel deminers who are to work in the field, are enrolled. The course, in Aden, will continue till the end of July. American experts will supervise the training.

It is worth mentioning here that the first batch of Yemeni antipersonnel deminers graduated last December, representing the managerial and supervisory cadres of the program.

The next phase, according to priorities listed by the National Committee on Demining, is the fieldwork which will begin in August. The United States contributed US \$800,000 to finance the program while the Japanese government is co-financing the program with a recently announced donation of US\$ 500,000.

Tree-Planting Season in Bloom

On Sunday, March 21st, 1999, the tree-planting season of the Republic of Yemen was launched by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Ahmed Salim Al-Jabali.

The country plans to plant some 600,000 seedling during this season which extends for roughly a month. Most of the trees planted are not fruit-bearing, and are intended for beautification and environmental factors.

Most government officials are expected to show up and plant a tree at one stage or another. The army, school children, and the general public also participate in this national program.

March/April are the best times for planting trees in Yemen, because of climatic considerations. Many families also avail themselves of the opportunity by planting fruit-trees in their backyards in cities and on their farms.

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Minister of Education

"There are yet three phases to be completed over the next three years."

Education is the basic tool for any society's transformation and modernization. Towards that end, the Republic of Yemen has invested heavily in this field. Even then, the growth has basically been in quantity rather than quality. The number of pupils and students has risen to nearly 4,000,000, and the total teaching and administrative staff of the Ministry of Education has exceeded a quarter of a million.

Ismail Al-Ghabiry of Yemen Times went to speak to the Minister of Education. Here is the interview he filed.

Q: What are the latest educational statistics?

A: In light of the comprehensive survey carried out by the Ministry of Education, I want to offer the following table, which provides all the statistics pertaining to education.

and improving the general performance of the whole educational system.

- Training the staffs of the educational offices and departments on the process of decision-taking and decision-making.

BASIC EDUCATIONAL DATA: 1998

ITEMS	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL
Pre-Schoolers	8,485	6,789	15,274
Pupils/Students	2,231,185	1,000,416	3,231,601
Commercial Students	1,471	554	2,025
No. of Kindergartens			174
No. of Schools			12,400
Yemeni Teachers	101,452	32,025	133,477
Foreign Teachers			7,405

Q: In the Decentralization Seminar, it was stated that your ministry has decentralized its work. Can you offer us details?

A: That is true. The Ministry of Education has delegated a lot of authority to the governorates and even to the districts, and even to the schools. Departments of education all over the country are authorized to deal with administrative, financial, and other other responsibilities. This orientation fits well in the general orientation of the state towards decentralization. Through this experience, we have been able to come out with the following positive points.

- Offering a practical experience to the state's orientation on decentralization.
- empowering the educational offices in the governorates and making them realize their importance and responsibility for any decision making or problem solving.
- The prompt handling of issues and problems
- Transferring some of the heavy burdens on the Ministry, so that it can attend to the more important duties of supervising, planning

However, despite these advantages, there are a number of shortcomings in this experience which are mainly related to the absence of a well-qualified and efficient administrative staff. Also, the authorities we give to the branch offices of education have created some problems due to the absence of the coordination with the other concerned parties. But in general, I can say that decentralization is an integral part of the state policy. I think everyone should work for strengthening this trend gradually.

Q: Private education has been coming on strongly. Can you tell us about the experience so far?

A: Private or generally non-governmental education is an old affair in Yemen. However, it remained limited in scope and prevalence. Given that education is a basic right for every citizen guaranteed by the Constitution and the Law irrespective of gender, or socio-economic conditions or any other considerations, the government has worked on expanding educational services and facilities



in the best way it could, within the limitations of its budget. Nevertheless, due to the enormous increase in demand on education, the state began during the last few years to encourage non-government education. In fact, private education has been rapidly expanding and developing and is still expected to increase in higher rates in the coming years. However this expansion in private education has raised a lot of organizational and educational questions of relevance to the public.

Thus, professional educationists strongly believe that there is need for the following:

- To reorganize private education in accordance with sound rules effectively controlled by laws and procedures and carried out by efficient and practical steps.
- To strengthen the Ministry of Education's role in monitoring and guiding private education. In fact, we have recently put this role in effect.

Q: How much do political security, top officials, and other power centers interfere in your job?

A: There is no pre-meditated or intentional interference in our work from any of those you named. Yet, I have to say that the educational system does not exist in a vacuum. It is part and parcel of the society. Therefore it is just

normal that it affects and gets affected by the system, and its entire social structure.

Q: How far have you come in incorporating the religious institutes/schools within the regular public school system?

A: Law no. (45) for the year 1992, article no (37) has defined the procedures for incorporating religious institutes into the public school system. Along the same lines, President Ali Abdulla Saleh has issued Republican Decree #14 of the year 1999. The third article in this decree states that a special committee is

henceforward authorized to adopt and approve the educational philosophy, policies, and objectives in the curricula submitted to the committee by the Ministry of Education. The final target for the committee will be to set up unified curricula for all students in basic education level (from 1 to 9 grades). This is the right and practical step in order to conceive curricula which:

- are built and designed according to a clear educational philosophy, policy and objectives.
 - fully comprehend the country's reality and circumstances.
 - meet the needs of both the individual and society.
 - are integrated, harmonized, and coherent.
 - are unified and can provide the minimum and common ground of experiences and public knowledge for all students.
- Today, we are streamlining all our efforts and activities in this direction relying on clearly specified steps and procedures.

Q: We hear that the distribution of scholarships is controlled by corruption and favoritism from outside the Ministry?

A: Such a statement is absolutely untrue. As you may know, the number of Yemeni students we send every year to study abroad is decreasing. This has started when universities in Yemen began to

absorb a growing numbers of high schools graduates. Therefore, the number of students abroad has become small. As for the allocation of available scholarships, it is usually controlled by the following considerations:

- Each governorate in the republic has its quota of scholarships based on its population and high school graduates.
 - There is an official announcement of the available scholarships through the national media.
 - The departments of education in the governorates follow the same rules and procedures of competition among the applicants, and prepares the final results of the successful students.
 - In the light of reports submitted to the ministry from the educational offices, the ministry announces the final results through the national media.
- It then completes the procedures of the acceptance of the qualified students, processes their placement and admission, and later their transportation to their destinations.

I would like to affirm here that in regard to these logistical matters we have no problem. The only problem we face is related to the students who on their own are able to secure free seats in foreign universities, and then turn around ask the ministry for financial assistance.

I also would like to inform Yemen Times readers that the law which organizes the awarding of scholarship has been issued and we are now preparing its executive by-law. According to this by-law, three committees will take care of the issue of scholarship, and each committee will be responsible for specified duties. So from now on this issue will be streamlined through those organizational channels.

Q: What is the main pressing concern of your ministry at this time?

A: The concerns, problems and difficulties are many and different. Given that education is an integrated comprehensive structure and yet consists of interdependent parts, it is only through a total view - or shall I say vision - that real improvement can be realized. Taking this into account I can summarize the following main concerns:

- 1) On the job training programs for teachers.
- 2) Paying special attention to long-term planning as the only

viable approach to improving education.

3) Attending to the qualitative sides of education.

4) Establishing a well-qualified educational management which is capable of periodically leading, renovating, and improving the process of education.

5) Achieving the best utilization of available sources (material or human).

6) Promoting female education by encouraging female enrollment in school, and constructing more girl schools.

7) Intensifying illiteracy eradication programs.

8) The improvement of the curricula.

Q: What is in store in your near-future plan?

A: As you know, to reach a sound plan, your decisions must rely on accurate, complete and up-to-date information or data-base. This is essential to diagnose the present realities and to assess its growth in quantity and quality.

Thus, in recognition of a good data-base, we are moving along this line. We have completed the first phase of the comprehensive educational survey in the year 1997-98. We are now working on the second phase for the year 1998-99, with the participation of the Central Organization for Statistics. There are yet three phases to be completed over the next three years.

Q: How far have you come in your efforts to put the Teacher's Law into effect? We know many teachers are impatiently waiting, and are regularly complaining.

A: We have started the implementation process since last November. But it is a complicated process and we are doing it in stages.

We formed a supreme committee to look into all aspects related to implementation of this law, including preparation of its executive by-law and the other complementary decisions. In two months of active involvement, we have come up with a complete plan on how best the ministry can put the law into effect.

We then embarked on the second phase which is to record complete data of the working force in the teaching profession. This phase is almost complete. The supreme committee is currently busy in preparing for the third phase related to job classification as defined by the law. This phase is scheduled to begin immediately after the Eid Al-Adha.

