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Protests against voter registration process in many governorates

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Nov. 19 — Protests against the voter registration process organized by supporters of the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) have spread to most Yemeni governorates. The JMP have finally announced that they will boycott the upcoming parliamentary elections in April 2009.

Security authorities on Tuesday arrested more than 70 protesters in several governorates, fearing they would hinder voter registration procedures in their areas. JMP sources accused security authorities of using excessive violence against protesters and treating them in an uncivilized manner.

JMP member parties condemned what they described as "hysterical practices" pursued by the authority, and its insistence on confiscating democracy and denying people their rights to participate in free and fair elections.

participate in free and fair elections.

JMP Spokesman Mohammed Al-Mansour denounced the government's crackdown on peaceful protests in many governorates and the arrest of 70 JMP activists and supporters, who had been peacefully protesting against illegal election procedures and the illegitimate election management body.

Al-Mansour warned against the potential consequences of such irresponsible acts by security authorities against citizens, holding the ruling party and its government accountable for any consequences of such arbitrary practices that will only lead to further crises.

In a statement to various media outlets, the JMP Spokesman said, "The current arrest campaigns launched by the security forces against citizens are intended to shift people's attention from the individualist procedures taken by the government and its ruling party in

the electoral regard." He described those arrest campaigns as "hysterical".

Plan to rig elections

Protestors in the various governorates strongly denounced what they described as "mishandling of the voter register as part of a plan to rig the upcoming elections".

In Taiz, thousands of citizens organized protests in front of various voting centers in the city and the security authorities arrested 52 of them. The protesters called for the government to stop mishandling the democratic process, which the ruling party plans to control.

In Shara'ab district of Taiz governorate, the JMP organized a huge popular rally near the district's voting centers in which the opposition coalition supporters expressed their strong rejection of the voter registration process and

upcoming elections. In addition, protesters in the Maafer district demanded that voter registration staff leave the area.

In Sana'a governorate, thousands of citizens in a popular rally in Hamdan district backed demands raised by the JMP. The rally released a statement saying that the JMP's demands proceed in favor of the nation and its future and consider the reform of the electoral system to be key to carrying out comprehensive political change. In the capital city, the guards of Sana'a University arrested as many as 20 students from the arts and commerce faculties over distributing statements to people to boycott the voter registration process to allegedly save Yemen.

In Hodeida, thousands of citizens held sit-ins in front of voting centers, protesting against the government for continuing an illegal voter registration

process. They raised banners and signs showing their strong rejection of any elections to be based on illegal voter registration process. The protesters sent letters to the Hodeida Governor and local councilors, declaring their objection to the voter registration process, currently run by the authority, and demanding that voter registration staff be removed from their areas.

Similar protests took place in the governorates of Ibb, Mahwit, Hajja, Al-Baidha, Marib, Dhamar, Abyan and Shabwa. Citizens in the Al-Radhma, Dhi Sifal and Yarim districts of Ibb governorate organized huge popular rallies, protesting against the presence of voter registration staff in their areas. At a massive rally on Tuesday, Yarim citizens raised signs, denouncing the job undertaken by the voter registration committees, saying their work contradicted the principles of political action.

Protesters throughout Ibb released statements, condemning all the steps and procedures taken by the ruling party and its government. They encouraged citizens to continue the struggle until they obtain all their democratic rights.

The statements noted that participating in the elections, according to the ruling party's conditions, was nothing more than a comedy meant to deny people's democratic rights, help the survival of corruption, risk the future of coming generations, waste the country's resources and produce further crises.

In the Hubeish district of the same governorate, citizens protested against the process. They released a statement labeling what is happening as an illegal procedure that does not reflect promises made by the ruling party during the most recent presidential and local elections.

Continued on page 2

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By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

SANA'A, Nov 18 — A delegation from Civil Society Organizations Network for Development held a meeting with the Parliament's Budget Committee and presented a study entitled

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titled The Equitable Distribution of Expenditures in the Public Budget from a Social Perspective.

