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Inside:

2
 Sayoun suicide bomber identified, 12 other men suspected of aiding operation

10
 Islamic Army in Iraq

12
 Giving Yemeni youth a "Third Option"

Agreement reached on Election Commission crisis Gov't seeks to amend Election Law

By: Aqeel Al-Halali
 For The Yemen Times

SANA'A, July 30 — As the government last Tuesday transmitted its second project, which includes amending 30 items in the Election Law, to Parliament to complete constitutional procedures in order to issue the new law, Parliament declared extending its session until next week to approve the amendments.

The Joint Meeting Parties already rejected a government project last November stipulating that election committee members be judges, demanding the election committee be comprised of politicians, not judges, according to a party principle agreement. However, the ruling General People's Congress Party believes the committee should be comprised according to the number of 2003

parliamentary election voters.

Yemen's state-run Saba news agency reports that the government project includes completely amending 23 items and eight clauses in another seven items, pointing out that the amendments will "fill shortcomings of the law that have appeared over the past period, as well as enhance guarantees for free and credible elections, thereby implementing European Union recommendations following the most recent presidential election."

According to the news agency, the amendment project essentially focuses on widening the scope of contesting against local and parliamentary public electoral candidates during the nomination period. It also guarantees impartiality in public works, public financing and official media during election cam-

paigns, in addition to granting the right to file management complaints during the election process and organize related procedures.

The proposed amendments will "enhance the election committee's independence and impartiality, organize election security, expand local and international observation of the elections and specify the observers' rights and commitments," Saba reported.

Election Committee crisis ends

An official source in the ruling party says this government project involves the "agreement of all political parties in forming the election commission."

GPC-affiliated Member of Parliament Abdulaziz Jubari says, "It's good for all active political parties to reach an agreement," pointing out that

Parliament earlier this month approved suspending discussion of the previous amendment law project "until the political parties agree on its terms."

Opposition parties boycotted Parliament sessions this past June in protest of a majority in Parliament members placing the amendment project on the parliamentary agenda before the GPC bloc approved suspending discussions, noting that there should be political agreement regarding the Election Law.

According to Jubari, Parliament last Tuesday approved extending its session to Aug. 6 in order to discuss the government's amendment of the Election Law, which is scheduled for approval next week, and elect new members to the new Election Commission.

Continued on page 2



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Relative optimism as humanitarian aid slowly finds its way to Sa'ada

By: Maryam Al-Yemeni
 & Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SA'ADA, July 30 — The current situation in Sa'ada is slowly stabilizing after the president's declaration that ended the war on July 17th, but restrictions, high prices and damaged property still makes life hard for the govern-

ment's residents.

The 8 p.m. curfew is still in place and locals do not attempt to go outside after 9 p.m. fearing renewed attacks by Houthi rebels, in addition to the threat of security arrests if they are suspected of aiding the Houthis.

Food prices are still high and much more so than in the other governorates; petrol is brought Saudi Arabia and diesel from Hodeidah.

"The price for a 200 liter container of diesel reached YR 22,000, from [its previous price of] YR 7,500," said Abdullah Hussein, an employee at Al-Talh Hospital in Sa'ada.

Telecommunication networks were blocked during the war, and when the peace was declared, some lines went back on briefly for three hours. However, now residents say that communication lines — specifically cellular phone lines — have ceased to operate once more.

Throughout the conflict there were severe electricity problems. Now, because of the use of generators, there is electrical power again. In Sa'ada city there were medicines available, but because of the scarcity of diesel fuel, Al-Salam Hospital was shut down. It remains closed to this day.

Mansour Al-Shara'abi, a Motamar.net correspondent, explained that residents who had fled because of the war are gradually returning to their homes, yet many have discovered their homes were ruined. Though it was difficult for residents to find food initially because of the roadblocks isolating the governorate, things are now — gradually — returning back to normal.

Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, explained that Yemen has called on the foreign community and donors to help Sa'ada recover. "Now that peace has been restored overall in the area, we need to cooperate together to rebuild what has been destroyed," he said.

On Monday, Al-Qirbi and Deputy Prime Minister Rashad Al-Alimi met with the international donor community in Yemen to explain the situation and ask for support to mitigate the damages in Sa'ada.

On Tuesday evening, the governor of Sa'ada, local security and administration in the governorate met with the humanitarian organizations in Sa'ada, as well as some of the locally-based civil organizations to coordinate humanitarian assistance.

The meeting was positive overall, and the call for humanitarian operations to recommence working in the area was made official.

Aid is on the way

Islamic Relief arrived in the area this past Tuesday and the International

Committee of the Red Cross resumed its work in Sa'ada on Wednesday. Other relief organizations are still working on their plans to travel to the war-torn area.

The United Nations has not yet sent its security team to Sa'ada as of Wednesday night. The security team assesses the risk for UN employees and arranges for the needs assessment team to be sent afterwards.

Khalid Al-Mowalad, Yemen Country Director at the Islamic Relief organization, explained that the situation is calm now, even in areas like Harf Syfian where a lot of the damage had been especially recently.

"We have done extensive focus group discussions with men and women in the largest Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Al-Anad, where around 800 families are located," said Al-Mowalad. "During the last five days, some of the locals went to inspect the damage in their homes and returned to the camps because there was nothing left for them back there," he added.

There are seven IDP camps in

Sa'ada, containing a total of around 1,500 families who all need food, medicine, blankets and shelters. "Some people have fainted because of hunger,

epidemics spread especially because of the four weeks siege, and now there is much help needed," concluded Al-Mowalad.

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"Know About Business" in Yemeni vocational institutes

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, July 29—Starting Saturday, the first batch of teachers from vocational and technical institutes will get to "Know About Business," through a project designed to promote Yemeni-owned small businesses.

Know About Business, or KAB, is a entrepreneurship development training program launched by the International Labor Organization (ILO) for teachers of vocational education and secondary education. The program consists of 120 hours of coursework for young students between the ages of 15 to 18 years old.

The KAB program directs students to understand the role of business in the society, its contribution to the wealth of nations and its social responsibility; it helps create entrepreneurial behavior and informs students about how an enterprise is supposed to function.

These teachers will receive an intensive training for two weeks. The 28 participants are teachers in technical and vocational institutes from all around the country. They will then turn around and teach their own first and second year students in their institutes about how to start their own businesses that offer vital – and lucrative – services.

"This is important for us because as a Ministry we are the body most concerned with providing the Yemeni market and even neighboring countries with skilled labor. There is an imbalance currently existing between the universities and vocational training because the majority of Yemeni youth would prefer to get a university degree rather than a skill. Our job is to change this," said Dr. Ibrahim Omar Hugari,



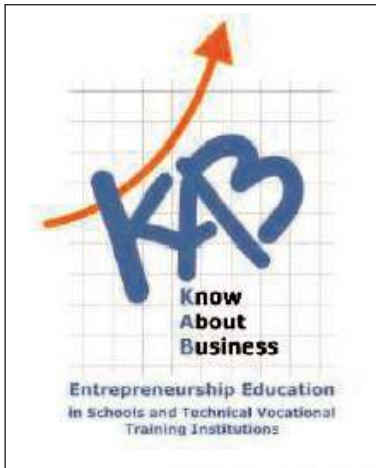
Dr. Ibrahim Omar Hugari, the Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training: "Our Ministry was the first to respond to KAB because we realize the challenges facing Yemeni youth in the market place."

Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training.

According to Hugari, such a subject will help Yemeni youth change their attitude towards technical education and become more independent as skilled workers who can start their own business.

Two KAB trainers from the ILO will arrive on Thursday and dedicate one month to train two batches of vocational teachers on how to teach this subject in their institutes. Although the curriculum is already set through a standard syllabus, there is room for customization during the discussions and group work. The two ILO trainers will be heading to Egypt next to provide the same training there. Yemen will be among the first few Arab countries that adopts this program into its educational system; Syria and Oman have already implemented KAB in their educational systems.

The training is funded by the Social



Fund for Development and organized by the Fund's Small & Micro-Enterprise Promotion Service Agency (SMEPS). This is the pilot stage of the project and throughout the academic year, experts from Small and Micro-Enterprise Promotion Service and ILO will evaluate its success encouraging entrepreneurship and creating business opportunities in Yemen.

"We understand that Yemen has its own particularities and there are things that you can never teach in a classroom. However, the aim of this subject is to change attitudes and encourage Yemeni youth to explore the possibility of creating small and micro-enterprises instead of waiting to be employed," explained Ahmed Abdulbary Ali, the KAB project officer at SMEPS.

He further explained that once the training proves successful, efforts will take place to include it in classrooms throughout Yemen.

While her father claims she was kidnapped,

Detective says girl disappeared intentionally

By: Emad Al-Saqqaf

TAIZ, July 27—Detectives in Taiz were finally able to find Sawsan Al-Maqtari, 19, who disappeared for 11 days, though now the details of her disappearance is question; her father said that Sawsan was kidnapped because of a revenge feud, while detectives said that the girl hid herself intentionally.

After police found Sawsan, Colonel Yahya Al-Haisami, the head of the Security Department in Taiz governorate, said that Sawsan's disappearance wasn't a kidnapping, confirming that one of her friends who worked in a telecommunications center persuaded her to go together to a house where she got to know a group of young men who subsequently hid her from sight throughout the 11 days she was absent from home.

Al-Haisami said that nine people, including two women, were caught together with two vehicles, the first of which carried Sawsan to a house belonging to one of the suspected kidnappers. "The primary results show that Sawsan wasn't kidnapped; she disappeared for other reasons," said Al-Haisami.

Sawsan's father, Jamal Al-Maqtari, had previously informed security



Sawsan Al-Maqtari: was she kidnapped or did she run away?

forces that his daughter had been kidnapped by unknown people in order to take revenge on Sawsan's mother, who testified as a witness for the prosecution in criminal court on a theft case.

Abdullah Abdul Rab, the attorney representing Taiz's Criminal Prosecutions Office, said that the girl refused to come back home to her father and instead demanded to be sent to the Taiz Central Jail, though her father denies this.

Jamal Al-Maqtari said that he met his daughter early Monday morning in the criminal investigations premises in

the presence of the lead detective who promised to hand Sawsan over to her father by the end of the work day. When Al-Maqtari came back at 1:00 p.m. to take his daughter, he was surprised to find that she was already put in jail.

Sawsan's attorney accused the security apparatuses of attempting to mislead public opinion by shifting the case from a kidnapping to an intentional disappearance. He said that security officials want to show how dutifully the security officers perform their tasks and are consequently denying the occurrence of any criminal activity.

Jamal Al-Maqtari has already demanded his daughter's immediate release and called for investigations to be conducted in order to clarify the details of Sawsan's kidnapping. He accused the security forces of switching the case from kidnapping to a deliberate disappearance despite the evidence to the contrary.

"Criminal detectives investigated my daughter's case after they found her without a lawyer," said Al-Maqtari, adding that Sawsan's lawyer along with a number of the local council members were barred from speaking with the girl soon after she arrived at the security administration headquarters.

Sayoun suicide bomber identified, 12 other men suspected of aiding operation

SAYOUN, July 30 – The perpetrator of the suicide bombing in the city of Sayoun in Hadramout governorate last Friday, July 25, has been identified, while Al-Qaeda in Yemen has claimed responsibility for the bombing that killed four and wounded 12 others.

The four that perished are believed to be security soldiers who worked at the targeted security camp in Sayoun. The injured included other security soldiers and several local women living near the camp. The blast was so strong that it damaged eight homes as well.

Al-Qaeda in Yemen took credit for the suicide bombing in an emailed statement that included a purported photo of the suicide attacker, identified as Ahmed Bin Said Omar Al-Masjari, also known as Abu Dajjana Al-Hadrami, according to a CNN report. "This attack was carried out in revenge for our brothers whose blood is on the hands of the infidel Yemeni forces," the statement said. The Ministry of Defense-affiliated newspaper and web site 26September.net reported that the suicide bomber was a third-level medical student at Hadramout University and was born in Saudi Arabia.

Yemen's state-run SABA news agency said the bomber drove a 2003 KIA through the security camp's gates, which prompted security soldiers to open fire on the bomber.

A security source told



The Suicide bomber is pictured on the right, but the man on his left is unidentified.

26September.net that the government is following 12 suspects who may have helped the suicide attacker, but have not arrested anyone yet. Two of the alleged planners are Saudis and one goes by the name of Mohammed Al-Qahtani. The other Saudi suspect's name was not released, nor were the names of the 10 other Yemeni suspects.

Previously, another group calling themselves the Yemeni branch of Islamic Jihad took credit for the attack in a press release published on the internet. "We congratulate the attacker on [attaining] paradise," the statement said.

The operation comes within the

context of "defending Islam against rallies and celebrations that pollute the minds of our sons and daughters through singing, impudence and mixing of the two sexes," which may be a reaction to an annual tourist celebration held in Mukalla, the capital of Hadramout, on July 17 featuring artistic, cultural and sports activities, as well as folk dancing and traditional foods.

This attack follows other hard-line events such as spontaneously formed vice monitoring squads in Hodeidah and Aden, as well as the creation of a Committee to Protect Virtue and Fight Vice sponsored by well-known cleric, Abdulmajid Al-Zindani.

Continued from page 1

Gov't seeks to amend Election Law, while Yemeni women seek role in 2009 elections

According to the law, the Election Commission is to be comprised of nine members chosen by the president from a list of 15 members presented by Parliament.

Election Commission Secretary-General Shayif Al-Husseini points out that announcing the Election Commission next week will provide the opportunity for the upcoming elections scheduled for April 27, 2009, to be held on time, adding that the current commission's general secretariat already has prepared technical and administrative orders to conduct the upcoming elections.

"The Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum, which will commence working by the end of August, will form the observation com-

mittee, since the other technical and administrative preparations already have been done by the current Election Commission's general secretariat," Al-Husseini noted.

Yemeni women seek their role
Ramzia Al-Eryani, head of the Yemeni Women's Union, recently stressed the importance of raising women's awareness about their electoral rights in order for them to actively participate in the upcoming elections.

In a workshop, Al-Eryani noted that an evaluation of the women's union's internal elections last June increased social awareness toward women's issues and rights, which is vitally important in enabling them make decisions and implement strategies related to women in the union.

Observers maintain that women's political situation in Yemen recently has decreased, especially given that women

hold only one of 301 seats in Parliament and only two ministry positions within the current government.

According to official data from the most recent local and presidential elections held Sept. 20, 2006, the number of women registered on electoral rolls is 3,900,565 out of 9,247,370 voters.

The first report recently issued by Al-Jazeera Center for Studies and Human Rights criticized women's situation on the agenda of parties and political organizations, pointing out that women "don't exist in any leadership positions, except in five out of 12 parties in Yemen." The report points out that illiteracy is one outstanding obstacle hindering Yemeni women's advancement in society. It further noted that the number of women is disappointing because they comprise the majority of Yemen's illiteracy rate, which is 39.3 percent in urban areas and 78.2 percent in rural areas.

Construction begins on Yemen-Djibouti Bridge

By: Aqeel Al-Halali
For the Yemen Times

ADEN, July, 29 — The Middle East Group for Saudi Development has officially begun the construction of the construction of a new hanging bridge joining the Arabian peninsula across the Red Sea. There will also be two industrial and tourism-based new cities built on both sides of the bridge, which will cost around US \$20 billion to \$30 billion.

The declaration came during a celebration organized by the Middle East Group for Saudi Development in Djibouti, which was attended by Djibouti's Prime Minister, Deleita Mohammed Deleita and the chairman of the Middle East Group for Saudi Development, Tariq Bin Laden. According to Saudi Arabia's Al-Watan newspaper, Tariq Bin Laden has bought 1,500 square kilometers in Yemen and 500 square kilometers in Djibouti to start construction on the industrial port cities.

The project will extend from Bab Al-

Mandab Strait in Yemen thought Djibouti on the horn of Africa and is expected to take from seven to nine years to complete. The bridge will be nearly 30 kilometers long, comprising of girder and suspension bridge structures and be able to carry a six-lane highway and four light rail lines, as well as water and oil pipelines. The second phase of the construction project will be divided into smaller constructions to make the rest of the bridge's length.

Bin Laden has granted the design and management contract to Noor Al-Medina Construction Company, which is based in California in the United States.

Noor Al-Medina Company in opened the project up to a board of international experts to submit ideas on the design, operation and management of transportation traffic.

The two construction companies said the major role of the project is to develop Yemen and Djibouti's economies and to recast the two countries as centers for global trade. They

added that this will have a positive effect on the nearby countries and their residents as well. Bin Laden signed the contract in March, accompanied by representatives from the Noor Al-Medina Company and Djibouti's president, Omar Ismail Jila.

Tariq Bin Laden said the project will provide more than a million job opportunities in Yemen and half a million in Djibouti.

It is anticipated that about 100,000 cars and 50,000 rail passengers will cross the bridge daily in addition to thousands of tons of cargo in trucks and rail wagons, according to Muhammad Ahmed Al-Ahmed, CEO of Al-Noor Holding Company

Observers believe that the project will enhance the commercial exchange between the Arab Peninsula and countries in the Horn of Africa. The bridge will also help millions of African Hajjis get to Saudi Arabia for the pilgrimage, as well as facilitate the transport of agriculture and livestock from the African continent to the Gulf region's markets.

In Brief

**SANA'A
Yemen, GTZ discuss supporting parliament committees**

Parliament Deputy Speaker Mohammed al-Shadadi reviewed Tuesday with the GTZ Office Director in Sana'a Thomas Hart means of availing from German experience in supporting the parliament's committees.

The German official acquainted the Deputy Speaker with its country's experience in the legislative field, particularly laws related to health insurance and public health.

The meeting also discussed aspects of bilateral cooperation and exchange of expertise in the aforementioned sectors.

SJC approves 2009 budget of judiciary

The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) approved on Monday a budget of judiciary for coming year.

