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Monday, 25 December 2006 • Issue No. 1010 • Price 30 Yemeni Riyals • Founded in 1991 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf www.yementimes.com

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Christmas myths unwrapped



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Can geothermal energy light up Yemen?

Readers' Voice
Last edition's question:
Is it true that having knowledge of international laws will give Yemeni journalist legal protection?

I don't know (6%)
Yes (45%) No (49%)

This edition's question:
Do you think president Saleh deserves the UNESCO award for maintaining human heritage?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

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and have your voice heard

UNESCO awards gold medal to President Saleh

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Dec. 24 — UNESCO gave President Ali Abdullah Saleh the Gold Medal of Qertaj City on Saturday in recognition of the efforts he expended in supporting the organization's activities, maintaining the human heritage and improving the country's infrastructure.

Saleh was honored in Aden by the UNESCO Director General Kushiuro Matsura and his delegation that is currently touring Yemen. Matsura confirmed that the Yemeni government pays closer attention to the ancient sites and protected areas, and maintains the country's architectural heritage.

He pointed out that his organization is discussing the announcement of the Yemeni Island of Socotra as a protected area to include it on the list of world heritage sites.

The UNESCO top official praised the cooperation programs carried out so far by the international organization in Yemen in the areas of education and illiteracy eradication. Also, he praised the efforts Yemenis exert in the area of popular songs and dance, as well as the government efforts in fighting corruption.



Matsura (second from right) confirmed that the Yemeni government pays closer attention to the ancient sites.

The UNESCO Director General visited Al-Hajrain City in Hadramout Valley with the aim of announcing this city as a protected area. The Yemeni government declared last week that Al-Hajrain City is a cultural and historic protected area at the national level.

Matsura agreed with the Yemeni government to send a UNESCO technical team to evaluate and view the city and its distinctive human heritage in order to set the necessary requirements for announcing the city as a world human protected

area. The UNESCO Director General received a copy of a study conducted by Hadramout University on the main components necessary for announcing Al-Hajrain City as a world human and historic protected area. The study contained many photographic shots of the city.

The UNESCO official paid a visit to Sana'a University and many research centers to discuss the organization's programs, which are under implementation in these centers.

Taiz lawyers support Al-Jomhuryah journalists

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

TAIZ, Dec. 24 — The Taiz Yemeni Lawyers Syndicate announced on Dec. 24, its stance with journalists working in Taiz-based Al-Jomhuryah daily newspaper who are asking for raising the wages as is the case with counterparts in Al-Thawrah newspaper.

In a released statement, the syndicate declared its support for Al-Jomhuryah newspaper affiliates in their legitimate demands for improving their living standards.

"The Taiz Lawyers Syndicate follows with concern protest developments of Al-Jomhuryah newspaper journalists and editors that started 15 days ago with lifting red flags," noted the syndicate's statement.

The statement denounced confiscating pressmen's minds by freezing them and emptying them from the main concern of the press.

It also expressed sorrow over the suppression among journalists themselves in the Al-Jamahiriah Establishment itself, an institution that graduated a number of leading journalists like Abdulhabib Salim, Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Abdullah Sa'ad, Mohammed Al-Mujahid and several others who were an exemplary in



their professionalism not only at the national level but at the international one too.

Further, the statement went on to say that they are with Yemeni journalists in their attempts to develop their job and improve their living conditions. It also demanded that pressmen receive their rights in full, in a way that saves their firm pride.

The syndicate called on all parties in Al-Jomhuryah Establishment to sit together and come out with solutions pleasing all and to exert efforts to prevent discrimination and parting among them.

In a letter forwarded to Parliament and Shoura councils, journalists syndicate and civil society organizations, Al-Jomhuryah journalists asked for their stance with them against the suppressions of Samir Al-Yousofi, Al-Jomhuryah's editor-in-chief. It also asked journalists syndicate to help them sue him as he insulted his colleagues over the newspaper's papers.

Continued on page 2

Media says spy arrested, security denies

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Dec. 23 — A security source denied media allegations that some foreign investigation-linked secret agents, including those for Israel, were arrested, according to the Army's September.net web site.

Noting that the information is baseless, the source requested mass media verify such news via specialized and reliable parties before publishing it.

The Yemeni Sons League web site, Raynews.net, reported Friday that security apparatuses in Sana'a arrested numerous individuals of various Arab nationalities on suspected links to foreign investigations, including Israel and some Islamic nations.

Several official sources were contacted in an effort to verify the web site report; however, they declined to comment, assuring that numerous suspects are being investigated for acts believed to be against Yemeni interests.

The league's report coincides with President Ali Abdullah Saleh's warning last Wednesday about some political powers trying to ignite sedition in Yemen.

Entering the country under the pretext of starting a business, operating tourist tours or even working as mosque preachers, most such individuals were arrested

one by one, possessing detailed maps of security-sensitive sites and investigation equipment.

The same source added that initial investigations revealed that some suspects were involved in spying while some are agents for many countries at the same time.

The number of suspects wasn't speci-

fied; however, the source said approximately 40 detainees are being subjected to intense investigations before being referred to judiciary.

Established in 2002 under U.S. instruction, the National Security Apparatus is headed by Ali Al-Ansi, President Saleh's office manager and Amar Mohammed Abdullah Saleh, the president's nephew.

Sit-in activists demand investigating Al-Shuaibi abuses

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Dec. 23 — Numerous political and human rights activists staged a two-day sit-in late last week in front of the Capital Secretariat's Prosecution, protesting abuses against a Yemeni woman while she was detained at a capital security detention.

Leading the protests, the Civil Society Coalition declared in a statement that Anisah Al-Shuaibi and her two sons were subject to torture and suppression, including physical and psychological abuse and rape.

The coalition demanded Capital Investigations Office Chairman, Brig. Rizk Al-Jawfi, be investigated regarding

the case, noting his refusal more than once to stand before prosecution.

It called upon all activists and human rights organizations both inside and outside Yemen, together with the press, to stand up against such abuses occurring in Yemeni prisons, particularly in women's prisons.

Continued on page 2

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In brief

Aden

YEC exports Yemeni salt to Seychelles

Dec. 23 — Yemen Economic Corporation exported 1,500 tons of salt to the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean on Saturday. Abdurrahman Hasan, YEC Salt Department manager, noted that the shipment cost \$45,000.

Commercial and industrial cooperation

Dec. 24 — Omer Bamashmous, chairman of the Aden Chamber of Commerce & Industry, held talks Saturday with deputy Pakistani ambassador to Sana'a, Dhafar Nassim Kiani. They discussed investment opportunities in both nations, as well as facilities being offered to attract investment in Aden Free Zone in commercial and industrial fields and the means to enhance them. The two men also dealt with the possibility of benefiting from Pakistani experience in establishing small industries, in addition to several joint economic projects between the two countries.

AIDS course concludes in Aden

Dec. 23 — A training workshop on the dangers of HIV and AIDS organized by the High Population Council concluded Thursday. Social workers and health supervisors from 35 Aden and Ibb schools took part in the two-day workshop, wherein participants received information about AIDS risks, methods of transmission, how to deliver information about AIDS, communication skills and steps to be taken to change behavior. They also had a lecture on the effects of AIDS on family and society and how to prepare special activities to fight AIDS.

Amran

Amran assistant governor meets World Bank delegation

Dec. 24 — Baker Ali Baker, assistant governor of Amran for the environmental sector, met with a World Bank delegation, headed by bank consul Christopher Ward, on Thursday. In the meeting, they discussed developing and supporting the governorate's water and environmental sectors. They also discussed obstacles the governorate faces in these sectors and the means to solve such obstacles, with the delegation stressing its willingness to provide research and studies Amran basin needs in order to decrease water drain.

Hadamout

Yemen, Arab Fund agree to fund agricultural project

Dec. 23 — Yemen and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development signed an agreement Tuesday to finance a \$41 million agricultural and fisheries project in Hadramout governorate. The agreement was signed by Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Abdul Kareem Al-Arhabi and the Arab Fund's legal advisor, Fateh Al-Shadeli. The sum will be used to build eight dams and fund agricultural and fishery activities in Hadramout. The project aims to improve the living standards of the governorate's residents, particularly farmers and fishermen.

Sana'a

Government increases student allowances

Dec. 24 — Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Saleh Ali Basurra on Wednesday announced a \$100 increase in allowances for Yemeni students studying abroad, beginning in January. He pointed out that 7,000 Yemenis are studying in 43 Arab and foreign nations.

Deputy premier minister inaugurates capital traffic plan

Dec. 23 — Deputy Premier Interior Minister Rashad Al-Alimi launched a forum on a comprehensive plan for Sana'a city traffic on Saturday. Encompassing until 2024, the plan was developed by an international professional company, in cooperation with the capital mayorship, the planning and interior ministries, represented by the General Department for Traffic, and Sana'a city Traffic. After discussing the plan's outputs, the various agencies should interact to put forth programs to implement its conclusions and recommendations.

\$250 million allocated to rehabilitate Aden Free Zone

ADEN, Dec. 23 — Several measures have been taken to restructure Aden Free Zone, including numerous free systems for organization and job description purposes employed at similar zones worldwide, noted Mohammed Hamoud Al-Wadhn, deputy chairman of the Free Zone General Authority and chairman of Aden Free Zone.

He added that such restructuring aims to focus free zone activity on fast services to investors, as well as

provide the type of information and data to serve various phases of investment projects.

Al-Wadhn pointed out that \$250 million of the funds Yemen received at the London donor's conference will be allocated to support Aden Free Zone to establish development projects, topped by goods and an air cargo village.

Aden governorate is making necessary arrangements to implement a sea bridge connecting Al-Mu'alla

Harbor with the Containers Harbor. The sea bridge is part of 12 projects due to be implemented in two phases: the first costing \$12 million and the second \$15 million.

Mohamed Zamam, general manager of the Port City Development Project, noted that special studies have been conducted regarding implementing the sea bridge project. He indicated that the project aims to help the city of Aden avoid the heavy traffic of containers, which exceed 2,500 daily.

Parliamentary report accuses Cabinet of financial violations

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Dec. 24 — Parliament released a report last Wednesday accusing the government of hiding customs revenues the Ministry of Endowment and Guidance received from Hajj pilgrims as part of the 2007 budget.

It accused the government of selling the endowment's estate and refusing to establish a general health security authority for employees. However, it vowed to implement the health security project before May 2005. The report confirmed the Ministry of Endowment and Guidance is investing the capitals of independent units, which included many authorities and funds, in the treasury bills. The Parliamentary committee, who studied the 2007 general budget, realized that sums of money were registered as part of the endowment ministry's budget to construct mosques, however the ministry only contributes partly to the construction of mosques.

The committee remarked that sale estimates of the agricultural crops coming from endowment-owned land declined by 51 percent, compared to that in the year 2006. It said the ministry continued registering sums as part of the land sales, contradicting the previous recommendations reached by parliament with regard to

maintaining endowment property and money.

The parliamentary committee mentioned that the budget of the General Authority for Job Security and Pensions included extra estimates in different interest expenses. These estimates rose by 47 percent compared to that of 2006. There were no allocations for such expenses during the years 2003, 2004 and 2005, according to the committee. It suggested that the government should not make allocations for expenses of this kind. The report, in light of which Parliament approved the state's 2007 general budget in last Thursday's session, pointed out the budget included YR 10 billion for workshops and meeting expenses, with an estimated increase of 66 percent from the previous year. The parliamentary committee insisted on the government to establish a health security authority for state employees, and to fulfil promises it made two years ago. Analyzing the budget allocated for the General Authority for Drugs and Medical Equipment, the committee discovered that much was allocated to this authority, which, according to the report, doesn't offer any medical and treatment services to citizens under the law. It said the authority's monitoring role of the quality and safety of drugs is poor.

The report criticized the government for not fulfilling the promises it made before Parliament when approving the state's general budget of the fiscal years 2004, 2005 and 2006. It said the government promised not to invest in the treasury bills because this policy contradicts the goals of funds and unites affiliated with the cabinet's ministries. According to the parliamentary committee, the General Authority for Job Security and Pensions, the General Corporation for Social Security and the Interior Ministry's Pension Fund invest their capitals in the treasury bills.

The report, concerned with analyzing the project of the independent units' budgets, which were added to the 2007 budget, indicated that the independent units' revenues for the year 2007 totalled YR 174.7 million, with an estimated increase of 56 percent from 2006. These revenues go to the Ministry of Endowment and Guidance, General Corporation for Social Security, the General Authority for Drugs and Medical Equipment, the General Authority for Specifications, Standards and Quality Control and the General Authority for Areas and Construction Planning. The last one of these authorities was listed among the independent units as of the fiscal year 2007 under the Republican Decree No. 35 issued in 2006.

YR 4.2 million to be awarded to distinct students

HADRAMOUT, Dec. 24 — Honoring the memory of their father, the heirs of Sheikh Suleiman Sa'eed Buqshan launched the Suleiman Buqshan Prize for Ideal Students in Hadramout to be granted annually to students in the final levels of education, including primary, secondary and university.

The prize aims to encourage distinction in scientific performance, together with other cultural, artistic,

innovative and sporting aspects.

It will be granted to 18 students, including four primary schools, four secondary school students and 10 students from all university faculties, in addition to students at institutes.

Each winner is given a gold medal and a certificate of appreciation. Furthermore, winning primary school students will receive YR 100,000 and secondary school students will receive YR 200,000, while university

students will receive YR 300,000.

Although the prize is to be awarded every Dec. 25, this year's ceremony was postponed because it coincided with Eid Al-Adha; thus, winners will be announced in the coming days.