The analytical study examined the final accounting report for 2007, draft budget plan for 2009 and the distribution of expenditures in the public budget from a social perspective. It was prepared by Dr. Mohammad Ali Jubran Professor of Accounting Sana'a University for the Civil Society Organizations Network for Development.

The study indicated that a substantial amount of the state budget was channeled towards governmental central offices at the expense of local authorities.

In both the final accounting report for 2007 and budget plan for 2009, the study showed centralization in spending. General expenditure for governmental central offices for 2007 was 85.4 percent, while for the governorates it was only 14.6 percent. In the 2009 budget plan, 83.4 percent of the budget was allocated to central authorities, while 16.6 percent was allocated to local authorities. This contradicts both the country's approach of decentralization and goes against the international standards of distributing expenditure between central authorities and local ones.

The study pointed to a decrease in government expenditure on social services like education, health and social security.

It described spending on education in 2007 as "very low" and as having decreased compared to previous years. Although money spent on education in 2005 and 2006 was 17 percent of public expenditure, it was only 14.3 percent in 2007. Accordingly, this has reduced Yemen's ability to achieve the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The health sector received over five percent of the general expenditure in 2005 and 2006, but only 3.15 percent in 2007. The budget plan 2009 allocates 5.7 percent of the general expenditure to health services. From the general expenditure in 2007, 1.1 percent was allocated for water, the environment and sewage treatment. According to the study, this means that the government doesn't deal with the vital issue of water seriously enough as most of this 1.1 percent goes to the cities at the expense of rural areas.

According to the study, the proportion of total public expenditure allocated to

social security in 2007 was 1.16 percent. The study quoted a United Nations Development Program report on a 2006 survey on household budgets in Yemen to explain that not only is the portion of the budget allocated to social security minimal, but that it doesn't help those in need. The UNDP report showed that only 14 percent of social security had reached those most in need.

The study further described the expenditure of the Social Fund for Development (SFD) as "useless" since most of the money is spent on purchasing furniture, vehicles and equipment. The fund only spent 3.54 percent of its budget on construction projects.

The study denied the existence of "fair standards" in the distribution of financial support among the provinces and said that, even if they existed, they were not applied.

"Additional budget allocations hinder the balance of state spending, and the

study recommends revising the practice," the study noted.

To achieve equitable development, the study recommended the government allocate sufficient funds to achieve the UN's MDGs by increasing the share of social expenditure.

It also called for the reduction of the costs of scholarships abroad, the reconsideration of the SFD and the equitable distribution of education and health expenditure according to population density. It further stressed the need to reduce centralized expenditure through the adoption of clear scientific criteria to fairly allocate financial resources in the provinces, and recommended that the center grant of adequate financial support to local councils, especially in rural areas.

Members of Parliament welcomed the delegation and promised to take the study's primary recommendations into consideration as well as recommend them to the government.

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Integrating culture into development strategy for reproductive health

By: Salma Ismail

SANA'A, Nov. 19 — The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) last week released its annual State of the World Population Report for 2008 worldwide. The launching of the report in Yemen took place at Sana'a University and was attended by a number of representatives from the ministries of health and information, the National Population Council, as well as a number of academia and researchers.

Coinciding with the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the fifth report of the UNFPA, entitled Reaching Common Ground: Culture, Gender and Human Rights, focuses on cultural politics and development, and examines gender inequality and cultural differences with regards to reproductive health. It asserts the importance of cultural interaction with development strategies.

It argues for an approach that modifies development programs so that they are compatible with local cultural tradition: "Culturally sensitive programming is key to building common ground. It provides a practical and strategic response to the observation that cultural beliefs and perceptions are at the root of gender inequalities in many societies."

The document calls for breaking the cultural barriers that hinder better communication between men and women on issues of sexuality and reproductive health and calls for the understanding of the joint responsibilities of women and men as equal partners in both their public and private lives. "Men play a key role in bringing about gender equality since, in most societies, men exercise significant power in nearly every sphere of life, ranging from personal decisions regarding the size of families to the policy and program decisions taken at all levels of government."

The report says that the infant mortality rate in Yemen is 58 for every 1,000 live births. The latest estimates in 2003 by the Yemeni Ministry of Health and Population were much lower at 37 for 1,000. The ministry's report is conducted every five years and the next report is due in 2009.