The budget will be used to set up a building of the Supreme Court and other judicial institutions.

The council, headed by Judge Isam al-Samawi, also approved plan of replacement for 270 judges and prosecutors in accordance with suggestion presented by minister of justice and general attorney.

Then, the council discussed a report on performance of the council and its achievements during the pervious period of the current year.

Cabinet agrees on STC's draft bylaw

The cabinet agreed, in its regular meeting held on Tuesday, on the draft law of the Supreme Tender Committee (STC) and directed concerned authorities to complete law measures required for its issuance.

The bylaw aims at enhancing STC's measures for protecting public fund, country processions, combating corruption in conducting tender and affirming justice and equality between contesters as well as controlling and naming measures and enhancing economic competence in tender process.

It also organizes the committee's meetings, mechanisms of issuing its

decisions, system building and its technical and administrative apparatus.

Cabinet agrees on Ministry of Industry and Trade's by law

In its meeting held on Tuesday, the cabinet agreed on the draft republican decree over Ministry of Industry and Trade's bylaw and directed concerned officials to complete law measures for issuing the decree.

The bylaw, that contains 58 items, organizes the ministry's activities, enhancing its efforts for realizing strategy of improving trade balance of the republic, enabling meddle and

small-sized facilities of competition, including Yemen's economy in regional and international economic alliances and realizing stable prices of basic goods.

The bylaw includes also making strategies and policies for developing industry, encouraging industrial investments and other aims for providing continuous environment to business sector.

Reducing unemployment rates high priority of government: al-Arhabi says

Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Abdul Karim al-Arhabi emphasized on Tuesday that the government's top priorities in the future are to reduce the unemployment rates and provide youths with job opportunities.

Al-Arhabi held talks with the Regional Director of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Beirut Bureau Nada al-Nashef on the general principles of the National Strategy for Employment.

The strategy aims to carry out several projects, activities and projects in order to reduce rates of unemployment and children labor besides improving workers' conditions.

The two officials also reviewed the strategy's executive plan and means of sustain its projects.

Five republican decrees and a law issued

Two republican decrees No. 147/2008 and No.148/2008 were issued to

appoint Ahmed al-Himiari, assistant deputy governor of Dhamar and Nasar Amabd as head for Abyan prosecution.

Moreover, a republican decree No.149/2008 was issued to appoint Yahya al-Shami as advisor for the ministry of endowments and guidance.

Other two decrees No.150/2008 and 151/2008 were issued to assign Mohammed Abdul-Salam Mansor as advisor for ministry of culture and Mohammed Hadi Salam as advisor for ministry of transport.

On the other hand, a Law No. 44/2008 was issued to approve a loan agreement signed between Yemen and Saudi Fund for Development last November, 2007 to finance a project of Central Hodeidah Hospital at sum of \$30 million.

Social insurance foundation to apply work injury insurance

Chairman of Public Foundation for Social Insurance Ahmed Saif said on Tuesday that foundation is preparing to apply insurance of work injury during the few coming period.

Upon his departure to Syria, chairman Saif said that the aim of the visit is to get acquainted with Syrian experience in the field of insurance and work injury.

He added that visit comes to implement cooperation protocol which was signed between the Yemeni-Syrian Insurance Foundation during the meeting of 8th session of the Supreme Yemeni-Syrian Joint Committee held last May.

He expressed his wishes for outcomes of the visit to be successful at the level of exchanging experiences and expertise to improve insurance performance goals between the two countries.

HCT says 119 tenders approved in first half of 2008

The Higher Committee for Tenders (HCT) approved 119 tenders during the first half of 2008, a report of the committee said.

According to the new report, the cost of

these tenders was at YR 56 billion to set up development and services projects across the country.

Tenders were in fields of public works and consultative services, the report added.

Recently, the committee sent letters to all concerned authorities to comply with law of tenders No.23/2007.

Evaluation workshop on YWU's elections began

Under the sponsorship of International Care Organization, Yemeni Women Union (YWU) began on Tuesday an evaluation workshop on the election process of the union 2008.

The two-day workshop aims at evaluating strength and weakness points of the union's election program 2008 aiming to improve skills.

In the workshop opening, the chairwoman of the union Ramziah al-Eryani affirmed the importance of increase the society awareness on women issues.

She made reference to the necessity to spread awareness among the Yemeni women on their elections right and their participation in the elections that would be held next year.

Cabinet refers amendment draft of election law to parliament

The cabinet approved in its Tuesday meeting headed by prime minister Ali Mujawar referring an amendment draft of some articles of law No. 13 for 2003 over general elections and referendum to the parliament for finalizing its issuance.

The amendments come to avoid the shortcomings of the law appeared last period, reinforce guarantees to hold free elections and to benefit from the European Union's recommendations issued after the 2006 presidential elections in addition to adopting what the political parties agreed on.

The amendment draft included issues concerning fields of challenges and the right of challenges against the candidates of parliament and local elections during the nomination period.

It also enhanced the media neutrality during the election campaigns and the right of offering administrative com-

plaints during the elections processes as well as regulating the election's security and the right of monitoring election either local or foreign.

**HODEIDAH
SNACC discusses protecting public fund in Hodeidah**

Governor of Hodeidah Ahmed al-Jabali held talks here on Tuesday with the member of the Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption (SNACC) Mohammad al-Matari on aspects of maintaining the public fund.

The meeting discussed means of applying rules and regulations in the various sectors and executive offices in the governorate.

Al-Matari hailed the governorate's efforts to facilitate the SNACC's mission to discover the corruption and do whatever needs to uproot it.

WNC, Oxfam review girl education reality in Hodeidah

Under the sponsorship of Oxfam organization, Women National Committee of Hodeidah governorate reviewed on Monday the explanatory report on girls education from gender perspective.

Chairman of Women National Committee in Hodeidah Branch Fairouz Taher said that the purpose of the report is to be familiar with the problems that face girls and prevent them from enrolling to school during basic education as well as the ways to overcome these obstructions.

The report aimed to offer accurate statistics showing easily the actuality of girl education in addition to organizing programs to improve such reality.

DALEI**Indian company allocates \$30 million to invest in iron**

The Broad Chairman of Indian company for the Iron and Mines Trade Ali Gafar announced on Tuesday that the company intends to invest \$30 million as a first stage in the extraction of iron and minerals in al-Dalei province.

During the meeting of al-Dalei governor Ali Taleb with chairman of Indian company, he briefed the governor on the preliminary results of the search for

iron metal in the area which studies show the existence of large quantities in the region.

He pointed out that the volume of investment in the project would cost, until the end of the last phase, up to \$100 million which will provide 2500 job opportunities for local laborers.

The governor welcomed Indian investment in the area of iron and steel, affirming to provide all the facilities for the company to implement the project within the framework of advantages of Investment Law.

He directed concerned institutions to provide land required to the project in the area.

TAIZ**Taiz deputy governor hails UNICEF's activities in the governorate**

Taiz deputy governor Ali Abdul-Latif Rajeh hailed coordination level among UNICEF, civil society organizations and official institutions in creating effective partnership to serve life, health and education of Yemeni children and their future.

During the consultative and coordinating meeting with UNICEF officials, Rajeh expressed his hope for continuing these activities and coordination, confirming that the local council does not retreat to solve all obstacles which may hinder its activities in the governorate.

MAHRAH**Omani delegation in Maharah for grant-funded project talks**

A delegation from the Omani Health Ministry is currently visiting the province of Maharah to familiarize with the site where a central hospital would be set up with funding from Oman.

The delegation will discuss with the concerned authorities in the province issues in relation to conducting studies and designs of the project.

The province Local Council secretary general appreciated the Omani support for developmental projects in Yemen, expressing Yemen's keenness to forge ties with its neighboring state of Oman.

Their News

Journalists can apply for Human Rights Media Awards

Mainstream and citizen journalists from around the world are invited to apply for the Every Human has Rights Media Awards. The deadline to apply is September 15.

The awards, which will be given by Internews, are in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Applicants are asked to send "creative and eye-opening works" that help illustrate one or more of the Declaration's articles.

The award seeks to encourage greater press freedom and support human rights reporting worldwide.

To learn more visit: <http://media-awards.everyhumanhasrights.org/>

National Endowment for Democracy offers journalism fellowships

The Washington, D.C.-based National Endowment for Democracy (NED) invites journalists worldwide to apply to be part of the 2009-2010 Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows Program. Selected fellows will take up residence at the Forum, a research division of NED, for five to ten months. Deadline: November 10.

According to its organizers, the fellowship seeks to provide experienced journalists with an opportunity to reflect on their work, learn from counterparts in the United States, and reevaluate techniques for building democracy in their country of origin. Projects must be in English.

Each participant will receive a monthly stipend for living expenses, health insurance and reimbursement for travel. Fellows also receive a fully equipped office and research support.

For further information, including eligibility information, visit <http://www.ned.org/forum/reagan-fascell.html> or contact fellowships@ned.org.

Media21 Global Journalism Network offers global media workshop

Experienced journalists are invited to apply for Media21 Global Journalism Network's global issues media workshop, which will focus on the challenges of migration in the 21st century from November 24 to December 7. Deadline to apply: October 15.

The first part of the workshop will be held in Geneva, Switzerland for three days where expert panels will discuss the aspects of migration, refugees and trafficking affecting countries from Europe to Afghanistan.

The next part will be held in Andorra as part of the 3rd Future of Europe Summit. Journalists will be exposed to international businesses, academia, non-governmental organizations and policy representatives.

Chosen applicants also will receive the opportunity to participate in a week-long field trip to certain parts of Africa or Europe.

The cost for traveling, food and lodging, field trip and tuition is EU=5,400(US\$8,465). Limited grants are available.

For more information, contact Daniel Wermus at dwermus@infosud.org or visit <http://www.media21geneva.org>.

Citizen journalism course offers basic skills

Aspiring journalists can apply to enroll in the citizen journalism workshop, hosted by the citizen-based Web site 7iber.com, in Amman, Jordan, on August 2.

The workshop will cover basic journalism skills and review how to post news items online. Journalists will also learn how to cover a story using different formats such as "photostories" or video.

The Web site aims to train aspiring journalists in using technology to improve their community.

For more information, visit <http://www.7iber.com/blog/2008/07/22/register-for-the-citizen-media-workshop/>.

Syndicate launched in Kuwait to support journalists

Journalist Zuhair Al-Abbad launched the Kuwait Journalist Syndicate this month after four years of being rejected by the Kuwaiti courts.

Al-Abbad, the former Assistant Board of Directors and General Manager of the Arabian Broadcasting Corporation, now is the Chairman of the new syndicate program.

The syndicate aims to provide opportunities for journalists in Kuwait and abroad. Although Kuwaiti journalists currently have the government-con-

trolled Kuwait Journalist Association (KJA), Al-Abbad argues the media group does not serve any purpose for journalists.

The syndicate will reach international audiences and is not subject to governmental control.

For more information, visit <http://www.arabpressnetwork.org/articlesv2.php?id=2444>.

Social Exclusion Debated at the UN House

Who are the excluded groups in the ESCWA region and what makes them so? What is Social Exclusion? How is it different from poverty? Who does it affect and why? Questions that UN-ESCWA and a quorum of regional experts, academics and activists will attempt to answer this week, on 1-2 August at an expert group meeting on "Social Exclusion in the ESCWA Region: Determinants and Indicators", to be held at the UN House, Beirut.

Three UN-ESCWA countries, Lebanon, Yemen and Egypt, have served as research grounds for this topic. UN-ESCWA conducted 36 in-depth interviews with men and women who live on the margins unable to benefit from different opportunities and services. Groups included refugees, street children, persons living with HIV/AIDS, Maqaber residents, and others.

Participants in the meeting will discuss the findings of studies, UN-ESCWA's definition of social exclusion; and the research methodology required to capture social exclusion and to make it a useful and meaningful tool of analysis in the Western Asia region.

UN-ESCWA's work on social exclusion is part of the United Nations Development Account Project (UNDAP), "Interregional Cooperation to Strengthen Social Inclusion, Gender Equality and Health Promotion in the Millennium development Goals (MDGs)", initiated in 2006. Since the general targets of the MDGs do not adequately address certain disadvantaged groups in different societies, the project is intended to supplement the MDGs with specific targets and localized indicators that measure the determinants of the exclusion and which take into account the challenges and differences facing the different regions in their

progress towards the these millennium goals.

UN-ESCWA is one of the five UN Regional Commissions. It is comprised of 13 member countries: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Its objective is to support economic and social cooperation among the countries of the region and promote the development process in order to achieve regional integration

REAL-TIME TEXT AIMS TO IMPROVE INTERNET ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

The blossoming of multimedia content on the Internet in recent years has revolutionised personal interactions, business communications, and other online services. But for millions of Internet users with sensory disabilities, many of the communication tools remain frustratingly out of their reach.

Mr Arnoud van Wijk, Disability Projects Coordinator for the Internet Society (ISOC), who was born deaf, knows only too well the frustration Internet users with a disability experience from many current Internet services.

"During the past few years, the use of the Internet as a modern replacement for telephony has accelerated," said Mr van Wijk. "The ability to include more media in calls provides an excellent

opportunity to include people with disabilities in online conversational services. But too often discriminatory voice telephony services are simply recreated."

With this motivation, Mr van Wijk and other researchers have documented a technique for "real-time text"; combining existing Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) standards to enable text streaming over Internet Protocol networks.

The technique uses Internet telephony protocols to ensure compatibility with voice, video, and other multimedia services on the Internet. It allows text to be sent and received on a character by character basis, with each character sent and displayed immediately once typed, giving text the same conversational character as voice communica-

tion.

According to Mr van Wijk, "Internet Telephony is rapidly becoming a major way of staying in touch. But it breaks the traditional text telephone, which deaf and hard of hearing people used in the past to call each other. The real-time text technique addresses this problem and can be integrated with Internet telephony."

Along with fellow technologist Guido Gybels, Director of New Technologies at RNID (UK), and with contributions from other experts in communication and accessibility for people with disabilities, Mr

van Wijk edited and co-authored 'Framework for Real-Time Text over IP Using the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP)', which the IETF has just published as an informational document in its 'Request for Comment' series as RFC 5194.

To further progress work in this field, this week sees the launch of the 'Real-Time Text task force' (R3TF), an informal forum for engineers, motivated individuals, experts, companies and organisations. The R3TF has received incubation support from ISOC, as part of its "Enabling Access" initiative, under which ISOC promotes a diverse range of projects aimed at breaking down the barriers to Internet access.

Michael Burks, Chairman, and Cynthia Waddell, Vice Chairman of ISOC's Disability & Special Needs Chapter, welcome the announcement of the new task force.

"Accessibility for persons with disabilities is critical and must be maintained in the coming convergence," said Ms Waddell, an Accessibility Expert to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), who is hard of hearing herself. "But it is worth pointing out that, like many disability projects, this effort has the potential to provide more options and greater usability for all users in many situations."

Dubai Culture and Arts Authority to launch Dubai Theatre Festival for Youth

Under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Majid bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairman of Dubai Culture and Arts Authority (DCAA), the Dubai Theatre Festival for Youth, an ini-

tiative to celebrate and foster the art of theatre in the UAE will be launched by DCAA.

To be held from 10 - 20 August at the Dubai Cultural and Scientific Association,, the festival will provide young actors, directors and playwrights the chance to demonstrate their talents in an art form that is gradually gaining more popularity in the UAE. The event will feature ten plays written, produced and directed by young people in the UAE. Entries for the festival are being invited from local theatre companies, universities, schools and cultural clubs in the UAE.

His Highness Sheikh Majid said: "As an art form, theatre has not only enriched our social life by providing education and entertainment but also helped us discover and understand ourselves and our society. The Dubai Theatre Festival for Youth provides a platform for the youth of this country to express themselves creatively and artistically. Events like these are a critical part of DCAA's effort to raise the quality of cultural life in Dubai." His Excellency Dr. Omar Bin Sulaiman, Governor of the DIFC and Managing Director of DCAA, said: "The Dubai Theatre Festival for Youth is born out of our commitment to provide opportunities for young people in Dubai to showcase their artistic talent. As part of promoting art, we are keen not only to encourage accomplished artists but also young people who show enthusiasm for art forms like theatre. We invite the widest possible range of young people to take advantage of the opportunities provided at the Festival."

Apart from plays, the festival will also feature workshops conducted by stage directors and choreographers on acting skills, set design, trussing and lighting.

The festival will give away awards in 12 categories including theatrical production, director, script, actor in a leading role, actress in a leading role, actor in a supporting role, actress in a supporting role, set design, lighting, sound effects and music makeup. The jury that will select the awards is set to be announced by the DCAA by the end of this month. A special category on 'media's choice for best play' will also be included as part of the festival, which will bring colour, spectacle and entertainment to the wider public of the UAE.



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 - Condition Based Monitoring of equipment
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- Investigates, analyzes and resolves the causes of failures and initiates action to eliminate similar failures in the future.
- Recommends training programs to improve craft skill, to support Yemenization, and to improve overall efficiency. Works with the Company's Training department and Maintenance Training Co-ordinators to coordinate both on-the-job and formal training programs for personnel in this section
- Reviews administrative functions including recommendations for salary changes, promotion, disciplinary action, leaves of absence within the limits of Company rules and policies.
- Maintains constant attention to all aspects of safe operation and working of his section, ensuring that safe working practices and compliance with Company EHS policies and Procedures.
- Prepares and manages the Mechanical Maintenance department portion of the Opex and Capex Budget.
- Develops Manpower through the Management of the Skills Ladder and iOP programs
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❖ Applications should be submitted NO later than **August 13th, 2008**. Faxed applications will not be considered.

New southern-based political movement stresses reconciliation, cooperation

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Abdulrahman Al-Sakkaf is one of the founding members of a movement called the Democratic Initiative for Change and Construction, which is applying to become a new Yemeni political party.