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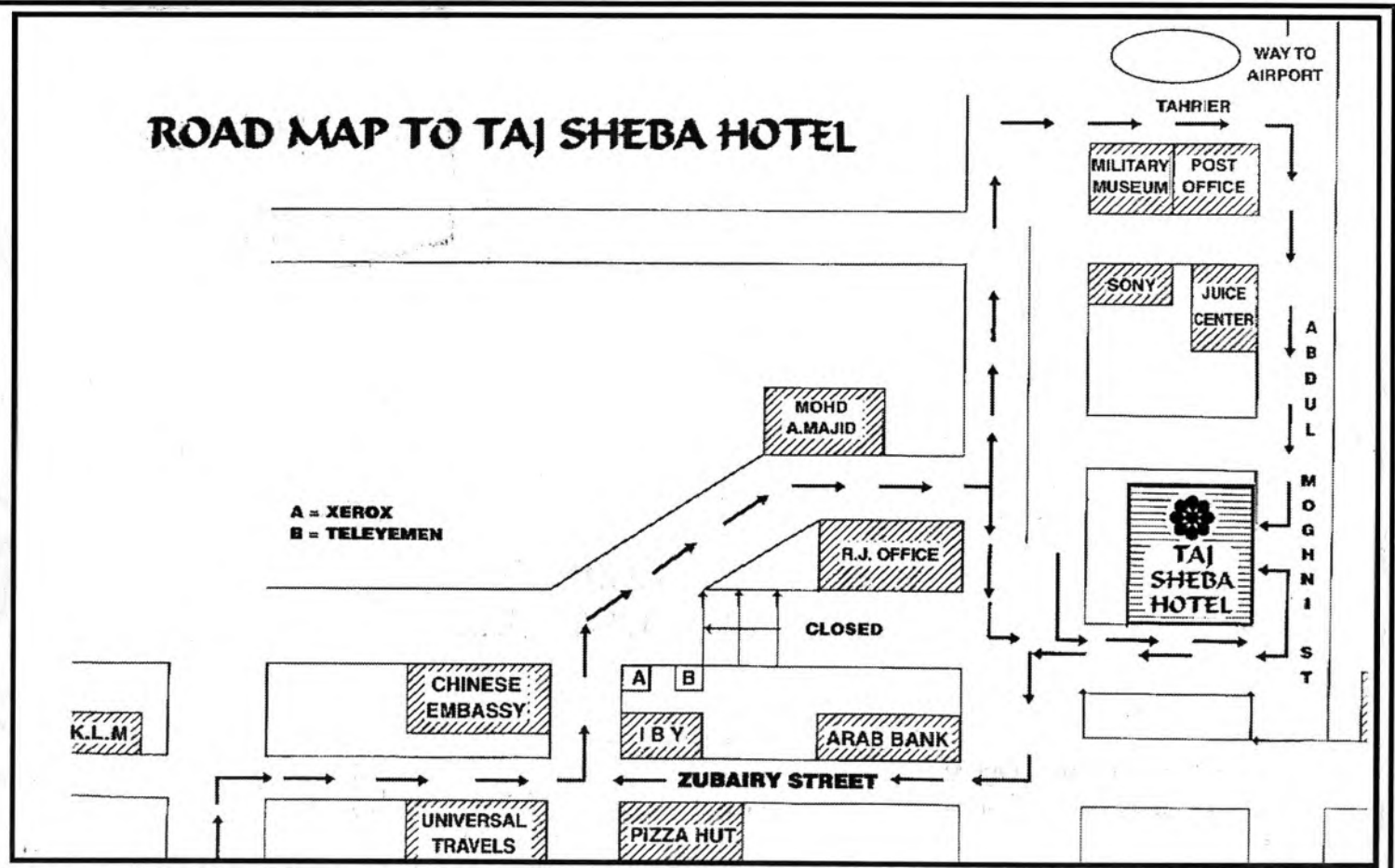
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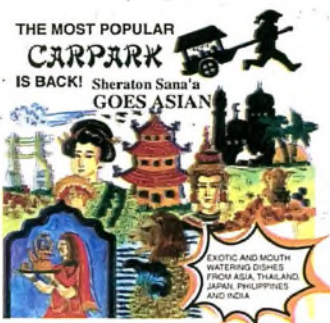
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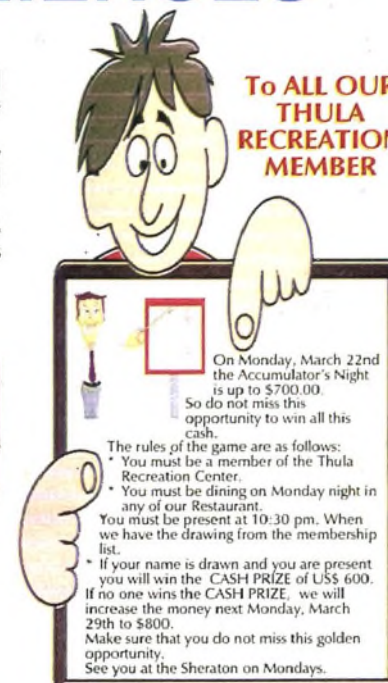


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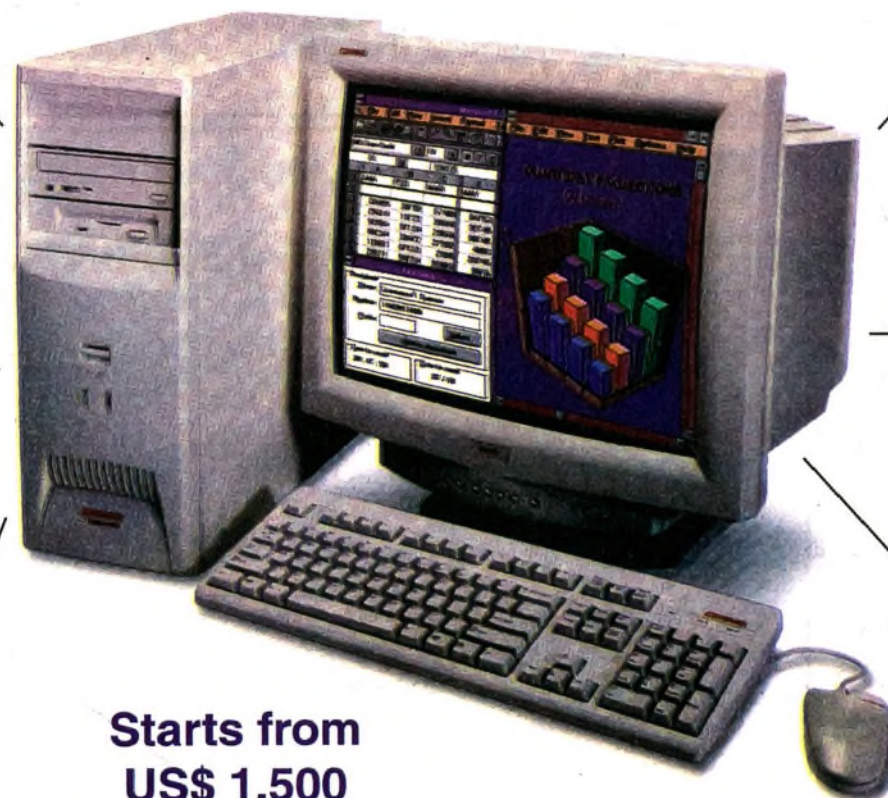
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New Leadership of Journalists' Syndicate Starts Corrective Measures

On Thursday, March 18th, 1999, the Second National Convention of the Yemeni Journalists' Syndicate concluded its 4-day meetings. 122 delegates attended the meetings, barely giving the 50% legal quorum required for the 214 delegates.

Many newspapers and journalists stayed away from the convention because they felt that the People's General Congress was going to take over the syndicate. Others boycotted the meetings because of irregularities during the preparation stages, especially in the election of delegates from the governorates.

Those were not the only troubles the organizers faced. There were heated debates inside the sessions as some delegates almost used their fists to make their points. In one case, one delegate used his shoes to slap another delegate in order to make his see light. He saw starts, not light.

At the end of it all, however, the convention was concluded and several important steps were taken. These include:

- 1) Re-structuring the charter of the syndicate in order to make it difficult for non-journalists to get a membership card.
- 2) Changing some items in the charter to reduce interference by politicians and to minimize the influence of politics in the work of the syndicate.
- 3) Limiting membership to press journalists only.
- 4) Electing a new board of directors for the syndicate.
- 5) Giving the new leadership a 3-month period to carry out the reforms and changes.

Members of the YJS Board

Name	Political Affiliation
Mahboob Ali	Independent
Hassan Abdul-Warith	Yemen Socialist Party
Wathiq Shadili	Yemen Socialist Party
Nasr Taha Mustafa	Islah Party
Abdulaziz Moqbil	Splinter Nasserite
Mohammed Shunaif	People's General Congress
Rajeh Al-Jaboobi	People's General Congress
Hussain Moh'd Nasser	People's General Congress
Abbas Ghalib	People's General Congress
Yassin Al-Masoodi	People's General Congress
Ahmed Moh'd Dahbani	People's General Congress
Mutahhar Al-Ashmoori	People's General Congress
Ali Baqi	People's General Congress

Mr. Mahboob Ali, the newly-elected chairman of the syndicate, told a press conference on Saturday, March 20th, 1999, that the syndicate needs the support of all journalists. "For those who are demanding an ideal situation, I ask them to join us in making such situation a reality. It is easy to point an accusing finger. It is much more difficult to join us in the hard work ahead of us," he indicated.

Indeed, he was referring to the famous Arabic proverb, "It is better to light one candle, than to curse the darkness".

Meanwhile, several opposition and disgruntled journalists are talking about setting up a parallel syndicate, under whatever name.

They indicate that a pluralist political system allows pluralism in unions and syndicates.

One of the main difficulties with the new structure of the syndicate's board is the dominance of the PGC people. Of the thirteen leaders of the syndicate, eight are PGC members - a comfortable majority.

The confused picture is expected to clear up over the next few weeks. The new leadership of the syndicate has a golden opportunity to introduce corrective measures and to win over the majority of journalists, who are still sitting on the fence. Even the hardliners can be won over if they see serious steps soon.

LUFTHANSA: Change of Chiefs in Yemen

Lufthansa has scheduled a change of chiefs in Sanaa. Next week, Mr. Nari Shahani is expected to leave Yemen at the end of two years of service in Yemen. "Normally, the term of service extends to four or even six years," Nari explained. But he has been called to head Lufthansa's Dhahran Airport station, which is a much busier sector.

Mr. Shahani pointed that the present situation of airlines is hard. "This is a problem for all airlines, and other travel-related industry," he indicated.

Indeed, most airlines complain of the loss to the extent that some carriers have reduced the number of their flights.

Mr. Shahani is being succeeded by Mr. Sadek Almas, who is sort of the trouble-shooter of the company. He has extensive experience in various stations.

"Let me assure you we remain committed to the Yemen market. Our three flights a week will continue. Actually we have even improved on the schedules, as one flight has been moved to match the week-end program of travellers to Europe," he disclosed.

Mr. Almas will remain in Sanaa for two months. Then he will head off to Khartoum where he will take over as the manager. "Khartoum is a more interesting market because we are the only European carrier," he said.

"I am here in what is a temporary assignment. I will remain in Yemen until May. But this is a place my wife and I had always wanted to visit."

Lufthansa has been making



Nari



Sadek

steady progress in its performance. The airline's group revenues rise by 4.6% to 22.6 billion D-Marks, while pre-tax profits rose by 40% to more than 2.4 billion D-Marks. In a world-wide market, troubled by deadly

competition, currency volatility and economic crises, that is quite a performance. The improvement in the operating results stems largely from a further rise in capacity utilization allied with sustained cost-cutting.



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الشيخ عبدالله علي نديش

وكافة آل نديش

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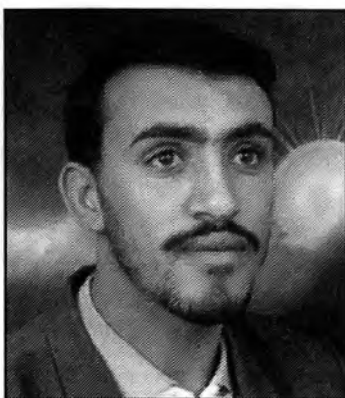
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This is an **OPINION** page.

Every week, a different intellectual writes a **FOCUS** on a pertinent issue!

Media Independence: A NATIONAL NECESSITY



Abdullah Ali Al-Sabri
Member of the Federation of People's Forces

INTRODUCTION:

The media in modern democratic societies is seen as the fourth branch of authority - besides the three well-known ones - judiciary, legislative, and executive. To perform its role in the service of the community, the media must therefore enjoy two vital rights: independence and freedom.

Since the reunification of Yemen, the press has enjoyed a relatively high level of both. Thus, the press was able to freely follow and cover the events and changes taking place in the country. However, since the end of the civil war in 1994, there has been a clear drive to reduce the margin of press freedom. This is visible in the various forms of harassment to which editors and journalists have been exposed, thereby greatly minimizing press independence and freedom.

MEDIA CONTROL:

Let me start by indicating that much of the effective media is actually a government monopoly. The two television stations and the various radio stations are all owned and managed by the authorities. The state refuses to relinquish its monopoly by licensing private television and/or radio stations.