Stressing the importance of education to the Yemen Times, Dr. Jamila Sale Al-Raiby, Deputy Minister of Health and Population, points to the



Despite the fact that fertility rate in Yemen is still one of the highest in the world, due to national efforts to promote family planning the projected population for Yemen in 2050 is now 58 million, 1.5 million less than expected in 2007.

fact that 98 percent of maternal mortality cases are illiterate mothers but stressed that there were multiple factors besides illiteracy that contribute to maternal mortality. Some of these include early marriage, poverty and poor health services.

Al-Raiby also attributes the slight increase in the use of contraceptives and birth control methods cited in the report to the aggressive awareness campaigns by the government coupled with cheap costs.

The UNFPA report estimates maternal mortality as a result of pregnancy, delivery and related complications in Yemen to be 430 deaths per 100,000 live births. This number is a substantial improvement from last year, when maternal mortality in the country stood at 570 for 100,000 according to the report. The Ministry of Health and Population had put this number at 365 for 100,000 in 2003.

The UNFPA office in Yemen recently said there is an urgent need for 5,000 more midwives to allow the country to achieve universal access to skilled care at birth and attain Millennium Development Goal 5 "to reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio". Studies outside Yemen indicate that when there is an increase in skilled birth attendants there is a decrease in maternal mortality. It is reported that 80 percent of deliveries in Yemen take place at home.

According to UNFPA, maternal mortality in Yemen accounts for 42 percent of all deaths among women of childbearing age. UNFPA said 75 percent of maternal deaths are preventable

and occur because of a lack of access to - and availability of - high-quality reproductive health services.

On a positive note, the projected population for Yemen in 2050 is now 58 million, 1.5 million less than expected in 2007. The population of Yemen now stands at 22.3 million, and is therefore expected to double by 2050. The document does mention that several of the estimates differ from official government figures.

On a global level, specific statistics from the report on gender equality show that 16 percent of parliamentarians worldwide are women, 70 percent of children who do not attend school are girls and two thirds of those who are illiterate are women.

The State of World Population 2008 report focuses links between culture and promoting human rights, especially women's rights. Taking into consideration cultural values can assist in eliminating human rights violations, especially those against women. It presents the challenges and dilemmas of culturally sensitive strategies and suggests ways that partnerships can avoid them.

The UNFPA also released a youth supplement to the State of the World Population 2008. Titled Generation of Change: Youth People and Culture, it features stories of young women and men, their experiences and achievements in different cultures. It demonstrates how young people can be agents for positive change and how they bring about change within their own cultures, championing human rights, gender and development, often by creating their own sub-culture.

Government and rebels must guarantee humanitarian access to civilians

By: Human Rights Watch

SANA'A, Nov. 19 — Tens of thousands of civilians in northern Yemen have been displaced or cut off from aid in fighting between government and rebel forces, Human Rights Watch said in a new report released today. Yemen's government as well as rebel forces should take immediate steps to ensure that they get the humanitarian aid they need in the aftermath of recent fighting.

The 50-page report, "Invisible Civilians: the Challenge of Humanitarian Access in Yemen's Forgotten War," documents how the Yemeni authorities have severely restricted humanitarian access to its northernmost governorate, Sa'da, ravaged by four years of armed conflict. As of October 2008, up to 70,000 people in remote areas and towns remained outside the reach of aid agencies.

"Thousands of civilians are in need, and yet the government is still depriving them of aid," said Joe Stork, deputy Middle East and North Africa director at Human Rights Watch. "This violates international law and common decency. Countries and UN agencies that provide assistance to Yemen need to press the government to allow humanitarian access."

When a fifth round of fighting in the northern conflict erupted in May 2008, the government imposed an information blackout and blocked the movement of commercial goods, including basic foods and fuel, an apparent act of unlawful collective punishment. The fighting ended in mid-July, but tens of thousands of people remain outside the reach of aid agencies.

Human Rights Watch said that the rebels, known as Huthis after their founder Husain al-Huthi, also prevent-

ed humanitarian access to areas under their control.