Headed by Dr. Sa'eed Al-Jariri, the judging committee board includes Dr. Abdullah Bahshwan, deputy president of Hadramout University, and Dr. Awad Al-Bakri, head of Hadramout's Education Office.

Training course focuses on writing scientific research

SANA'A, Dec. 24 — "Journalists and researchers should be sure of the information they have and they have not to write whatever said here or there," said Nina Attalla the researcher and documenting consular at the inauguration of the training course for documenting and preparing scientific research reports held on Saturday.

"Our role is to give researchers and journalists the technical way of inquiring and documenting information and the scientific way to deliver them to the readers," Attalla added.

The five-day training course falls within the observation of the women rights activities' project (Aug 2006-Jul 2007) and will cover 18 researchers and journalists from different governorates.

Though the women's issues are given the biggest share of the training course credits, the course will discuss issues concerning societal problems, tribal revenge and children's issues.

"What I found during the introduction section is that the interns are concerned with different issues, and this will help build bridges of cooperation between the interns to have a joint work in the course after," said Attalla one of the trainers of the course.

According to a press release from Yemen Female Media Forum, the women's rights project observes the positive and negative changes in the



The interns are from different governorates willing to achieve a unified goal.

field of women's situations and positions in the different governorates of the republic. The results of the observation process will be published in periodic reports. The researchers, placed in 18 governorates will witness, observe and follow up all the changes of the specified mission.

The project aims to supply information based on women's status in the different governorates of the republic in a scientific report which will directly observe the women's situation and will be distributed in Arabic and English languages to all interested local and international

organizations to be the base of these organizations in their struggle for women issues, said the press release.

Yemen recently witnessed a big movement in women's rights in all facets of life, "The woman is an essential knuckle in entity of the society. Without her there is no renaissance in the society. However, her role as a good mother must not cancel her other role in the society especially the social, scientific, cultural and charitable contributions, as well as in decision-making," said Abdulaziz Al-Tarb, an economist and a professor of political science.

Education issues in Yemen

By: Ismail Al-Ghabiri

SANA'A, Dec. 24 — The phenomenon of failed students, dropping out of school and teachers who don't live up to the responsibility causes Yemen to lose more than YR 17 billion every year, according to a new government report. However, in 2004 the loss exceeded YR 13 billion with an increase estimated at 2 percent compared to the previous year.

The state loses nearly YR 4 billion per year as a result of ignorant teachers who are remiss in performing their duties. The fact indicates a waste of effort, time and money. The report warns that the phenomenon of failed students and dropping out of school will be exacerbated. It indicates that such a growing phenomenon is responsible for unemployment, low income rate and the spread of poverty, in addition to other bad consequences.

The report, released by the Higher Council for Education Planning, said the average years spent in school by primary school boys and girls is 15.4, with an increase of 6.4 years from the nine legal years required for finishing the primary education. Secondary school students remain in school for 4.4 years on average with an estimated increase of one year from the three years required for finishing high school.

The paper indicated that 79 percent of the total number of primary school exam applicants passed the exam while the failed students and dropouts accounted for 4.26 percent of the total number of primary school exam applicants. 27.3 percent of high school exam applicants failed or dropped out of school.

Schools, constructed during the year 2005, numbered up to 14,410, of which 3,058 schools are jointly used for primary and high school students. According to the report, students face difficulties understanding lessons in both primary and high school stages due to large classes.

The average number of students per class increased, to 40 students per class in primary schools and 53 students per class in high schools. The number of schools increased from 13,335 in 2002 to 14,003 in 2005 with an estimated increase of 2.5 percent, according to the report.

The report revealed that numerous schools are closed for disputes between locals and the unavailability of teachers. It said there are more than 80 suspended

education projects, the cost of which was not recorded, while other schools were constructed in inconvenient places.

The paper mentioned that school projects are not fairly distributed between cities and rural areas and these projects lack the coordination mechanisms required for buildings construction.

The report revealed that only 71 percent of primary school age children are enrolled in schools and most of the dropouts are those who were enrolled in schools at a late age.

On the other hand, the International Peer Education Meeting concluded last week involving 40 officials in charge of youth programs in the United Nations Fund for Population from across the world.

Themed "Learning best practices on peer education and adopting standards of practice," the meeting is organized by the Sana'a-based UNFPA, and will take place over four days.

The program aims to make youth share their best practices and specify the mechanisms for youth education programs together with deciding peers' education levels.

Peer education is a process whereby well-trained and motivated young people undertake informal or organized educational activities with their peers, sharing a similar age and background.

The meeting discusses a number of working papers relating to reproductive health, youth and teenage problems, and problems that need focus only in Yemen.

The UNFPA representative in Yemen, Hans Obdeijn, delivered a speech during the first session, highlighting the importance of such a meeting in Yemen, which needs to develop a peers culture.

The Yemeni Minister of Youth and Sports, Abdulrahman Al-Akwa'a, said demography is one of challenges for Yemeni society that increases with 3.3 a year.

Youth, below 25 years old, represent more than 60 percent of the Yemeni population. Three fourths of population lives in the countryside, distributed in 120,000 residential locations over hills, plains, coasts and deserts.

Al-Akwa'a also declared his ministry supports peer education, as it is based on scientific grounds and further because UNPFA is a primary partner in supporting Yemen in all aspects related to youth issues.

Continued from page1

Taiz lawyers support Al-Jomhuryah journalists

The letter further indicated the journalists would continue their open protest in the newspaper's headquarters and journalists syndicate headquarters, Taiz branch.

The journalists also sympathized with the chairman and the administrative staff of the Taiz branch who refused their legitimate demands, asking the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate president's intervention to stop violations against them.

They also asked other journalists of all Yemeni newspapers and Web sites to stand by them.

Al-Yousofi, according to protestors, tried to break the protest as he promised some to appoint them in leading posts within the establishment; but he failed and they declared they would continue their protest until their demands are met.

More than 22 journalists at Al-Jomhuryah ask for improving their

professional and material conditions and not to admit the new nominations of the establishment's leadership. They also accused it of nepotism regarding nominations, promotions and bonuses.

Reacting to Al-Jomhuryah newspaper's journalists' suffering, 43 journalists from Al-Thawrah newspaper decided to support their colleagues until their demands are met.

For its part, Al-Jomhuryah newspaper denied what was reported in the complaint distributed by the Al-Jumhuryah journalists to the media, asking journalists syndicate to verify the complaint.

The newspaper went beyond that to describe the protestors as *lifting the red flags*- a phrase that carries bad sexual overtones- considered by the latter to be defamation for which the newspaper should be sued.

Sit-in activists demand investigating Al-Shuaibi abuses

Khalid Al-Ansi, a human rights activist and secretary-general of the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, known as HOOD, said prosecution has been investigating Al-Shuaibi's case since before September's elections. The attorney general requested Al-Jawfi for investigation; however, Al-Jawfi made various excuses, such as his engagement in the elections and combating terrorism.

Though he was informed of the time and location of the investigation, Al-Jawfi hasn't yet stood before prosecution. Thus, human rights activists and organizations were forced to stage a peaceful sit-in until those responsible for abusing Al-Shuaibi's human and constitutional rights stand trial, as such incidents are considered illegal and constitutional crimes for which severe punishment should be inflicted, especially when committed by state officials.

"We demonstrate because the Capital Investigations chairman, being an influential official, has refused to be investigated, although he should have attended such investigations immediately," Al-Ansi explained.

"Remaining in his post will affect the results of the case because it involves investigating a number of his employees. In such cases, it's presumed that he should be suspended until the investigation has ended," he added.

Details of Al-Shuaibi's detention

were published last week in a meeting with Al-Nas newspaper, wherein she revealed that she was jailed Nov. 6, 2003 on false charges of kidnapping and killing her ex-husband. The Capital Southeast Appeals Court acquitted her Jan. 17, 2004, after her case was proven baseless because her ex-husband is alive.

She also recounted that she was subjected to physical torture and rape and further, that her children were tortured psychologically.

A Ministry of Interior official who declined to give his name said Al-Shuaibi's case has been politicized to avenge Al-Jawfi, who caused the Islah Party to receive few seats in Sana'a University's Student Union elections.

According to the same source, it then was alleged that security was responsible for kidnapping Jamil Sha'af, but such story was fabricated to make students sympathize with Sha'af and elect him student union head.

"Al-Shuaibi's case is old, dating back to 2003. If not political, why was it brought up again?" the source added, recounting, "Her 80-year-old aunt falsely accused her of kidnapping and killing her ex-husband. However, it soon became clear that [Al-Shuaibi] was innocent, so she was released and her aunt was jailed, but later freed when it became evident that she's senile."

Italian President honors Arhab Al-Sarhi

The president of the Italian Republic issued a presidential decree granting a great medal to Dr. Arhab Al-Sarhi, the public Affairs Specialist at the "Yemeni Italian Friendship Association."

The honorary decree was granted after receiving the president of Yemen's approval as required by Italian law, and in recognition of Al-Sarhi's achievement to strengthen the Yemeni Italian relations in the past five years.

Al-Sarhi said that he is happy to receive this honor which is also an honor to Yemen. "The Italian govern-

ment recognition was for his work to strengthen the Yemeni Italian relations, especially during the kidnapping of the Italian tourists last January and his support to the embassy staff during that time.

It's important to mention that Dr. Al-Sarhi played a big and effective role during the kidnapping event and was a key communication person between the Italian government and different Italian media to inform them of the event's development presenting Yemen's position and actions to free the hostages

peacefully.

Dr. Al-Sarhi expressed his hope for more progress and development of the Yemeni Italian relations. He also added that the association is now coordinating with the Italian Embassy in Sana'a and other concerned parties to organize a number of events during the coming month of February to celebrate 80 years of Yemeni Italian relations.

Al-Sarhi also pointed that the association has made an official request to the Yemen government to put the name "Italy" to one of Sana'a key streets, which was well received by the major of Sana'a.

It's expected that Dr. Al-Sarhi will receive the MEDAL during the celebration event to mark the 80 years of Yemeni Italian relations.

Dr. Al-Sarhi has graduated from Italy and has participated in several education business visits including the



Dr. Al-Sarhi

International Visitor program funded by the US Embassy. Dr. Al-Sarhi was also a member of the presidential Yemeni delegate during President Saleh's latest visit to Italy.

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Al-Jeel Al-Jadid, continuous expansion and distinguished exhibitions

Al-Jeel Al-Jadid group launched its new branch at the new university area on Tuesday Dec. 19 2006. A number of authority figures from the ministry of culture and the general book associa-

tion were present at the event as well as a number of media representatives and students. Mohammad Al-Anisi director of the group said that this branch is the second of its kind, which



includes both stationary and publications. The location of the new branch is critical because it is at the centre of an academic area and thus facilitates access to books and stationary for the students. "The group is known for its high quality products and reasonable prices. We also pride ourselves in providing essential requirements for university students and items not found elsewhere. The group also offers curricula printing services for both university students and professors. We also sponsor professors' books, to print them and sell them to the students for cheap prices. Because our main purpose is to provide services to the students and professors and to the society in general." He said.

Professor Muhsin AL-Akwa director of the development center at Sana'a University commented that this branch would add quality to the education system and provide better services for student especially that it is located in a strategic location. The branch will include educational materials and other books from which students are to benefit in their academic and general life. It will provide them an opportunity to expand their general knowledge and learn more.

Al-Jeel Al-Jadid group is a well-known establishment and a distinguished model in this sector through its services and branches in Sana'a and around the republic.

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Christmas myths unwrapped

By: Dina Al-Ameena

After being in Yemen for a year now, away from my home in USA, I'm spending my second Christmas here. Since I was sick and home alone last year, this one had to be better and so far, it is. I've broken out the Christmas music and added to my meager collection of Christmas decorations so that my house now looks properly done up. Amazingly, I've even seen Christmas trees for sale in some Yemeni toy and home decorating stores!

As the holiday season approached, I wondered what, if anything, Yemenis and Sana'a residents actually knew about Christmas, how it's celebrated and the story behind it. I had heard others say what their friends say, but I wanted to find out for myself and what I discovered was truly saddening, especially regarding such a blessed and holy occasion. So, read on for what I discovered on the streets of Sana'a from average Yemeni folk:

According to graphic designer Ramzy Al-Saqqaf, "Christmas celebrates Jesus' birth. It's a respected occasion, but I never observed it. It's also a great occasion to congratulate Christians."

"I think Christmas is tied to the idea of wild parties where people do whatever they want, but I never checked if this was fact or fiction. From the movies and television, we saw where they have the first kiss of the new year."

"To celebrate, Christians gather, often traveling long distances to be together, and eat a big feast with a stuffed turkey, so it's kind of equivalent to Eid Al-Fitr or Eid Al-Adha." He added jokingly, "I don't believe in Santa Claus!"

Mohammed Bin Sallam also mentioned the partying idea, "The new generation of Yemeni youths gather with Christians and celebrate at parties on Dec. 24 and 31, drinking until morning."

Social researcher Anwar Mughram responded that Christians spend the week of Dec. 24 until Jan. 7 celebrating Jesus' birth, which was Dec. 24, "so it's similar to our eid because it is spread out."

"They celebrate by gathering with friends, playing games with children and Santa Claus gives gifts to the children." However, he's never celebrated the holiday with anyone. "Yemenis in general think Christians do bad things on the eid day, forbidden things like drinking and having improper relations with each other, so they have a negative idea about it."