Thus the only venue open for

public participation is the written media. This is a very limited role for two reasons:

1) Most of the people of Yemen, especially the adults are illiterate. Therefore, they can tune in, but not buy a paper and read it. In addition, even for those who can read and write, the habit of reading is a hard one to keep up.

2) Most newspapers are city-based and have a limited circulation. Thus they are not circulated in the vast countryside, where some 70% of the people of Yemen live. Even in cities, the high cost of print prohibits adequate circulation.

Thus, it is actually the state that controls most of the media and is responsible for shaping public opinion. Now, it is irritated even by the small margin of influence the non-government papers have.

BACK TO THE PAST:

The acts of harassment inflicted upon the press over the last few weeks are ominous. They offer a very strong evidence of the state's inclination to go back to the old ways of totalitarianism and authoritarianism. The arrest and trial of several journalists, the periodic summoning and interrogation are just a few examples of the new oppressive line. The press in Yemen was somewhat lucky in that it had enjoyed a certain degree of freedom and independence.

Another tactic the ruling authorities use in their on-slaught on independent and free journalists is defamation. The politicians use the more powerful press they

control to slander the people they see as refusing to bow to them. They intimidate them, and often shroud them with bad names.

There was an additional recent attack against the independent and free press. Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, Prime Minister, who is supposedly an educated and future-oriented man, issued an order forbidding any government or quasi government institution or company to advertise in non-governmental local media. They can advertise in the international non-Yemeni media, but not in the local papers which criticize him and his government.

ROLE OF GOV. MEDIA:

I have mentioned that half of the press in the country plus all radio and TV stations are completely state-owned and state-operated. Unfortunately, these organs understand their mission as serving the politicians, and not the public. Thus they become a tool in the hands of the authorities which is used to justify their policies and actions. In certain instances, this media is used in a crude way either to magnify the illusionary achievements of the state or to prattle ceaselessly on the state's non-existent feats.

Not only are the official media not doing their job, they are actually often used to undermine the independent and free media. Thus, papers like September 26th, which is managed by the press secretary of the president of the republic, and which supposedly is the mouthpiece of the armed forces, has often lashed out against papers and editors.

They call them agents of imperialism, zionism, masonism, or whatever; they call them traitors; they call them secessionists and unpatriotic; and they call them different things. If you do not bow to corrupt and power-hungry politicians you are unpatriotic; and if you do not kiss-up to crooked officials, you are an agent of a foreign country.

Given the swift and immediate impact of the media, particularly radio and TV, in forming public opinion in the absence of similar independent means, we can understand the state's meticulous care to monopolize these means of communication.

CHANGE OF LINE?

We can understand the state's actions and drive to fully control the media if it chooses to turn its back on democracy and freedom. That would be logical. But it is fantastically ironic that our officials and their media continue barking and chanting about democracy and pluralism, while they still do these illegal things. In a modern society with real democratic institutions, there is nothing called the Ministry of the Media or "Information". The name of this ministry is usually associated with propagandist states or totalitarian regimes. Under such systems, freedom of the press and of public opinion is restrained and restricted. Media as a propaganda tool directed by the Minister of Information is by no means allowed in a modern democracy based on civil society. The reason is that the ruling party, to whom the minister will of course belong, will then abuse such a facility. If the state needs to own and operate media organs, then they need to be independent of the direct political control of government officials. Otherwise, we are back to the old ways of operating.

If the state in Yemen is seriously committed to democracy, then how can we understand the on-going anti-freedom acts of harassment and violations? Why should the state have complete control over the media means, and why should the state confiscate the people's and the other political parties' right to the media?

I understand that we can't hope for a full-grown democracy to be attained overnight, but, it is also disturbing to see signs of regression. Democracy is a process, and it must continue to go forward, unless our politicians have decided to change our course of evolution.

OUTSIDE MODELS:

Our political leadership often boasts that our political system is advanced by regional comparison. This may partly be true in some ways, but it is not true in many significant ways. Let us divide the countries into two groups.

1. Democratizing Countries:

There are many countries, and Yemen is one of them, which have stated that they want democracy. These include Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, etc. In most of these countries, there are real institutions that counter-balance and stop the excesses of the politicians.

What happened in the Egyptian Press Syndicate is an example. The authorities tried to change the rules in order to control the syndicate. The effort backfired and was checked.

In Morocco and Lebanon, there are private radio and television stations.

In Jordan, the official media serves as an effective watchdog against corruption and has exposed bad officials.

2. Non-Democratic Countries: There is another set of countries - actually the majority in the region, which do not profess to embark on democratic practices, at least not in the Western sense. But these countries offer their people bread and butter.

In short, therefore, Yemen does not compare favorably in either camp, in spite of the gloating and boasting of our leaders.

WHERE DO WE GO?

All we ask for is a certain space of freedom to be given to the independent press. I also would like the authorities to consider breaking their monopoly over the radio and television stations. Maybe we can start by licensing radio stations.

The reason for this appeal is that I fully realize the paramount responsibility of the media to be reinforcing the democratic choice in our evolution. And this cannot be fulfilled when all media is in the hand of the regime?

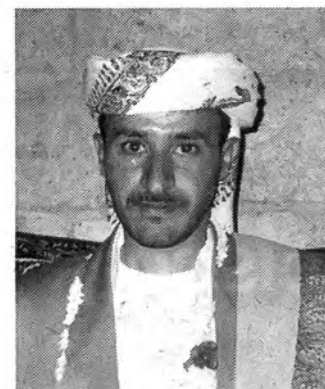
In theory, the Constitution and the laws of Yemen guarantee the people's ownership of all media. Can the government abide by the law and allow the Yemeni people to launch their own radio or television channels?

This, I think, is the real test of whether our officials want to go forward in our democratic evolution, or whether they want to go back to the old ways.

To transform ourselves into a civil society of civilized institutions, we must first have a vision of the tomorrow we aspire for. Our movement should not be ad hoc, or because we are pushed by others. We have to accept the values of the 21st century and join the civilized world.

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Conclusion of the Seminar:

"Decentralization is the next vital step in our political evolution."

Over 150 participants gathered for two days to address the issue of decentralization in Yemen. The speakers came from parliament, the Consultative Council, government, academia, etc. For the first time, a taboo topic was addressed head on. "People were scared of being branded separatists or secessionists. We thought there was a need to break the psychological barrier," explained Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, one of the organizers of the seminar in Sanaa during 17-18 March, 1999.

Under the tutelage of the Consultative Council, the Human Rights, Liberties and NGO Committee took on itself to risk it. It was all worthwhile, in spite of the warnings and reservations at many levels. Actually, the organizers broke another taboo.

"In the past, the authorities organized their conferences and seminars. Opposition party representatives and intellectuals were invited as decoration, if at all. The opposition circles also organized their conferences and seminars, and government people were invited as decoration, if at all. In this seminar, there was a well-balanced partnership. 'The two sides participated on an equal footing, which is amazing,' said Renaud Detalle, a French researcher who is an authority on Yemen.

There were three documents that were distributed to the audience. The first is the proposal of the Local Administration Law Draft prepared by the Ministry of Local Administration. This was replaced by a more developed version presented by the People's General Congress. The government adopted this second version, and is now being discussed in parliament. The third document is a proposal of the Local Government Law, which was prepared by the opposition parties.

Dr. Faraj Bin Ghanim, former Prime Minister, who chaired the first session, made an important prelude to the discussions. "All efforts aim to serve the nation. We have to accept that Yemenis are trying to help their country in different ways," he stated in the talks. He also indicated that local government has become a necessity for the nation's continued growth and evolution.

There were four main presentations, beyond the drafts of laws.

The first was by Professor Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf who showed the integral relations between democracy and decentralization. "You cannot have a real democracy if all powers are focused at the center. Decentralization is one of the manifestations of a democratic system," he asserted.

Dr. Abubakar Al-Qirby gave the second paper. He showed how decentralization strengthens a democratic system. "The mistakes and abuses are part of the lack of accountability. In a decentralized system, there would be more feedback from the people who will have a say in the way their elected representatives behave and manage public affairs."

Mr. Mohammed Abdullah Saeed, Deputy Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reform, shared his experience while preparing for the law draft. "We have to be careful not to over-step our realities. 'If we take too much in one bite, we may not be able to chew it up,' he cautioned.

Dr. Abdullah Saeed Mohammed, Deputy Minister of Education, presented the experience of his ministry in delegation of authority. "At the theoretical level, it is all fine and good to say that we want people to have more control over their lives in the governorates. The point, however, is whether those people have the capability to manage their affairs efficiently," he said.

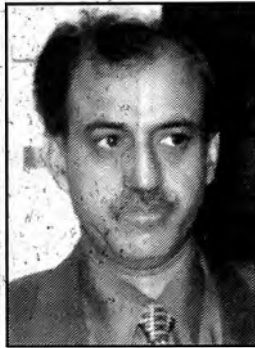
The German side made two presentations.

First Mr. Manfred Haack, Regional Director of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, gave a long introduction on the significance of decentralization. "It is not only needed for democracy, it also has an important economic dimension. Decentralized systems tend to be far more efficient than centralized ones."

Then Professor Klaus-Eckhart Gebauer, Head of Division at the Prime Minister Office in Rhineland Palatine, gave a legal and historic description of how Germany's decentralization system works. He explained the powers and rights at the federal, state, and local levels.

But it was really the discussion sessions that generated the juicy details and positions. More than six hours of open debates and discussions highlighted many aspects of the proposed law, the political agendas, and the possibilities and trends for Yemen's near future in this regard.

Many of the participants explained their views openly to the Yemen Times. Here is a selection of the views.



Mr. Sultan Al-Barakani, the Majority Leader of the People's General Congress Party in Parliament:

"I hope our law draft on decentralization will be enacted by parliament during the second half of 1999. I also hope that elections of the local administrative councils will take place before the end of 1999," he said.

"Some governorates are concerned over decentralization because of the lack of resources - whether financial or manpower. However, this question is irrelevant. National resources are not owned by a particular governorate, and will therefore be shared by all. Any person who attempts to manipulate this issue is trying to disrupt the process or looking for personal gain. I feel we should leave all party-based quarrels behind us, and work with the people in efforts to overcome the mistakes that result from administrative and financial centralization.

"The People General Congress (PGC) took the initiative to advance and promote this law draft. The President (of the Republic) has emphasized the importance of giving people the right to participate in managing the government.

"There is no harm in analyzing and studying other nations' experiences. At the end, however, we should selectively apply those aspects that suit our society. We should not blindly copy from others, because of social, cultural and political differences. I finally that the local administrative councils will increase efficiency of our system."



Manfred Haack, Director of Friedrich Ebert Foundation for the Arabian Peninsula.

"The Yemeni people can achieve their democratic goals, because they have such a rich history and culture that dates back to 5,000 years. I am sure Yemen can fulfill all its ambitions, including decentralization.

I think the Yemeni mentality of independence and local loyalty of the tribes and regions offer an organizational structure which is ideal for a decentralized system. Yemen will face problems along the way, but it will be able to work through them by communicating and sorting out differences.