The movement started with a group of Yemenis from the southern governorates desiring to stress reconciliation and cooperation rather than silence and secession.

Al-Sakkaf, who is originally from Hadramout, sat down to explain the movement and its goals for Yemen's future.



Abdulrahman Al-Sakkaf

We first want to know about this Democratic Initiative for Change and Construction, so what is it?

The Democratic Initiative for Change and Construction is a burgeoning political party comprised from a broad national line-up representing all societal groups. Its members have a strong belief in freedom – which is based on democracy – equality in citizenship and social justice as necessities to achieving Yemeni peoples' aspirations to develop, prosper and have decent lives.

So, is this a new party movement and if it's independent, does it have members from all parties and governorates?

The Democratic Initiative is an independent political organization comprised of Yemeni youths with experience in various fields, along with some who have attained high leadership positions both in the ruling and opposition parties. Our movement also includes several cultured writers and university professors, in addition to other important Yemenis from the revolution and unification generations in every governorate. These public figures in the movement's leadership include Dr. Murshid Shamsan, Ahmed Al-Shara'abi, Dr. Mohammed Al-Suroori and Dr. Hussein Bilal.

How many members are in the movement?

Our members – both men and women – who have been recruited into the Democratic Initiative number around 40,000 and is continually increasing. Once declared at our constituents conference to be held soon after we complete legal procedures according to the laws of the Parties Affairs Committee, this number will make it the third largest political party in Yemen after the General People's Congress and the Islah parties.

Our movement views democracy as the optimal way for the nation to get out of its successive predicaments and raise Yemeni society to guarantee freedom and equality. Such democracy also can move the wheels of development in order to achieve social, political and economic progress.

Who is funding the movement, when was it formed and why is still in the establishment phase?

Concerning funding, the movement has decided not to rely on anyone – neither national nor foreign – for financial support, the reason being to protect the movement's decisions and initiatives from others' will. Instead, our movement depends on its members' personal efforts. For this reason, financial matters

have delayed our finding a permanent residence for the movement, forcing it to hold many of its meetings in hotel conference rooms.

The Yemeni government is supposed to provide whatever the multiparty system requires, as stipulated by the fifth article of the Yemeni Constitution, which states that the regime in the Republic of Yemen is based on a multiparty system.

The Democratic Initiative's introduction notes that Yemen currently is experiencing a conflict-of-interest crisis. Who is this conflict between – the Yemeni government and the opposition?

Talking about the correlation of conflict in order to attain power, our current political situation leads us to recall from our collective national memory the events and methods of Yemeni politics since revolution broke out in September and October 1962. Those events are considered the introduction and reasons for the deterioration of the political situation we're witness today as a result of those practices.

Following this revolution, upon which Yemenis relied to get out from under tyranny and the remnants of backward times, a civil war erupted in North Yemen that continued for many years. However, this conflict wasn't restricted to just the two warring sides – republicans and imamates – rather, there also were conflicts within the republican circle itself.

By the end of this civil war, the conflict for power extended to a series of military coups and this scene in North Yemen witnessed similarities in the south.

All of these events wasted much time and effort, besides the huge damages they inflicted upon the nation and its citizens. Moreover, the revolution's morale began to vanish because the prospective project didn't see the light of day and the revolution's aims weren't achieved.

There were conflicts on both sides of

Yemen, with the situation being aggravated and broadened in many forms due to continuous hindering of development projects. These various power conflicts were in the civil war between the two parts of the country.

With Yemeni unification came hope for a change for the better. However, the events since then haven't given much hope, as the same interactions returned in different forms to confirm that this way of dealing with things isn't the right one.

It's right that some within the opposition parties accept the government's stance on issues that don't serve the nation's supreme interests. Nevertheless, this coalition gathering the General People's Congress and the Islah Party to vote for the same presidential candidate, as well as the constitutional amendments in 1999, was reversed upon forming the Joint Meeting Parties.

Generally speaking, political relationships between the ruling and opposition parties are taking the abovementioned path of renewed conflict. This cycle of confusion won't end unless there's a real democracy based on the partnership of all peoples to get through the difficult situation and achieve future aspirations based on legal unanimity, which is one reason for establishing our movement.

Members of the ruling party created the current crisis in Sa'ada; the opposition had nothing to do with this war. In your opinion, what are the sides of conflict in Yemen?

Regarding the Sa'ada events, citizens know that the Houthis movement was no secret to the Yemeni government since it began. It's also clear that this movement has resorted to the memory of history and the geography of Sa'ada – the previous metropolis of the imamates – in order to reestablish long-gone regimes.

During the past four years, confrontations between the two sides have occurred repeatedly. While we don't know what the government will do during this period of truce, what the other

side will do during this time is clear.

Some official practices may have had a role in agitating the last war. The picture may become clearer if we consider the explosions and assassinations that occurred prior to the war. Whatever side committed these disgraceful acts bears the responsibility for them and their consequences. Investigating those accountable for renewing this war is the government's task.

The Democratic Initiative desires to create a new Constitution, but what's the problem with the current one? What are its shortcomings, both in general and in detail, and will creating a new one solve these problems?

As we know, since humankind began establishing ways to regulate society, regimes have been formed and developed over the course of time and throughout history. Philosophers worked a lot, particularly during the Golden Age, on the issue of society so that people would have their rights. Thus, this method specifies the form of the regime and the involved authorities, as well as regulates the relationships between those authorities.

Apart from a society's historical roots, its people are the natural source of a regime and its legislation. Therefore, it's necessary for all society members, including political parties, civil organizations and social leaders, to participate in and agree upon its Constitution. The development and construction process then begins to be supported by a unanimous legislative authority, which achieves the people's supreme interest.

When large segments of society don't participate or take part in issues, particularly if the issue concerns them as citizens, there will be rebellion against the regime and legislation is wasted. This is one of the problems with our current Constitution. There are many sensitive issues in this regard, such as the effects of the 1994 Civil War and the incessant fighting in Sa'ada.

Activities in the southern governorates are just one aspect indicating a

crisis and a feeling that there's no justice and that others are deliberately marginalized. Thus, the tension now is between the government and the opposition, in addition to the violence that has begun there and includes confrontations between Houthis and the government.

There's a continuous need to save this nation from sliding into the unknown, but this can happen only through constructive dialogue and public partnership, which our initiative calls for, in addition to the government and all other stakeholders dealing with these issues earnestly.

The Democratic Initiative is working to gather all current political parties, but some groups aren't represented by parties, although they are part of our nation. How do you suggest integrating Yemeni peoples' interests within the framework of reconciliation between the political parties?

Our initiative calls on political parties and all others to sit at the national dialogue table and participate objectively because the issue is related to the national and popular fate and applying the agreed-upon results. This doesn't contradict the independence of the political parties, but rather, strengthens their necessary roles.

Our initiative notes that the main bodies concerned are the ruling GPC and the JMP, but this doesn't mean others are excluded. Our initiative places national unity as its first aim, while stressing the participation of all social figures, intellectuals and political parties.

Further, we emphasize the importance of leaders' participation in order to move from the cycle of conflict to dialogue. All will benefit from this historical national project because the people are the owners of this interest because this matter concerns everyone.

Lastly, I want to reiterate that the Democratic Initiative is based on national unity and constructive partnership and it is from this idea that our initiative takes its name.

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Vacancy for reporters and editors

Yemen Times is seeking to employ full time reporters and editors to work at the newspaper's editorial department starting from September 2008.

Requirements for reporters/ journalists:

- Excellent command of English and Arabic writing, speaking and reading
- Ability to move around and do field work
- Good research, investigation and communication skills

Requirements for editors:

- Experience in editing and revising stories and reports
- Excellent command of English and Arabic writing, speaking and reading
- Ability to move around and do field work
- Good research, investigation and communication skills

Interested candidates should send their resumes along with a 300 words essay as to why they want to work with Yemen Times Editorial department to yteditor@gmail.com no later than 15 August 2008.



Vacancy Announcement for National Personnel for the GTZ Office Sana'a (PN 1998.9272.0-001.00)

Accountant – GTZ Office Sana'a

Responsibilities

- Carries out accounting procedures using corporate accounting software and prepares monthly/journals/balance sheets/bank reconciliation statements
- Sends monthly journals and account balances to the Principal Adviser and to GTZ HQ
- Distribution of cost and income sheets to principal advisors

Internal Control:

- Reviews the classification of all vouchers/receipts according to completeness and to cost centres/cost category/legal as sent by the projects and corrects them if required.
- Supports the chief accountants in internal control matters and preparation of the internal control reports according to GTZ guidelines.

General Services to the GTZ Office Sana'a

- Maintains office inventory records
- Processes claims for travel expenses
- Controls accuracy of Telephone and Fax Internal Invoices

Qualifications & Requirements:

Formal Education: BA in Accounting and Auditing or comparable qualification

Professional Experience: At least 2 years of professional working experience in a similar position

Other Qualifications:

- Experience with IT-based accounting programs
- Good working knowledge of modern telecommunication systems
- Native Arabic speaker, fluent in spoken and written professional English.

Interested candidates of suitable qualification and with the required work documents are invited to send their application and CV both in English and Arabic latest by **10th August 2008** to:

By mail:

The GTZ Office Sana'a
Human Resources Officer
Vacancy Announcement "Accountant – GTZ Office Sana'a"

By Fax:

Vacancy Announcement "Accountant – GTZ Office Sana'a"
Fax number: (00967-1) 412 539

By E-mail:

Vacancy Announcement "Accountant – GTZ Office Sana'a"
e-mail address: gtz-jemen@gtz.de

Only short listed applicants will be invited for interview.



Invitation for International Bid

The International Telecommunication Company (TeleYemen) announces its interest to invite bidders to bid no. (TY/EMS/PP2-08) for:

Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) supply, installation, commissioning

and dismantling services at TeleYemen Gurraf site in Sana'a

Bids must be sealed, received by 8/10/2008 at 11:00 am, and submitted by registered mail (Courier -express mail) in three (3) copies to:

Purchasing & Contracting Department

26th September St.

P.O. Box 168

TeleYemen

Sana'a, Yemen

Telephone: +967 777009410.

- Interested bidders can submit their request to buy the bid documents during the working hours to the above contact address
- The bid documents cost will be (\$ 200) non-refundable.
- The deadline for obtaining the bid documents will be 10 September 2008.
- All bidders must submit the following with their bids:
 - 1- A bid security equal to \$ 25,000, which can be in the form of either a certified check, or an irrevocable bank guarantee from a reputable bank
 - 2- A Valid tax certificate
 - 3- A Valid registration and classification certificate

The deadline for bids submission and opening will be 8/10/2008 at 11:00 am. Bids opening will take place at TeleYemen Headquarter, Sep. Building, 26th Sep Street.



Invitation for Bid

The International Telecommunication Company (TeleYemen) announces its interest to invite bidders to bid no. (TY/MKT/2-08) for:

Marketing and Advertising Services Supply

Bids must be sealed, received by 23/8/2008 at 11:00 am, and submitted by registered mail (Courier -express mail) in three (3) copies to:

Purchasing & Contracting Department

26th September St.

P.O. Box 168

TeleYemen

Sana'a, Yemen

Telephone: +967 777009410.

- Interested bidders can submit their request to obtain the bid documents during the working hours to the above contact address
- The deadline for obtaining the bid documents will be 3 August 2008.
- All bidders must submit the following with their bids:
 - 1- A bid security equal to \$ 5,000, which can be in the form of either a certified check, or an irrevocable bank guarantee from a reputable bank
 - 2- A Valid tax certificate
 - 3- A Valid registration and classification certificate

The deadline for bids submission and opening will be 23/8/2008 at 11:00 am. Bids opening will take place at TeleYemen Headquarter, Sep. Building, 26th Sep Street.

I want my Al Jazeera

By: Jalal Ghazi
New America Media

If you live in Israel, you can watch Al Jazeera English because its two largest cable systems, Yes TV and HOT Television, have bounced both CNN International and BBC World News in favor of Al Jazeera English.

If you live in Britain, you can also watch Al Jazeera English but you can't watch FOX News because in the eyes of the British regulatory watchdog, Fox has failed to meet the minimum requirement of regulatory licensing laws of objective and neutral news. However, if you live in the United States, you can't watch Al Jazeera because major American cable systems, including Time Warner Cable, Comcast and Fox Reality, have refused to carry Al Jazeera English.

Townhall meeting

If Americans want to watch Al Jazeera, they must buy a satellite dish from GlobeCast, a division of France Telecom. Toledo, Ohio, is one of the only two American cities that offers its residents the opportunity to watch Al Jazeera on their cable system, the other being Vermont's largest city, Burlington.

Recently, Al Jazeera English has been the center of a public debate in Burlington on whether it should stay in their city-owned cable system or be taken off the air. The residents that attended the public meeting were in a way the American jury deciding the fate of Al Jazeera for their town but symbolically for the United States. Al Jazeera understands the significance of this event, which explains why it was the main featured story of its media watch program, The Listening Post.

Al Jazeera English also sent two representatives to defend the television station: Al Jazeera English Managing Director Tony Burman and Josh Rushing, a former Marine spokesperson who served as a Marine Corps media liaison for 14 years before turning to Al Jazeera English. Rushing, who helped sell the war in Iraq to the American public as a Marine spokesperson, is now one of most effective spokesmen for Al Jazeera.

The controversy over Al Jazeera English started in May when Burlington Telecom's General Manager Chris Burns decided to drop the channel from the

municipally-owned telecommunications company due to the large number of complaints. However, Mayor Bob Kiss demanded that the channel not be pulled out until city residents had a chance to express their views.

Two separate forums were organized in late May and mid-June where citizens were given a platform to express their views about Al Jazeera English before Burlington Telecom's two oversight committees: the Telecommunications Advisory Committee and the Cable Advisory Council.

Heated debate

On June 26, Burlington Free Press.com reported that the two oversight committees jointly and unanimously recommended that the city-owned cable system maintain Al Jazeera English. In their recommendations, the committees said that much of the testimony against Al Jazeera English at the two heavily attended public forums seemed to have been "based on secondary sources," and that there was no evidence that the station condones terrorism, anti-Semitism or calls for the destruction of Israel. Such accusations were made by the Israel Center for Vermont and the Defenders Council of Vermont.

The public debates were very heated but in the process they brought to the surface a very important point. The Vermonters who defended Al Jazeera were not necessarily doing so only because they want to hear the Arab perspective on major world events, but rather because they saw Al Jazeera's award-winning news program as a viable alternative source of real news to mainstream television stations in the United States.

Rory O'Connor from Mediachannel.org told Al Jazeera English, "It is important to see the struggle that is going on now in Burlington as part of a larger struggle for media reform here in the United States, for voices, for more choices and for more diversity.

It is not that people want to subscribe to Al Jazeera English so they will follow, let us say, the politics of Al Jazeera English. They want to get other viewpoints and unfortunately there are not enough diverse viewpoints available on the American television airwaves."

Proud to be informed



Many citizens echoed this sentiment during the public debates.

One woman said, "I want to start by saying that I'm Jewish. In Israel, Al Jazeera English is one of the largest stations in the entire country. I sincerely hope that you think in terms of the freedom to listen to whatever is around."

Another woman said, "I kind of take pride that Burlington is one of the only American cities that has Al Jazeera and that is because we stand for freedom. We stand for an informed public."

Unlike most Americans, Vermonters who can watch Al Jazeera English in Burlington's cable system have come to appreciate the value of getting diverse news.

Al Jazeera, which has 70 bureaus and now reaches the homes of more than 110 million people worldwide, has beaten entrances by BBC News, Sky News, Lisboa TV and the Phoenix Satellite Television Co., and won the award for "Best 24 Hour News Program" at the prestigious 48th Monte Carlo Television Festival on June 14, 2008.

Tony Birtley's "Inside Myanmar - The Crackdown" won Best News Documentary and James Bays' "Taliban Embedded" was awarded a second place in the category of Best TV Item.

The Best 24 Hour News Program award is a testimony that English Al Jazeera is setting a higher standard for global news, in the same way that Al Jazeera Arabic service has set a higher standard for news in the Middle East.

Everywoman

If Al Jazeera beat BBC and Sky News, then U.S. channels like Fox and CNN simply do not have a chance. If Al Jazeera English was shown in America, these channels would have to provide more in-depth coverage, and depend less on local or embedded journalists.

Al Jazeera also has proven to be a serious competitor to public broadcast service channels in the United States by providing in-depth reports about different parts of the United States. One episode of a program called "Inside U.S.A" talked about gentrification in Harlem, New York, bringing attention to the plight of African-Americans who are being uprooted from their homes and stores to make space for more well to do tenants from [Manhattan.]

Another episode of a program called Everywoman focused on the plight of U.S. ex-servicewomen fighting against health care bureaucracy, unemployment, and high housing costs.

Most importantly, Al Jazeera English offers a wide variety of global programs bridging the gap between people of different countries, religions and cultures. As an example, Everywoman programs often juxtapose the plight of women from different cultures, religions and nationalities.

One episode juxtaposed the plight of American Muslim sorority sisters with the plight of beauty pageant contestants competing for the title of Ms. Senior America. Other episodes showed American cowgirls competing, riding

rodeo bulls, and Muslim women competing in soccer and car racing games.

What is unique about these reports is the fact that they are made by reporters on the ground who are familiar with the areas they are reporting on.

Six to one in favor of Al Jazeera

In one episode of Everywoman, the Israeli reporter Shira Livi tells the story of a 28-year-old Bedouin woman Sara who lost custody of her seven children to her drug addict husband. Sara picked Livi, who is a Jewish Israeli reporter, to tell her story and she told it in Hebrew, not Arabic. Livi was able to capture the complexity of the challenges facing an Arab woman living inside a tribal society in the heart of Israel.