He proposed, "Maybe we can change this idea, but who can give us the right idea? The media, doesn't give us any information, especially in Yemen, so it would be better if English and Arab newspapers to share ideas. Even Christian ambassadors don't play any role in this. Why don't they hold workshops to share ideas and change these ideas?"

"Due to the negative ideas about Christmas, if I thought to celebrate it with Christians, other Yemenis would think negatively about me. We need to change this," he concluded.

Myth #1
The most prevalent Yemeni belief is that Christmas involves celebrating the New Year, which is Jesus' birthday. Christians hold wild parties, drinking alcohol and eating until midnight, when they kiss to begin the New Year and then do whatever they want, including having sexual relations with each other.

Christian facts

Having been a Christian for nearly 20 years now (after believing while at university), I can affirm that Christmas has absolutely *nothing* to do with New Year's, as the former is a religious holi-



Poinsettia Christmas flowers grow abundantly throughout Yemen.

day celebrating Jesus' birth while the latter is a completely secular celebration often depicted in movies or television, involving men and women drinking alcohol, dancing and sharing the first kiss of the new year at midnight. Christmas is observed by true Christians (and by many who may call themselves "Christian" but who aren't religious at all, see Myth #3 below), whereas New Year's is observed by any secular individual.

Regarding Jesus' birthday, no one knows exactly what date it was, so when the Italians created the Gregorian calendar, Christmas was set on Dec. 25. The same calendar also determined that the new year would begin on Jan. 1; thus, it has nothing to do with being Jesus' birthday.

What people say

Wahib Hassan Noman, manager of the American Language School, said he believes the coinciding of this year's Christmas and Eid Al-Adha celebrations is from God and thus, a good opportunity to wish each other goodwill and not focus on differences or strife. He believes Christmas is a time when Christians wish each other well and put away all bad feelings about each other.

Myth #2

Christians celebrate Christmas by wearing new clothes, visiting their friends and family and giving gifts of chocolate or other sweets, much like the Islamic eids.

Christian facts

People (whether Christian or not) often receive presents of new clothing at Christmas, which they soon wear, often to visit other friends and family who gather in one place to share a Christmas meal together. During the Christmas season, cookies, cakes, bread and other sweets often are made to share with friends, family, coworkers or those who may come to visit. Special Christmas candy such as candy canes often are distributed to children (or anyone) or hung on Christmas trees.

What people say

Secretary Na'eesa said, "Because there are no Christians in Yemen, we don't know how they celebrate Christmas. We just saw on TV that they put up a Christmas tree."

Secretary Fatima said Christians in Ethiopia only celebrate Christmas by holding a small party in the home or visiting their Muslim friends and neighbors, adding that her Christian friends in Yemen don't celebrate the holiday at all because there's no Christmas in Yemen.

According to Nujoud, Samah and Sumaya Ali of Sana'a, "Christians celebrate their eid every year, gathering together and making big festivals playing drums and reed pipes. The day is an official vacation for Christians regarding their religious faith about Jesus' birthday.

"Surely, we know the story of Jesus, that Allah

breathed life into Maryam and she gave birth to her son without being married," they recounted, with Sumaya adding, "I never celebrated Christmas before, but a telecommunications shop near the university once distributed chocolates to customers, so I took one."

Myth #3

Christians celebrate Christmas the way it's portrayed on television or in the movies. Also, all of those who celebrate Christmas are Christian (refer back to Myth #1 above).

Christian facts

The vast majority of portrayals in movies and on television most definitely are not Christian; however, there are some accurate depictions if one looks hard enough. Whether Christian or not, families often gather and share a large Christmas meal together, exchange and open presents, sing special Christmas songs and maybe even watch an American football game on television. The most important thing is for them to spend time and enjoy the day together.

While observing the above activities, Christian family celebrations often also include attending a church service either on Christmas Eve (Dec. 24) or Christmas Day, reading the biblical Christmas story or watching it depicted in a nativity play and singing Christmas hymns about Jesus' birth.

Another secular Christmas celebration involves a Christmas party at one's workplace, as well as a Christmas bonus, either in the form of a monetary addition to one's salary, an actual gift item or maybe a gift certificate for a particular item or service.

What people say

Sa'ad Al-Khawlani of Dhamar also believes Christians celebrate Christmas annually, that it's a duty for them and that it's organized by the pope. It involves a single celebration with men and women together. "They usually hold a party somewhere and eat and drink. My teacher once invited me to a nativity play depicting the story of Jesus' birth, so I went because I was curious," she explained.

Myth #4

The pope organizes the Christmas celebration, which is a duty for Christians.

Christian facts

Since I'm not Catholic, I'm not sure if the pope organizes any particular Christmas celebrations, but he doesn't determine that it's celebrated on Dec. 25. The pope is head of the Catholic Church, not the Protestants or even the Orthodox, I believe.

Unlike Islam, which requires Muslims to fast during Ramadan and perform the Hajj once in their lifetime, celebrating Christmas isn't a duty, but rather something Christians want to do to remember when Jesus came to earth to live among us and show us how to live in order to please God.

What people say

Regarding the Christmas story, Al-Khawlani affirmed that Jesus was born without a father because his mother Mary had no husband. "Her pregnancy came about because of an angel God sent and he ordered her to become pregnant, to which she responded OK on condition that no man would touch her. Only afterward was Joseph accepted as her husband. After Jesus' birth, she decided to fast and not speak, so when people talked to her, she had the baby Jesus speak for her. He said, 'I am like Moses. There will be a prophet after me named Ahmad.'"

Umm Adel of Dhamar also remarked that Mary conceived Jesus via the wind and through an angel. When people accused her, saying, "You seem to be deviant from your moral parents," the angel told them she was innocent.

Sana'a University student Jamal Al-Ajel said he heard that the Christmas story is about a man who loved a woman, but wasn't allowed to marry her, so he eventually died without marrying her. "I've never found anyone celebrating Christmas here because there are no customs and no special places to celebrate it in Yemen. I don't know the story of Christmas because I've never seen anyone celebrate it here. Most Yemenis think Jan. 1 is celebrated because of Jesus' birthday, so it's the beginning of the year."

Myth #5

The Christmas story is about a man who loved a girl, but wasn't allowed



Christmas trees now are sold in Sana'a shops. Seen also in the photo, a calligraphy showing the name of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH).

to marry her so he eventually died before he could marry her.

Christian facts

This is the first I've heard such an explanation – which sounds more like Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" – but read on for the answer to Myth #6 below.

Myth #6

The Christmas story of Jesus' birth involved only Mary because she had no husband named Joseph. An angel of God appeared to her and told her to become pregnant, so a baby began growing inside her right then. Because she was unmarried, her family and friends didn't accept her and accused her of impropriety, but she told them she was innocent.

After Jesus' birth, Mary decided to fast and not speak, so the baby Jesus spoke for her when people again accused her of immoral acts. He said, "I am a prophet like Moses and there

Christmas has absolutely nothing to do with New Year's, as the former is a religious holiday celebrating Jesus' birth while the latter is a completely secular celebration.

will be a prophet after me called Ahmad." Other thoughts are that Mary conceived by the wind or the breath of the angel, who defended her against her accusers, instead of the baby Jesus.

Christian facts

In the Christian holy book, the Bible, Mary did indeed become pregnant via the spirit of God because she was an

unmarried virgin. However, she was engaged to marry Joseph, who thought to break the engagement when he learned she was pregnant and thus thought her immoral and not worthy of marrying.

However, before he could do so, an angel appeared to him, telling him that Mary was a good and moral woman, that the baby she was carrying was from God and that they should name him Jesus upon his birth. So, he had no sexual relations with her until after Jesus' birth, when they were properly man and wife.

Whether our two holy books agree on every aspect of the story of Jesus' birth or not, the most important aspect and the thing we can agree upon is the fact that Jesus wasn't born like anyone else. He came from heaven and didn't have a natural, earthly father. And indeed, he did perform many miracles while he lived, including giving sight to the blind, causing the deaf to hear and lame to walk, healing lepers, casting out demons and evil spirits and even raising the dead.

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Words of Wisdom



Gentlemen, Yemen does not need more money! It needs a system. Yemen needs accountable officials, and it needs people with some decency in the way they work. If the IMP, World Bank and other organizations pump loans into Yemen, where will it go? More importantly, how will it be paid?

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

OUR
OPINION

Women and youth

We had a marvelous discussion at the Yemen Times last Thursday with 30 Yemeni students between ages 12 and 24. They came in response to our invitation to attend an awareness session on the quota system proposed by the Yemeni women's movement as a temporary measure to attain gender balance in both elected and unelected governmental decision-making positions.

The enthusiasm we witnessed was overwhelming – it sometimes was hard to make them listen because they had so much to say! Some girls also were present, so it was good to see how they fit into the session. They were a little quieter than the boys, but still actively participating by asking questions and suggesting ideas.

For one thing, I realized that Yemeni youth really are out of the loop. They aren't included in any activities or awareness, regarding not only women's issues but also human rights, democracy, health, the economy, politics, international relations, etc. What information they had they learned through the media and word of mouth. Needless to say, the Yemeni education system is doing a terrible job of educating.

We eventually encountered three schools of thought, so to speak. One supported the quota system, understanding that it involves urgent action. Those with this viewpoint mostly were young boys and girls who had certain exposure via their families or firsthand contact with such issues.

Another school of thought supported the quota system, but didn't consider it a priority. They believed education, health and other basic needs are more important than politics or dedication to women's issues and that poverty should be eliminated before thinking about politics.

The third and final group believed women are better off performing their normal social and reproductive roles. "Why do they want into politics anyway? Many men are repelled by politics that women would find interesting," one obviously male attendee observed.

We tried talking with the three groups to gain a better understanding of where they are coming from and how they arrived at such thinking. It all became clear when we understood how much exposure they had to drawing up policies, strategies and budget allocations.

We agreed on 30 recommendations to forward to those working in this field. We also decided to hold regular sessions with this particular group of students about issues concerning them. They jumped at the idea of creating a roundtable and bombarded us with ideas for the next discussion, which will be Jan. 18 and entitled, "Bridges between Western and Yemeni youth."

The students were so eager to learn about their Western counterparts, what they're experiencing, their difficulties and their aspirations, we decided to be the means to make this happen. The medium of discussion will be English, so if you're an English-speaking Yemeni between ages 12 and 24 or a Westerner in the same age group, then we'll be more than pleased to accommodate you at our January discussion.

Be there because we will.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf
Editor-in-Chief

What future awaits the Arabs?

Soaring and legendary are figures describing the money oil-producing

Arabs spent throughout the second half of the 20th century via careless ways and primitive methods. Such funds were ample enough to make them the most powerful people on Earth. They could've been in a situation where nuclear bombs were their simplest weapons. They also could've built palaces on both near and remote planets, if they wished.

But such high figures regarding Arab spending have gone with the wind due to lack of strategy or thinking about the future and what remains is a feeling of regret for what has passed. If the situation continues in this manner, Arabs will lose what remains of their riches, which are dwindling without achieving the minimum degree of protection for their homelands, which are exposed to the threat of invasion and direct occupation.

I mention all of this because of the international fuss North Korea has aroused after forcing itself into the nuclear club, despite being one of the world's poorest nations. It proved that poverty doesn't just regard finances or material capabilities, but there's also poverty of intellect and poverty in national pride. Strategy and determination were involved in its departure from the realm of the weak and entering the nuclear club.

From there, it can move into the



Dr. Abdulaziz
Al-Maqaleh

industrial club in order to ensure safety in the face of aggression and polarization in an age without moral coexistence, peaceful thinking or exchange of interests in accordance with the laws of justice because the powerful have transformed them into laws of transcontinental piracy. Thus, mutual fear has become the guarantee to protect the weak from being devoured.

We've lost the 20 centuries and we're about to lose the 21st century too. Arab efforts and their remaining riches are flying like the dust overshadowing their capitals, which are filled with ruins.

After a series of disappointments, it's not strange that this 'great' nation has converted from one afflicted by economic, health and military starvation and begging for the simplest components of life as a result of totally neglecting the future to concentrating on the here and now, as well as total dependence upon the enemy to be both protector and thief at the same time. Such is a trick disclosed by mad individuals among the Arabs before reasonable ones.

The utmost necessity is to reconsider everything we've done to ourselves and against our nations and immediately begin following the right path, which guarantees future generations dignity and survival in

this world.

I and the bewildered masses wonder what prevents us from sincerely extending our hand to neighboring Iran to learn from it and participate with us in building up the required power to deter our aggressors, who have sentenced humiliation and deprivation against us and given our historical enemy all that makes it strongest, despite being the smallest, and putting it in control of the region's destiny?

The United States in particular and the West in general should realize that we stand with Iran regarding possessing nuclear power for peace or for war, just as they've stood with the Zionist entity to build its nuclear arsenal, which threatens all of us and the entire world too.

What future will Arabs have without possessing a deterrent power to protect them first from their protector-thief and then from their actual enemy, the Zionist entity, as well as other enemies?

I admit that this question is long, but its answer is even longer and supposes that those interested have comprehended the question and realized its dimensions in order to benefit from its answer. Since I'm one who's sure that those asked this question are too stupid and indifferent, there's no use indulging in an answer when those concerned don't understand the question.

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

Source: Al-Thori newspaper

The problems of a ruler

Some useful advice for rulers is the necessity of listening to wise individuals, as well as those intellectual and scientific elites who lead public opinion. A ruler may have to allow himself space and/or time to extract himself from his inner circle so he can listen to those outside his entourage, some of whom can't be acquitted of seeking benefit. Thus, such insiders seem keen to hide facts from the ruler because their major concern is the personal benefit or gain they'll receive as long as that ruler remains in power.