"We in Germany will support Yemen's transformation process."



Dr. Ahmed Abdullah Ibn Al-Sheik, Director of the Sanaa Office of the League of the Sons of Yemen Party.

"Decentralization is about distributing duties in different organizations and regions. Centralization means compactness and concentration of power, whereas decentralization means that the population will have a greater say in public life. It is the democratic way. 'Consequently democracy and decentralization are two sides of the same coin' as Professor Al-Saqqaf in his opening statement which guided our discussions.

"We can't imagine having a democracy without decentralization. For us Yemenis, decentralization is a necessary step to face today's challenges.

"What we need is a large-scale wide-ranging local administrative system which empowers the people to fulfill their own hopes and needs, and to allow them to govern themselves. A system that helps them develop themselves and their areas. A system that gives the people the right to hold their authorities accountable.

"We are very glad that to have our German friends with us. It is useful to have an idea of the experience of others, but it would be foolish to just blindly copy it. I would like to say that we have learned a lot from their experience."



Dr. Faraj Bin Ghanim, Former Prime Minister.

"It is clear that all sides want decentralization. The differences in the positions relate to the level of delegation of authority from the center to the branches.

"I believe both sides have presented their views. In my opinion there is a great deal of agreement, and there are some clear differences. We should approach this matter with flexibility and an open mind. We have come here to share notes and see how we can bridge the gap. The documents, papers and discussions of this seminar will go a long time towards achieving that."



Abdul-Rahman Ba-Fadhle, Member of Parliament, Islah Bloc.

"Let me announce here that the PGC party has the major responsibility in the way our local administration law evolves. They have the majority in parliament, and they can decide.

"I am happy to say that I personally am satisfied with the law proposal we have been offered. I feel it meets our present needs.

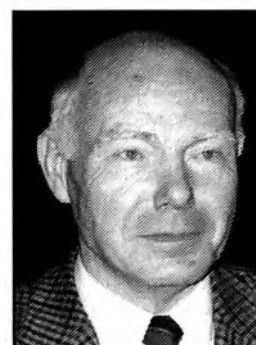
"Some people argue that the proposed draft does not go far enough. If there is any need in the future for changes, we can always amend the law."



Dr. Abubakar Al-Qirby, Member of the Consultative Council.

"In my paper I highlighted the theoretical aspects of how decentralization or local administration can strengthen a democracy. It is obvious that the more liberty you give people to participate in managing their own affairs, developing their own resources, and planning for their growth, the more they feel the sense of responsibilities, which strengthen our democracy.

"I feel which should not be scared of decentralization. Slowly but steadily, we should proceed in this important undertaking. I think it is time to go ahead."

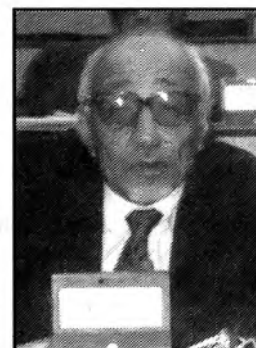


Prof. Dr. Klaus-Eckart Gebauer, Head of Division in the State Chancellor of Rhineland-Palatine, Germany.

"I am very excited by the discussions we had with our Yemeni friends. The questions were clear and the answers were straight. I am also impressed by the free political engagement and the well thought-out ideas of all of my colleagues speaking here. They all agree that this issue of decentralization is an important question for the future of this country.

"My task is to give some ideas of our experience in Germany over the years. It would be impolite of me to tell Yemenis how to develop their own system of decentralization. I simply provide some raw material and explanations from our experiences to help Yemenis in the discussions and in developing their ideas.

"Our system was shaped by strong influences from the USA, France, the UK and others after World War 2. The watershed was in 1959. "We develop our system in a democratic way and over many years, and we are still working on it. I am sure if Yemen has success in decentralization, we might want you to come to Germany and inspire us by your example, some day."



Mohammed Al-Rubayi, Chair, National Committee for Proposing Decentralization Law (Opposition):

"There is very little meaning in enacting a law if it does not give the governorates and district enough powers. We are talking about strengthening our democracy and moving forward. I am afraid the PGC proposed law takes us backward."

PGC proposed law takes us backward."

CONCLUSION:

At the end of the discussions, there was near-total consensus that the politicians, decision-makers, opinion-makers, businessmen, intellectuals and others will support parliament in its drive to enact the law.

"This law has been delayed several times for various reasons. We want parliament to go on with the job. If there are any discrepancies, then we will address them at a later stage," explained Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, the engine behind the seminar.

By: Hatem Bamehriz.
Yemen Times.

Communique of the Seminar

At the end of discussions in the "Decentralization & Democracy" seminar organized by the Human Rights, Liberties and NGOs Committee of the Consultative Council and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung during 17-18/03/1999, the participants, which included members of parliament, members of the Consultative Council, senior members of government, academicians, opposition politicians, lawyers, and many public figures, the following communique was issued:

1. The participants hail the continuing political evolution of the country, leading towards a democratic system based on political pluralism following the nation's re-unification. They also stress the importance of continuing on this democratization course.
2. The participants have concurred that the next meaningful step in the country's political evolution in strengthening of decentralization. All participants have shown that decentralization has become a popular and pressing demand in the nation's political life. In order to expand people's participation in building our society. Towards that end, an adequate delegation of authority is necessary for the governorates to carry out their duties fully.
3. Some differences have appeared in the positions of the participants regarding the level of delegation of authority. While one group wanted a minimal delegation of authority within the concept of Local Administration, another group wanted an expanded delegation of authority within the concept of Local Government.
4. The participants agree that the Local Authority Law Draft presently being discussed by parliament represents a constructive beginning to this matter, and that all sides must support such endeavors. They also called for transferring all documents, papers, discussions and minutes of the seminar to the parliamentarians in order to enrich their views and approaches. The participants also call for further development of the law as the political evolution permits.
5. The participants value highly the dynamic and free discourse of the discussions which permeated the sessions of the seminar, and they appreciate the tolerance and space that all parties have given other sides while discussing such a vital issue.

GM of Sheraton Sanaa: WORKING HARD TO REVIVE THE MARKET

Mr. Fadeel G. Wehbe, General Manager of Sheraton Sanaa Hotel, is actively involved in promoting Yemen as a viable tourist destination. Mr. Wehbe completed his bachelor's degree in Business Administration, majoring in Hotel Management from the University of Colorado, USA.

He started his career in the international hotel business in 1986. He then became the general manager of Al-Khaleej Palace Hotel in Dubai in 1992, and in 1994, he moved to El-Jezirah Beach Resort and Hotel. Since October 1998, he is the general manager of the Sheraton Sanaa Hotel.

The Sheraton Sanaa Hotel is now part of the Starwood Group. Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc., which is one of the leading hotels and gaming operating companies in the world. Its brands include Sheraton, Four Points, Westin, W Hotels, The Luxury Collection, and Caesars with 661 hotels all over the world.

Mohammed Bin Sallam of Yemen Times talked to him and filed the following interview:

Q: How will the transfer of ownership to Starwood affect work at Sanaa Sheraton Hotel?

A: It will affect us in a positive way. It will be part of a much larger family of hotels, giving us the benefits, connections and experience.

Q: You recently launched the Starwood Preferred Guest program. Can you tell us more about it?

A: Yes, we just launched a new program called the 'Starwood Preferred Guest' described as the easiest, most flexible and advantageous of its kind in the world, and which features the following advantages:

1- A New Global Currency:

Members will earn Starpoints, linked to the industry "gold standard" airline miles. Starpoints can be used for free stays, free flights, merchandise, vacation packages, hotel dining, plus a lot more. And for active members, Starpoints do not expire.

2- No Blackout Dates:

Starwood Preferred Guest is the first upscale/luxury hotel reward program to do away with blackout dates entirely at all 550 participating properties.

3- The Fastest Way to a Free Night:

With Starwood Preferred Guest, it typically only takes an average of three stays or US\$ 1,000 in spending, for members to earn their first free weekend night - faster and fewer points than any other hotel program. And with instant redemption, we eliminate the two to three week waiting

period for a certificate.

4- Instant Awards:

Unlike any other hotel frequency program, Starwood Preferred Guest lets members use Starpoints instantaneously for hotel services such as room upgrades, breakfast in bed, room service, in-room movies, and more - all at a moment's notice.

5- On-line Redemption:

Via "www.preferredguest.com", another first, members can instantly redeem points on-line, track account information and access Starwood Preferred Guest special offers. Travellers can also enroll in the program via internet and create their own personalized web page based on their travel preferences.

6- The Easiest Way to a Free Flight:

The program offers members an exchange rate of one Starpoint to one airline mile/point with most major airline carriers. Plus every time a member transfers 20,000 Starpoints earned in the program to an airline, they receive an additional 5,000 airline miles/points.

Q: How is the hotel business these days?

A: Occupancy rates are lower than what they should be in this season. A principal requirement of tourists is their personal safety, which should be guaranteed by the state. The recent violent events and the negative international coverage have hurt the tourism industry in Yemen.

Q: Does that mean the hotel is making a loss?

A: All businesses related to the travel and tourism industry have been hurt. This includes hotels, airlines, tour operators, museums, handicrafts and artisans catering for tourists, and various other sectors.

Companies lose from time to time because of exceptional circumstances, which is the case in Yemen now. But we hope to come out of the red and start generating profits as the business picks up again.

Q: How are you handling the exceptional situation?

A: The necessary steps have been taken in the hotel to streamline management and services by downsizing certain aspects of our activities.

We have postponed some of the major investments for the time-being. However, this does not affect on-going investments. The Health Club had new tennis courts, and fully equipped facilities which cost us \$100,000.

Tandoor Restaurant is under renovation as well as the meeting rooms and party halls. Also, we have started renovating the 4th floor of the hotel, which we hope to complete in May.

Q: What are the steps to be taken to revive tourism?

A: There are many steps that have been taken. The government has issued a new tourism board law. This is a joint effort between

official, private and NGO bodies. The media is also involved.

We are also actively participating in international fairs and meetings to promote Yemen as a viable tourist destination.

I personally just came back from a tour of Europe in order to better explain the situation in Yemen.