The report is based on three weeks of investigation in Yemen's capital, Sana'a, in July 2008, which included interviews with displaced persons and aid agencies based in Sana'a. Human Rights Watch was unable to travel to areas directly affected by the conflict because the government did not grant permission to travel.

"Invisible Civilians" also examines the government's attempt to keep the war from the public eye by banning journalists from the conflict zone, arbitrarily arresting those who report on civilian casualties, and cutting off most mobile-phone subscribers living in affected areas.

Human Rights Watch called on Yemeni authorities to end their restrictions on media coverage of the war and its aftermath, and to restore the phone network so that aid agencies can effectively communicate and work in the conflict zone.

By mid-July, 60,000 displaced persons had found refuge in the town of Sa'da, where they received limited assistance in camps and private homes. By the end of September, the government allowed humanitarian access to a limited number of other towns, but well into October, tens of thousands were still not getting assistance.

The report describes how United Nations agencies and other international actors in Yemen — such as the European Union and other countries — have broadly failed to hold the government and Huthi fighters to account for their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the need to ensure access to civilians in need.

"The Yemeni authorities have done their best to prevent any international awareness of this war and its consequences," Stork said. "Unfortunately,

the UN and foreign governments have largely obliged by remaining silent themselves."

Background

In June 2004, members of "The Believing Youth," a revivalist movement among the Zaidi Shia, took up arms after the government closed their religious schools. They are commonly known in Yemen as Huthis, after Husain al-Huthi, who led the movement in the 1990s. The Zaidis, a branch of Shia Islam mainly found in Yemen's northern highlands, are a minority in Yemen's mainly Sunni Muslim population, but ruled the country prior to a military-led revolution in 1962 and remain well-represented in senior political and military posts.

The Huthis have never issued clear demands to the government, although leading Huthi figures have cited a range of grievances. These include the need to protect Zaidi religious identity, opposition to the Yemeni government's close cooperation with the United States, economic neglect of Sa'da governorate, and what they view as unjustified government military operations against them.

The president of Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh, declared an end to the fifth and most recent round of fighting on July 17, 2008. However, many longtime observers believe that without a written and monitored peace agreement, a sixth round of fighting is likely.

On October 24, 2008, Human Rights Watch published a related report, "Yemen: Disappearances and Arbitrary Arrests in the Armed Conflict with Huthi Rebels," (<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2008/yemen1008/>) which documents arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances in connection with the conflict in Sa'da.

Aden containers terminal workers still on strike

By: Ali Saeed

ADEN, Nov 17 — Aden container terminal workers have been on strike for more than 10 days in protest at the new clauses imposed by Dubai Ports World (DPW), the new operator of the Aden Container Terminal (ACT), in their labor contracts. They were on partial strike from the Nov.5 to Nov.7, and have held complete strike from then until now.

Last Saturday, around 500 workers protested in front of the governor of Aden's office. Media sources indicate that the workers protest every morning for four hours in front of the governor's office before going to the building of the General Union for Labor Syndicates to continue the protest there.

According to the press release by the syndicate of ACT workers, the latter are complaining that the DPW, the new operator of the terminal, has imposed

new conditions in the workers' contract that are unjust and do not protect their rights.

The press release stated that the authority had not responded to the workers' complaints. It also declared that the port's new managers as well as the Ministry of Labor and local authorities had not carried out the president and prime minister's directions to employ Yemeni workers in the port.

The syndicate demands stakeholders revise the items of their new contract that have not been approved by the labor office, said the press release. Among their demands, workers asked for the application of the same wages policy in the port of Aden as in the port of Al-Mu'alla, as well as the cancellation of a trial period of six months and a clause in the new contract preventing the worker from demanding his rights. The workers also demand the revision of a clause giving the employer the right

to end the contract at any time without paying compensation.

When workers started the strike in the port, the Aden police arrested six of them. The workers committee stated that the executive manager of the new company had threatened to replace the Yemeni laborers with workers from Thailand or Djibouti.