Regardless of any perceived notions one may have about Al Jazeera, if Americans are given an opportunity to watch Al Jazeera English like Vermonters in Burlington were, they will most likely respond positively.

Sandra Baird, a lawyer and university professor, told Al Jazeera English, "At those public hearings [in Burlington] one noticed that the people that came out were hugely in favor of Al Jazeera. I counted the speakers the other night. It

was six to one in favor of Al Jazeera."

According to Tony Burman, former editor in chief of the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) and now the managing director of Al Jazeera English, the station's website gets around six million hits a week worldwide, and more than 60 percent of these hits come from the United States. Burman added that "a lot of Al Jazeera's negotiations that are going on now are going quite well." He attributed this to the fact that the television station is becoming better known among cable distributors.

The Burlington Telecom's two oversight committees support Burman's view.

In their recommendations, they noted that in the two heavily attended public forums they "witnessed a compelling preponderance of subscribers and potential subscribers requesting that BT not drop Al Jazeera English."

This article was republished with permission from New America Media, a subsidiary of Pacific News Service. Jalal Ghazi is the associate producer of the Peabody Award-winning show, "Mosaic: World News from the Middle East," and writer of the column "Eye on Arab Media" for New America Media.



EMBASSY OF INDIA, SANA'A

INDEPENDENCE DAY 2008

The Embassy of India, Sana'a cordially invites all Indian nationals in the Republic of Yemen, along with their families, to join in the celebrations of 62nd Independence Day of India on Friday, the 15th August, 2008 at 0845 hrs. at the Embassy premises (Building No. 12, Djibouti Street, Off-Haddah Street, Sana'a).

(Cameras/Mobile Phones/bags etc. not allowed).



EMBASSY OF INDIA



BHANGRA GROUP FROM PUNJAB CULTURAL SOCIETY, INDIA

EMBASSY OF INDIA is organising a "BHANGRA (a traditional and very popular dance form of Punjab, a State of North India) PERFORMANCE" from Punjab Cultural Society, India, in Sana'a, Dhamar, Hodeidah and Aden, under the auspices of the **INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS (ICCR), Government of India.**

City	Venue	Date	Time
Sana'a	Cultural Centre, Al-Edha'ah (Radio) Street.	Tuesday, 5th August, 2008	7.00 PM
Dhamar	Conference Hall, Thamar University	Wednesday 6th August, 2008	4.00 PM
Hodeidah	Cultural Centre, Next to old Governorate	Thursday, 7th August, 2008	6.30 PM
Aden	Palestine Hall.	Friday, 8th August, 2008	6.30 PM

ENTRY FREE

“Citizen journalists are playing a big role in the Arab world”

"Citizen journalists report on how the world really is," says Sashi Kumar, Chairman of the Media Development Foundation at the Asian College of Journalism in India. Kumar, along with Nahla Al Shahhal, a freelance journalist contributing to the Al Hayat daily in Lebanon; Ayman Al-Sayyad, editor-in-chief of Egypt's Weghat Nazar magazine; and Jihad Al Khazen, a columnist for the Al Hayat daily in London, spoke with APN about the swell of citizen journalism in the Arab world.

Al Shahhal, Kumar, Al-Sayyad and Al Khazen participated as panellists at the Arab Media Forum 2008. In their respective panels, titled "Freedom - the new battle-front for Arab cyber media," "Pushing Technology Boundaries," and "Are Transformations Breaking the Traditional Mould of Arab Media?" they discussed how technology has resulted in a surge of citizen journalism in the Arab world.

What exactly is citizen journalism?

Kumar explains that the term implies that "the function of news making belongs to the public sphere." Al-Sayyad elaborates further, clarifying that citizen journalists "are members of the general public who provide news materials, albeit outside the framework of professional journalism, such as bloggers or the public (eye witnesses) who provide pictures or video footage of incidents in the areas in which they live."

Citizen journalism is flourishing in the Arab world today where, as Al Khazen pointed out, the "trend is toward independent newspapers and electronic press. Arab countries are now allowing for independent and privately owned media." Access to the Internet has expanded rapidly throughout the new millennium and many active citizens have seized the opportunity to use technology to their advantage; giving the world a different taste of how life is in their region than the mainstream publications are providing.

"They have more compassion and understanding of the current events they're experiencing [than professional

journalists]," Kumar tells APN.

The increase in Arab consumers using the Internet has spurred many governments to limit access and broaden their control over the technology. Khazen spoke at the Arab Media Forum of the restrictions on mainstream media but clarifies to APN that "citizen journalists have far less restrictions."

"They must be doing a good job too because they're annoying Arab governments," Al Khazen jests. "They cannot control the blogs."

Despite controls and limitations that some Arab states have tried to place on the Internet, freelance journalists Al Shahhal boasts that the Arab world has the highest percentage of bloggers and citizen journalists in the world. Touching upon the influence of citizen journalists, she proceeds to say that it was the expansive network of bloggers in the country that orchestrated the general strike that swept Egypt on 6 April. "They told people to stay at home that day," she explained. "It gives you an idea of the power of bloggers."

Since the bloggers initiated the general strike they have also adopted the responsibility of reporting on it. "The recent labour strikes in Egypt have not been covered except by the bloggers who happened to be there in large numbers," says Al-Sayyad, of Egypt's Weghat Nazar magazine.

"Citizen journalists are playing a big role in the Arab world," Kumar stated. Particularly in areas of the region that are currently unstable, Kumar emphasized the importance of citizen journalists, not only to disseminate the news through

their own methods - be it blogs, mobile networks or newsletters - but also to give professional journalists stationed in the area a "real idea of what is happening on the ground."

"Professional journalists can't really report from the five-star hotels they're kept in," Kumar mused. "Citizen journalists report on how the world really is."

While speaking at the Arab Media Forum, Kumar had brazenly stated that "truth is only coming through citizen journalism," a statement that he qualifies to APN by explaining that, in the Arab world, "professional journalism is artificial and stagnated - there is no free media in the Gulf." He continues to clarify that the emergence of citizen journalism is countering the "pre-emptive censorship and sins of omission" of professional journalists in the region. "Professional journalism is being challenged; there is a paradigm-shift taking place. The people are now able to speak to power with modern technology."

Al Shahhal does not entirely agree with Kumar's suggestion that citizen journalists are the sole harbingers of truth in the region. "There are newspapers with a large margin of independence and freedom," she says, naming the relatively young Al Akhbar daily in Beirut and the Al Masri Al Youm daily in Egypt as two examples. The website of the former has become one of the most popular online Arab news sources since its establishment less than two years ago. Despite these examples of liberty Al Shahhal does admit to there being "many taboos and red lines."

Where the two do agree is on the necessity for a free web. Speaking of the importance of the Internet, Kumar says that the web should be free and open. "It's the best approximation we have to a public sphere; open irrespective of creed or class."

The Arab Media Forum 2008 was held in Dubai on 23-24 April. Hosted by the Dubai Press Club, the 7th annual Forum

was themed "Bridging Arab Media Through Technology" and focused on the impact of new technologies on the dynamics of the media industry.

Source: Menssat

Ministry of Education (MoE)
Project Administration Unit (PAU)
Basic Education Development Project (BEDP)
Credit No. 3988-Yem & Grant No. TF-053721

Request for Expressions of Interest For Consulting Services for conducting a Random Sample survey of 500 schools in Yemen

The objective of this consultancy is to assess the quality of the data collection by each data collection method and estimation of the magnitude of error between actual and reported in the different data collected for (2004/05-2008/09). The survey should serve two similar but distinct objectives: (i) A survey of randomly selected 500 schools is to check the quality of the data collected by the MoE using the AES-WBS combined method for this year (2008/09); and (ii) Last 4 years of data (2004/05-2007/08) for the same 500 schools will be collected and checked with the MOE data already collected and reported to show which data collection methodology contained how much gap between the actual and the reported.

This request for Expressions of interest follow the General procurement Notice for this project that appeared in the development Business and Dg Market dated of Feb 2, 2005 .The Ministry of Education (MOE) ,Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this to payments under the contract for the above –consulting service.

The Project Administration Unit now invites eligible consulting Firms to indicate their interest in providing the service for conducting a Random Sample survey of 500 schools. Interested consulting Firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the service profiles, description of similar assignments, experience in similar assignment, experience in similar conditions ,availability of appropriate skills, etc. And experience in Yemen and other countries in the region.

The selection of the Consulting Firms will be made in accordance with the procedure set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: "Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, May 2004". Interested consultants may obtain further information during working days Sat. –Wed. From 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the address below to which the expression of interest must be delivered by August 30, 2008.

Basic Education Development project
60 m Southern Rd-Bait Meyad
TEL:00967-01-619160, FAX:00967-01-619219 or to
Email: The project Director: a.al-arashi@y.net.ye

Criticism necessary to establish national partnership

By: Raddad Al-Salami

Many people can not tolerate criticism despite the fact that it is tolerable and soft most of the time. Criticism usually provokes fury and irritation when the targeted individual loses trust in himself/herself. This kind of person gets enraged by criticism instead of utilizing it to develop his/her personal skills and trust.

Lack of a serious effort to avoid any notable limitation in the performance of a political organization, particular individual or group may be the direct result of indifference toward promoting mutual criticism or utilizing any available criticism.

In our country, criticism is pondered upon as a sort of scandal and exposition, as well as insult and humiliation. This is how criticism is looked at. Also, criticism, exposition, frankness and saying the truth is the kind of task that must not be used except in private. This vision helped accumulate mistakes and make matters go from bad to worse. As a result, motives of credibility and transparency have become infected with

atrophy and degeneration, while the language of hypocrisy and complement and concealing facts behind our behaviors, practices and thought have turned to pervade our environment.

This is the primary reason why community awareness have become counterfeited and governed by deception, hypocrisy, complement and threats that don't place individuals and groups face to face with their faults and mistakes. Consequently, this fatale game continues to grow and float in the scope of self-deception.

This game is the origin of making change and progress forward. Notable lethargy seems to be affecting forces and institutions of the community and surround it with blindness and phantom that contradict credibility, correct vision and transparency, which are indispensable for advancement and progress toward what helps enhance construction values, establish civil society and create better tomorrow.

Multiple purposes and motives of criticism:

Criticism has multiple purposes and motives, but remains very important irrespective of its purpose because self-confidence, be it on the part of individ-

uals or groups, is what can deal well with this kind of criticism in way helping parties involved benefit from criticism, based on the a Holy Quran verse reading: "Those who listen to what is being said and utilize the best of it." As a result, the parties involved establish a unique self-sensation to differentiate between the malignant and benign. They begin adopting the idea of construction and abandoning the idea of destruction.

Adopting what is right and ignoring what is wrong according to a well-established criterion determining significance or insignificance of criticism is thought of as an urgent necessity amid the current situation of quick steps and multiple transformations. The current situation is changeable and complicated, annuls passiveness and motionless, but on the other hand, produces new challenges.

Getting things based on a fixed strategy is what helps make criticism an urgent necessity too since this modifies, adds, slows down and accelerates progress of things amid the currently changeable situation tightening thought in a critical circle that never serve strategic objectives.

Criticism is a constructive tool for improving, developing and dismantling

self-complexes experienced by individuals and groups. It constitutes an effective coalition to overcome any obstacles facing development and progress, as well as leads to creating a consensus on what people should differ over and agree upon.

Criticism helps resolve any deadlocks and crises, and end claims of the absolute hold of reality, which becomes a detestable ideology that doesn't give a chance for facts, thoughts and postulates to exist. It also enhances coexistence with what dynamites transcendent ideological shrines as a result of excessive individualism and absolute discrimination.

In addition, criticism facilitates the process of social integration, diversity, difference, variety and vision of oneself and others from various angels. It makes a real national partnership having equal citizenship as its basic criterion regardless of the different viewpoints, thoughts, traditions and visions that eventually reorganize in a collective national frame based on democracy as a mechanism to control differences, varieties, multiplicity and the peaceful transfer of power.

Source: Al-Tagheer.com

Three decades of Saleh's pragmatism and tribalism

By: AbdulSalam Al-Qarari

H.E. President of the Republic Ali Abdullah Saleh marked this month the 30th anniversary of his presidency that meets the 17th of July. Throughout his three decades of leadership Yemen has witnessed several upheavals. His leadership has great influence on the country's politics over the past 30 years and will continue to have impacts on the Yemeni political landscape for several years ahead.

The main characteristics that have featured president Saleh's reign can be boiled into: Pragmatism and Tribalism. In fact, it was his tribal oriented character that propelled him into the helm of power, on 17th of July 1978. Driven by his tribal sense and motives, the junior lieutenant had initiated to undertake the leadership to avenge his president Ahmed Al-Ghashmy's assassination that said to be president Salim Rabee'a of the southern part of the country was blamed for.

Then, Saleh had come to power with a retaliatory agenda, at least at that moment, and not with a visionary political and economic platform. Yet, he was really too brave and adventurer to assume the office at that turbulent time, notwithstanding his primary real motivation, whether to lead the country to the safe anchor or to carry out his reprisal. Many of his colleagues and fellows suspected that he would face the fate of his predecessors, not long time later.

The young ambitious commander of Taiz-brigade, with no career as a politician and not to mention the lack of academic studies of statecraft, had managed to command the approval of the General Assembly to steer the ship. Soon, he had proven out to a man of great potential as a pragmatic leader. He had already learned the rules of the game very quickly-particularly, in the area of security.

How has he managed to hold on the top job for three decades? It can be said with quite certainty that he has been very pragmatic at both domestic and regional levels. He has never had a permanent foe or ally, neither locally nor regionally. He has been ready to make concessions, to accept half-way solutions and to forge temporary coalitions as well as to reach a compromise as long as that serve his own policy and doesn't target his own power.

He has opted for an appeasement and reconciliatory approach to contain the potential opposition groups. He had begun with forging an inextricable link with the main influential tribal figures around the country, most important of all the late Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Al-Ahamer. Then, he had pursued an active cooperation with the Islamist groups to fight the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP). After that he had created the General People Congress (GPC) to include: leading politicians of all political stripes, social dignitaries and prominent sheiks.

Not long time later, he seemed as if he had come to power to carry out a specific regional and international agenda, to counter the socialism in southern part of Arabian Peninsula. To this end, he had been offered all required resources. Yemen was the

largest recipient for direct and indirect financial assistance from the Gulf states, in the 1980s.

In exchange, the regime in Sana'a under president Saleh had devoted its security and intelligence capacities to crack down pro-Aden regime of socialist and secularist oriented politicians and intellectuals. The younger generations were overwhelmingly exposed to an aggressive anti-socialism, communism and secularism campaign all the time, in schools, mosques and media. Religious scholars, preachers and teachers were given a free hand to attack (YSP) and preach intensively the Wahabi-style of Islamic attitudes. That was really a blunder as it has started to backfire seriously.

His pragmatism had actually helped him to deal reasonably with the regional and international powers. In the first decade of his presidency, his pragmatic manner enabled him to effectively manipulate the political forces in the domestic scene, thus to bring a relative political and economic stability in the north of the country, thanks to the generous financial support of the Gulf nations. To his great credit, his pragmatism had already played a key role in Yemen's re-union. This great achievement, indeed, covers all defects that might be a by-product of his pragmatic approach and policy.

The bad news, is that both his tribalism and pragmatism were counterproductive. Since the early years of the second decade of his ruling, his tribal-style leadership has been causing huge damage to the country's economy, stability and image. While pragmatism in politics is a norm, tribalism is lethal. Remember, when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, Yemeni leadership led by president Saleh had acted tribally. That tribal reaction to that Arab catastrophe had nothing to do with politics, in deed, Saleh was given in to his tribal sense rather than his proven pragmatism. That uncalculated maneuver had opened pondera -box for Yemenis who had to pay high price for his tribal attitude.

Tribalism has been steadily and increasingly promoted under president Saleh. Today sheikhs and tribal figures yield much more influence than intellectuals, politicians and community leaders. His 30 years leadership has largely tribalised the state's institutions in terms of manners of leadership, management and function. This can be seen clearly in the Parliament. He also has inspired great deal of tribal oriented actions, such as vengeance and kidnapping, to mention few.

In short, his pragmatism has largely enabled him to put northern local opposition under control in 1980s, to defeat southern rivals in 1990s, to do away with his partners in the early years of the recent decade. Meanwhile, his tribalism has seriously undermined his pragmatism. Hence, has constantly failed to build an institutionalized state, enforce the rule of law and bring up good governance.

AbdulSalam Al-Qarari is the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Afaq Gadidah Magazine.

Who will be wanted after Al-Bashir?

By: Moneer Al-Mawri

Regular readers of writings and dialogues on the web-site with regard to the international arrest memorandum expected to be released against Sudanese leader Omar Al-Bashir will get surprised by the fact that Yemeni websites in or outside Yemen are not less cheerful than the Sudanese in terms of commenting on the ordeal faced by the Sudanese President and his rule.

Cheerful Yemenis never care about Al-Bashir, nor do they care about what has happened in Darfur or what is happening in the south or east of Sudan. In fact, they are concerned about crimes of the ongoing war in north Yemen, as well as potential war crimes in south Yemen. They fear that this sort of crimes may lead to releasing an international memorandum to cap-

ture Yemeni leaders, who don't enjoy political and military powers, but give orders to troops to devastate villages and annihilate women and children.

This will not happen in Yemen in the prospective future due to the following reasons:

First: The multiple internal events in Yemen and the approaching date for change from within the regime will not give the relevant international forces enough time to pave the way for international public opinion to issue an arrest memo against a legally elected statesman, according to the testimony of international powers. This may work if the statesman retains his post until the international forces learn about what he commits against his people.

Second: The Yemeni regime succeeded in imposing a complete information blackout on what has been happening in Sa'ada by preventing media personnel,

be they local or foreign reporters, from approaching the governorate. On the contrary, Houthis failed to use modern video cameras to take pure photos for events that may help condemn the regime at the international level, particularly as it orders service troops to destroy citizens' homes and property, and kill women and children.