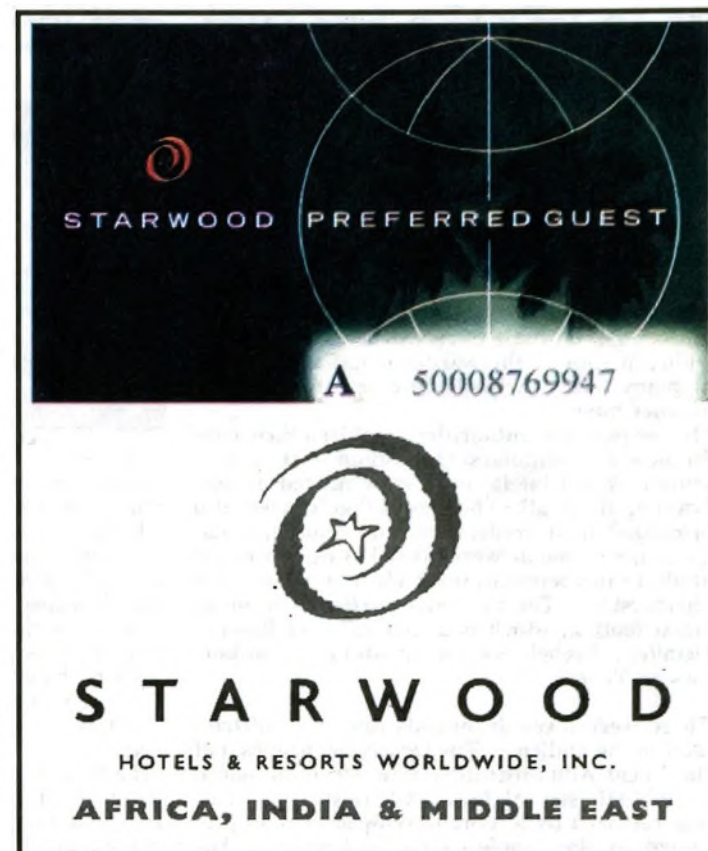
Q: What about new services at the hotel itself to attract more business?

A: We have introduced new attractions such as The Car Park, every Sunday, and with live entertainment from our Filipino Band, with choices of international buffet in Asian countries. This will be an enjoyable atmosphere for families, company employees, embassy staff, and generally friends and their guests. We have also lined up some games and prizes to be given away.

Sanaa has limited entertainment facilities, especially for night outings. The Sheraton offers many alternative in a safe and comfortable environment.

Q: Does your hotel have a direct relationship with local or international airlines?

A: Starwood Preferred Guest Program has a partnership with 20 airlines such as Air France, KLM, Air New Zealand, Alitalia, American Airlines, Cathay Pacific, British Airways, Canadian Airline, and many other renowned names. Starwood Pre-



ferred Guest Program permits you to travel in any of these international airlines in an exchange process of the points you collect during you stay in any of Starwood hotels and resorts including Sheraton.

Q: Do these companies

promote their services in Sanaa Sheraton Hotel?

A: Yes they do, as they also market them in all other hotels of the group. Many hotels and tourist companies launch new programs that aim to attract new guests, but not as great and comprehensive as this program.



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Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, & Members of his Government;
and the People of Yemen

on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha Al-Mubarak

Many Happy Returns



شركة هنت اليمنية للنفط

شركة هنت اليمنية للنفط

تتقدم بأصدق وأخلص التهاني والتبريكات إلى زعيم اليمن وإبنها البار
الرئيس علي عبدالله صالح

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وإلى الأستاذ عبدالعزيز عبدالغني رئيس المجلس الاستشاري وأعضاء المجلس
وإلى دولة الدكتور عبدالكريم الإرياني رئيس مجلس الوزراء والسادة أعضاء المجلس
وإلى جميع أبناء شعبنا العظيم

بقدوم عيد الأضحى المبارك وكل عام وأنتم بخير

Eid Mubarak

HAZM AL-JAWF: The Last Frontier

By: Mohammed Al-Shuwaibi
Sanaa.

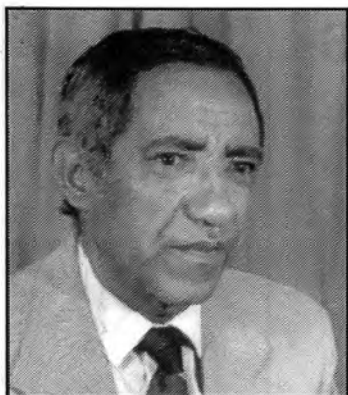
The name Hamz Al-Jawf or simply Al-Hazm occupies a prominent place in the history of Yemen. It has also been the focus of recent archeological excavations.

It is one of the last frontiers to be explored by trekkers. Alas, it continues to be off-limits because of the kidnapping and hostage-taking practice for which the place has become notorious. Yemeni travel warnings alert visitors not to venture into this no-man's land.

The area sleeps on considerable historic and cultural stock of a unique human heritage, which dates back to the prime age of the Yemeni civilization - the Ma'een Kingdom. Preliminary archaeological information traces the history of this place back 4,000 years, when civil and commercial life flourished in the region. The largest political and commercial cities include Brakesh, Nashak, Harem and Ma'een.

Those cities or centers had a political association among them within a federal system of government, and were collectively linked in an alliance with the Kingdom of Sheba and Dhu Raydan, next door.

Historians and political scientists are strongly attracted by this



peculiar political relationship based on dual independence. Vast areas of sandy land is the first view the visitor glimpses when he/she arrives to the town of Al-Hazm, the modern capital of Al-Jawf governorate. But, beneath your very feet lie 4000-years of stories of conquest and defeat, of glory and despair, of love and sorrow, of prosperity and ruin. It is all embodied and preserved in monuments, palaces, and temples. Mankind has only peeked into that history. The inscriptions on walls, arches, and pillars have yet to tell the full story.

"You can dig in any spot in this land, and you will come up with tales from a glorious and civilized past that once prevailed in here." The material and the spirit are still preserved underground by piles of sand. This was the site of

the first civilization in South Arabia. More were to come as the focus point shifted to Marib and other places.

One kilometer west of Al-Hazm sits the town of Harem. Some parts of it have been uncovered near the present-day village A'al Ali. Unfortunately the homes in this village were built on top of a large portion of the old historic town. Even more unfortunately, the villagers used the rocks of the old city to build their new houses. Thus, the past and the present have come together in a strange mix.

The protruding past - whatever of it is visible, comes to us in the form of a gate. The top part of a huge gate stands out piercing the sand and announcing the treasures still buried underneath. Only 300 meters away, the remains of another part of history meets your eyes. The lofty entrance of a giant temple, built of granite stones greets your vision offering a wonderful collection of decorations of images and shapes carved out of stones of various shape.

The temple faces west as is the case in all the old temples of Yemen. The worshipers of the 'sun' daily paid their last tribute to the setting sun which they saw

as the source of life.

The part of the gate to the entrance of the temple is 4 meters high. Just a few meters behind is a small hall with another small gate leading to a wide courtyard. The walls of the courtyard are decorated with various beautiful images. Sadly, the higher parts of the walls are destroyed.

The artistic collection inscribed on the temple's entrance raises the visitor's curiosity. On one side of the temple, inscribed, are vessels suspended with ropes, on the bottom of which can be seen two rows of oval jars of wine. Under the jars, suspended, is an image of two ladies dancing with bow-shaped sticks in their hands. They have a small cover on their heads, but their locks of hair cover their faces and flow on to the shoulders and chests. Each is wearing a long dress with ribbons on the shoulders. At their feet, appears the image of an ibex and a number of javelins. Javelins stands for Astarte, the divinity worshipped by the people of Ma'een Kingdom.

This near-carnal image is repeated on many sides of the entrance. In some cases, the image of the dancing women and the wine jars is replaced with the image of 4 couples of snakes. Two couples each are twisted together.

In another place, four couples of ibex each couple is facing the other one. Next to this image is an image of a row of ostrich birds

standing with their heads and wings raised high reaching to the sky.

This decoration and inscription job was done according to the highest technical and artistic rules, and it points to a well-developed level of artisanship and skill, as scientists and tourists say. The painting of the dancing women represents a progressive stage on the social level, or at least a certain love of life.

On the artistic and creative level, these images surpass every artistic painting ever discovered in the Arabian Peninsula, so far. On the same line, the images of animals and birds indicate the variety of wildlife that must have existed in the Ma'eenian civilization. The style and artistic work must have interacted in some way with Greek and Babylonian artistic traditions.

As was the case in all temples in Ma'een cities, this temple was built outside the town's walls. The purpose for this is still unknown. In fact, local and oriental studies are still unable to understand many aspects of the Ma'een civilization.

The local inhabitants call the temple in Al-Hazm area Banat A'ad or the daughters of A'ad. Arab linguists say that the word A'ad means any old thing that has some value. In a way it is similar to the way the English word classic is used today.

The Ma'een temples were specially built for the worship of Astar, the same god worshipped in Babylon. The common religion of the two civilizations raises the question of whether Ma'een, during part of its history, was a Babylonian colony. That possibility is strengthened by the image of the wine jars and the dancing girls sculpted on walls in both civilizations. Yet it appears from social traditions and political practices in Ma'een that this kingdom experienced more liberal socio-cultural values and a tolerant political system than its Babylonian contemporary.

We will never know for sure, except with more excavations. In the meanwhile, an unruly and fiercely independent tribal structure is keeping everybody off-limits. In a sense, they are its 'protectors'.

For oriental scientists and archaeologists, here is an opportunity to do studies and research on one of the world's few remaining virgin sites - one of humanity's last frontiers - the antiquities of Ma'een civilization.

NOTE:

Last week's article on Serwah was also written by
Mohammed Al-Shuwaibi

His name accidentally dropped off the written space of the article. Our apologies.

A Two-day Trip to Taiz Prison

I got a culture shock.

As I walked in, my hair stood up on one end. The state of our prisons is terrible, and the way prisoners are treated is disgusting, in spite of the many human rights organizations we have in this country. As a matter of fact, this situation is one of the major issues that directly bears on the security of the state. The horrible and indescribable suffering of prisoners goes beyond the power of any writer. To drive my point home, let me tell you of what I came to realize a week ago.

Last week I was jailed in a court's prison for 2 days. I did not, of course, do anything wrong. The only reason I can think of is that they wanted me to bribe them and when I refused to comply, they put me in this jail. I tried my best to be patient but I was stunned by so many things.

The first thing that caught my attention is the way prisoners are treated. They are treated like animals, may be worse. I think what is called the rights of the prisoner never exists in our jails. Often the prisoners are like tools or toys used for the amusement of the jail keeper. Though he is only a jail keeper, he behaves like a mighty commander in the field. Once you are locked in, anything you want, including going to the toilet, is not possible without the consent of the jail keeper. Of course you have to buy his consent with your money. If you want to drink or eat or go to the toilet or even simply to sleep, well you have to pay up. Money is the only language he speaks.

And how crooked and twisted ways he has to extract your money. I will tell you something I saw. One of the prisoners decided not to let the bastard get any more money from him. Do you think he succeeded? No way. Being very shrewd, the jail keeper came to this stubborn man smiling and told him that he has been released and that he is free to get out if he pays some money - hak Alrissama meaning the jailers fees for taking care of him! The

happy fool, eager to get out, swallowed the bait. He borrowed some money and gave it to the jailer, who took the money, turned his back and walked away. The poor prisoner who realized what happened, simply cried and cried.

That is not all, for I saw something more dramatic. At night, specifically after the Night Prayer, this prison's keeper took money from some wealthy prisoners and let them out for the night. Of course they have to come back early in the morning. In other words, they are not really prisoners.