A ruler should remain close to the center of things in order to perceive trends and horizons lighting his way so he won't find himself hostage to any situation governed or controlled by those around him or which seeks to erect a barrier between him and his people, thus



By: Prof.
Abdulaziz Al-Tarb

automatically becoming the power of pressure, making the ruler hostage to his palace and a prisoner of those inside it, who have become an invisible leadership running, controlling and imposing their ideas upon everything.

A ruler also must disentangle himself from the clutches of those close individuals who control and impose their desires within their capacity as trusted advisors, while at the same time purposefully excluding any elements that may beneficially counsel the ruler.

An entourage mainly is concerned with the political stability of a ruler and his party, so it vetoes anything else. For this reason, a ruler must seek alternatives so the situation won't be difficult for him to deal with, as well as to avoid all matters exploding in his face at once.

U.S. President George W. Bush is an example of one such beneficiary whose surrounding group of evil advisors has placed him at a serious impasse from which he can't liberate himself. Events and paradoxes have affirmed that Bush was neither wise nor reasonable; thus, he missed the goals, which in turn have gone astray. This is what happened to Saddam Hussein and Gamal Abdul Nasser lost the 1967 war due to the phrase, "Everything's perfect sir!" History teaches us lessons.

Therefore, a ruler should be awake, learn, listen to others and comprehend such lessons. He must listen to the people's voice because they represent the source and the springhead wherein is transparency and purity without beautifying makeup because that's simply enough. Thus, they are free of any

personal motive.

Rulers should learn this failing lesson from Bush. U.S. public opinion has talked about, demanded and held opinion polls confirming recession in Bush's popularity and support, but he didn't pay any attention because his advisors presented him a rosy picture, conveying what they wanted him to know.

Moreover, they blocked his sight, intentionally resorting to imposing a blackout in order not to disclose their deceptive acts, which seek to hide all of the gaps. They granted him false hope that his policies reflect God's will.

When will our rulers understand this situation and recognize that listening to others is one of the basics of democracy and peaceful transfer of power?

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Tarb is an economist and a professor in Political Science. He is the head of the Arab Group for Investment and Development.

SILVER LINING

Addressing human rights abuses in Yemeni jails

A wful barbarism and fascism is taking place in Yemeni prisons. The harassment and rape of Anisah Al-Shuaibi, who was raped and beaten by jail officials, is just one in an endless series of human rights abuses in Yemeni prisons.

The Sana'a Criminal Investigations Office acted like a gang when they snatched Al-Shuaibi from her home without any legal warrant or orders from prosecution. She was put in jail while her two children were tossed into a men's jail for a time before being moved in with their mother.

Al-Shuaibi was accused of kidnapping and killing her ex-husband but what I can't understand is why jail the children? Of course, she denied the charges, claiming her ex-husband is alive and behind all of her troubles, including her imprisonment. Apparently, he's even influential enough to cause security personnel to harass her. What a pity.

However, my question doesn't regard Al-Shuaibi's charges or whether she's innocent or guilty in her dispute with her former husband. My concern is her rape and harassment by criminal investigation officers, who are supposed to protect those in jail, but instead become monsters driven by their fleshly lusts, neither observing human or moral values, let alone law and order, which they're supposed to respect and impose.

Of course, this isn't the first case wherein Yemeni soldiers or police – the supposed "guardians of the nation" – have exercised such immoral and shameful acts, as their record is filled with such human rights abuses and violations. Numerous instances regularly occur, but due to the social ostracism women experience if such incidents are reported, most cases remain hidden.

But this time, the hidden rotten apple has come to the surface, as Al-Shuaibi has the guts to expose her plight at the hands of security personnel, saying she has nothing to lose or worry about because her moral dignity already has been damaged by these savage soldiers.

The support extended to her by the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, known as HOOD, and other human rights activists really is impressive and demonstrates a growing legal awareness. However, such solidarity will be fruitful only when those in charge of the jail, including Rizk Al-Jawfi, chief officer of the Criminal Investigation Office, are held accountable.

Why doesn't the Interior Ministry commence interrogating Al-Jawfi and his security officials involved in Al-Shuaibi's rape? Does this mean the ministry approves of such disgusting acts by its affiliates or that even the big guys themselves are predators?

I suppose such an issue of human rights abuse not only should hold Al-Jawfi but even the interior minister or the prime minister accountable.

The citizens of this nation would like to see an open and transparent investigation into such rapes and human rights abuses by prison security personnel. Jails are where convicts serve their court-imposed prison terms, not prostitution centers, as some security officials seem to perceive.

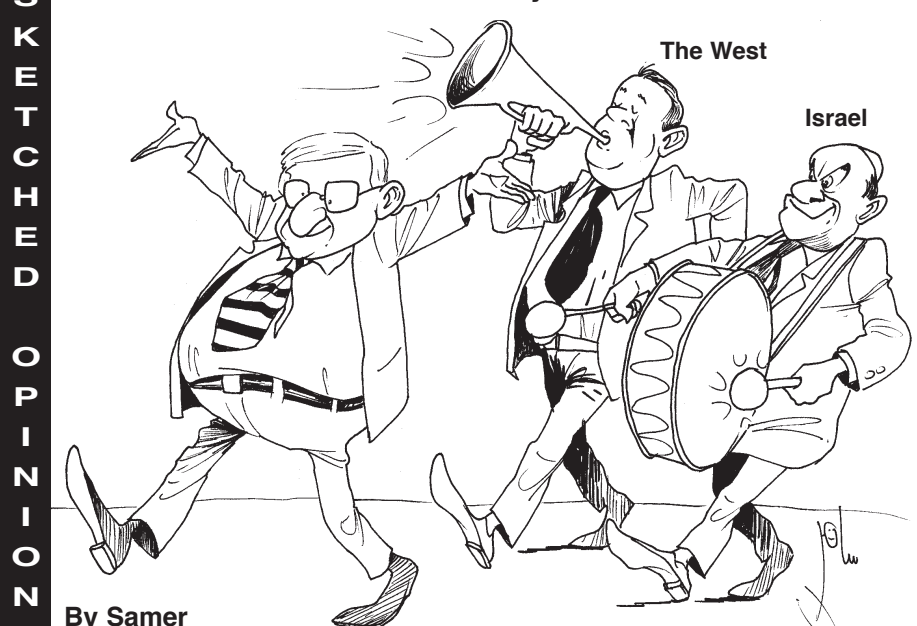
Imprisonment is supposed to reform those with bad conduct and restore them back to life soundly. Unfortunately, Yemeni prisons only serve to produce frustrated and psychologically unsound individuals, a serious issue the government promptly should address.

Mohammed Al-Qadhi (mhalqadhi@hotmail.com) is a Yemeni journalist and columnist.



By: Mohammed
Al-Qadhi

Fatah Movement calls for early elections in Palestine



By Samer

Letters to the Editor

Christmas spirit

In 1223, St. Francis of Assisi simply and joyfully commemorated the nativity scene according to the infant gospel, thus, the crib became one of the traditional and best-loved Christmas symbols. In the crib, we contemplate the One who stripped himself of divine glory in order to become poor, driven by love for mankind.

Besides the crib, the Christmas tree, with its twinkling lights, reminds us that with the birth of Jesus, the tree of life has blossomed anew in the desert of humanity. The crib and the tree – precious symbols handing down throughout time the true meaning of Christmas!

Amid today's consumerist

Christmas attitude, we're allowing ourselves to be stripped of our traditions – the dearest and most venerable, the oldest and sweetest, the truest and most beautiful – so that carelessly and via neglect, we are abandoning Christ to follow the latest futile fad.

A sensitive Christian wouldn't let anything replace the crib and Christmas tree because commemorating these means passing on the history of popular piety and religiosity.

Setting up the crib and Christmas tree in homes and public places, not in a folkloric manner but as symbols of faith, prayer and offering, means rediscovering joy and the solidarity of friendship, the human tenderness of relations and the piety of souls of

enchanted children and adults.

In the advancement of faith, family and fraternity, may we all strive to keep Christ in Christmas!

Paul Kokoski
Ontario, Canada
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Long lost friend

I am looking for my friend Mr Mohammed Naif of Yemen. We were student colleagues at University of Arizona, during 1996-97. I do not know if he is employed at Sana'a University and have been unsuccessful in trying to locate him through that link or the British Embassy - where I thought he might also have worked.

Sue Stanton
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Tel: +967 (1) 268-661

Fax: +967 (1) 268-276

P.O. Box 2579, Sana'a, Yemen

E-mail: editor@yementimes.com

Advertisement: ads@yementimes.com

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Policies:

- All opinion articles that have not been written by Yemen Times staff on the Opinion, Op-Ed and Youth pages do not necessarily represent the newspaper's opinion and hence YT could not be held accountable for their consequences.
- Letters to the Editor must include your name, mailing address, or email address. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity, style, and length.
- Submissions will not be returned to the writer under any circumstance.
- For information on advertising, contact the advertising department at any of the Yemen Times' offices

Yemen Press Review

By: Mohammed Khidhr



Al-Wasat weekly, 20 Dec. 2006.

Main headlines

- Al-Lawzi stabilizes the culture of oppression Rafidain al-Qaeda active in Yemen
- Minister of Information threatens to close down Al-Wasat newspaper
- Leaflets of Rafidain country Jihad base distributed in Abyan
- By-elections instigate disputes between the JMP and the GPC
- American report expresses fear from bequeathing authority in Yemen
- Ten soldiers from Hunaish garrison die of drowning

Editor in chief of the newspaper says in his editorial the more Yemen is drowned in its problems the sooner the regime resorts to cling to the life jacket of solving regional and international problems. No one asks about the result of many initiatives that are similar to soap bubbles that disappear once they are blown into the air.

Yemen initiatives have not stopped, particularly those adopted by the president of the state who throws them towards areas of conflict in the world and does not wait for response of their parties. The editor in chief counts in his article the initiatives of Yemen regarding some Arab countries especially Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan and Somalia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, African countries and some Asian countries as well.

The question that is always repeated says the editor in chief of the newspaper, is what is the need for a president whose people are suffering from so many problems beginning with corruption, economic deterioration, bad health conditions and live on external assistance, to preoccupy himself with contributing to solve world issues? The editorial mentions that he (the president) knows he cannot offer anything because the crisis does not lie in absence of ideas but in the power to impose them and in this regard some

countries superior to Yemen in political, economic and military capabilities have failed to do it. it is not meant here to ridicule the good intentions that may be the motive behind those initiatives and the ambition to go beyond the local sphere to the world level as much as it is a kind of reminding by someone who is keen on his country's reputation and its political regime.

The writer addresses the president by telling him that the domestic situation needs his abilities more. The government is incapable of making the free zone as a reality or even to operate a seaport. The government has been incapable of solving a chronic problem of expensiveness of living or electricity and other problems that it solves by lies. A domestic initiative for the elimination of corruption and solving issues of pensioners, making the equal citizenship a reality and restoring confidence in the regime and government are the actual victory and more avail than external initiatives.



26 September weekly, organ of Yemen Armed Forces 21 Dec. 2006.

Main headlines

- President Saleh: Development won't be achieved and investment won't come nut under security and stability. The stage is decisive, corrupt elements have to straighten their crookedness or leave
- In an interview to Al-Jazeera channel, the President: We are going ahead in fighting corruption with national conviction and not for the sake of someone
- By-elections in 30 local councils constituencies

In its editorial the newspaper mentions that the motive of Yemen under leadership of President Ali Abdullah Saleh regarding his calls and initiatives to solve conflicts and contain crises among the sons of any sisterly country are stemming from a real vision realizing that regional, Arab and international security and stabil-

ity are interrelated directly and indirectly to the security and stability of each Arab or regional country in Africa and Asia. That impact also extends internationally, particularly if instable situations are in the Middle East, south of the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa, and the situation in Palestine, Iraq Lebanon, Somalia Sudan and Afghanistan are proofs confirming that. This also affirms Yemen's vision and stands vis-à-vis the events taking place in those countries and their reflections on the situation in the region and the world.

In this context are the Yemeni orientations represented by embracing and sponsoring many of reconciliation rounds among factions of conflict in Somalia since the beginning of the conflict in this country 16 years before. The latest of those efforts is the dialogue between the Islamic Courts and the Somalia parliament held in Aden. And in the same context come the calls on the brethren in Iraq and Palestine and Lebanon and Sudan for reconciliation and agreement through constructive dialogues stemming from sincere intentions expressing the Somali, or the Iraqi or Palestinian or Lebanese interest.

Yemen does not claim it is the only one in this pursuit and keenness and that its role has been effective in reaching reconciliation on all those areas. However, it cannot stand hand folded and spectator without taking a stand in the face of challenges and dangers facing its brethren because its nationalist and Islamic and human duties dictate that on it.

There is no meaning of what some newspapers allegations that Yemen aims by those efforts to look for a regional role because it does not need that role as it is actually there due to Yemen's historical, civilization, and geopolitical economic and security factors.



Al-Sahwa weekly, 21 Dec.2006.