Although the available photo is of bad quality, Houthis' media instrument has focused on the destruction of tanks and burning of armored vehicles in a way priding themselves in lieu of delivering more important facts (photos for genocides) to the international public opinion.

Third: With regard to the South Part of Yemen, it seems that the regime began covering crimes committed against citizens like it did on July 7 when it held a street vendor with the military rank of a major accountable for the killing of several protesters in Aden with the intention of achieving two important objectives. Objective one is to deliver a message of intimidation to citizens of this part with the content: "Those who joint protests will not escape live bullets."

Objective two is to acquit the authority of flagrant crimes it has so far committed against citizens in South Yemen. The street vendor, however, was labeled as a criminal because he fired randomly in the air when policemen hunted him. He did so in order to avoid killing any of the protesters, particularly as he is one of them.

Fourth: Weakness of Yemeni opposition abroad, as well as its need for the capacity to fund and recruit pressure groups to promote such a Yemeni issue in the west, and highlight human rights abuses and genocides. This pressure is attributed to notable control of the individual work and loss of trust among opposition leaders abroad, which is why they have become unable even to exploit photos published on www.youtube.com that will raise various questions if they are not adequate evidence to condemn the regime.

Fifth: Regarding the available evidence against Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir in person and members of the security cell affiliated with his regime, one can say that this evidence is strong, according to information obtained from Sudanese sources. This information is supported by documented sound and photos while other information is contained in tapes (footage without sound) leaked from the State's television during Al-Bashir's meeting with top loyal officials in his government.

It didn't appeal to the mind of

Sudanese President that State's Television staff may leak video tapes and deliver them to the International Court. In Yemen, the available evidence may help in uncovering corruption cases, killing or assassination, however, they don't suffice to accuse the regime of committing mass massacres. And, when available, such evidence in Yemen doesn't go beyond the limit of personal notifications taken from leaders involved in power.

Regional and international forces often favor that these leaders remain in their positions since they constitute a precious source for information instead of losing them for the sake of prosecuting the top political leader in the state.

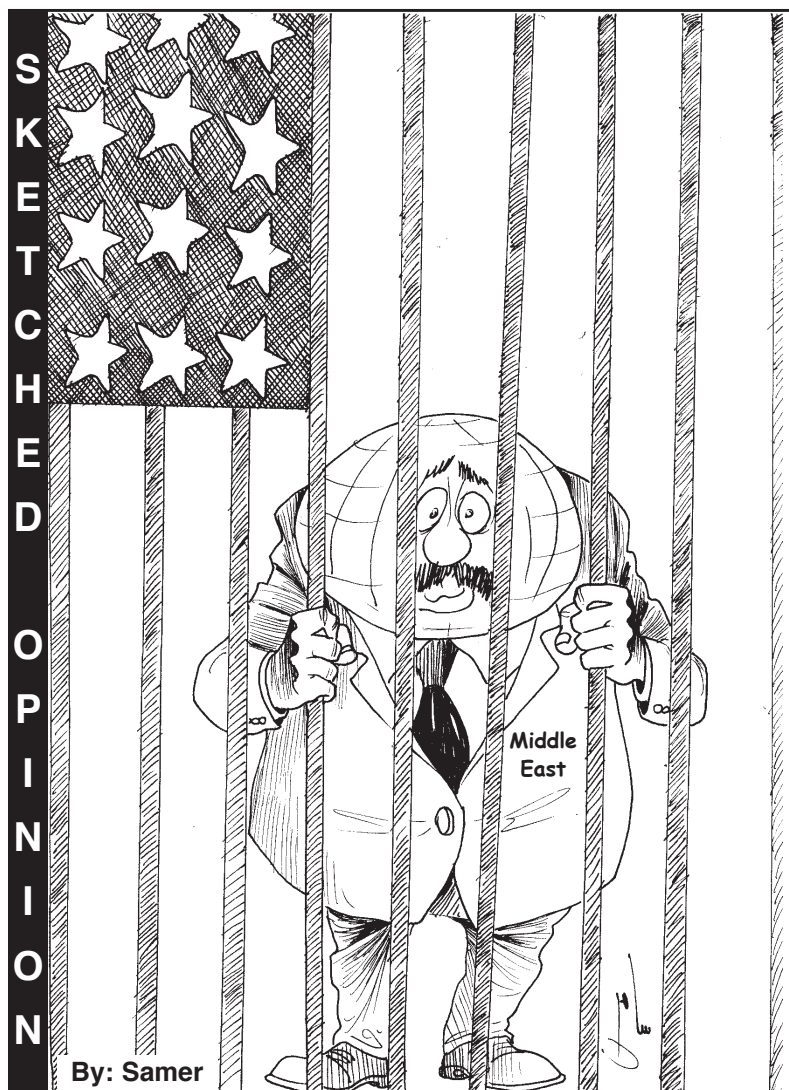
Sixth: Irrespective of the availability or lack of evidence, the primary motive for provoking an issue against members of the Yemeni regime still is absent. It is represented by the desire of world superpowers to topple the regime because prosecuting the top leader in the regime will eventually mean complete fall of the regime. Even if there is an international will to oust the standing fragile regime in our country, there are other means, which are more quick and feasible than waging a legal war due to last up for many years before the international community realizes its outcome.

Yemen opposition not effective:

Clearly, the Yemeni opposition's inability to crystallize an alternative to assure people about their future, and at the same time assure regional and international forces that their interests will remain in safety, still reflects the primary obstacle before sought-after change. In addition, this inability supplies the standing regime with the sort of ammunition it utilizes to fight against its opponents via making the international community fear them.

In conclusion, those, who pin a great hope in the international community or the International Justice Court to insert Yemeni President in the list of leaders wanted by the U.S. Administration for prosecution after the Sudanese leader was added to the list, should wait for a long time period. The best thing for them to do is contemplate on the famous proverb saying, "Nothing may rub your skin like your fingernail does." This is a completed agenda with hast revenue and content in total contrast to an international court subjugated by interests of superpowers that have not even signed the agreement under which the court was established.

Source: Al-Maasdar.com



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Is Yemen at its stability tipping point?

By: Jeremy M. Sharp

It often takes a crisis to rivet our collective attention on problems such as those facing Yemen, a society that seems to be perpetually on the verge of collapse. While it is difficult to tease apart fact and fiction when dealing with Yemen, the country has real problems that need attention from key international players, especially the United States and Saudi Arabia.

Over the past six months, the tone in international media coverage of Yemen has become increasingly apocalyptic. On the security front, the resurgence of Al-Qaeda in Yemen has been well documented via a spate of brazen attacks, leading security experts to warn that the new generation of Yemeni militants will be more lethal than its predecessors.

The failed state narrative, in which Yemen devolves into something resembling Somalia or Afghanistan, has also spread. Yemeni ministers, foreign aid workers, and journalists routinely predict an imminent demise, as food prices skyrocket, drought hurts harvests, the long-running Al-Houthi rebellion in the north drags on, and riots erupt in the south over unresolved grievances stemming from the 1990 reunification of the country.

At the same time scholars (as opposed to journalists and other visitors) reflexively repudiate the idea that Yemen is on the brink of disaster, asserting that President Ali Abdullah Saleh operates in an environment of controlled chaos. Instability, critics allege, is manufactured to garner international sympathy - and external financing.

The old formula for power that made the controlled chaos scenario viable, however, may be changing. The December 2007 death of Sheikh Abdullah Hussein al-Ahmar, a key power-broker and interlocutor between Saleh and the tribal wing of the opposition Islah party, leaves a political void that Yemeni Salafists may attempt to fill. The 2009 parliamentary elections will be a key test in this regard. Presidential succession also clouds Yemen's future. Saleh's term ends in 2013, and the line of possible successors is growing, particularly from within his own extended family.

Among the leading contenders are his son Ahmad and Saleh's half-brother, Brigadier General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, the Commander of the Northwestern Military Flank and an alleged Salafist sympathizer.

Civil society activists and international observers point to signs that the twin pressures of insecurity

and economic stagnation have overwhelmed the authorities and led to curtailment of political freedoms. In June, a state security court sentenced noted independent journalist Abdulkarim al-Khaiwani to six years in prison on a charge of collaborating with Al-Houthi insurgents. Observers believe that the regime targeted Khaiwani for his investigative reporting on the revolt. While in prison, he received an award from Amnesty International for his work.

Yemen's systemic challenges certainly are real and must be taken seriously. Oil production is dropping rapidly and, despite the government's insistence that new fields will be discovered, many promising areas already have been explored. Yemen also has one of the greatest water shortages worldwide.

To keep pace with population growth, Yemen requires a massive infusion of cash and energy to finance and fuel several costly desalination plants.

And yet something more than mere alarmism about Yemen's predicament is needed. Unfortunately, the key international players - the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries - have been unable to formulate a collective long term strategy to save

Yemen from itself. There seems to be no real consensus among the outside powers about whether Yemen faces a heightened risk of instability now and what the consequences of such instability would be.

An ongoing misunderstanding between Yemen and the US about counter-terrorism efforts is a major problem. For nearly a year, US relations with Yemen have been deadlocked over the fate of Jamal al-Badawi, a ringleader in the 2000 USS Cole bombing who was released from prison after swearing allegiance to Saleh and pledging to cooperate against Al-Qaeda.

Critics charge that the government is protecting Badawi, among others, despite repeated US demands for his extradition. Yemen refuses to cave in to American pressure, citing a constitutional ban (Article 44) on extraditing Yemeni citizens to foreign entities, while insisting that the nearly 100 Yemeni prisoners detained in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, be returned to Yemen for "reintegration." US policymakers not only resent Yemen's obstinacy, but feel a visceral sense of injustice knowing that operatives such as Badawi remain at large.

For his part, in a June 2008 New York Times interview, the Yemeni president called the United States "arrogant" for demanding that he

sever ties with known Al-Qaeda supporters.

The Badawi stalemate, coupled with growing US concern about security and political conditions in Yemen, has gone well beyond a war of words to put the entire bilateral relationship into the deep freeze.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation's \$20.6 million threshold program - which was to help Yemen meet standards required for a much larger package of economic development assistance - is suspended. Rocket attacks in spring 2008 on or near compounds where US officials lived, caused the US Embassy in Sanaa to evacuate all non-essential personnel.

And after Khaiwani was sentenced, the US Department of State publicly rebuked the regime, stating that his imprisonment "points to a distressing trend in Yemen of intimidation and prosecution." For Washington, it continues to be difficult to craft an overall policy approach toward Yemen that disaggregates security issues from humanitarian and democratization concerns.

When it comes to Saudi Arabia and the GCC, Yemeni officials use the specter of Iranian meddling in the Al-Houthi conflict to seek support from their Saudi neighbors, who are alarmed by a Shiite insurgency on

their borders.

Although the Saudis have increased both their political and financial support for Yemen in recent years, the rest of the GCC has not been as forthcoming, feeling no real sense of urgency to accelerate Yemen's bid for GCC membership. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether the conditionality attached to Saudi and GCC money will mirror US and Western reform priorities.

The tipping point for Yemeni stability may be approaching, although it also is quite possible that in the years ahead Yemen will muddle through as a ward of Saudi Arabia and the GCC. Either way, who is paying attention? Until its problems spread, a sustainable policy toward Yemen will continue to be caught between crisis and complacency.

Jeremy M. Sharp is a specialist in Middle Eastern affairs at the Congressional Research Service. The views expressed are the author's and not necessarily those of the Congressional Research Service. This commentary is reprinted with permission from the Arab Reform Bulletin, Vol. 6, issue 6 (July 2008) www.CarnegieEndowment.org/ArabReform (c) 2008, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Source: the Daily Star

Serious negotiations or hot confrontation with Iran?

By: Joschka Fischer

For two weeks, it looked like the regime in Iran had finally gotten the message that, if it continues to pursue its nuclear program, serious military confrontation is likely to result. Indeed, there were interesting - and previously unheard of - statements and signals from Teheran that suggested an increased willingness to start negotiating about Iran's nuclear program and regional security issues. And America's decision to send Undersecretary of State William Burns to a meeting with Iran's top nuclear negotiator suggests that those signals are being taken seriously.

But the recent military muscle-flexing with rocket tests and the rejection of a compromise by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad and his foreign minister show that the country's leadership is seriously divided over the strategic line that Iran should pursue.

Iran's leadership still harbors the misconception that Israeli threats against its nuclear facilities are an

expression of the domestic difficulties of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's government. This is plainly wrong. Olmert's government has serious problems, but they are not the reason that the situation between Israel and Iran is coming to a head.

On the contrary, a cross-party consensus exists in Israel concerning Iran's possible nuclear armament and regional hegemony. All sides agree that, unless there is a diplomatic solution, Iran's possession of nuclear weapons must be prevented in good time and by any means necessary. Moreover, Saudi Arabia and some other Arab countries share this view, albeit behind closed doors.

If Iran adopts a more realistic approach, there is real hope for a diplomatic solution. The most recent offer of the 5+1 group (the United Nations Security Council's five permanent members and Germany) was well received in Teheran. In addition to far-reaching political and economic cooperation, the offer promises cooperation on nuclear matters, including the construction and supply of the newest light-water reactors in Iran, as well as Iranian

access to nuclear research and development - provided that there is a negotiated settlement.

But what was really new is that Iran also responded positively to the procedure proposed by the 5+1 group. In the pre-negotiation phase, this means that Iran would agree not to install any new centrifuges, necessary for increasing the volume of uranium being enriched, while the 5+1 group would refrain from calling for new sanctions in the Security Council.

Once negotiations start, Iran would, under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency, suspend its uranium enrichment and all related activities for six months - something that the Iranian government refused even to discuss in the last four years. For its part, the Security Council would suspend all its deliberations related to the Iranian nuclear program.

The aim of these negotiations is a comprehensive agreement between Iran and the 5+1 group that would resolve both the nuclear conflict and address regional security issues (Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Lebanon, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan)

while opening up extensive international and regional cooperation.

There were also signals emanating from Iran that, having mastered uranium enrichment technology, the authorities could envisage continuing enrichment in a third country in a joint consortium with the West. A similar proposal made by Russia was unceremoniously dismissed only a short time ago.

Moreover, while there is no willingness to accept Israeli hegemony, the tone vis-à-vis Israel is beginning to change. Ahmadinejad's vile anti-Semitism has of late been indirectly, but fairly openly, criticized by one of the closest confidants of Iran's supreme religious leader, former Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati. Iranian spokesmen also indicate that there is an official awareness of Israel's importance for a comprehensive regional solution, and that doing business with Israel is no longer inconceivable.

One hasn't heard this sort of language in all the years since Ahmadinejad came to power. But is Iran really serious? Or are these

simply the old stonewalling tactics? Does the government just want to buy time once more, now to make it through the America's presidential elections? Given the public contradictions in the Iranian leadership's behavior, is there a reliable Iranian position, and, if so, who represents it? These crucial questions can only be answered by the practical test of negotiations, this time with direct American participation.

If Iran is serious, the result may be nothing less than the long awaited "Grand Bargain" - a regional reconciliation of interests between Iran, on one side, and America, Europe, and the region's US allies on the other.

But if Iran is playing for time, its behavior is shortsighted and foolish. The conflict, and thus the danger of a military confrontation, will not disappear under a new US administration. On the contrary, should the negotiations fail, the confrontation will resurface in short order, and be far more dangerous.

Neither John McCain nor Barack Obama will take a softer stance than

the current American administration on the question of Iran's regional hegemony and its nuclear program. Indeed, if a diplomatic solution fails, they are more likely to react more forcefully. It is therefore imperative that diplomacy, which looks possible at the moment, be given a chance.

If the top leadership in Teheran has realized that it makes a great deal more sense, and is more in keeping with Iran's interests, to consolidate the successes of its foreign policy in the last few years, and to strengthen the regime, rather than risk everything in a military showdown with unforeseeable consequences, then there is a real chance for a diplomatic solution. If not, the region will be plunged into a hot confrontation.

There's wisdom, which Iran's leaders should heed, in the old adage that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Joschka Fischer, Germany's Foreign Minister and Vice Chancellor from 1998 to 2005, led Germany's Green Party for nearly 20 years. Source : Project Syndicate.

Dubai: a true home to many

By: Natasha Bukhari

I was recently on holiday away from Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. As customary, I was bombarded with questions by both friends and acquaintances gathered around the dinner table one evening about how I could possibly bear to live in this desert and "unbearably" hot country.

Well, putting the element of heat aside, those present started making what I would describe as fleeting and, in my opinion, ignorant judgments about a country that they had never lived in. Some lived in nearby Middle Eastern countries and others in Europe.

One of the remarks that sounded my alarm bells was a comment on how "Dubai has no soul". Others talked about a "lack of culture" in this modern country where locals are a minority. Others went even further by saying that they wouldn't live there even if they were offered all the money in the world!

Trying to remain calm, I started arguing against their fleeting remarks and began defending the place I've now come to consider home, keeping in



mind of course that everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion, as long as it is backed by facts. However, that did not sway me from this urge to prove them wrong, especially where "soul" and "culture" were concerned.

Soul, I argued, is relative. Every place in the world has a soul, and it is one's own perception that actually defines how soulful or not a place is. If you are perceptive, you come across it in every corner of any place on earth.

And if anything, Dubai, with its diverse population, has an abundance of it.

The same goes for culture (which does not mean heritage). This tiny emirate has more culture than so many ancient places I've visited, and I've always prided myself on being well-travelled!

In fact, it is here that you are bombarded with culture, beginning with languages, and ending with diverse

religious practices. One needs to be observant and aware. This must be one of the few places in the world where when Ramadan and Christmas overlap you can openly celebrate both without reservations.