Although the port workers are still on strike, Aref Al-Muhairi, executive manager of DPW, made a statement to the press in which he said that that, although the port had stopped its work for just three hours, it had resumed its work normally. He denied that there were any new conditions in the laborers' contract and said that the strike had not affected work at the port.

Local sources have said that the workers sent two letters to the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, otherwise known as HOOD, and to the syndicate of workers.

Renal failure patients die in Ibb and Hodeidah due to lack of services

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For the Yemen Times

IBB, Nov. 17 — The number of people who have died due to renal failure in Ibb since the renal center was established there in the beginning of 2007 amounted to 100, while people who suffer from the disease are over 500, according to Faisal Abdu Hassan, manager of the renal center. The manager said that the center suffers from a huge shortage of capabilities amid a big number of renal failure patients who resort to the hospital. He pointed out that many patients have died as they couldn't continue the process of dialysis [cleansing blood through a machine].

"Every day, we receive 32 to 40 cases suffering from renal failure and the number of dialysis machines is limited as we only have 12. Every machine is supposed to cover only two patients a day as the dialysis process takes 4 hours," said Hassan. "Due to the high demand, we are obliged to do three to five dialysis operations with the same machine every day and reduce the time of every case from four to three hours."

Hassan maintained that the center carries out around eight thousand dialysis sessions per year, and noted that the district of Ba'adan tops others in the governorate in terms of renal failure patients. He said that patients may die if they don't undergo regular dialysis. "Some patients think that dialysis causes death and others apply herbal remedies as alternative medicine. These wrong practices lead to death as the treatment of the disease involves that patients should



A scene from the kidney dialysis center at Al-Thora Hospital, Ibb. Renal – or kidney – disease patients have only limited treatment options: several types of dialysis or surgery. Dialysis is a procedure that cleanses the blood of waste, excess fluid and salt when the kidneys no longer can perform these functions.

stick to doctors' advice and the time of dialysis."

Renal failure patients complain from overcrowding and negligence in the center. "I have to wait days until my turn for dialysis. In addition, the time of the dialysis has been reduced from four to three hours, which means that we don't receive the proper treatment. Our friends have died due to negligence and we are on the way to death as the local authority and the government are incapable of treating us," said Hussein Ghalib, a renal failure patient.

There are only five dialysis centers in Yemen, in the Sana'a, Hodeidah, Taiz, Ibb and Aden governorates. This past May, three people died in Hodeidah due to lack of the substances that are used in dialysis. The disease still threatens hundreds of people in the province who have not received minimum care since the required substances were cut off. The

Hodeidah dialysis center receives patients from different districts including Zaideyah, Al-Meghlaf, Bait Al-Faqih and Zabeed in addition people from nearby governorates including Hajja, Raimah, Al-Mahwit and Dhamar.

Dr. Mahir Sulaiman M'ijam, director of Al-Hodeidah Center for Dialysis, described the situation of renal failure patients as "disastrous". He maintained that "unless the center is provided with more necessary materials including solutions and filters, those patients will die as the center cannot provide them with the required treatment."

"The center would provide 20,000 sessions for the patients in the past. Nowadays, we are supposed to make more than 40 thousand sessions due to the big number of patients which increases incessantly particularly given that the center receives patients from four governorates," said Dr. M'ijam.

Continued from page 1

Protests ...

According to the statement, the illegal procedures taken by the government may only serve to foment sedition among citizens and feed conflicts to reach irresponsible partisan achievements and retain corrupt individuals in government, while citizens still have no access to basic services.

Security authorities in the Beidha and Abyan governorates arrested many opposition activists for allegedly distributing statements instigating citizens to boycott the voter registration process.

Registration offices closed due to poor turnout

In the governorates of Sa'ada and Dhamar, two of the largest constituencies, voter registration staff faced great obstacles hindering their performance and registered no citizens on the voter lists. The voter registration offices in the Hada district of Dhamar were closed. On Monday, local councilors of Al-Dhalea began discussing the dire situation of citizens in the governorate as a result of political congestions and crises. The local councilors and the

governor confirmed during a meeting that the controlling of the democratic process by an individual party has converted the elections into a comedy, while the unconstitutional composition of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER) helped the dire situation to worsen.