And now to the prison as a place. I can tell you with complete sincerity and honesty that this jail is not fit for pigs, let alone human beings. It is very old, very small, filthy and awfully crowded with human beings. Some people have been there for a long time, without trial. We could not sit down nor could we sleep. There was no water, no bathrooms, no electricity. You might die out of hunger and thirst if you have no money.

The really sad thing about all this is the fact that no judge in the whole country is moving a finger to deal with this issue. The people we honor as men of justice are perhaps busy with more serious cares and problems, like building houses or getting new cars! No human rights activist has been able to do something about it, though they do make a lot of noise.

Prisons are places for rehabilitation not of destruction, assuming, of course, the people who have been taken to prison deserve to be there. These people are made to pay for wrong deeds. In our country, however, the case is quite the reverse. I hope my appeal, based on a personal experience, will reach the ears of the people who control this country, and will do something about it.

By **Tawfiq Mohammed M. Saeed,**
Taiz.

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Members

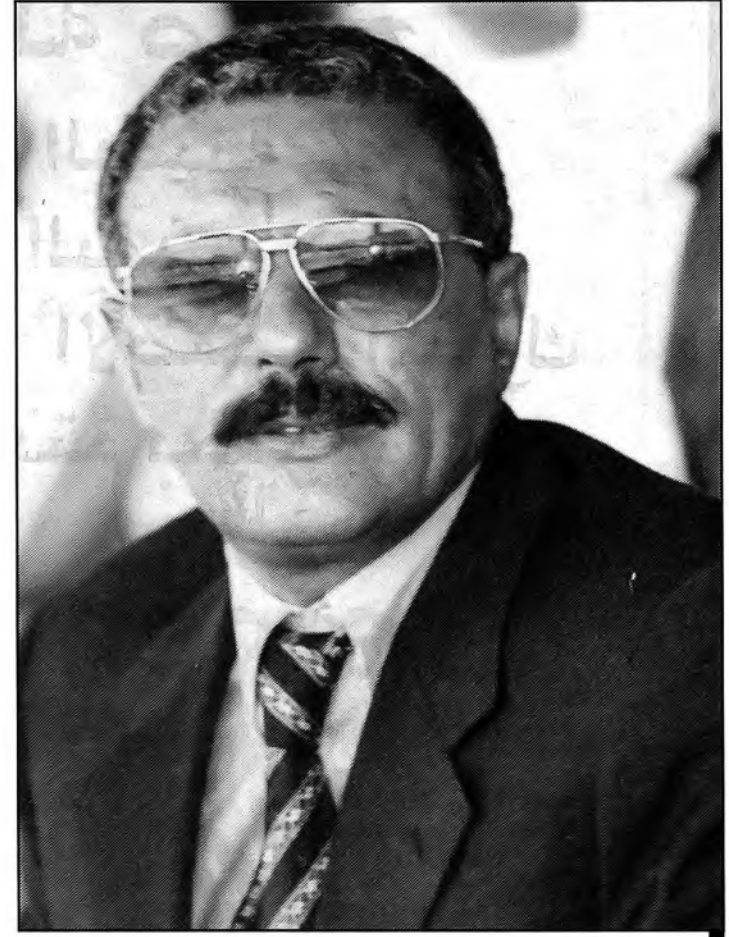
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الرئيس علي عبدالله صالح

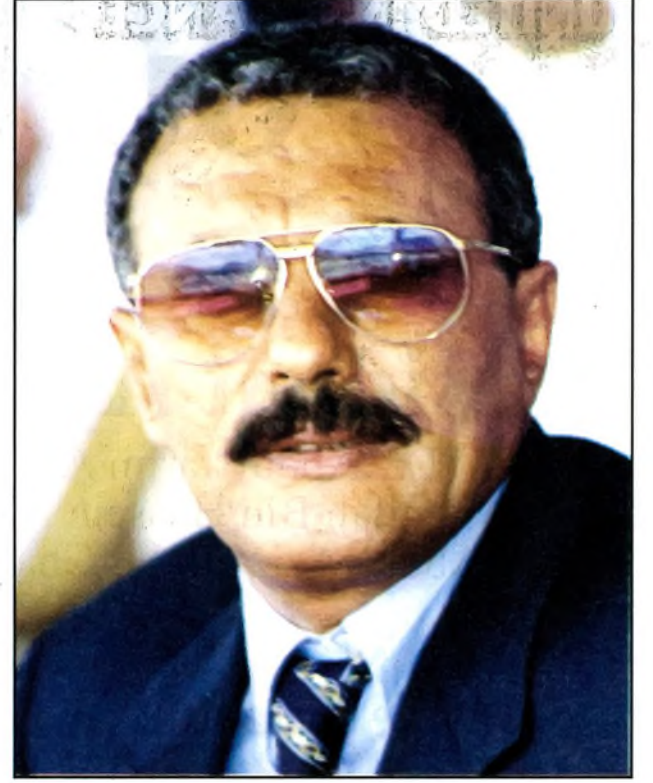
وإلى فخامة الدكتور عبدالكريم الإرياني رئيس مجلس الوزراء والسادة أعضاء المجلس
وإلى الشيخ عبدالله بن حسين الأحمر رئيس مجلس النواب وأعضاء المجلس
وإلى الاستاذ عبدالعزيز عبدالغني رئيس المجلس الاستشاري وأعضاء المجلس
وإلى جميع أبناء شعبنا العظيم

بمناسبة قدوم عيد الأضحى المبارك وكل عام والجميع بخير

Eid Mubarak

الشركة اليمنية للفنادق والاستثمار

تتقدم بخالص التهاني والتبريكات
لفخامة الرئيس
علي عبدالله صالح
والحكومة اليمنية
والشعب اليمني
بمناسبة حلول عيد الأضحى المبارك
وكل عام وأنتم بخير



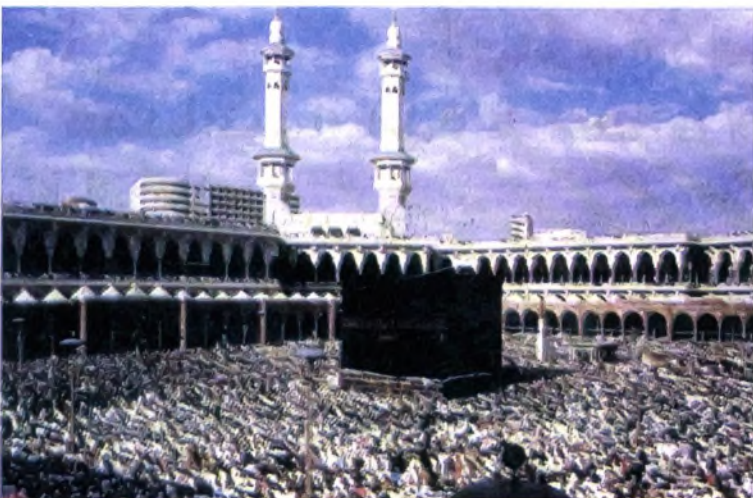
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Ali Abdullah Saleh

The Government and People of Yemen
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Eid Mubarak

Teachers of Taiz Explain:

"HOW TO TEACH TEENAGERS!"

We were eight experienced teachers gathered in a friend's house. As usual we talked about a number of things, especially the obstacles and difficulties we teachers face at school. The topic of discussion soon zeroed in on a big issue, the headache of dealing with adolescents.

We all confessed that we do not like teaching teenagers. We came to this conclusion because of a long and miserable experience most of us had at school in teaching teenagers. We felt the majority of teachers must feel the same way.

Today, as a responsible citizen caring for his nation, I raise this vital issue because it can harmfully affect the process of learning in Yemen. In my opinion, there are a few questions, which must be

answered carefully so that we can cut down the bad consequences of such a serious problem:

1. Why do many educators opt out of teaching adolescents?
2. In what way is teaching teenagers different?
3. How should a teacher handle teenage students?

Based on my personal experience, and according to several authors who specialize in teaching, I can summarize the following points:

1. As a teacher, one should realize that teenagers undergo major psychological, mental and physical changes. These changes often affect the way they behave, thus leading to enormous problems by adult standards.
2. Remember that the attention span of teenagers is very limited and they often have 'irrational'

priorities. Therefore, one should not spend too long on one activity. If the activity is too difficult, students may give up, and if it is too easy, they could lose interest.

3. To avoid getting the students lost and confused, one should not incorporate a lot of writing. Adolescents like talking, and they feel what they have to say is quite important.

4. Teachers must try to overcome the students' weaknesses by creating activities that help them. Extra-curricular activities such as games, competitions, songs, stories, etc, must be included.

5. Teachers need to remember that teenagers enjoy testing out the other side, even if they are teachers. So never negotiate what you are going to do in the class. Just do it.

6. That takes me to the next point.

Strike a balance between being firm and fair. However, Let me advise you to leave the impression of being strong early in the course.

7. Get to know your students and assess their inclinations. Some are shy, others are forthcoming. This is important in interacting with them, especially in public.

I feel confident that the above mentioned hints will help adolescents to react positively and may eventually build up a bond with their teachers. However, what satisfies us all is looking at the results of well-balanced, sensitive teaching, which is based on pedagogical considerations as well as an awareness of what makes teenagers tick.

By: Abdullah Saleh Al-Hashedi, Taiz

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Yemeni Press in a Week

Given the importance of this page to our readers, responsibility for it has been moved from one editor to a group. The newspapers' editorial is also translated.



Ray,
Sanaa Weekly, Mouthpiece of
the League of Sons of Yemen,
16/03/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:
1. 12 Chief Editors of Newspapers Condemn the Efforts to Divide the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate.

2. The US Parliament Condemns Violations in Yemen, and the US Congress Warns Against Regression of Democracy.
3. Three Parties Control the Elections Registration Committees.
4. The Rabitah Party Condemns Interference of the Authorities in the Affair of Political Parties.
5. Attack on the Government Offices Complex in Al-Jawf.

B: Issue's Editorial:

Yemen's democracy will never mature, and it will never grow so long as the authorities deal with it as a beautification kit it uses to simply improve its image. We cannot overcome our crisis so long as some elements within the ruling circles see democracy as a gift from them to the people, which they give or withdraw at whim as it fits their private interests or calculations without regard to the constitution or laws. Democracy will never become a cornerstone for building a modern Yemen if it continues to serve as a shield for the opportunistic drive to grab everything. Democracy should be a base on which we can build a better tomorrow. It should form our beliefs and behavior as a complete package based on civil society where the law is higher than everyone.



Al-Belagh,
Sanaa Weekly, Independent
16/03/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:
1. The German (Writer) Attacks Al-Belagh and Defends the American.
2. Al-Sharq Al-Awsat Newspaper Is Forbidden from Entering Yemen.
3. The President of the Republic Visits Three Asian Countries.
4. The Opposition Coordination Council Refuses to Participate in the Elections Committees.
5. The Ministry of Oil Holds Talks to Upgrade Some Oil Wells.