Main headlines

- Al-Sahwa symposium on the European Union report, the JMP considers it fair and the GPC describes it as contradictory and biased
- By-elections, killed ones, bullying and GPC differences
- Physicians and government agree on paying their salaries
- American report: The regime manipulates the issue of political reform
- After a female exposure to torture, legal organizations demand investigation into female prisoners conditions
- Demands for investigation with al-Jawf governor on issues of corruption
- Fathi al-Azzab condemns prohibition of political activity at the university

Writer Zaid al-Shami says in his article every year the government presents the state public budget to the parliament so that to come out of it without any change or amendment despite that there is a committee formed to discuss the budget and come out with many recommendations and remarks by member of parliament and opposition blocs. What happens is that the GPC absent MPs are recalled the parliament session and they in turn demand quick voting without more of them are able to get informed on components of the budget or read report of the specialized committee. This behavior that is always refusing ideas of others leads to accumulation of mistakes and misadministration of the country's resources.

Criticisms of the budget are repeated to the point that they have become necessities for approval of the budget of the state. Priorities of the budget distribution are unclear. What has been allotted to education in the budget of 2007 is 11% against 21.85 in the budget of 2005, the budget of health was reduced to 3.3% instead of 5% in 2005. Four billion YR was allocated to fighting unemployment where the individual share of it will not exceed one thousand riyals. while three quarters of the budget was allotted to current expenditures. What is allocated for the investment program is not implemented and the parliament recommendations have been repeated on necessity of redistribution of the budget chapters so that to increase

investment expenditure in order to create job opportunities on the one hand and to build infrastructures on the other. In addition, the transparency on which all emphasize is weak. The undistributed expenditures this year amounted to YR 268.9 billion in addition to the problem of internal and external borrowing that are growing hugely year after year.

There is a recommendation from the parliament on not depending on oil revenues and to develop other resources in precaution to variable and the consequences of the drop in the quantity of oil production or droop in its prices. But what happened is an increase in dependence on oil resource reaching this year to 70% of the total of resources.

إعلان وظيفة

منظمة رائدة في تنفيذ المشاريع التنموية الممولة، تعلن عن رغبتها في توظيف شخص يمتلك كفاءة ومقدرة عالية في تنفيذ المهام الموكلة إليه وذلك لشغل وظيفة مسؤول إعلامي ومدقق لغوي (عربي، إنجليزي).

المهام والمسؤوليات الأساسية

١- تحديد الاحتياجات من المعلومات والبيانات المستهدفين من الرسائل الإعلامية، ومن ثمّ تصميمها وتحديد وسائل توصيلها، وكذلك تنسيق وإدارة وإنجاز وتحرير وتدقيق التقرير السنوي والنشرات المختلفة باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية.

٢- العمل مع المستويات الإدارية داخل المنظمة على تحديد الأهداف العامة للمواد والتقارير الإعلامية، ووضع خطة إستراتيجية لها وإعداد الخطط السنوية في هذا الجانب، وكذلك المساعدة في إعداد ملاحظات على المقترحات للمواد الإعلامية التي تعدها المستويات الإدارية المختلفة، والعروض وكتابة النص الأصلي (إذا لزم الأمر)، و/أو تحرير المسودات.٣- كتابة وإدارة تصميم وتحرير وطباعة ونشر المواد الإعلامية؛مثل: البلاغات الصحفية.

٤- تبادل هذه المعلومات مع الأجهزة الإعلامية والجهات التنموية، وإيجاد فرص للنشر في الصحف والإذاعات والتلفزيون ومواقع شبكة الانترنت...الخ.. ومتابعة طلبات وسائط الإعلام، والتنسيق (من وقت لآخر) مع الشركاء لسد أي نقص في محتوى المعلومات المنشورة والمتعلقة بالمجالات ذات الصلة بالأنشطة أو بالمستفيدين من المشاريع.

المؤهلات والمهارات المطلوبة

- مؤهل جامعي في مجال ذو علاقة.إجادة التحرير والتدقيق اللغوي باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية
- القدرة على إدارة عمليات إنجاز المشاريع المتعلقة بمجال التخصص كالتقرير السنوي والإصدار الأخرى، إنتاج أفلام وثائقية ... الخ).
- الإلمام بالأعمال المكتبية الأساسية على الكمبيوتر، وبرامج العرض وبعض برامج النشر الصحفي.
- خبرة في الاتصال باستخدام شبكة "الانترنت".

فعلى من يجد في نفسه الرغبة والكفاءة إرسال طلب توظيف مرفقاً به سيرته الذاتية على البريد الإلكتروني:

omrtepp@pmi.tl.com وذلك في موعد أقصاه ٢٠٠٧/١/٦م

VACANCIES

PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT

INVESTMENT PLANNER

Background:-

The Public Works Project (PWP) is one of the main components of the Social Safety Net. It was established in 1996 with the main objectives of mitigating the adverse effects of the Economic Reform Program on the poor segment of the society.

Main objectives are creation of short-term employment; provision of infrastructure to improve services and environmental conditions of the poor communities; community participation in project selection, preparation and implementation, and, development of local contracting and consulting firms.

Main Responsibilities:

The Investment Planner will function directly under the Project Director and shall be responsible for:-

- Distribution of funds to governorates & districts based on criteria
- Selection of sub-projects in accordance with election-criteria
- Prepare annual and quarterly investment programs
- Work closely with beneficiaries
- Preparation of quarterly and annual Progress reports for each donor
- Coordination with donors and other similar implementing agencies
- Ensure compliance with PWP Procedures

Qualifications & Experience:

The candidate should have:-

- Minimum Bsc. In socio-Economics/ Engineering
- Well-documented experience, at least 10 years, in similar positions preferably with donor-

funded projects

- Experience in community participation, in assessment studies and in the use of selection criteria;
- Experience in Environmental Assessments
- Good communication and writing skills and fluency in English & Arabic
- Ability to work in team and collaborate closely with other staff
- Ability to use computers

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

Major responsibilities of the chief accountant include but are not limited to:

- In-Charge of ensuring the efficient functioning of the Financial Department
- Monitor, manage and control all aspects of financial operations
- Maintain appropriate accounting policies; introduce improvements in procedures and system
- Financial Reporting for all Donors including Government
- Ensure timely auditing by various auditors for each donor fund
- Create positive environment for teamwork.
- The Chief Accountant shall report to the Financial & Administration Manager

Qualifications:

- A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in accounting/or auditing, with an understanding of procurement.
- A minimum of Ten years of private & public sector financial management experience preferably with donor-funded projects or a recognized accounting firm.
- Ability to use computers, and accounting software applications.
- Proficiency in both Arabic and English.

All application letters along with a detailed resume should be submitted by January 15, 2007 to the following address:

Public Works Project
Email: ppw-yem@y.net.ye
20m Road Off the West 60m road (Community College Previously)
Tel: 407354/407358, Fax: 407353

JOB VACANCIES

الشركة اليمنية للغاز الطبيعي المسال YEMEN LNG COMPANY



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

All candidates applying for these posts must be Yemeni nationals

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Download the Yemen LNG Application Form from the Yemen LNG Website www.yemenlng.com
- E-mail the completed form to HR@YEMENLNG.COM only
- Do not make duplicate applications by post, fax etc..
- Yemen LNG will contact potential candidates. Applicants not contacted by 31st January 2007 will have been unsuccessful on this occasion

Closing Date: 5th January, 2007

Job Title: IST Security and Planning Engineer – Reference No. 120
Reports to: Information Systems & Telecoms Manager (Finance Dept)
Work Location: Sana'a

The company operates an Information Systems Network with nodes in Sana'a, Balhaf, Pipeline Construction sites, Paris and London. This network is used for voice and data communications and utilizes the following particular services and facilities:- Centralized Servers, Leased lines, Internet access, VSAT TDMA links, PABX, PRA Access, PSTN access, ISDN lines, ADSL, VPN links, Multiplexers, Switches (LAN), routers and firewalls.

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Ensure the security of the IS Systems.
- Prepare contingency plans for IS Systems
- Ensure the quality of IS Projects
- Ensure the security of IST Equipment rooms

Qualifications:

- Bachelor or Master's degree in Electronics, Computer Science or Telecommunications
- Minimum of 10 years' experience in Data Communications (Inc Firewalls) Engineering with at least 3 years MS Windows Server administration experience
- Specialized qualifications from a recognized Information Systems Security Authority
- Fluency in written and spoken Arabic and English
- Ability to communicate, influence and negotiate in order to achieve optimum and practical technical solutions

Job Title: HR Officer – Ref No. 121
Reports to: HR Manager
Work Location: Sana'a

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Establish a comprehensive HR service for client departments and staff (both in Sana'a office and at Balhaf terminal), communicating and providing advice on HR policy, employment legislation, employee relations and performance management.
- Assist in the formulation of HR strategy by identifying business needs and recommending and developing appropriate policies and procedures as solutions.
- Actively identify best practice (industry, technical, professional, etc.) and encourage an environment in which this is willingly and openly shared
- Initiate studies / analyses to address people-management issues and key concerns such as turnover, employee grievances etc.

Qualifications:

- Degree or postgraduate diploma in Human Resources / Business Administration (Membership of the UK CIPD or similar would be an advantage)
- Minimum of 8 years' professional HR experience
- In depth understanding of HR policies & procedures
- High level of Internal consultancy and diplomatic skills
- Working knowledge of remuneration, compensation and retirement benefit schemes
- Fluent in written and spoken English and Arabic
- Availability and mobility to various company work sites

Job Title: HR Administrator – Ref No. 122
Reports to: Head of HR Administration
Work Location: Sana'a

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Verify monthly timesheets and related employees' information and forward them to Payroll Officer for the Staff monthly remuneration.
- Maintain/Update a HR Administration database to produce company manpower and staff reports and analyses their evolution.
- Ensure that all benefits, payments and reimbursement are made in accordance with Company's policy and standards.
- Administer the Company Medical scheme for Yemeni Nationals and families with strong control of scheme costs and administration
- Administer a contributory Staff Savings Plan for the long term benefit of employees with adequate safeguards.
- Ensure that newly recruited or arrived personnel are inducted efficiently into Yemen LNG
- Assist in the research and advise senior Management for Yemen LNG Yemeni National salaries and benefits
- Contribute to the Group Life Insurance Plan for the Yemen LNG company Staff

Qualifications:

- Degree in Personnel Administration or similar.
- 5 years' experience in Personnel Administration (payroll, income tax, remuneration medical and insurance policies) preferably with oil and gas companies.
- Good knowledge of Employment and Labor Law
- Very good knowledge of computer software and database
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Good knowledge of Arabic and English language (spoken and written)

Job Title: Head of Sales Administration - Ref No. 123
Reports to: Commercial & Shipping Manager
Work Location: Sana'a

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Manage commercial, legal and operational aspects of Yemen LNG sales contracts and take responsibility for proper contract implementation;
- Establish and manage relationship with customers and inform customers on project progress through Monitoring Committees;
- Prepare and agree Annual Delivery Programme for LNG deliveries with customers and supervise the programme proper implementation;
- Co-ordinate with Shipping Department all aspects related to maritime transportation;
- Ensure that all technical aspects of operations are handled;
- Contribute to create, maintain and enhance computerized system for monitoring and forecasting of Yemen LNG production and lifting;
- Compile and verify accuracy of all necessary input data for cargo invoices;
- Create and maintain database with market intelligence and analyse how market developments may affect the company;
- Assist with drafting department procedures including procedures for the Annual Delivery Programme and for invoicing in collaboration with Finance and Operations Departments;
- Negotiate Master Spot Agreements with potential future spot buyers.
- Supervise Plant and Finance Coordinator and provide coaching where needed;

Qualifications:

- Bachelor or higher degree in Business Administration, Sales & Marketing or other relevant discipline;
- Minimum 8 years of relevant work experience, preferably in the oil & gas industry;
- Very good negotiation skills and evidence of the management of complex, high value contracts.
- Excellent managerial and interpersonal skills with capability of operating in a multi-cultural environment;
- Excellent written and spoken English including a sound understanding of legal and technical gas industry jargon;
- Very good computer and numerical skills.