It is a place where cultural practices of every ethnic and religious group are respected and even encouraged. It is where Arabic, English, French, Indian, and Filipino songs are sung enthusiastically by students during assembly at many of the country's private schools. It is also a place where veiled women are working hand in hand with mini-skirt wearers to further develop this country, neither judging nor berating the other.

It is where children can enjoy trick or treating on Halloween but are yet encouraged to donate food, clothing, money and toys to tsunami victims. It is where they are learning that they have a chance at success regardless of their race, nationality, ethnic background or religion. It is where merit, hard work and dedication are the deciding factors of how successful you can be in any endeavour.

My friends argued that it is such a transient place that no one can ever call

it home, except for its local residents. Well, I beg to differ. There are countless expatriates who admit that they would never dream of such a "comfortable" lifestyle in their home countries and that they would not choose to leave the emirate unless they absolutely had to.

Many choose to give birth to their own children in Dubai and teach them to not only respect the locals' culture and tradition, but also to give back to the society that they believe has given them so much. Tolerance, cooperation and respect are key to success in this country, and those who lack them will not make it in this melting pot.

Yes, it does get scorching hot during summer, but that does not limit Dubaians' activities, for what nature has deprived them of they make themselves! Manmade islands, an indoor ski slope and a soon-to-be built indoor golf course are just a few examples. There may be little rainfall in this desert country, but innovative ideas keep pouring in.

A number of the region's countries are trying to emulate Dubai, be it in its eccentric architecture or shrewd business sense, but the steadfastness of its

leadership has made it difficult for others to keep up.

That is not to say that it is a perfect place, but what its leadership, local and expatriate population have achieved over a limited number of years is truly admirable.

Many steps are yet needed for the region's business model to also become a pioneer in issues of human rights, gender equality and quality of education, among other things, but Dubai has proven again and again that where there is a will there is indeed a way.

So to my friends I say that I will gladly take the heat to be part of the growth and progression of this phenomenal place that feels no less than home.

Natasha Bukhari is a freelance journalist based in Dubai and a former press adviser to the prime minister of Jordan. This article is distributed by the Common Ground News Service (CGNews) and can be accessed at www.commongroundnews.org. Source: Middle East Times, 24 July 2008, www.metimes.com Copyright permission is granted for publication.

Islamic Army in Iraq

In a recent interview with The Media Line, The Islamic Army in Iraq (IAI), a prominent Sunni insurgency group, revealed its motivations, ideology and aims regarding the war in Iraq.

Among the main issues brought up during the interview with IAI spokesman 'Ali A-Na'imi, were the following:

Established after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, the IAI is comprised of ex-Iraqi military officers, all – or most – of whom are adherents of the Sunni creed. These officers recruit young Sunnis to the organization and train them in a combination of military discipline and guerilla warfare.

The movement takes the media war seriously and uses the Internet to promulgate its ideology. It produces a monthly magazine and airs a daily updated website. Each month the organization publishes what it calls the "harvest" of its operations. During last month, the IAI managed, according to its website, to kill at least 28 American soldiers, using guns and bombs. Following are excerpts from the interview:

By: Yaniv Berman
The Media Line

TML: Most parties in Iraq are backed by a military arm. In an ideal democracy, do you believe parties should have a military arm?

IAI: Democracy is a great illusion used by the U.S. to deceive the peoples [of the world] in order to justify its criminal deeds. It is an impossible concept in light of an occupation, which employs a divide-and-rule policy.

TML: In the past, the IAI said it considered [conducting] negotiations with the American army. What is your stand regarding negotiations today?

IAI: Our door is open to negotiations with others, for it is an important principle in war according to Islam. The religion of Islam permitted this principle in order to save lives and turn to war only as a last resort. Islam is a religion of peace and the Muslim only fights if he has to, as is our situation in Iraq. The Islamic Army's official spokesman has announced our readiness for negotiations with

preconditions. These include an announcement by the U.S. Congress regarding a timetable for the American forces' withdrawal from Iraq, and its recognition in the resistance as the Iraqi people's legitimate representative. However, until now we have not seen any serious steps from the Americans toward negotiations.

TML: Your activities involve much killing. How does this affect your warriors from a psychological point of view? Do they ever seek any psychological or other kinds of aid?

IAI: We are an ideological army and we believe in the hereafter. Fighting in the name of Allah is a divine honor and grace our warriors not only contend for but also take pleasure in. Therefore, they suffer no psychological effects or any such problem, contrary to the occupation soldiers' pangs of conscience and fears of death and disability, which they suffer for the sake of satisfying [U.S. President George W.] Bush's vanities. We will [continue to] draw confidence from our souls, from the

rights we [are willing to] die for and from heaven, which was prepared for the God-fearing.

TML: You recently said that during the past two years the IAI had committed over 14,000 attacks. How do you finance your activities?

IAI: When IAI's leader was asked this question two years ago by the [London-based daily] Al-Hayat, this was his answer: "In Iraq there are Jihad and wealth. We are a generous nation, which sacrifices its people's lives, let alone their wealth."

TML: What kinds of weapons do you use?

IAI: The experts and engineers in the military development unit are working day and night and they always have something new with which they surprise the enemies. God willing, soon you will hear news about advanced weapons, which will stun the occupation army and will gain a victory for Allah's sake.

TML: In April 2005 the IAI announced the formation of the Al-



Aqsa Support Division. This division was meant to support Palestinians in their armed struggle against Israel, according to your announcement. What have you done so far to support the Palestinian struggle? Have you sent experts to the Palestinian territories? Have you trained Palestinians in Iraq?

IAI: The aim behind these brigades was to support the Palestinians in their struggle against the Zionist entity and all who support it. We have our own policy regarding this issue. Everything that is done for the sake of the resistance in Iraq is also done for the sake of the Palestinian cause, because the two are part of the same problem and cannot be divided. The Zionist evil, as everyone knows, draws its might from the unlimited American support [it receives]. The

Palestinian operatives undergo a high level of training, and it shows. It is our policy to benefit from past and present Islamic experiences to complement our activity in Iraq.

TML: In a recent article you published in your website, you said Iran aimed to control Iraq and strip its Sunni population of any political influence. You also said Iran, after the American withdrawal, would aim to turn southern Iraq into a completely Shi'ite region, by way of arresting and transferring its Sunni population. You are fighting the American forces in Iraq. If they leave, what will prevent Iran from executing its plans?

IAI: Iran would not dare take one step toward or inside Iraq without receiving the green light from the United States. If that is not so, then

where was Iran before the American occupation? Also, the U.S. entered Iraq with Iranian support, which cannot be hidden. The Iraqi street in the south, especially the Arab tribes, is tired of the Iranian influence. We say: He who succeeded in defeating America, can also respond to the Iranian aggressions, especially after the harsh experience Iran went through with the Iraqi warriors.

TML: Do you plan to expand your activities and commit attacks outside Iraq?

IAI: We have said time and again that the movement is defined by its name – the Islamic Army in Iraq. Iraq is the arena where the struggle takes place, and it would be illogical to leave it to the occupier in search of another arena.

Long-Term Positions – DPK Consulting Yemen

JOB CODE: YE12.25

DPK Consulting seeks qualified Yemeni consultants to serve as a long-term Policing and Criminal Justice Advisors, Information Management Specialists and Administrative and Financial Managers on a 5-year, DFID-funded assistance program aimed at developing a more responsive, better integrated, and better managed justice and policing systems in Yemen.

Requirements:

• Police/Criminal Justice Advisors

- Assessing training needs of law-enforcement personnel and determining appropriate training programs, designing and implementing education and training programs, developing legal curricula, and creating sustainable training capacities;
- Transparency and accountability in key criminal law institutions, including design and implementation of accountability and transparency mechanisms, performance standards and codes of ethics, and monitoring-and-evaluation systems;
- Coordination of government-led donor and law-enforcement coordination;
- Strategic planning in law-enforcement institutions;

• Information Management Specialist

- Proficiency setting up information data management systems
- Experience working with automated data collection software
- Prior international development project experience

• Administrative and Financial Manager

- Financial accounting and administration of personnel and financial resources;
- Experience as Administrative/Financial Manager for large international development project
- Minimum of 7 years of professional experience and at least 3 years serving in a technical capacity on development projects.
- Advanced degree in a relevant field.

All applicants must be proficient in English and Arabic.

Positions will be filled within two weeks, for a possible start date in late September.

Please send a résumé to resume@dpkconsulting.com and reference the above job code in the email subject line. No phone calls, please.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin.



Correction

This is to correct the deadline of receiving applications of UNICEF advertisement on Thursday 24 July in Yemen Times Issue #1175 concerning “Request for Expression of Interest for Request for Proposal” Interested and qualified individuals/research institutions can request copies of the detailed document for the “Request For Proposal” (RFP) to Mr Yuji Taketomo at ytaketomo@unicef.org by **Wednesday 6 August 2008**. UNICEF will be expecting interested and qualified individuals/research to send 1) one technical proposal and 2) one sealed financial proposal by **12 August 2008**. Applications received after **12 August 2008** will not be considered

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites **Yemeni Nationals** to apply for the following position within **Public Financial Management Advisory Unit (PFMAU) - Yemen**.

Post Title: Public Finance Management (PFM) Website Developer
Duration: 6 months – renewable based on performance and project duration

Responsibilities:

- Meet with the project staff and discuss the purpose of the website in order to establish the values, message and image that stakeholders wish to project.
- Develop a coherent content and technical plan for the website.
- Prepare a draft design of the website, written and visual, for the project, UNDP and Ministry of Finance (MoF) approval.
- Set up the website and review it with stakeholders to get feedback and ensure satisfaction with the end result.
- Establish and maintain the website once it is completed by updating content, refining features and demonstrating innovativeness.

Qualification:

- Industry – approved certification in Web Technology Design and Administration.
- At least 3 years hands-on experience
- Good communication skills.
- Good command of English and Arabic (Oral and Written).

Interested candidates are requested to visit our website at: <http://www.undp.org.ye/undp-vacancies.htm> for detailed term of reference of the position and may submit their applications indicating the title of the post applied for by mail to Human Resources Unit and response will only be made to short listed candidates.
UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448892/E-mail: (hr.ye@undp.org)
The deadline for receiving applications is Thursday, 07 August 2008.
UNDP is an equal opportunity organization and qualified female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites **Yemeni Nationals** to apply for the following position within **Global Fund - Developing National Capacities to Address HIV/AIDS- Yemen**.

Post Title: Programme Assistant
Duration: 12 months

Responsibilities:

- Assist in administrative, operational and logistical aspects of the Programme including managing and organizing everyday office work, travel arrangement, information dissemination, correspondence and translation.
- Ensure that documents of programme activities, personnel, reports, correspondence ...etc are appropriately recorded and stored by organizing the structure and maintenance of the Programme Unit's information storage and retrieval.
- Schedule appointments and coordinate for meetings. As well as recoding meetings by taking notes, preparing minutes and recording decision points generated.
- Liaise with the Sub-Recipients to ensure timely submission of reports, plans and relevant documents to the Programme.
- Assist in following-up for Monitoring and Evaluation M&E requirements and ensuring proper reporting to the Principle Recipient.
- Assist in satisfying Local Fund Agent/Global Fund requirements as needed.

Qualification:

- University degree in Business Administration.
- At least 3-5 years of relevant experience in office management.
- Previous working experience with a UN agency is an asset.
- Comprehensive knowledge of MS Office (Word and Excel) and Internet use.
- Good communication skills.
- Good command of English and Arabic (Oral and Written).

Interested candidates are requested to visit our website at: <http://www.undp.org.ye/undp-vacancies.htm> for detailed term of reference of the position and may submit their applications indicating the title of the post applied for by mail to Human Resources Unit and response will only be made to short listed candidates.
UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448892/E-mail: (hr.ye@undp.org)
The deadline for receiving applications is Thursday, 14 August 2008.
UNDP is an equal opportunity organization and qualified female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.



Request for Expression of Interest for REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) - YEME/SAN/RFP/2008/005

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) invites proposals from qualified research institutions for the following:

Level: Consultancy to a research on the health consequences of FGM
Type of Contract: 4 months
Duty station: Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

A situation analysis conducted in 2007 highlighted that most women who have undergone FGM/C and their husbands have little information about its health effects. Senior policy makers in the Ministry of Public Health and Population recognise the health consequences of FGM/C, however there is no country specific evidence available to support policy development. UNICEF is assisting the Ministry of Public Health and Population in undertaking a research and a KAP analysis on the health consequences of FGM/C. It is intended that this research and KAP analysis would be conducted by a research institution. The health consequences of FGM/C study will be conducted through clinical examinations of all women attending the Obstetrics and Gynaecological clinics, the antenatal care clinics, the delivery rooms and post natal care wards during the two months of data collection in the reference hospitals in the governorates of Hodeidah, Hadramout, Mahara and Aden. The KAP study will be conducted through Focus Group discussions using structured and semi-structured interviews with women, their husbands/men, young people, dayas and midwives. The information obtained will be used to tailor advocacy and mobilization messages against FGM/C targeting different groups: youth (girls, boys), women, men, religious scholars, service providers and educators. The findings will also identify specific recommendations to strengthen the pre- and in-service training of health care providers not only to encourage the abandonment of FGM/C, but also appropriately address the specific complications due to FGM/C.

Expected deliverables

The research institution is expected to proceed as follows: The assignment of the Research Team is for a total period of four months. The data collection on the health consequences of FGM/C will be performed on a daily basis during two months. First phase: Two weeks for the preparations (desk review, research tools development, training of local researchers, pre-testing). Deliverables: progress report on phase I and final research tools ready to be disseminated to the field research local teams. Second phase: Two months for the data collection, Focus Group discussions and in-depth interviews of health care providers. Deliverables: progress report on the hospital examinations, FG discussions and in-depth reviews. Third phase: Six weeks for data analysis and reporting. Deliverables: Final report. A report in excellent English will be first presented in draft form. This first draft will be reviewed by UNICEF and Ministry of Public Health and Population. Other stakeholders will be invited to give inputs at the dissemination of the final report. The Research Institute will submit a final report in both English and Arabic.

Interested and qualified research institutions can request copies of the detailed document for the “Request For Proposal” (YEME/SAN/RFP/2008/003) to Mr. Yuji Taketomo at ytaketomo@unicef.org by **Wednesday 6 August 2008**. UNICEF will be expecting interested and qualified individuals/research to send 1) one technical proposal and 2) one sealed financial proposal by **20 August 2008**. Applications received after **20 August 2008** will not be considered.

Vacancy announcement

Job's Title: Manager of the Labor Intensive Work Program

Vacancy No: 5
 Post Title: Program Manager
 Organization: SFD (Social Fund for Development) .
 Location: Headquarter of the SFD, Capital Secretariat
 Duration: Full time, including three (3) months probationary period
 No of Post: 1
 Date Announced: 28 July 2008
 Closing Date: 7 Aug 2008

Background:
 The **Social Fund for Development, SFD** launched a country wide labor Intensive Public Works Program **LIPWP** aiming at providing work opportunities for needy communities especially during critical times, through executing mainly simple infrastructure and other types of works such as rehabilitation of agricultural terraces, soil protection works, village access roads protection and improvement, street pavement, construction, cleaning and rehabilitation of water harvesting schemes, forestation and various environmental activities as the need and priorities of targeted communities may suggest. Under the program, several projects will be identified and implemented in partnership with the local communities both in urban and rural areas.

The implementation will use different methods and mechanisms of implementation including formal contracting, community contracting and direct implementation as the nature of operations may require.

Special focus will be on poverty targeting, community participation, fair access to work opportunities for different community segments including women in addition to works quality and fundamentally labor intensity and levels of wages. Close monitoring and full documentation of projects development, implementation and outcomes is needed.

Responsibilities and tasks

- Further elaboration and development of the policies, strategies, work procedures and different tools.
- Direct office and field supervision for the performance of branch project officers and provision of technical backstopping.
- Review and recommend studies and intervention proposals raised by SFD's branch offices.
- Develop and deliver the program annual plans including capacity building and enhancement for the program's staff.
- Monitor overall progress of ongoing operations with focus on the social, technical, managerial and financial aspects. In addition to assessment and participative evaluation of completed projects.
- Receive, collect, integrate and analyze operational and regional periodical and non periodical reports on the progress of the program and deliver comprehensive reports in light of the program's objectives and specific obligations.
- Establish and coordinate work relations with SFD's relevant partners. (e.g. Ministries, local authorities, Civil Society, Beneficiary Communities, Donors).

Required qualification:

- 1- Possess Yemeni nationality and a university degree (Civil or Agricultural Engineering is preferable).
- 2- Minimum of five years experience in managing development projects.
- 3- Available on a full-time basis as per SFD system.
- 4- Able and willing to travel among governorates.

Required skills and abilities :

- 1- Time and cost management, communication and reporting skills.
- 2- Possess good abilities in planning, organizing, following up and supervising, directing workers, making decisions, and Computer literate.
- 3- Acquire leadership, coordination, motivational and innovative skills
- 4- Fluency in English language (Spoken & Written) is preferable

Reporting:
 The Program Manager will report directly to Managing Director.
 Submission guideline:
 Interested applicants should send their letter of application, along with their CV to the Social Fund for Development by the following e-mail: whumran@sfd-yemen.org
 Or by mail to the following address: Social Fund for Development, Headquarters, Technical Unit, Faj Attan, P.O.Box. 15485

Deadline for receiving applications is 7/8/2008

بقلوب مؤمنة بقضاء الله وقدره نتقدم بأحر التعازي وأصدق المواساة القلبية إلى الأخ / محمد حسن الصعفاني
 لوفاة المغفور له بإذن الله تعالى والده.