B: Issue's Editorial:

Al-Belagh newspaper received information that Yemeni-US relations are not in good shape. An indicator of this has been the US State Department's report on human rights in Yemen. Another indicator is the absence of any news on a timetable for the president to visit Washington. A third indicator is that contact between Yemen and the US continues at the level of Assistant Secretary of State. Finally, there is the refusal of the Americans to resume assistance under the EPF program, except for humanitarian shipments of flour. At the military level, the Americans have also refused to resume

shipments under FMS regarding spare parts of American military hardware in Yemen.

On this basis, the need for creating solidarity among Arabs and Muslims becomes clear and strategic. Arab and Muslim states are duty-bound to create mechanisms for solidarity and unity at the political, economic and military levels. In as much as our governments try to improve relations with the US and the West in general, they should consolidate inter-Arab and inter-Muslim relations. If this happens, they will see that it is the US that will seek to improve relations with them.



Al-Wahdah,
Sanaa Weekly, Official.
17/03/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:
1. Britain Ready to hand-over the Terrorist Abul-Hamza to Yemen.
2. Al-Wahdah Discloses Participation of Ibrahim Al-Wazir in the Secession Conspiracy.
3. Election of a New Leadership for the Journalists Syndicate.
4. 222 Confirmed Investment Applications in the Aden Free Zone.
5. "We expect to occupy a special place in Expo 2000."

B: Issue's Editorial:

Under the leadership of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemeni diplomacy continues to achieve great success in translating its principles into action internally and internationally. The Republic of Yemen has always been faithful to its principles, especially those of political pluralism, civil liberties, and market-based economics. The same is true of our relations with our neighbors as Yemen always tried to find negotiated solutions to any differences. Examples include the peaceful resolution of the border with the Sultanate of Oman, the arbitration with Eritrea on the Red Sea Islands of Hunaish, and the continued talks with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the border issue. We have always worked hard to build bridges of confidence and mutual cooperation as we prepare for the future. The Presidential visits to many fraternal and friendly countries also serve the same purpose of enhancing political understanding and economic cooperation.



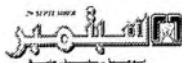
Attariq,
Aden Weekly, Independent,
16/03/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:
1. Tighter Control over the Eastern Entry Points to Fend Off Population Inflows.
2. British Authorities Arrest Abul-Hamza.
3. Agreement of Principles among Opposition Parties to Protect Syndicates.
4. Murder of a Senior PSO Officer in Shabwah.
5. Members of US Congress Send Two Letters to President Saleh and Albright.

B: Issue's Editorial:

It is known that a strong and vibrant opposition can improve and enhance the work of the state. The centers of power in Yemen recognized early that the opposition is weak, fragmented, and docile. They also recognized that the media has become the most effective force in the scene. That explains the recent actions to reduce the margin of freedom for the press.

Those people today who are attacking the free and independent press actually show that they are weak. That is why they are using force in an illegal way against editors and journalists. However, let me address the main issue here - the role of the opposition. In my opinion, the opposition parties have one of two choices. Either they promote and protect the interests of the public, even if that will cost them some of the financial and psychological benefits that their leaders now get from the authorities, or they stop talking in the name of the people and the public interest. To be sure, we are not asking opposition leaders to take arms against the state, but we wish that they take a clear position on the national issues at hand. Honestly speaking, the people are tired not only of the rulers and their mistakes, but also of the ineffective and self-centered opposition.



26th September,
Sanaa Weekly, Official -
Mouthpiece of Armed Forces.
18/03/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:
1. The President Arrives in Singapore After Successful Visits to India and Japan.
2. The Cabinet Approves the Use of Telephone Cards.
3. Completion of Aden Telephone Network.
4. Aden Receives a 200-Container Ship.

B: Issue's Editorial:

Everyday, we see on the ground the fruits of the economic and political opening-up of Yemen under the leadership of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. This is clearly seen in the presidential visits to Japan and India. The talks at the highest level in both countries have centered on economic cooperation, as a necessary base for political understanding. This is also going to be the same in the short stop-over in Singapore. The wise political leadership of our country is indeed taking a well-prepared nation into the 21st century. The signals of prosperity are clear.



Al-Thawri,
Sanaa Weekly, Mouthpiece of
the Yemen Socialist Party
18/03/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:
1. The Convention of the Journalists Syndicate Is Illegal, and Some Journalists Are Preparing to Establish a New Syndicate.
2. Opposition Parties: "Every One Has His Party, and the Syndicate Is For All".

3. The National Committee to Defend Victims of Peaceful Struggle Approves Its Program.
4. Dr. Yusuf Wali (of Egypt) Praises the New Course of the YSP.

B: Issue's Editorial:

Comrade Lenin was a very intelligent person. His repeated statement that 'the road to hell is paved with good intentions' applies to a personal experience for me last week.

I was a zealous participant in the preparations for the Second Convention of the Journalists Syndicate. All along, I was praying that God protect our syndicate from the scandal of the king. Everybody knows the story of the king who spent a lot of money of good clothes. One day, there came to his city two crooks who claimed to weave excellent cloth. There was one catch, however. The cloth was invisible to people who occupy positions they do not deserve.

The two men were employed to weave the new garment for the king. So, all the king's men, one after another pretended to see the cloth that was not there, lest they should be told they did not deserve their position.

Then one day, the king put on his new clothes, which were not there and walked around the town. All his aides praised his new clothes. But one little boy shouted, "The king has no clothes."

The king realized that his aides were lying to him, and that he had no clothes.



Al-Ayyam,
Aden 3-times weekly,
Independent
17/03/1999.

A: Front-Page Headlines:
1. The Future of the Region Is Tied to Stability, Development and Respect for Human Rights and Liberties.
2. Scotland Yard Gets Help from Yemeni Security, and a Second Person Arrested

Worked in Yemen for 7 Years.
3. Dr. Biblawi: Access of the Public to Information Is the Most Important Indicator of Democracy.
4. Peaceful Demonstration Against Construction of Petrol Station Near Salt Basins.
5. Somali Refugees Demonstrate at Jaheen Camp.

B: Issue's Editorial:

These days, large numbers of pilgrims are headed to Mecca for the Haj which is one of the pillars of Islam. But God has ordained this requirement on the basis of ability. A pilgrim is supposed to pay for the Haj with his/her pure and legally earned income. Therefore, we urge all Yemeni would-be pilgrims to check their resources and see if they have plundered any private or public resources and return them.



Al-Ummah,
Sanaa Weekly, Mouthpiece of
Hizbul Haq,

أحر التهناني القلبية نرفها إلى الشاب الخلق
حمدي عسكر علي حسين الظاهري
بمناسبة الزواج ووصوله من السفر.
المهنون:
عسكر علي الظاهري,
وعلى ومعد ويكر وأسامة وحسام الظاهري
ووليد وتيم وأكرم محمد عبدودود
ويوسف وتامر وفارس وحامدة الشريف
والعم حسن فزاد والعم فريد والعم نائف
وجميع الأهل والأصدقاء

18/03/1999

Front-Page Headlines:
1. Abul-Hassan: "What happened in Moudiya was settling accounts."
2. The Opposition Council: "The authorities continue to twist democratic life."
3. Agreement Among Political Parties Regarding Unions.
4. Will Zionist Companies Invest in the Aden Free Zone?

Al-Wahdawi,
Sanaa Weekly, Mouthpiece of
the Nasserite Unionist Party,
16/03/1999.

A: Front-Page Headlines:
1. Humiliating Failure for Journalists Syndicate.
2. Oratory Ceremony on the 1st Anniversary of the Passing Away of Ahmed Tarboush.
3. Opposition Parties Sign a Joint Statement on Syndicates and Unions.

B: Issue's Editorial:
The authorities proceeded yesterday in their war to control the civil society organizations. They financed, organized and controlled the 2nd Conference of the Journalists' Syndicate. It is unfortunate that some journalists have found it in their interest to go along with the authorities in this undemocratic move. But the real journalists have stayed away.

أجمل التهناني والتبريكات لأخ
وهيب مهدي عزيزان
بمناسبة ارتزاقه مولودة أسمها
« مها »
المهنون
شوقي السقاف، واسرته

COUNTRY: REPUBLIC OF YEMEN
PROJECT TITLE: NWSA SPARE PARTS & MATERIALS FOR WATER & SANITATION SUPPLY
PROJECT NUMBER: YE-018801
EuroPA Ref: YE-98106

GENERAL PROCUREMENT NOTICE

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Directorate General of International Co-operation (DGIS), The Hague, The Netherlands, will finance the above mentioned project for the supply of the following:

- LOT 1 - Spare parts for Submersible and booster well pumps; (E-Motor spares inclusive)
- LOT 2 - Laboratory Chemicals and Equipment for Water supply;
- LOT 3 - Electrical Spares Parts for Control Panel, Booster pumps, Contactors, Circuit Breakers, Control Switches, Fuses, Relays etc..
- LOT 4 - Spares Parts of Trucks, Whale and Vacuum Tankers

Place of Delivery: FCA Alphen aan de Rijn, The Netherlands, (Bonded Warehouse)
Final Destination: 7 (seven) cities with in the Republic of Yemen

EuroPA SA, acting on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/DGIS, The Hague, the Netherlands will issue a tender in accordance to the procedures specified in the 'Rules and Guidelines for the Procurement of Goods and Works with Financial Development Assistance from the Government of the Netherlands'. Contract award(s) will be issued by EuroPA SA.

Interested eligible bidders (Origin DAC-countries, The Netherlands inclusive) who wish to be included in this procedure to receive an invitation to bid under International Competitive Bidding (ICB) should contact the undersigned in writing. Tender dossiers are available since the 12th of March 1999 and Bidders will be invited to submit their bid (Tender bids for one or more Lot's are acceptable) not later than 21st of May 1999 - 14.00 hours CET. Closing date for technical questions and/or information 29th of April 1999. A bid security of 2/two percent of the tendered FCA price will be required. Bid securities should remain valid for a period of 30 days beyond the validity period of the bid received. The bid security of unsuccessful bidders will be released within 7 days.

The executing agency will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders in connection with the preparation or delivery of bids. Interested bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the IPA/EuroPA office in The Netherlands from 12th of March 1999. A complete set of the bidding documents may be purchased upon payment of a non-refundable fee equivalent to US\$ 75.00 inclusive courier charge by means of a demand draft, cashier's check, in cash or by telegraphic transfer (TT) on account no. 63.39.51.862, Banque Artesia Nederland.

Quoting EuroPA ref no. YE-98106 Tender Yemen.

EuroAP SA
P. O. Box 190
1400 AD, Bussum, The Netherlands
Mr. H. J. Groen
Tel: +31.35.6911296; Fax: +31.35.6937355
E-mail: IPA_BV@compuserve.com

Official application to receiving bidding documents could take place in writing from 31th of March 1999 by letter, fax or e-mail to the address mentioned above quoting Tender Dossier Yemen Re.. YE 98106

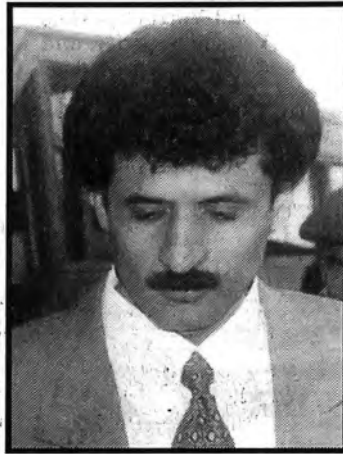
The Bidding document is also available on E-mail upon payment of a non refundable fee of US\$ 25 by payment means described in this Procurement Notice

The tender opening session will **not** be open for bidders.