Job Title: Sales Assistant/Business Analyst - Ref No. 124
Reports to: Head of Sales Administration
Work Location: Sana'a

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Create and maintain database and analyse market developments;
- Contribute to the creation, maintenance and enhancement of computer model required to provide accurate monitoring and forecasting of LNG production and LNG lifting;
- Conduct volume analyses to optimise existing assets, pricing analyses and analytical support on commercial issues;
- Assist with the preparation of commercial negotiations with existing or new customers; participate in meetings with customers and provide minutes of meetings and follow-up on action points for such meetings;
- Produce reports and presentations for management and shareholders on markets, potential buyers and company sales and shipping department performance;

Qualifications:

- Degree or postgraduate diploma in Business Administration, Sales & Marketing or other relevant discipline
- 3 - 5 years of relevant work experience preferably in the oil & gas industry
- Excellent numerical skills
- Good computer skills with knowledge of database programmes
- Excellent interpersonal skills capable of operating in a multi-cultural environment
- Good research skills and presentation skills
- Fluency in English, both written and spoken

Job Title: Head of General Services - Ref No. 125
Reports to: Logistics and Procurement Manager
Work Location: Sana'a

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Ensure the effective administration of various general services activities in Sana'a office involving the maintenance of offices and premises, administration of car pool, office reception and mail services, allocation of offices and equipment, provision of furniture and consumables and the supervision of cleaning and house-keeping services

Qualifications:

- Degree level education
- Minimum 5-10 years' logistics and general services administration experience in a multinational environment at supervisory level
- HSE Awareness
- Well-organised, with good interpersonal and communication skills
- Initiative and ability to work independently
- Fluent in Arabic and English, both spoken and written

JOB VACANCIES

الشركة اليمنية للغاز الطبيعي المسال
YEMEN LNG COMPANY



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

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Closing Date: 5th January, 2007

Job Title: Contracts Administrator - Ref No. 126
Reports to: Contracts Engineer
Work Location: Sana'a

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Prepare, review and follow-up contract documents in liaison with Contract Engineer for enquiry and contract awards
- Prepare Call for Tender packages in a timely and professional manner
- Participate in analysing and answering Tender questions, clarification meetings and the analysis and classification of Tender proposals
- Identify interface issues between the Contractors and the Company to optimise the use of resources for all contracts, and ensure their performance in a cost-effective manner
- Maintain and regularly update contract documents library and archives

Qualifications:

- Degree or postgraduate diploma in Business Administration or similar.
- Minimum of 5 years' experience in contract administration functions with at least 3 years in a supervisory capacity
- Good analytical skills with knowledge of accounting principles
- Initiative, ability to work independently, good interpersonal skills
- Very good knowledge of English and Arabic, both spoken and written
- Good knowledge of standard computer software and databases

Job Title: Procurement Officer – Ref No. 127
Reports to: Procurement Coordinator
Work Location: Sana'a

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Issue requests for quotations in accordance with departmental procedures
- Issue and follow-up Purchase Orders and will ensure that all relevant documentary information is complete
- Maintain and Update the Purchase Order database regularly
- Maintain extensive communication with internal clients and departmental colleagues to ensure that purchases are made effectively and rapidly

Qualifications:

- Bachelor degree or similar
- a minimum of 5 years of purchasing experience, ideally gained within an oil and gas environment
- Very good knowledge of procurement procedure and activities. Good knowledge of Arabic and English languages both written and spoken
- Good knowledge of standard PC software and willingness to learn related systems
- Autonomous and organized with good interpersonal skills

Job Title: Upstream Logistics Coordinator – Ref No. 128
Reports to: Upstream Project Manager
Work Location: Sana'a
Contract Status: Fixed-Contract with estimated duration of 2 years

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Being the local representative, coordinate all logistics aspects of the project (construction/equipment receiving yards/Mareb filed, transportation...) with other Yemen LNG entities and contractors and follow-up/expedite contractors' activities
- Monitor activities related to material handling and transportation in liaison with project team during the construction phase
- Involve with other upstream project coordination activities as advised by the supervisor
- Attend meetings at various upstream project locations both in and outside of Yemen

Qualifications:

- Degree level education
- Minimum 5 years' logistics and construction experience with oil and gas project activities at supervisory level
- Well-organised with good interpersonal and communication skills
- Initiative and ability to work independently
- Good knowledge of standard PC software
- Fluent in Arabic and English, both spoken and written

Job Title: Public Relation Officer Ref No. 129
Reports to: Head of Public Relation (Corporate Affairs Dept)
Work Location: Balhaf

Duties & Responsibilities:

- To effectively supervise the overall operation of the Visitors' Centre
- To oversee, in liaison with Site Manager and Head of Public Relations, the logistical preparations of field visits to the plant to ensure a smooth and organised reception of visitors on site, particularly VIPs and establish a record of all visits.
- To coordinate with the Liaison Officers on site for the provision of information to the community representatives around Balhaf
- To collect and provide site-related information for company Intranet and website in consultation with both site manager
- To assist the PR team in Sana'a with the production of information materials with an emphasis on Balhaf and the local communities
- To administer the work of support personnel at the Centre
- To assist in the implementation of the company's PR Strategy and work plan

Qualifications:

- University Degree preferably in Communications, Business Administration or Social Science
- Minimum 5 years of previous experience in the area of communications and administration of PR activities
- Good organizational and supervisory skills with the ability to make a judgment
- Good interpersonal and communication skills with strong respect for confidentiality
- Very good command of Arabic and English, both spoken and written
- Good computer skills

Job Title: Public Relation Assistant – Ref No 130
Reports to: Public Relations Officer (Corporate Affairs Dept)
Work Location: Balhaf

Duties & Responsibilities:

- To organize the information corner at the Centre and to follow up on the distribution of publications and information materials to other personnel in Balhaf
- To assist with the logistical preparations for external visits to Balhaf and surrounding sites, in coordination with the PR Events Coordinator and Logistics Department in Sana'a
- To assist with the administration and update of the PPE (personnel protection equipment) distribution list of external visits and the tracking record of site visits
- To assist with the follow-up and provision of site-related information for company Intranet and website
- To assist with executing various activities of the Visitors' Centre and administration of other support personnel at the Centre

Qualifications:

- University Degree or diploma preferably in Communications, Business Administration or social science
- Minimum 3 years of previous experience in the area of communications and administration of PR activities
- Good Arabic and English both spoken and written
- Good interpersonal and communication skills with strong respect for confidentiality
- Very Good computer skills and Knowledge of standard office software

WWW.YEMENLNG.COM

His final essay The vastness of a dream

This is the last essay published in the foreign press by the late Egyptian novelist, Naguib Mahfouz, appearing in "Le Figaro Magazine" on Aug. 12 while he was still in the hospital. In its preface, the magazine noted that Mahfouz wrote the essay in collaboration with his close friend of many years, fellow Egyptian writer Muhammad Salmawi.

By: Naguib Mahfouz
Translated by: Eyad Al-Samman
For Yemen Times

The writing process isn't completely innocent, as it sometimes allows individuals who meet me without having read my writings carefully to talk about personal issues instead of focusing on discussing current events.

I had the chance to meet a French journalist who focused on one of my short stories entitled, "The Man," wherein I described a journalist who wrote an essay about a man from the older generation. Wasn't that a weird coincidence?

In the story, the journalist describes one of his neighbors who anonymously watches him as he walks. This individual, who assumed significant positions during his career as a successful engineer and a top governmental official, experiences a fatal loneliness after losing his wife and then his children, who immigrate to the United States.

At this point, the journalist asked himself, "Throughout my long life, I now have nothing other than memories?" I wonder whom he thinks about in his loneliness and how he entertains himself. How can one harmonize himself with his senility instead of it being an obstacle for him?

Upon reading these lines, he immediately recognized himself, astonished that he'd been chosen as a subject. He was motivated toward thought and contemplation, although he was somewhat distressed because the recent historian was wrong.

Being elderly wasn't an obstacle to dreaming and his situation wasn't an incentive for the sympathy of others. His life always was motivated by courage and persistence, features taught by his father, who was a great teacher. His love of power reached the extent of worship.

Strong observation and strength drawn from the wisdom of his father made him a man stiff like iron. When he contemplated the weakness others supposed in his personality, he said, "What imaginations such writers have!"

When he met the essayist on the second day during his regular promenade, he shook hands with him,

showing him gratitude and inviting him to his house to explain the reality of his attitude. Astonished, the journalist asked, "Can this be right?"

"The Man" portrays the two men's dialogue, which focused on the desires of life and the surmountability over all difficulties. After so many years of publishing this story, a French journalist asked me, "How can we make our senility a blessing without making it an indignation?"

My reply at this time is different than the reply of my victorious hero. It's not important to believe in what you're writing in order to make senility a blessing. We must know its restrictions and live within the core of these restrictions without trying to overstep them. Everyone must be aware of his or her frontiers.

I live my dreams in my small Nile Street apartment in Cairo. The weakness that befell my body didn't affect my soul or my imagination. To the contrary, it allows another type of liberty to arise at everything that's changed since that day in October 1994 when two radical individuals belonging to an Islamic group tried to assassinate me.

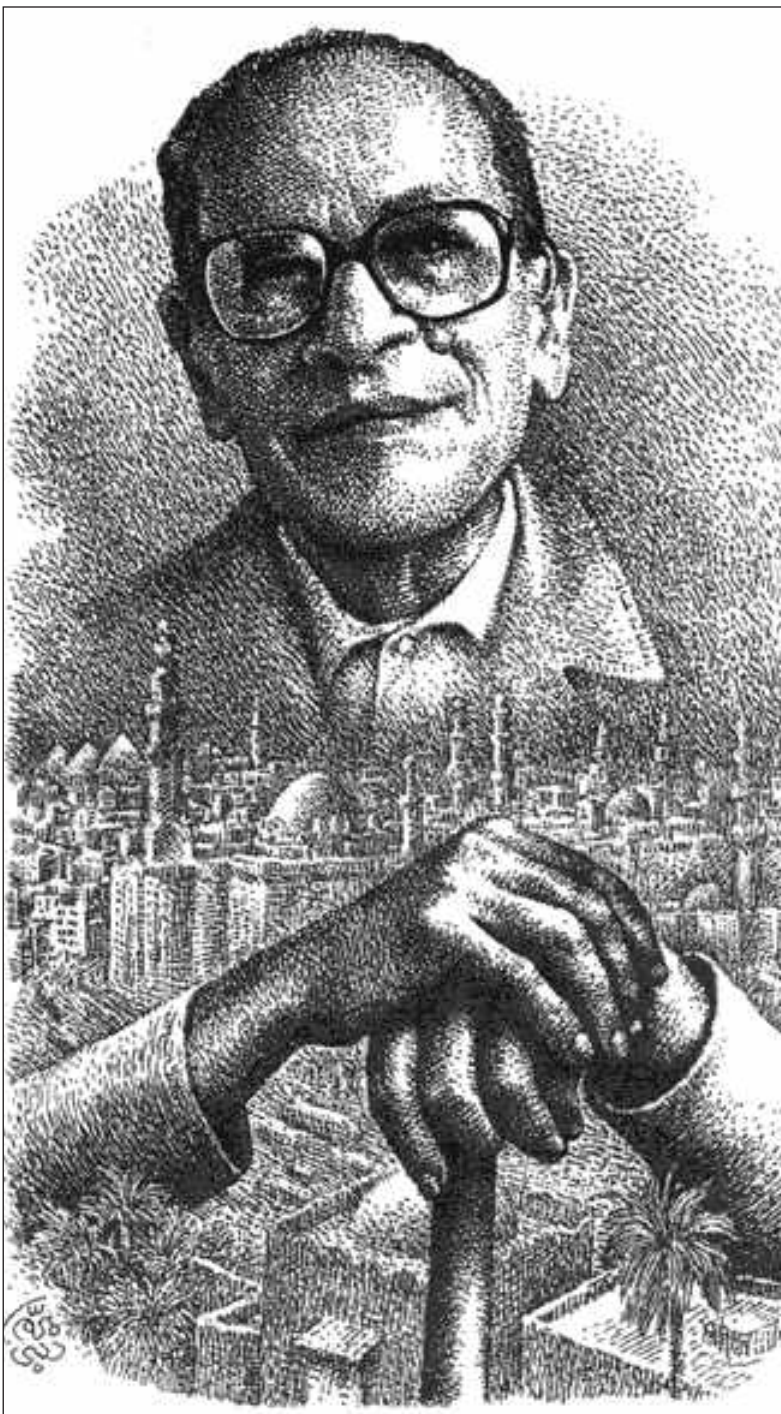
I was leaving my house when one of them stabbed me twice from behind. I felt like a monster had thrust its nails into my neck. After seven hours in the operating room, I escaped death and remained in the hospital for several weeks.

Injury to one nerve caused paralysis in my right hand, my writing hand. It took 18 months of rehabilitation to be able to write legibly, but I once again learned how to write my name – what a symbol!

The two men who attacked me were implementing a fatwa, which allowed killing me due to republishing one of my novels, first published in 1959 under the title, "Children of Gebelawi."

Upon its first publishing, religious scientists accused it of spreading atheistic thoughts. From the events in the novel, it was possible to detect the characters of the prophets Moses, Jesus and Mohammed (pbuh), which is considered an unforgivable sin in the minds of radical Muslims.

The tragedy was that during the culprits' trial, it became clear that they'd never even read the novel. What miserable terrorists to censor



the thoughts of others when Islam is a religion of liberty.

After their execution, for a long time, I felt a mixture of anger and sadness at thinking about the life they might have lived because they were just youths. I also thought about my disability since the incident because the paralysis I suffered caused my entire physical state to deteriorate to the point where I experienced deafness and partial blindness. How can such senility be a blessing? Because I forgave them in this present life.

As one who's written more than 50 novels, short story collections and plays, I'm now able to write only very short tales based on my dreams – but those dreams are without frontiers.

Originating in my dreams or a form of contemplation, they're actual thoughts I then transform into literary paragraphs. I don't write them as I

receive them. Rather, they turn around inside my mind and transform. It's a weird chemistry since there's the abstract idea and then the literary production.

The process succeeds much, but sometimes it doesn't. This internal process lasts one to two weeks, but if it leads to nothing, I don't insist.

The dream residing inside my head right now is that I saw Gamal Abdul Nasser giving me upper Egyptian bread, a very tough, well-done type of bread from the sun's heat (solar bread). He gave it to me and asked me to eat it.

I've done nothing with this vision. I'll write about it if I find the strength, but for now, it's still in the creation phase, so I'm letting it reside inside me.

Indeed, dreams are the frontiers of my world!

Source: Weghat Nazar Magazine, Issue No. 93, October 2006, Page 82.