According to a statement released by the meeting, the SCER was composed in a way contravening Article 159 of the Constitution, but boycotting the elections via democratic and peaceful means is a constitutional right. The statement warned citizens against possible engagement in violence.

Various media sources reported that two blasts hit on Tuesday evening two voting centers in constituency no. 297 of Al-Dhalea governorate, adding that an unidentified cyclist on a motorbike threw a hand grenade at one of the targeted centers.

No dialogue between JMP and ruling party

A JMP source denied the authenticity of media reports that the opposition coalition is currently in dialogue with the ruling party to resolve election-related

problems, describing such reports as "baseless".

The source ruled out that the possibility of serious dialogue between the JMP and the ruling party on election-related issues unless the latter accepts a recent JMP proposal to approve the proportional list.

Senior Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) leader Yasin Saeed Numan wondered why the ruling party is only concentrating on the composition of the SCER when the problem is the representation of the opposition in this commission. Numan told Al-Sharia weekly that the JMP's vision stipulates approving the proportional list in the elections.

Pro-government media outlets have reported that there is a new round of dialogue between the ruling party and the JMP. The ruling party-affiliated Al-Methaq weekly reported that both sides met on Monday and were expected to reach positive results.

The ruling party's weekly quoted special sources as saying that the list of SCER nominees was increased by Parliament to 22 instead of 15, pointing out that this procedure stipulated amending the General Election Law.

In Brief

SHABWA

Japan grants YR 32 mln to improve water and clearing services in al-Dali'a and Shabwa

The Japanese government has decided to extend grants to two grass roots projects in al-Dali'a and Shabwa governorates under the Japanese scheme called" Grant Assistance for Grass Roots Human Security projects" at sum of YR 32 million.

According to the press release of the Japanese embassy in Sana'a, Masakazu Toshikage, ambassador of Japan to Yemen signed on Monday in Sana'a two agreements to this effect with Sadiq Al-Adrisis, General Manager of Cleaning and Improvement Fund of al-Dali'a governorate and Dr. Ishaq al-Suba'i, President of the Modern Youth Society of Shabwa governorate.

The first grant is at amount of more than YR 16 million will be used for the project of improving environmental public health in Damt city, by Al-Dali'a Cleaning and Improvement Fund who would purchase four garbage dump trunks.

The press release said that the grant aims at improving the cleaning services by boosting the environment and the public health of the inhabitants in the city of Damt.

The second grant is at a sum of nearly YR 16 million which will be used for the project of improving the water supply system in Khamar area, Ataq district of Shabwa governorate.

Under the agreement, the Modern Youth Society of Shabwa governorate would use the money to purchase a submersible pump unit and a generator.

the embassy said that the grant aims at providing clean drinking water to the inhabitants, through reducing sufferings of women and children from the heavy labor burden, and improving the health condition of the inhabitants

in the area.

Thousands of citizens will benefit from these two projects in the two governorates.

During the current Japanese fiscal year (April 2008- March 2009) Japan funded ten grass- root projects in Yemen, totaling \$ 737,876 under the above mentioned scheme including the aforementioned two projects, during the past Japanese fiscal year (April 2007- March 2009), Japan funded 17 grass-roots projects in Yemen totaling \$ 1,337,350 under the same scheme.

ADEN

Yemen concerned int'l navy appearance in Gulf of Aden: al-Qirbi says

Minister of Foreign Affairs Abu Bakr al-Qirbi expressed Monday the concern of Yemen to the escalating numbers of international warships arriving in the region.

During his meeting with the UK ambassador to Sana'a Tim Torlot, al-Qirbi confirmed the country's ability to secure its regional waters, indicating to the need to intensify and coordinate efforts with the concerned neighboring countries to face the piracy phenomenon in the region.

Moreover, the meeting dealt with the global financial crisis and its consequences on the regions economies, in addition to the outcomes of the G Twenty Summit that aims to alleviate the crisis impacts.