سائلين الله العلي القدير أن يتغمد الفقيد بواسع رحمته وأن يسكنه فسيح جناته وأن يلهم أهله وذويه الصبر والسلوان.. إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

الأسيفون: نادية عبد العزيز السقاف – خير الدين محمد النسور – هياف عبد الرحمن السقاف

Giving Yemeni youth a “Third Option”

The Small and Micro- Enterprise Promotion Service, an agency of the Social Fund for Development, has managed to convince the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training to introduce a new subject called "Know About Business" – or KAB for short – in order to encourage a sense of entrepreneurship among Yemeni youth and provide them with skills to start their own businesses instead of relying on jobs in the public sectors.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Sameer is the middle child of seven children and the only one without a university degree. However, he is the most successful among them because he started his own business selling electronic goods and computer maintenance services in Taiz.

"Seeing how successful our brother is, we realized that a university degree or a job with the government is not the best thing," commented Sameer's brother, Ahmed.

There is a common understanding among Yemenis that getting a stable income is better than launching a pri-

thinks that Yemeni youth need to rediscover the so-called "third option," whereby they need not be dependent on either the government or the private sector for employment.

"The problem is that the society looks down upon graduates from the technical and vocational institutes," said Bafaqih. "Even the private sector does not encourage these graduates and so the only people who opt for such technical education are the ones who were not accepted anywhere else."

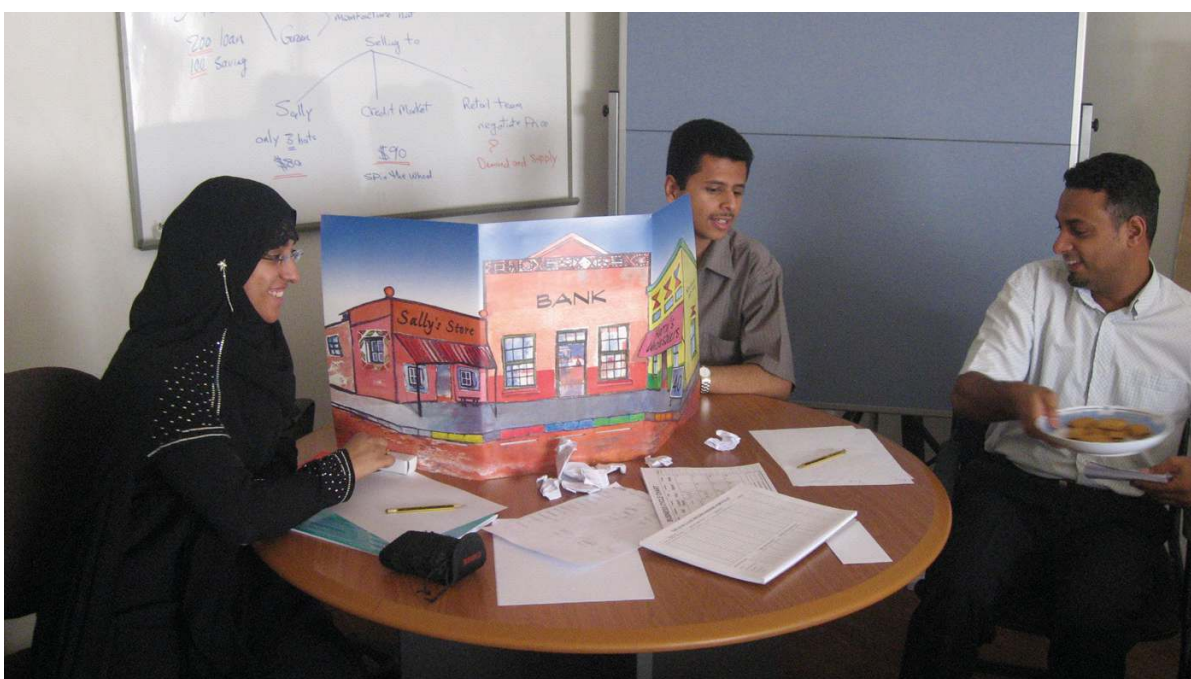
Realizing this issue, the Small and Micro-Enterprise Promotion Service (SMEPS) sent Ahmed Abdulbary Ali, a project officer at SMEPS, to learn about a new program to help vocational trainers encourage their students to start businesses at the International Labor Organization's (ILO) training center in Turin, Italy.

"Once we had enough evidence that this would prove useful for Yemeni youth, we held a workshop with stakeholders and presented this training idea to them," said Wisam Al-Ariqi, the Director of SMEPS. "At the time, they all seemed enthusiastic about the idea, but so far only the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training has taken serious steps to introduce KAB into Yemeni education."

The interesting aspect of this training, as Al-Ariqi explained, is that it is entertaining. It is like one of those money-oriented board games where the players have to create a strategy, think about their risks, work hard to defeat the competition and make a profit. "Which is what business in real life is all about," said Al-Ariqi.

A third option

KAB's general objective is to con-



KAB is a fun way of learning about business, say its organizers. Adults and teenagers alike can enjoy while learning the ABCs of creating and managing enterprises.

tribute towards the creation of an enterprise culture in a country or society by promoting awareness among young people about the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship and self-employment. It aims to show young people their role in shaping their future and that of their country's economic and social development.

Last year there were 240,000 graduates from government universities in Yemen, compared to only 24,000 technical and vocational training graduates. With a ratio of 1:10 there is an overwhelming majority of university graduates who specialized in disciplines such as literature or history, and who want desk jobs but don't have any particularly marketable skills. Dr. Ibrahim Omar Hugari, the Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training, promised that the number of technical education institutes, currently 64 vocational institutes and 35 community colleges, is going to increase soon. He explained that 50 more will be established in the next few years, 18 of which are funded by the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia.

Products of these institutes and community colleges will supply the job market inside and outside Yemen with urgently required skilled labor. He hoped that this way, the balance between academic and technical education will be restored and hence the dynamic of the Yemeni economy will improve.

"It is impossible to create businessmen and businesswomen in one year. What we hope to do is to encourage such thinking and lay the fundamental skills for youth so that they build on this in real life, where they would be on their own," explained Ali.

Ali Hamoud Taher, the General Director of Curricula and Educational Media, agreed with Ali and hoped that the trainees would create networks and business groups whereby they can work together on small business ventures in order to minimize the risk and maximize their learning experience.

To start with, 56 teachers who had business experience will be trained on how to teach this subject in the voca-

tional institutes. Then the students will be given an aptitude questionnaire at the beginning of the academic year and again at the end of the year to monitor



Ahmed Abdulbary Ali, KAB project officer at SMEPS

any aptitude changes in business and managing small enterprises. During the academic year, experts from SMEPS, the ILO and the Ministry of Technical Education will evaluate the training in all the institutes and provide feedback to the Social Fund for Development on the success and the progress of the program. At the end of the year, the students must be able to create a simple business plan in which they should apply the lessons from the course.

However, the real success of the training will be realized only after three or four years when the students graduate and start their own business or not.

According to Taher, the ministry has an electronic database system to track the graduates and their careers in order to see to what extent they have developed entrepreneur skills or attitudes.

Know About Business

KAB training aims to firstly develop positive attitudes towards enterprises and self-employment among the population by targeting youth but also

stakeholders for enterprise development. Secondly, KAB provides knowledge and practice of the desirable attributes for and challenges in starting and operating a successful enterprise. This means that the curriculum provokes business oriented thinking and equips the trainees with ideas and skills to start their own business venture.

The KAB package is designed to provide teachers and trainers with the materials necessary for a 120-hour course. It comprises a trainer handbook and nine modules. Each module represents a key area of entrepreneurship and each is divided into several topics.

In Yemen, the course is to be studied throughout the first year of the vocational training education instead of a subject called project management. The titles of the modules are in the form of questions, which the trainees should be able to answer after the completion of the module.

Module 1. What is Enterprise?

The module's objectives are to enable learners to recognize that everybody is involved in an enterprise in one way or another. It enables learners to appreciate that everybody's lifestyle is affected by the roles they play in their enterprises.

Module 2. Why Entrepreneurship? The module's objective is to enable learners to recognize that utilizing entrepreneurship in all situations is a beneficial approach both on individual and societal levels.

Module 3. Who Are Entrepreneurs? The module's objective is to enable learners to appreciate the personal characteristics needed to be a successful entrepreneur.

Module 4. How Do I Become An Entrepreneur? The module's objective is to provide an understanding of the key competencies and determining factors for success in entrepreneurship and small business management.

Module 5. How Do I Find A Good Business Idea? The module's objective is to provide techniques for generating business ideas as well as for identifying and assessing business opportunities.

Module 6. How Do I Organize An Enterprise? The module's objective is to enable learners to appreciate the procedures required for organizing an enterprise.

Module 7. How Do I Operate An Enterprise? The module's objective is to enable learners to appreciate the various techniques that will affect the management of an enterprise.

Module 8. What Are The Next Steps To Becoming An Entrepreneur? The module's objective is to enable learners to pursue plans to start an enterprise.

Module 9. How Can You Elaborate A Business Plan? The module's objective is to enable learners to apply KAB knowledge to a real market situation and to evaluate a business idea.



Alawi Mohammed A. Bafaqih, the Vice Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training.

vate business that would include risk.

"The problem is in the attitude," explained Alawi Mohammed A. Bafaqih, the Vice Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training. He



There are several levels of KAB, from simple to complicated, whereby the variables change just like in real life. Students have to keep track of financial records, plan and operate against a deadline and work on marketing their ideas.



History of KAB

At the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the ILO implemented several projects in Kenya's small and medium enterprise development and vocational education sectors. These ILO projects involved a number of government institutions and private institutions such as the Federation of Kenyan Enterprises (FKE). Though there was a keen demand for entrepreneurship education in Kenya, no specific training programmes were then available.

To close this gap, funds were provided in 1996 from the ILO Geneva and the ILO International Training Centre (ITCILO) in Turin to develop an entrepreneurship education programme for institutions of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). A workshop was organised in Turin with the participation of Dr. G. Manu from ITCILO, Mr. J. Thiongo, a Kenyan consultant and Prof. R. Nelson from the University of Illinois, USA to



Dr. George Manu, creator and co-author of KAB

develop the KAB training materials for trainers and instructors of TVET institutions. The materials were then field tested in Kenya, finalized and printed.

Entrepreneurship education that was inspired by KAB and Improve Your Business (IYB) became part of the national curricula for vocational training in Kenya.



Mr. Klaus Haftendorn, First KAB Global Coordinator and co-author of 2007 edition of KAB

In the following years, ITC Turin organized several training workshops for participants from the vocational training sector, including instructors and international consultants from various countries.

KAB was translated into French by ITCILO and integrated as one activity in the "Gérez mieux votre entreprise"



Peter Tomlinson, ITCILO Programme Manager, Enterprise Development and KAB Master Trainer

(GERME) project (=SIYB West Africa, first phase 1999 to 2002). A KAB Training of Teachers course was organised in Turin in 2000 with participants from North and West Africa, including project staff from the GERME project. A test course was organized for adult women under skills

training in Senegal.

In 2000, KAB and SIYB were introduced in Kazakhstan through a Luxembourg-funded project: The KAB training package was translated into Russian; after a training of teachers and instructors, it was pilot tested in five vocational training schools. In May 2003, the curriculum development institution of Kazakhstan validated the KAB materials. A decree was subsequently issued introducing entrepreneurship education based on KAB in TVET institutions.

In 2002, KAB was adapted and translated into Spanish, Conozca de Empresa (CODE) and used in Bolivia. By an agreement with the Ministry of Education of Bolivia, CODE has been incorporated into the regional curriculum in the Chapare region.

In May 2004, the ILO Small Enterprise Programme (SEED) and the ITCILO Enterprise Development programme updated the KAB materials by organizing a workshop with the origi-

nal authors of the training materials assisted by Mr. Klaus Haftendorn and Mr. Peter Tomlinson as KAB editors. A new edition of KAB was published in 2005, and this is currently the main version in use around the world.

To respond to the increasing demand for KAB from ILO constituents, a KAB promotion and coordination unit has been established within SEED at ILO headquarters in Geneva. The first KAB global coordinator was Mr. Klaus Haftendorn, who was appointed in late 2007 to the position of Chief Technical Adviser for an ILO youth entrepreneurship project for North Africa. The current Global KAB Coordinator is Mr. Nabeel Goheer, who continues to work closely with his predecessor.

Mr. Klaus Haftendorn and Professor Robert Nelson revised the KAB materials during 2007, and an updated new edition of KAB was published by the International Training Centre of the ILO in February 2008.

Source: ILO- What is KAB



Job Announcement DEPUTY CHIEF OF PARTY

The Academy for Education Development (AED), a not-for-profit international NGO registered in Yemen seeks a full time Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) for a USAID-funded education project. Entitled "Basic Education Support and Training" (BEST), the project aims at expanding access of Yemeni children to quality education, while strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Education. The DCOP will be broadly responsible for ensuring the effective administrative, financial and operational management and integrity of the project. Among other responsibilities, he/she will, in collaboration with the Chief of Party:

1. Guide the Project in all aspects of its financial management;
2. Ensure effective administration and human resource management;
3. Ensure the effective management of Project vehicles, equipment, offices and physical resources;
4. Provide effective management and oversight of project information and communications technology resources and products;
5. Provide guidance and support to sub-contractors to ensure consistency in policies and procedures in implementing the project activities;
6. Facilitate the establishment and implementation of effective program monitoring and evaluation processes and reporting;
7. Oversee the procurement process of technical and administrative services, including the recruitment of consultants and firms.

General Requirements:

1. Bachelor's Degree in one of the following or related fields: Business Administration, Education Planning, Public Administration and Public Policy required or equivalent combination of education and work experience (Masters preferred);
2. At least 5 year(s) of relevant experience in managing large scale international development projects;
3. Knowledge of USAID strategies, policies, and procedures highly desirable;
4. Demonstrated experience in project design and management;
5. Demonstrated experience in financial, administrative and operational management of complex international development projects;
6. Demonstrated knowledge of project monitoring and evaluation concepts and applications preferred;
7. Experience in contract management, including institutional sub-contractors; and
8. Excellent written and spoken English skills essential.

Yemeni and international candidates residing in Yemen are encouraged to apply. Qualified candidates should send their CV's with cover letters in English no later than one week after the date of this announcement to the following address by mail or email:

P. O. Box 22377 Sana'a - Yemen
Email: coneil@aed.org



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The deception of elections

By: Ivan Simic
ivansimic10@gmail.com

An election is the decision-making process by which a population chooses an individual or a party to hold formal office. This is the usual mechanism by which modern democracy fills legislative, executive and judicial offices in both regional and local government.

During an election campaign, everyone focuses on the politicians or rather, the candidates; however, some very interesting election participants aren't talked about as much and these are the qualified voters or electors.

The candidates are the most interesting players in an election because they tell us anything that will likely lead them to great victory. They lie, deceive, promise the impossible, sing and dance, laugh and cry – all to win.

In fact, they give us so many campaign promises, that if we ask about them just a few hours later, they don't remember them, so they make new ones in order to deceive us further. Later, if elected to formal office, they start making excuses for these lost promises in order to maintain their political power.

It's evident that candidates tell us what we want to hear and those things with which we agree simply to make us believe that they are good, smart, dedicated and considerate people, among other things.

However, nearly everything they say is written and prepared in advance by their campaign staff in an effort to attract more voters. In most cases, particularly in democratic systems, candidates rely heavily on financing from private donors, select individuals, groups and industries. If elected, they then have an obligation to reimburse

supporters for their contributions by protecting and supporting their businesses, no matter what that business might be.

We all know what candidates do, but what about voters?

Voters are a group of people gathered to make a decision or express their opinion often through discussions, debates and election campaigns. Voters support their favorite candidates by attending rallies, listening to what they have to say, analyzing it and then ultimately agreeing or disagreeing with them.

In the end, they make their final decision on Election Day. However, on that day, not all supporters vote for the candidate they supported throughout the campaign because not all voters are faithful to their candidate.

To make things more clear, let's look at the approaching 2008 U.S. presidential election as an example, looking at candidates Barack Obama and John McCain and the qualified voters/electors.

It appears that many Americans are fascinated with Democratic candidate Barack Obama, possibly more so than with any other presidential candidate in U.S. history, with many talking about him, adoring him and cheering for him.

On the other side, Republican candidate John McCain was chosen in U.S. primaries a long time before Obama, so it was clear that he was the chosen one on that side. However, it appears that American aren't as enamored of him as they are of Obama.

According to these indicators, we may believe that Obama will become the new president of the United States, but will he?

The chances of Barack Obama becoming the next U.S. president may not be as good as they appear. Yes, people love him, but voters can't be

trusted because they always like something new – radical new changes, new and different politicians, new ideas and fresh promises, among others. However, this doesn't necessarily mean they'll vote for the same. It would be better for Obama if he had less attention, which would better his chances of winning.

Many people change their minds on Election Day and do the opposite of what they were saying, promising, cheering and longing for throughout the campaign. Because voters are just regular people and realizing that the show is over on Election Day, they start thinking in other directions.

Voters are an interesting breed, often saying one thing but doing another. They complain about and criticize certain politicians day after day, but then end up voting for them in the end. It appears that the more mistakes and scandals a politician makes while doing nothing for the nation, the more likely voters will vote for him, particularly a second time. As an example, just look at George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, Jacques Chirac and Silvio Berlusconi, among others.

In the end, democracy isn't like a Communist regime. In a democracy, it actually may not be as important which candidate or politician comes to power, so long as democracy continues to be the ruling mechanism and the elected individual doesn't seize extra power.

The system will continue to work and plans and ideas will continue being executed, no matter who's in charge. The only thing that changes is the interests of the financiers or the ruling elite who financed the elected candidate.

If the financiers are from the weapons industry, then there will be new wars; thus, we may prefer financiers from the toy industry, so that instead, there will be toys for everyone.

Through The Mind's Eye

By: Maged Thabet Al-kholidy
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To marry educated or uneducated women?! (Part 3)

Having shed sufficient light on the aspects of marrying uneducated women, it is time to shed light on the aspects of marrying educated women. Again, this is not my personal point of view, but the opinions of others as supported with some real examples taken from our society.