Literary Corner

By: Abu Al-Kalima Al-Tayybah

Yemeni Annals (Hawliat Yamaniyah) (VII)

Subject Book: Yemeni Annals (Hawliat Yamaniyah)
[1224 – 1316 AH (1809 – 1898 AD)]
Author: Muhsin Bin Ahmed Al-Harazi et al
Checked and Edited by Abdullah Mohammed Al-Hibshi
Language: Arabic
Publisher: Ministry of Information and Culture
Year Published: 1400 AH/1980 AD
No. of Pages: 661

Continuing with a year by year summary of the Annals we proceed as follows: 1263 AH (1846 – 1847 AD): Imam Mohammed Bin Yahya Al-Mansour continues to consolidate his control of the country going down to Tehama. There the Imam encounters the Sherif Hussein and they met in the outskirts of Al-Qutai'a and there the Sherif told his men, "you take one third of the Imam's troops (who were recruited from all the major tribes of Yemen) and I will take two-thirds" mocking at the Imam's forces! The author contends that the Sherif was shot with three bullets, especially after the Imam's troops had taken over the big cannon he had. But he stood on his horse, and because the Imam's troops knew of his valor, they were afraid to approach him although he had been shot with three bullets and they did not know this, yet he still continued to fight "and went on another horse, and when that one went down, he went on to another horse, eventually fleeing to his fortifications in Al-Qutai'a. After a long siege of a couple of months and fierce fighting, the Sherif accepted a settlement, by which he would surrender Mocha, Zabid and Beit Al-Faqih, whereas the Sherif would keep Hodeida and the rest of Tehama. The Imam agreed to this not knowing that "this was a trick, just so the Sherif can get away and redeploy his troops. He had already sent messages that none of the ports should surrender. The Imam kept him until he sees what happens when he sent his troops to the places supposedly surrendered to the Imam. When the Imam went to Mocha, he left the Sherif with the Dhu Hussein tribesmen, who were among his troops. The story of the Sherif is long and eventually he managed to escape and retook Zabid, where the author notes his troops went wild plundering looting and killing. The Imam then went to Sana'a, where he had to deal with new contenders for the Imamate from Sa'ada and Dhamar.

1265 AH (1847 – 1848 AD): Plagues and pestilence and more internal strife. News also came of the Turks wanting to return to Yemen. The Sherif Mohammed Ibn Own and Tawfiq Pasha led the expedition. They took Hodeida and then ordered the Ashraf of Tehama and other dignitaries to confirm their allegiance to the Porte, which they were willing to give rather than to be subjects of the Imam. When the Turks requested the Imam to also come down like all the other dignitaries of the land, he sent an emissary with letters and gifts and an invitation to Sana'a, just to buy time while he prepares to confront the Turks.

Some leading officers came to Sana'a and realized that there was no immediate hope of taking the city. In the meantime, in the month of Sha'aban of that year, the Imam set out to confront the Turks. The Turks had promised that they are only here to help the Imam, so the Imam set out to meet them in Bajil, to test their sincerity. The Turks invited him to come to Hodeida, wherein they assured him of their good intentions to help him subdue the tribes. Then the Turks sent emissaries and on the 29th of Sha'aban of that year, the Imam returned to Sana'a realizing that he had to be careful with the Turks, as they were heavily armed and well funded. On the Fifth of Ramadan of that year the Turks arrived in Sana'a and the Imam told the people of Sana'a to greet them. The Imam realized that he was no match for the Turks started to consolidate their hold on the city and positioning their people in the administration buildings and the fortifications, and they ordered the Imam to surrender the Imam's palaces in Bustan Al-Sultan, and Tawfiq Pasha ordered his troops, who were camped outside the city to enter Sana'a and take over the town and evacuate the people from their houses. The Imam had positioned some tribesmen in the Western part of the city, near what was the Jewish Quarter, so when the Turks came to shop for provisions, the Yemeni tribesmen jumped on the Turks and slaughtered the Turks wherever they found them and those that survived went to the Castle of Sana'a on the Eastern Periphery. Sana'a became chaotic after that and the dignitaries went back to Ali Ibn Al-Mahdi to declare him Imam, but he only accepted reluctantly, as he has already been Imam twice and the Imam Al-Mutawakkil was locked up. The surrounding tribes came to supposedly help the people of Sana'a against the Turks, but when they saw what has happened to the Turks, they realized that they could not so easily deceive the people of Sana'a and that they really just wanted to loot the city. The gates of the city were kept closed for twelve days, "and the people of Sana'a "never had the city locked up so long", but the City was well provisioned. Then the Turks went out feeling somewhat secure and started to take their revenge on the people of Sana'a, but they were ready for them and rained them with bullets from everywhere, once they left the fortifications in the Castle of Sana'a. The people of Sana'a then besieged the Turks in the Castle and cut all channels of respite from the siege and finally the Turks left on the Eid Al-Fitr of that year and they have tried to buy time hoping for relief to come from Tehama, but to no avail. In reflection of the moment, the author states that he was informed that ghosts had occupied the mountains around Sana'a, as God's help to the people of Sana'a..

1366 AH (1848 – 1849 AD) The Imam Al-Mutawakkil is killed and executed and it took four hits with the sword to remove his head! The author states that this is the first Imam to face execution in Yemen since the Imam Al-Hadi ruled in Sa'ada a thousand year ago.

Body LANGUAGE

By: Nisreen Shadad

Bus route gestures: Hadda Street

Driving a Yemeni bus and calling riders to get on is slightly problematic because buses have numerous routes, but often use the same departure point.

In order for riders to communicate with bus drivers, Yemenis created gestures and signs that easily refer to where buses are going. In the past, illiterate men dominated as bus drivers, so both drivers and riders needed a way to communicate with each other. Once citizens became more educated, the bus's direction was written on its front, as well as coloring certain routes red, yellow or green.

This week's issue will discuss hand gestures for the two types of buses



For Hadda Street buses, this gesture indicates Al-Tahrir, whereas for Al-Hasabah (since the same gesture was published in the previous issue to indicate something different), it indicates Hayel Street.

operating on Hadda Street, the first of which are buses for Hadda-Tahrir, whose route is colored red, and end at

Hadda Square.

Bus drivers and passengers going to Tahrir move their forefinger forward. However, if a bus intends to stop on Zubairi Street rather than continuing on to Tahrir, drivers will shake their forefinger downward, meaning, "We'll stop at the end of the street on which we're driving," clarified Taha Al-Udaini, a representative of the bus drivers union.

Those going to Bab Al-Yemen use buses for Hadda-Bab Al-Yemen, whose route is green. To indicate such, they stick out their thumb and point to the right (a sideways thumbs-up sign) "Because we don't continue to the end of Hadda Street. To go to Bab Al-Yemen, we turn right off of

Hadda Street, so we point to the right," bus driver Noor Al-Deen Al-Refae explained.

When buses return to the Hadda last point, they either go to Al-Sakaniyya or the funduq (Ramada Hotel). The



Sticking out one's thumb and pointing to the right indicates the funduq (Ramada Hotel).

last point for Hadda-Bab Al-Yemen buses is Fiftieth Street (Beit Baws).

The gesture indicating going to Al-Sakaniyya is to stick out the thumb and point to the left, whereas when they go to the funduq, they stick out the thumb and point to the right. "Because bus drivers turn left when going to Al-Sakaniyya, they point to the left," Al-Udaini noted.

"These gestures depend on the direction of the most distinctive places we're going to or passing from," bus driver Fawaz Sharib added.



Sticking out one's thumb and pointing to the left indicates Al-Sakaniyya.



This gesture mostly is used when bus drivers won't continue to the final point, but rather will stop when they reach the end of the street on which they're driving. Therefore, it can be used by several bus drivers going different ways and streets.



National Bank of Yemen Consultancy Services Contract Signed Between the National Bank of Yemen and Deloitte & Touche (Middle East)

As a part of the Yemeni Government's general directive and strategy of restructuring administrative and economic reforms, and decentralization; and encouragement investments and set up a financial market in Yemen, and with initiation safeguard the Ministry of Finance (the owner) and the Board of Directors of the National Bank of Yemen to maintain the Bank's position and rank at local and international levels, and with the purpose of preserving the results and successes made by the Bank over recent years, the National Bank of Yemen signed last Wednesday 20 December, 2006, a consultancy service contract with Messrs. Deloitte & Touche (Middle East) for requirement of development and modernization of the bank.. The signing ceremony was honoured of the Chairman and the Members of the Board of Directors of the bank, several businessmen, general managers of various companies and banks. was also Mr. Sami Shuhaibar, the authorized representative of Messrs. Deloitte & Touche (Middle East).

Mr. Sami Mackawee , first Deputy general Manager Member of the Board signed the by contract on behalf of the National Bank of Yemen and Mr. Sami Shuhaibar on behalf of Deloitte & Touche (middle Eat)

Mr. Abdulrahman Mohammed Alkuhali, the Chairman and General Manager of the Bank, said in statement: This vital and important project aims at restructuring the bank and develop and modernize the banking administrative policies and procedures and financial and organization structure, and introduction of advanced technology to keep up with latest developments in the banking and technical fields. The project consists of two main stages which would be implemented simultaneously within the contract period.



Mr. Abdulrahman Alkuhali
Chairman and
General Manager

Stage 2: Comprises outlaying of IT strategic and plan which determines the organization structure of the Bank (management information systems), which in turn determine and the required manpower in terms of their qualification, and specialization suitable and compatible with the bank strategy, and operation.

Mr. Abdulrahman Mohammed Alkuhali added that: the Year 2006 constituted a distinguished era in the progress of the National Bank of Yemen as shown by the financial results achieved by the bank and reflected on unprecedented growth in various financial indicators and performance levels. This was confirmed by 'The Bank of the Year 2006-Yemen' award which was awarded to the National Bank of Yemen from the British Magazine The Banker which is regarded as distinguished magazine in banks and financial institutions world. He further declared that: the National Bank of Yemen is seeking to occupy a strategic position at local and regional level to qualify it to be a best pioneering bank in the banking business, and to promote and provide comprehensive alternative channels banking services to companies, and individuals to enable them to carry out various banking operations smoothly and efficiently

Mr. Abdulrahman Mohammed Alkuhali , the Chairman of the Board of Directors and General Manager of the Bank , extended his most sincere gratitude and reverence to His Excellency President Ali Abdulla Saleh , the President of the Republic, for his prudent leadership which achieved economic development and suitable climate for investment which boosted the Yemeni economy. He also thanked the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Governor of the Central Bank of Yemen for the enormous cooperation and support they extended to the Bank.

He also thanked the bank's customers for their continuous support and confidence rendered to the Board of Directors and the executives management of the Bank.



Can geothermal energy light up Yemen?

By: Amel Al-Ariqi
amel11ariqi@yahoo.com

Many national and international environmental officials recently have talked about generating geothermal energy to power Yemen's cities. The term 'geothermal energy' itself is new for most of Yemenis, who are ignorant about how such energy can be generated or used. However, Yemeni citizens mainly doubt whether such power can solve the problem of constant electricity breakdowns in cities. Can geothermal energy light Yemen's rural regions that are mostly plunged into darkness?

Senior hydrologist Noori Jamal explained geothermal energy, which comes from the Greek 'geo,' meaning earth, and 'therine,' meaning heat; thus, geothermal energy is derived from the natural heat of the earth. It's a renewable energy form derived from heat deep in the earth's crust.

"Since we began researching this subject, we were sure Yemen has a huge stock of geothermal energy in the earth, particularly in western Yemen where there are many volcanoes, including Taiz, Ibb, Dhamar and Sana'a."

High-temperature reservoirs generally are the ones suitable for and sought out for commercial electricity production. Geothermal reservoirs are found in "geothermal systems," which are regionally localized geological settings where the earth's naturally occurring heat flow is near enough to the earth's surface to bring steam or hot water to the surface.

There are two ways to use this energy to generate electricity: the first is via power plants, wherein dry steam is taken from geothermal reservoirs as it comes from wells and is then routed directly through turbine/generator units to produce electricity.

The second method is via flash steam

Lack of data exchange, lack of laboratory facilities, lack of geophysical equipment and lack of geoscientists. Financial problems included the high initial costs, as well as the cost of drilling and tribal conflicts, are the main obstacles that may lead to stopping the exploration process in some regions.

plants, which use water at temperatures greater than 360 F (182 C) that is pumped under high pressure to generation equipment at the surface. Upon reaching the generation equipment, pressure suddenly is reduced, thus allowing some of the hot water to convert or "flash" into steam, which then is used to power the turbine/generator units to produce electricity.

The remaining hot water not flashed into steam and water condensed from the steam generally is pumped back into the reservoir.

Not a new idea

Both national and international groups conducted preliminary geothermal investigations in Yemen during the 1980s, producing geological descriptions, as well as geochemical and hydrological data. However, Yemen's past division into north and south didn't allow for coherent or unified conclusions and recommendations.

Abdulsalam Al-Dukhain, director of the geothermal project in Yemen, says, "Since we began researching this subject, we were sure Yemen has a huge stock of geothermal energy in the earth, particularly in western Yemen where there are many volcanoes, including Taiz, Ibb, Dhamar and Sana'a."

"When we searched more intensely, cooperating with some countries that have experience in this field through certain organizations like Florence University in Italy, we attained positive results, which convinced everyone that such energy must be used, particularly to cover the existing gap in electrical power in Yemen," he noted.

In 2003, the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resource initiated the technical cooperation program, GEOTHERM, whose objective is to promote the use of geothermal energy in partner countries by kicking off development at promising sites. The program supports partner countries worldwide, preferably in areas with high geothermal potential (e.g., active volcanism).

Practical steps and obstacles

This past March, a joint project appraisal mission established by the Ministry of Water and Environment, Yemen's Geological Survey and Minerals Resources Board and the German geosciences institute initiated a joint project called ARGEO to head geothermal energy use in Yemen. Consequently, a project-planning workshop for this joint project was held last month in Sana'a with participants from all three partners.

At the workshop, participants talked about the possible obstacles to geothermal energy use in Yemen, classifying such obstacles as technical, financial, institutional, social and cultural.