YAF's President Fuad Al-Qumaim:

"We have many ambitions, but we need support!"

The Yemeni Athletics Federation (YAF) is one of the most active sports unions in Yemen. The YAF regularly organizes local championship games, which do not depend on the insignificant financial support provided by the Ministry of Sports. Despite the fact that the Ministry is not giving enough support to the YAF, it was able to accomplish many spectacular achievements for the national team on the Arab and international stages. The latest such achievement was the gold medal obtained by the Yemeni champion Abdulrahman Abdulaziz in the Arab youth championship in Damascus Syria during 26-29 of June 98.



Recently, the YAF has not been organizing many local sports activities, in spite of the fact that the YAF's last organized local sport event was very successful on many fronts. Their last event was the Half Marathon of Sanaa, which had several hundred participants from Yemen and the Arab world.

To examine the ambitions and hopes of the YAF in depth, Yemen Times interviewed the YAF's president, Mr. Fuad Al-Qumaim.

Excerpts:

Q: Although you have not had any local activities for some time now, you are still participating in the 13th Asian Olympic Games. Unfortunately, the results were not encouraging. Why?

A: To understand the unsuccessful results, we should first look at the inadequate preparation of our athletes. Most athletes participating in the games have been preparing for the event for months and even years, our athletes had only one week to prepare for the games in the humble internal training camp we reserved. What could you expect from our athletes who were competing against world champions from China, Japan, Korea, and even Qatar. To say the least, we lack a number of factors for success. We also lack the ability to plan for future events. Our participation was arranged at

random and on short notice, and all we pay for is traveling expenses.

One year when we were prepared, we placed 7th in the world rankings and first in the Asian rankings. That was quite an accomplishment, and it wasn't luck that made us do so well. We accomplished that by preparing well and using our talents and abilities throughout the games. Long before an event begins, every trainer used to provide YAF a schedule for the training camp and indicate all the possible training requirements for optimal preparation. After providing all the preparation and requirements for our athletes, the team usually

achieves remarkable success in most competitions. But now that the Ministry of Youth and Sports is in charge of such preparations, it sends us people who are supposed to evaluate and see the needs of our teams, but they don't know anything about sports.

Q: Do you see any athletic champions who you think have a chance for future success?

A: There are many such athletes whom I think can do well if given the chance. The first name that comes to mind is definitely athlete Abdulrahman Abdulaziz, who has a love of sports in his blood. He is the person who, even though he had to train himself, was able to achieve second place among 94 participants representing 27 Asian countries in the Asian Olympic Games held in Taiwan last year, and first place in last year's Young Arab Championship Games.

This in fact confirms that we do have young Yemenis who are capable of becoming champions not only regionally, but also on an international level. With a bit of support and encouragement, we can create champions out of ordinary talented athletes living among us.

We have the resources and facilities, but we lack another important requirement, willpower. If our politicians have the drive to promote sports and improve sport conditions in the country, we can do it. If the ministry provides the necessary conditions and facilities, we can select well qualified and

organized staff members and administrators. This should lead the way to better sports conditions and higher achievements.

Q: Do you think that local Yemeni athletic trainers are well qualified to train the national athletic team?

A: I am proud to say that we have a large number of qualified trainers who have graduated from the best international institutions in Europe. Among them are Mustafa Saeed Nasser, Mohamed Bartoosh, Badr Muhsin, Ismail Rawia, who are all first class Yemeni trainers. But recently, we have tried to give an opportunity to younger trainers whom we think have a bright future in the field of athletic training.

Q: Why were YAF's secretary and technical manager changed?

A: Some changes were made at the posts of general secretary and technical manager because they did not want to cooperate with others in formulating the arrangements of the planned athletic championships. It is in our best interest to have the staff working together and sharing ideas and suggestions, instead of excluding other staff members in making important decisions. The best work is teamwork.

Q: How were you able to get the financial resources to launch all of the local championships you organized, in spite of the fact that the Ministry of Sports and Youth contributes very little?

A: The total approved budget the Ministry of Sports cannot even cover the expenses of a single championship for the local teams. If not for the commercial companies and deals that we make to get financial support through sponsorships and advertisement, we could have done nothing. A good example of this is the latest half marathon held in Sanaa for the president's trophy. The whole event, which five Arab countries participated in, was totally sponsored by Yemenia Airlines. It is well known that organizing such sports events and preparing our national teams for international events requires a significant amount of

money, much more than we get from the government. After our achievements at the Asian games, the International Athletic Federation (IAF) decided to contribute US \$7000 annually to our federation for the general management of YAF.

Q: How strong is the relationship between your federation and the Ministry of Sports?

A: We appreciate the attempts of Dr. Abdulwahhab Raweh, the Minister of Sports to arrange plans and programs to help our federation's activities. However, we have noticed the wide gap between what is happening and what is supposed to happen. Whenever we try to get our rights from the ministry we face an awkward routine at the ministry's managerial offices. Routine transactions that come to a dead end are the main reason behind not implementing the ministry-funded programs. As an

example, the Sports Activity Administration at the ministry always asks us to provide reports of athletic sports events held in governorates in a certain program before even providing the financial support that is vital for that very program to be begun. We also face difficulties in some distant governorates, which do not even have the equipment to send the reports the ministry wants. To avoid all of this, the ministry should hand over the budget of every sports federation at the start of the sports season. At the end of the season, every federation should be responsible to send a report to the ministry.

Q: Do you have a closing statement?

A: We have many ambitions for the future, but they cannot be carried out unless we get more support. I am confident that we can build a strong national athletics team if we can bring

about a major change in the way we deal with sports and create better environments to improve athletics and give it more attention. The best areas for athletes to train and develop their abilities are high altitude areas like Sanaa City. The requirements are more care and attention, and of course financial support so that we can do our best in raising our level of performance and bring a bright image to athletic sports in Yemen. Our dream is to raise the Yemeni flag high in Arab and International sports events.

**ROTHMANS PRIZES BRING DELIGHT TO WINNERS**

On Saturday, March 20th, 1999, Paul Carrington, Rothmans Sales Manager, Abdul-Rab M. Ohaj, Deputy Manager of the Sanaa Region of the Hayel Saeed Group of Companies, and Anees Al-Dhari, of Rothmans Sanaa Office, were handed to the lucky winners seven Rothmans prizes.

The names were drawn from a huge list of names in a raffle on 14th of March. Attending the raffle and prize handing over were many people, including media persons.

"One of my clerks got the number of the jackpot winner, Mr. Saeed Qassem Saleh Abdullah Al-Maqtari. I called him to Turbah to give him the good news. For a few minutes he did not understand what I was talking about," explained Mr. Omar An-Nehmi, General Manager of the Apollo Exhibition Center.

"I was worried because there was a lull. I was hooked on the line for longer than I expected. 'You won an Explorer Land Rover' I tried again. Finally, I said, 'Ribhi sayyarah salon'. I waited. He replied, to my great relief. But it was half an hour later." Rothmans and their agents in Yemen, the Hayel Saeed Group of Companies, congratulate the winners, and wish better luck for those who did not make it this time.

The prizes were won in a nationwide competition for discovering on a map where a treasure was buried.

In addition to periodic prizes, Rothmans also sponsors many athletic games and supports various community-based projects. It also provides funding to numerous grass-roots level development efforts in the country.

Reported by:
Yasser Mohammed Ahmed

**The Winners, Their Address and their Prizes:**

1. Saeed Qassem Saleh Al-Maqtari of Turbah, Taiz - Land Rover;
2. Layla Hassan Abdullah of Hadhramaut - 500 grams, 24 karate Gold
3. Mohamed Salim Al-Bormaim of Sanaa - 100 grams, 24 karate Gold
4. Magdi Mohamed Al-Qubaty of Sanaa - 100 grams, 24 karate Gold
5. Omar Salim Al-Bormaim of Sanaa - 100 grams, 24 karate Gold
6. Yusuf Mohamed Al-Jalal of Kitab, Ibb - 100 grams, 24 karate Gold
7. Khaled Ahmed Ali Ghalib of Sanaa - 100 grams, 24 karate Gold

All winners received their prizes on Saturday, March 20th, 1999 in the presences of a large cheering crowd.



HSASA Prizes

During the 15th and 16th of March, 1999, Taiz city witnessed a flurry of meetings to evaluate the applicants for the 1998 prizes of the Hayel Saeed Awards for Science and Arts (HSASA) awarded by the Saeed Foundation for Science and Culture (SFSC). Senior university professors from Sanaa, Aden and Taiz universities met in five committees to discuss their assessment of the work presented by 15 candidates in the following fields:



to the recognition. Persons living/working in Yemen are eligible.

At the end of the committee meetings, the General Secretariat of the HSASA met to consider the conclusions. It decided to present the awards on April 23rd, 1999.

"We are grateful for the time and effort of these highly educated professors in helping us push forward with these prizes. We also appreciate the numerous applications for the awards," said Ahmed Hayel Saeed, Vice Chairman of the Hayel Saeed Group of Companies and Vice Chairman of the Saeed Foundation's Board of Trustees. He also invited comments and proposals 'in order to continue to improve on the work of the committees and procedures'.

Faisal Saeed Farea, Director-General of the SFSC said that

the process takes a full year - starting from invitations of candidates to formation of committees, to assessment, and nomination. "Every year, we have a different committee for each field. We have a long list of senior researchers and academicians from whom we choose three referees for each field.

Mr. Ahmed Hayel Saeed unveiled 3 new additions for the coming year. "We have established a library which we hope will be the largest and most sophisticated in the Middle East," he said. Based in Taiz, the library, which is part of the SFSC, will be connected electronically to all major research centers in the world. Already, it boasts 120,000 titles of books and publications in addition to 2,000 periodicals and journals. "It will have internet and intranet connectivity, as well as the tradi-



tional audio-visual facilities."

Another new idea is the Youth Prize which the Saeed Foundation is considering for next year. "We would like to encourage our young people to think innovatively. Our first target group are secondary school students. We want them to work on projects that relate to our lives," Ahmed said.

A third development is the introduction of a new prize.

"We will have a sixth prize in the field of engineering, technologies and information," he disclosed.

The HSASA is the only private sector award open to the public.

The Hayel Saeed Group of companies is also considering allocating an annual sum to finance researchers. "Often there are studies, lab experiments, and field research which need to be supported because of their

contribution to our growth and development,"

Ahmed Hayel added. The Hayel Saeed Group today is the largest philanthropic organization of Yemen.

Mohamed Hatem Al-Qadhi, Taiz Bureau Editor,



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