Some men look at the educated women as better than uneducated because of their way of thinking and style of life. Educated women, according to some men, are well behaved and more rational than uneducated ones. "Educated wives are not narrow in their thinking and look at life from a more rational perspective", said an educated young man.

As a matter of fact, educated women do no need orders to do things for her home. She is more careful to do her duties at home and outside home as well. "My educated wife always does everything without tasking her to do so and that makes me feel rest, and saves my time", said a husband of an educated wife.

Educated women, according to some men, deal with life with a sense of responsibility. They realize how life is difficult especially for those who have children with a limited

source of incomes. Such wives feel a sense of responsibility and tries as much as possible to offer something for her home and children. "An educate wife tries as much as possible to make the marriage life better and suitable", said that man.

Educated women know the importance of how to grow up children. This make them take it as a matter of duty to do best for growing up her children. They, subsequently, pay attention to their education, their behaviors and their relations etc. This helps the man and contributes to establish a more stable life.

Educated women also help the husbands in their financial responsibilities of home needs. That is to say, some educated women get chances to work so that they help the husbands in the home expenses. "My educated wife works as a teacher in a one of the governmental schools, and though her salary is not too much, she offers many things which are required for home" said a husband of educated wife.

Educated women can be good wives since they look at life from a wider point of view. They, for example do not make problems if the husbands talk or contact other women because they have an idea that the

husbands' relations with other women can be colleagues, friends and so on. In contrast, uneducated women never believe that there are normal relations between men and women and subsequently, they may move earth and heaven if they know that their husbands have relations with other women. For this, the husbands take it easy to talk about their relations with other women, knowing that their wives will not create any problem or even ask any question about such relations with other women.

Of course, there are more positive aspects of marrying educated women. These are only some cases, I hope, dear readers, you shed light on some other cases. Such cases are to be compared with the aspects of marrying uneducated women so that men can realize which one is better to select for future life. Finally, I hope this topic is interesting for you so that you react and send responses to my personal email or the email of the newspaper's editor.

Maged Thabet Al-kholidy is a writer from Taiz, currently doing his M.A. at English Dep, Taiz Uni. He is an ex-editor of English Journal of the University.

Masked criminals

By: Fuad Hazaea
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A short television episode about criminals being investigated recently drew my attention. Out of curiosity, I asked my father the reason these criminals veiled their faces. They appeared to me like our veiled women, except that they were criminals while our women are guilty of simply being born that way.

Our society looks down on women as inferior, believing they should cover their faces so they won't be identified by or exposed to men. A man on a bus once told me that the veil is like a guard that secures a woman's dignity, respect and name.

To the contrary, soldier Ahmed Al-Amari says, "The veil is a type of witchcraft attracting men's attention because we try to discover the hidden face behind the veil." Yemeni women are jailed like criminals. Just as a criminal's freedom is limited to his jail cell, their freedom doesn't extend beyond their black veils. It's a way to lock them up and keep them out of mind.

Ahmed Al-Hamadi, a teacher at Al-Amjad Private School in Sana'a, wonders how women can bear the imprisonment of such a mask, adding, "The veil is a cover for vice because women can do anything they wish without being dis-

covered. Unveiled women may capture our first glance, but veiled ones capture our curiosity."

A book isn't valued for its well-crafted cover but by its content. Likewise, the veil doesn't display signs of morality, esteem or respect, but rather signs of unfairness and lack of confidence. While shyness is natural, it is lack of self-confidence to be shy about exposing your face.

According to Mona, a student at Sana'a University, a woman is a human being, not an object or a piece of meat; thus, she should be given the freedom to veil or not. She further notes that many women dream of being able to walk about unveiled, but Yemeni society enacts harsh barriers.

On the other hand, another student points out, "It's our tradition, so we should stick to it."

Yemeni women have the right to vote, drive and be educated. While veiling isn't a law in Yemen, society still considers it a compulsory necessity to be protected.

Islam does not oblige women to be veiled; rather, veiling was introduced into Yemeni society as a fashion by the Ottoman Empire, with high-class women wearing it.

However, veiling has prevailed throughout the entire scene of Yemeni society, changing from a fashion into a compulsory necessity.

Likewise, Salah Al-Shamiri affirms

that veiling has nothing to do with Islam, but says that traditions speak louder than religious teachings and instruction.

Veiling is a "compulsory option" in Yemen. While women aren't forced to veil, many choose to do so themselves. When they see all of their female family members wearing it, young girls seek to imitate their mothers, sisters and other relatives because they just want to be like them, even choosing different and elaborate types of veils.

As Asamae Al-Kholani says, "No one forced me to veil. I choose to wear it because all of the females in my family wear it."

For many tribal men in Yemen, luck has been the last resort when marrying. Taxi driver Najib from Arhab says he never saw his wife's face before the day of their marriage. Because his mother and sisters chose his wife for him, he didn't have the chance to even see the face of his future wife. "I'd seen her walking about, but she was always veiled."

Just as criminals have no right to choose their jail cell, Najib didn't have the right to see his wife or her appearance. It's unfair to force one to marry without even knowing how she looks. Enforcement doesn't equal necessity but rather, enslavement.

Your opinion is greatly valued, so please send us your comments on this issue.

Afrah Jaan
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I am a young woman who embraced Islam a few months ago and was in the process of considering moving to the Middle East because I was hoping that moving to that part of the world would enable me to live in a more Islamic environment.

After speaking to several sisters at my local mosque, I was surprised to hear the negativity Arab Muslim women feel about their homelands. I was even more surprised at their shocked looks when I said that I'd prefer living in a society that is an Islamic state rather than living in a society driven by Western democracy.

My three years of research and studying Islam prior to reverting leads me to believe that Islam is democracy, so why do we look elsewhere? I believe no form of democracy can measure up to the rights and freedoms Islam gives men, women and children in all matters, whether personal, marital, legal or state affairs.

My question then is why aren't all Middle Eastern nations Islamic states? Why do we need a "domino effect" geared by the West to begin the process of their version of democracy when in reality, Muslim countries already have the tools to create such an environment for their peoples?

Dear Afrah,

While I am respectful of how people

choose to live their lives (this being the very definition of democracy), I ask you as a woman, a mother and a human being to consider the plight of Nadia Muhsen and her sister Zana and then ask yourself if this is democracy – all in the name of "Islam, Muslim tradition and the West not wanting to upset the East."

I agree that everyone should live in a society where they can be free and enjoy a good quality of life that is wholesome and good, but we must never accept that human suffering caused by another individual is acceptable to God. He is the only one to administer discipline except, of course, when we train our children or those appointed to maintain law and order in a democratic land, which in turn doesn't torture, beat or maim our fellow brothers and sisters.

The Bible and the Qur'an are the rule-books of life (working manuals for humans). Just as a washing machine requires an instruction manual, we also must consult these manuals regularly to keep us functioning properly.

However, neither book condones the use of kidnapping, slavery or violence against those who can't defend themselves or who are weaker than the one asserting power. This isn't God's arrangement; rather, this is how man has interpreted things for his own gain.

Please do a Google search of the abovementioned two women's names and remember that there are thousands of women and children in the same position who are being shipped off to Muslim states every day to meet the same fate. We turn a blind eye to this while others call this democracy.

Some may be able to see why some Muslim women are happy to come to England to find inner peace and just be able to care for their families, be good Muslims living law-abiding lives and caring for humanity because they know the true meaning of democracy when they come here. The West isn't a bad place; rather, it's the people there – just like everywhere else in the world – who take advantage of God's goodness.

Thinking about these two women, please answer this: Did they or thousands like them come up during your research? If so, how do you feel about this being protected by Islam and the Muslim faith? Was it really part of the religious deal or was it simply from man? How was it justifiable?

If you knew about this situation, then why were you shocked that the women at the mosque prefer living in England?

I am interested in your views and I wish you every happiness and inner peace with all of your life choices.

*Best wishes,
Gina Tyler
gina67@gina67.karoo.co.uk*

P.S. I am a Christian but was raised in a multiracial community (a chaplet in Leeds) all of my life, so I have a range of friends from different faiths. I say this so you'll know I'm not anti-Muslim – I just love people and I don't like the suffering doled out in the name of religion or the misuse of power because being powerless is a horrendous place in which to be. Nadia's family knows this more than most. Salaam.

Like the moon

By: Adnan Al-Halmi
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Like the moon among the stars
Playing the love symphony, I saw her.
To the clouds in the darkest dusk
asking the morning star.
To regain the college days together, she struggles
With the moonbeams, sent me love sprinkles.
The faded soul is quenching like trickles.

Yet, your smiles my heart embraced,
Exiled stress and strain,

Also woe displaced.
It glistens here, it sparkles there,
Apart my fears it tears.
Sprinkles of love to you I sent in return.

Let your mouth smile like the smiling mouth of Yemen still.
A slim moderate waist, she is tall,
Silky yellow hair like falling cascades,
Reddish-white red cheeks, strawberry it looks,
Thin, but her lips are rosy,
Painted by God's hand red, red, red.
A necklace upon her chest shines like the Eiffel Tower at night out set,

Long blond eyelashes that my heart captures and jails,
Charming, fascinating, a "fairy lovely queen."
My sweetheart is.
Angel or human? I cannot tell. Oh sigh.
Oh, so far, so agonizing, so hard, so high,
To reach but instead the moon,
She decorates the sky.
But alas, far away, a deserted broken heart she left.
It is bleeding.
With woes her smile folded.
She is caressing, longing and I am hugging the sky.

Return to the Catholic Church

By: Paul Kokoski
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Radical Anglicans who support women bishops and the evil of homosexuality are misinterpreting the bible and being guided by a false sense of freedom, seeking not God, but their own selfish desires of power and lust.

Freedom doesn't rest in one's ability to do as one pleases. "Ye shall be as gods" – this promise quite clearly is behind modernity's radical demand for freedom. Such anarchical freedom

doesn't redeem, but instead makes man a miscarried creature and a pointless being.

Those who live like this very soon clash with others who wish to live the same way. The inevitable consequence of this selfish concept of freedom is violence and the mutual destruction of freedom and life. This is the direction in which the worldwide Anglican community now is heading.

Traditionalists should take heart. They are always welcome back to the fullness of truth that resides – with all its pristine beauty and splendor –

within the Catholic church. Guided by the unshakable rock of Peter the pope, the Catholic church is the only church today that can be traced directly back to Christ, the Messianic king whose coming was foretold in Jewish scripture.

All other Christian denominations are defective in the sense and to the degree that they arbitrarily have chosen to sever themselves from Catholic beliefs. Therefore, I encourage traditionalists tossed about by the waves of false doctrines to climb aboard Peter's boat because it will be their only safe haven in these troubled times.

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 فندق تاج سبا ت: ٠١-٢٧٢٧٣٧
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 معهد اللغة الألمانية ت: ٢٠٠٩٥٥
 المعهد البريطاني للغات والكمبيوتر ت: ٢٦٦٢٢٢٢
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 معهد لينك ت: ٢٤-٨٢٢-٥١-٦١٢ فاكس: ٦٦٥٥٧٢

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 عدن ت: ٢٤٦٦١٧
 تهر ت: ٢٥٠٣٤٥

مدارس

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سفرات

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• محمد محمد صالح - بك

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قص هذا الكوبون وارسله إلى صحيفة يمن تايمز على فاكس ٢٦٨٢٧٦ أو على صندوق بريد ٢٥٧٩ - صنعاء لمزيد من المعلومات اتصل ب (ت ٢٦٨٦٦١/٢/٣)

The Arab Thought Forum's Third Youth Conference: Toward developing institutionalized work for Arab youths

For two days, Arab youth from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Syria came together to discuss various issues and what should be done to create a better future for themselves and future generations.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Sabreen is an 18-year-old Egyptian college student who has lived the past 10 years of her life in Jordan. Her Jordanian accent is so remarkable that one would be surprised to learn that she's originally from Egypt. Other than an identity issue, Sabreen complains of gender discrimination in her own family.

"I wasn't allowed to travel to Syria to participate in an event that was so important to me and in which I was a key player. My family said they wouldn't allow their daughter to travel by herself to such an event. If it had been my brother who wanted to go, it would've been no problem. I hate that," she said.

Her frustration is one reason she began working at the college newspaper. She needed a place where she could express herself and where her work would be recognized because of her talent and not be objectified because of her gender or nationality.

Sabreen is just one of some 200 young men and women who participated in the Third Youth Conference organized by the Arab Thought Forum

women's and youth issues are rigid societies with no hope for development. The solution is to listen to the young generations and hold constructive dialogue with them," he proposed.

Nine themes, numerous recommendations

The participating youth were distributed among nine themes: education, family, health and environment, citizenship and public participation, religious influence, equality favoritism and nepotism, legal and legislative awareness, freedom of expression, networking and communication. Sessions took place over two days, concluding with numerous recommendations.

Among the general recommendations were to provide more training and public opportunities for youth so that they will learn more and gain more confidence in their abilities. Discussions focusing on technology revealed that Arab youth greatly depend upon the internet and modern technology.

Participants displayed concern about quality of education and lack of opportunities to participate, even at universities and higher education institutes.

As one University of Jordan student remarked at the education session, "We want teachers to respect us and work with us, not against us."

The young participants also pointed out that Arab families gradually are losing their close-knit structure and positive social values. They concluded that most family problems occur because there's no dialogue between family members and "nobody really wants to listen to the other," they complained.

An interesting issue running throughout the sessions was the comparison between men's and women's rights and obligations. As expected, the men disagreed with the women on gender-related issues, but eventually agreed that for the sake of a better future for Arab youth, both men and women must be empowered.

Disparity and taboos

The youth participating in the sessions surprised the organizers and session leaders with their intellect and their deep understanding and concern.

Through her participation on the health and environment team, Samar Mazghani explained that certain taboos should be broken and youth should feel free to talk about certain currently frowned upon issues. For example, one's sexuality, political affiliation, religion, etc., shouldn't be hidden, but rather discussed openly so that both individuals and society as a whole may thrive.

Mazghani gave the example that drugs, AIDS and other STDs are spreading because Arab society refuses to acknowledge their existence or why they are occurring.

At the same session, the youths expressed their concern about the environment and how they should promote a sense of volunteerism among youth and children to care for their environment.

Heated discussions also took place regarding religion and religious influence in daily life. As Doa'a, a student at Jordan's Irbid University, commented, "I'm scared that the number of



Children selling goods at a traffic light in Sana'a. Participants at the Third Youth Conference expressed their concern about increasing poverty and the risks young Arabs face on the streets.

fanatics is growing. I'm afraid that a day will come when the rights I've earned regarding education, work and public participation will be taken from me on the pretext of religion."

The youths also said they hope to emigrate from their respective countries because they find no freedoms or an encouraging environment in the Arab world in which to thrive and prosper.

"Let's face it, we aren't equal. There will always be someone who has a better opportunity than me because he or she knows some VIP or has more money or a strong family name," said one Iraqi student in Jordan.

Huda Al-Zu'obi, director of the Arab Culture Association in Gothenburg, Sweden, noted that she has seen many Arabs excel abroad and how they would rather live away from their homes and enjoy freedoms than live in oppressive countries surrounded by their family and friends.

She added, "It's a shame that we don't live up to our principles because there's so much to learn from Islam that could make us world pioneers."

Heated discussions also took place on the freedom of expression team, with the participants split between those wanting no limits at all and those saying there must be rules.

"Let the people be the judge, not the Ministry of Information or any media council governed by the government. The people are the ultimate judges who will make a particular media either successful or not worthy of their time," Egyptian blogger Wael Abbas pointed out.

However, his idea wasn't well received because most of the young participants couldn't imagine a world without any boundaries. "It would be chaotic, and blasphemy and insult would spread," said Abdullah, a student at Jordan's Al-Esra University.

Time to listen, cooperate and create. At the conference's final session, Prince Hassan briefly commented on what he saw and heard in the sessions.

"I'm delighted that I witnessed a sense of noble partnership and a true desire to listen and comprehend. But I also saw signs of creativity, pioneering and leadership and this has made me glad. I can say that this event was a great success," he concluded.

Commenting on some of the youths' remarks in the nine sessions, he indicated that they should be turned into real projects to be seen and felt in practical life. However, he also emphasized the need for legal education and awareness.

The prince noted that if there's a sin-

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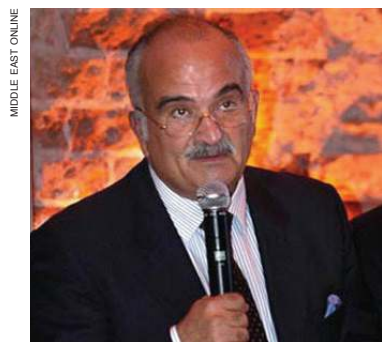
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Prince Hassan Bin Talal: "I have a dream that one day our young men and women will rejoice at a life without discrimination, degradation and oppression."

in Amman the middle of last month. The forum takes an interest in young people as the future and this year's conference discussed ways to develop institutional work related to youth in the Arab world.

Jordan's Prince Hassan Bin Talal, who chairs the Arab Thought Forum, sympathized with Arab youth at the opening ceremony, describing their challenges and their not so encouraging environment. He pointed out that the situation of today's Arab youth is a direct result of what adults are doing. However, he highlighted ways to move ahead, indicating a ray of light through some of the activities and projects created by the forum and other concerned organizations.

"Like Martin Luther King, I too have a dream. I have a dream that one day our young men and women will rejoice at a life without discrimination, degradation and oppression," he said.

The prince emphasized the need to "empower youth legally because this is exactly what they need in order to find their place in the sun."

The forum's general secretary, Dr. Hassan Nafi'a, agreed, further noting that Arab societies suffer from oppression, corruption, high costs of living and lack of rule of law.

"Societies that take no interest in

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