Jamal explained, "Participants considered the obstacles the project may face; for example, technical obstacles such as lack of data exchange, lack of laboratory facilities, lack of geophysical equipment and lack of geoscientists. Financial problems included the high initial costs, as well as the cost of drilling. They noted social obstacles such as tribal conflicts, which may lead to stopping the exploration process in some regions, etc."

"However, they also talked about possible measures to overcome such obstacles; for example, pointing to the importance of cooperating with donors and establishing national and local fundraising campaigns and other measures to overcome financial obstacles," she added.

"Participants also discussed cooperating with international scientific institutes and programs to provide Yemeni staff with required training courses, as well as focusing on the role of awareness among politicians and local citizens to inform them about the

importance of such energy," Jamal concluded.

The workshop was followed by a signed agreement between Yemen and the German geosciences institute to launch a project exploring the use of geothermal energy. Under the agreement, the German side will fund the approximately YR 77 million geothermal project in Yemen.

The German contribution, along with contributions from the Yemeni government and other donors totaling some \$2 million, will be allocated for exploratory digging to 2,000 meters in Dhamar. "Work on the project will start at the beginning of 2007," Abdulsalam Al-Dukhain, director of the project in Yemen, noted.

Various usages

Dr. Mohammed Ali Mattash, scientist and observer of the project, referred to the advantages of geothermal energy use, saying that such energy is environmentally friendly unlike other sources because it doesn't produce any negative environmental affects. Additionally, the cost of using such energy is low and it's more sustainable compared to other energy sources.

Mattash stressed the importance of supporting the project, noting that Yemen can start to apply the project if there's support from the decision makers.

According to statistics, Yemen has the lowest population access to electricity in the region, with only 40 percent of the total population having access, compared to the regional average of approximately 85 percent.

Among the nation's rural population, which is 72 percent of the total population, only 23 percent have access to electricity, which compares unfavorably to 85 percent of the urban

Yemen has the lowest population access to electricity in the region, with only 40 percent of the total population having access, compared to the regional average of approximately 85 percent.

population (28 percent of the total) who have access to electricity.

Of the rural population with access to electricity, only half are connected to the national grid system while the rest are estimated to have some access via other sources, typically a diesel generator operating only a few hours in the evening.

"This project will help cover the gap and shortage Yemen suffers in electrical energy," Mattash said, adding, "Implementing this project isn't easy, but it's not impossible. It's also not a new idea because many countries have been using this type of energy for many decades. For example, in the African Horn, which isn't far from Yemen, six

countries have been applying this project, including Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia."


He pointed out that some countries with the same geological circumstances as Yemen can generate electrical power, for instance, Kenya, whose production reached 400 megawatts. "That's encouraging to carry out this project," Mattash added.

He said regions selected to conduct the project are Al-Lissi Isbil in Dhamar governorate, Mashkafer in Ibb and Damt in Al-Dhale' governorate. Geothermal energy has various uses, such as in small industries, domestic heating, natural therapy, irrigation and agriculture.

Mattash confessed, "I can't evaluate the quantity of electrical power that can be generated from geothermal energy unless involved sectors complete all of the studies, exploratory digging and results analysis, which will take time and effort, besides financial and technical support. However, if there are good circumstances to generate a thermal field, the expected power will be from 5 megawatts to 200 megawatts."



Geothermal energy is derived from the natural heat of the earth. It's a renewable energy form derived from heat deep in the earth's crust.



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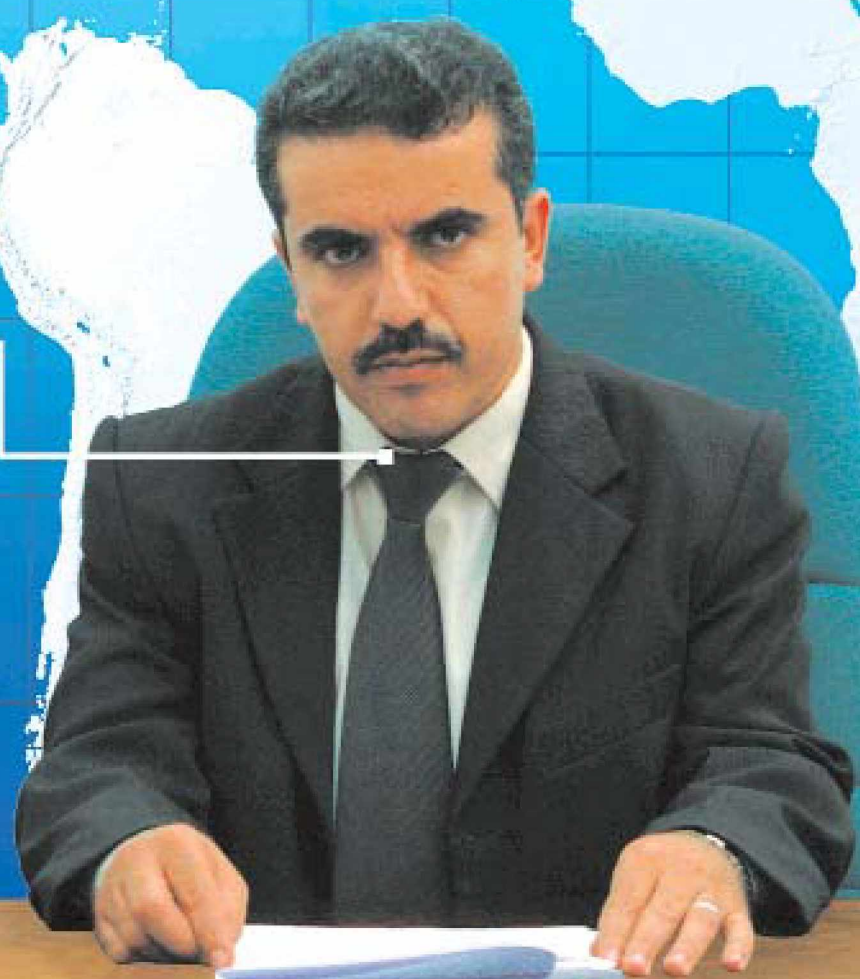
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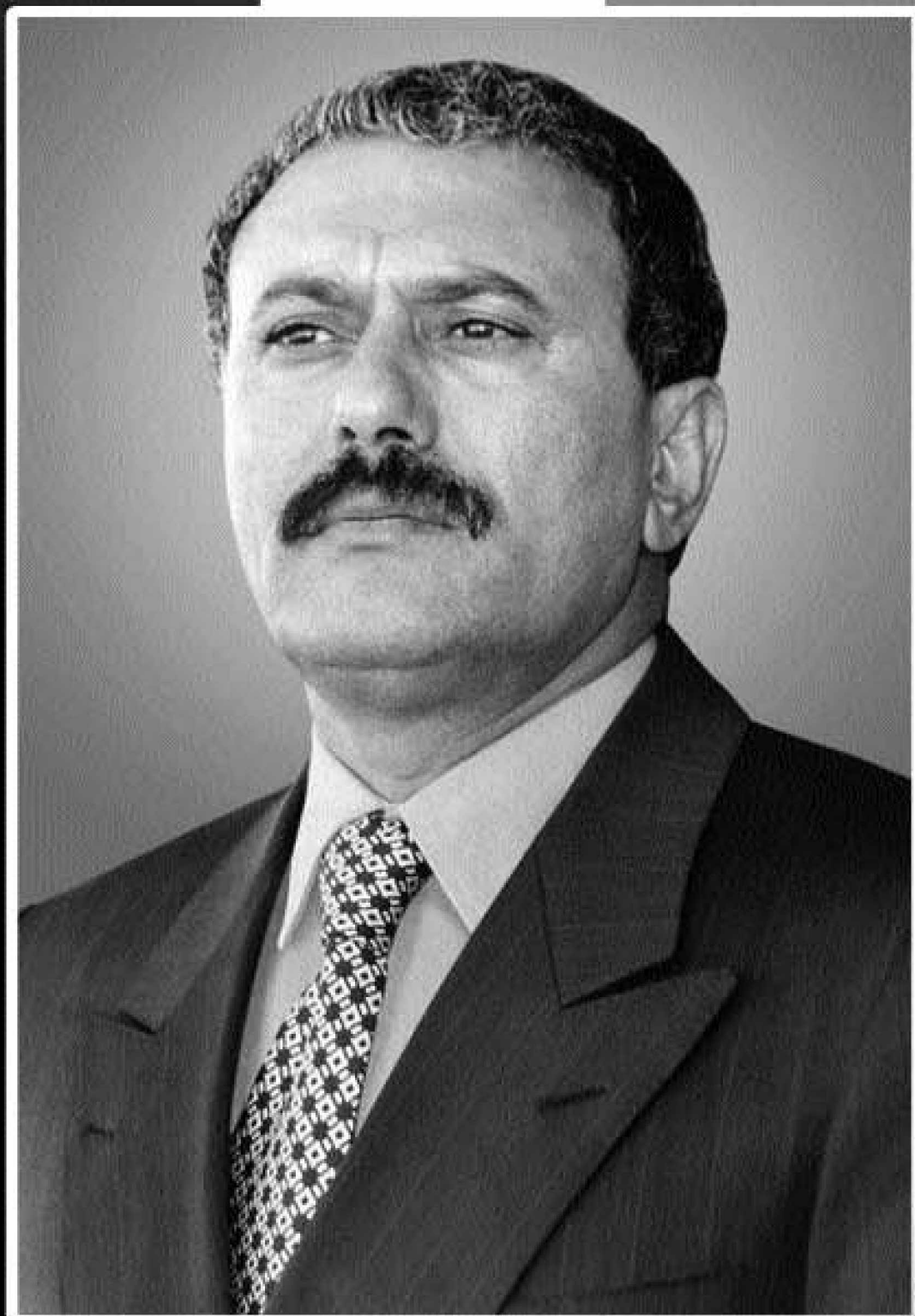
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Christmas comes to Yemen

By: Dina Al-Ameena

Most Yemenis likely are unaware that for more than 20 years, Christmas has been celebrated in Yemen in the form of an annual dramatization of the biblical story of Jesus' birth, called a live nativity.

Youths depict the action and some dialogue as a narrator reads the gospel account of Jesus' birth involving such characters as Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist (Yahya), Jesus' mother Mary, King Herod of Judea, three wise men and the angel Gabriel. At one point, Mary rides a donkey while entering Bethlehem, where Jesus is born, as biblical prophecies foretold.



King Herod and his assistant

History

A family working at the U.S. embassy in Sana'a initiated the nativity drama involving youths aged 13 to 18 from the Sana'a International Christian Fellowship performing three shows outside on a small wooden stage.

Always staged at a private residence in the Safiah neighborhood, this year's performance involved approximately 20 youths from Germany, the United Kingdom, Ethiopia, South Africa, India, South Korea and the United States.

In the past, more live animals were involved in the show, such as sheep, goats, a donkey and a camel. Children especially liked riding the donkey and the camel, one of the sesame grinders

in the Old City.

At first, the camel's owners simply would loan it to the production for free (receiving some compensation from organizers); however, they began charging more for it, so they dispensed with it, only using a donkey.

Besides more animals, previous years also involved attendees moving inside afterward to sing Christmas carols. Other former Christmas festivities in Sana'a included a pantomime by British expatriates and a community choir of various embassy families.

The event used to be fairly open, but organizers have been more watchful since 2002 due to heightened security. Attendee and performer numbers dipped significantly lower during

Yemen's Civil War and the first Gulf War. Despite such conflicts, numbers have remained steady, averaging approximately 50 attendees per show and peaking at about 80 attendees per show in previous years.

Audience reactions Sana'a resident Abdulsalam, 35, observed, "I think it's nice to celebrate the birth of Jesus because we remember that he came for a task. Therefore, we must remember him so we won't forget what he did."

Abdulrahman, 30, of Taiz marveled, "It's beautiful to be in the open air! This is a great opportunity to celebrate Christmas because people here don't know anything about it. I hope this event can explain to them the true identity and meaning of Christmas."

First-time attendee, Hamdan Zaid, 33, from Ibb said, "I want to understand the life of Jesus, so this event was a good opportunity. The actions made it easier to understand."

One long-time Sana'a resident noted, "It's a special tradition. [Christmas] is better here than in America with all of the commercialism of the holiday. I prefer celebrating here because I can focus more on the true meaning of Christmas."

Another Sana'a long-timer agreed, "We're so close to the original biblical culture here. I think all nationalities like to see the story – no matter what religion they are – because it's part of Christmas."

English student Mohammed Al-Yazidi, 21, said, "It's my first time to attend a celebration like this. I heard a little about the story, but this was the first time to see it. It was good."

However, Adel Al-Khawlan, 28, of Sana'a pointed out, "We have a different story. The Qur'an didn't mention Joseph; he wasn't present when Maryam gave birth. I was curious about other cultures and ideologies. This was somewhat new to me, but I heard about it in some Christian books, so it was similar."

Performers' views

This was the sixth year for 17-year-old

Graham McCullough, who played King Herod's advisor. Asked why they perform it, he replied, "We do it for the kids – those in the audience as well as the performers. It's a great way to get into the Christmas spirit and a reminder of Christ's birth."

Playing an angel, 11-year-old Nadia observed, "It really gets people thinking about what Christmas is all about – not just presents and Christmas trees – but about Jesus' birth. I see lots of people in the audience with their eyes shining."

This year's director commented, "There aren't many Christmas events here, so it's a good reminder of what Christmas is all about – not just Santa Claus or New Year's, like most people think. It brings the Christmas season here."

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