Talks to develop Aden Containers Port

Deputy head of Free Zones General Authority, head of Aden Free Zone Abdul-Jalil al-Shuaibi held talks on Sunday with General Director of Developing Port Cities Program Ahmed Salem and consultant of Cornel Group authorized to conduct

the study by the World Bank Robert Keota.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed issues relating to studying Yemeni ports development and Aden Containers Port which will be implemented by the World Bank.

Al-Shaif, Salem and Keota paid a visit to block (C) to select a suitable site to carry out extending and improving activities in the port.

SANA'A

IFAD shifts Yemen's loans to gifts

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) approved on Tuesday shifting the development assistance of Yemeni agricultural projects for 2009 from loans to gifts.

This announcement took place during a meeting gathered IFAD regional director Omar Dhefar with Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Abdul Karim al-Arhabi here in Sana'a.

Dhefar pointed out that the Fund has allocated \$ 23 million for agricultural development projects in Yemen and is studying the possibilities of raising this amount in future.

For his part, al-Arhabi expressed the government's appreciation of IFAD's supports in agricultural development field and its desire to develop the mutual cooperation between the fund and the country.

The meeting also reviewed the implementation progress of the IFAD-funded projects in Yemen.

Program on Happy Yemen aired

The Three D Media Corporation for specialized production has completed the program of "Felix (happy) Yemen- a Tourist Story" which was prepared with funding from the Tourism ministry and the Tourism Promotion

Council.

The program included 26 episodes and 53 TV films on 53 tourist attractions across the republic.

Executive director of the Tourism Promotion Council Ahmed al-Beel said the program came within the framework of a plan aimed at promoting tourism in the country and that was carried out by the council for these attractions which are among many other tourist attractions the ministry is working to promote and introduce.

Head of the corporation Abdullah Esmail said the Atlas Tourist and Cultural TV Channel has started airing the program, expecting the program would be aired through the Saba TV Channel and other channels.

The work has been produced over five months and included various tourist attractions throughout the country with focus on archaeological towns, tourist landmarks, folklore and handicrafts.

Photographing was carried out with modern instruments by Yemeni cadres.

Human, prisoner issues discussed with Human Rights Watch

Interior Minister Rashad al-Masri has discussed with a delegation from the US-based Human Rights Watch issues related to human rights and jail conditions in the country.

Al-Masri affirmed that Yemen works to facilitate human organization's job either UN affiliated ones or other interested in this field, those who work to improve the prisoner conditions.

He made clear that the Yemeni law ensures rights and freedom of all people and that judiciary has the final say over all matters.

He said that the security authorities work to ease the work of organizations working in human fields, calling for further cooperation between the min-

istry and the Human Rights Watch.

The delegation expressed the group's readiness to continuously contact authorities to promote humanitarian job in the country.

Okaz agrees to print and distribute al-Syasiah daily in KSA

Saba News Agency agreed on Monday with the Saudi Okaz Organization for Press and Publication to print out al-Syasiah daily- run by Saba- in the corporation to distribute then in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

During his meeting with the Director General of the corporation Walid Kattan, Saba Board Chairman and Editor in Chief, Nasr Taha Mustafa discussed with him arrangement to print the daily.

Kattan voiced readiness of the organization to print al-Syasiah daily, saying that the organization has clear directives form the Saudi Ministry of Culture and Information to enhance ties with Yemeni press.

For his part, Mustafa pointed out to the importance of enhancing role of media in Yemen and Saudi Arabia to response to the notable progress in the brotherly relationship between the two countries under the sponsorship leaderships of both countries represented by President Ali Abdullah Saleh and the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz.

He made it clear that the step of printing al-Syasiah in the kingdom aims at boosting media contact between the two countries and serve Yemeni community in the kingdom to link them with their homeland to know what is going on.

Mustafa expressed thank you for the welcome of the Okaz organization to print the paper, highlighting position of the kingdom to support development process in Yemen.

He praised humanitarian assistance presented by Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz to help affected people in Yemen due to flood disaster which hit Hadramout and al-Maharah governorates.

Then, Mustafa paid a visit to Okaz newspaper and the printer.

Parliament approves ≈ 26mln loan agreement

The Parliament approved on Monday a French loan agreement of funding a project of SCADA system for national control of electricity power that was signed between the Yemeni government and the French development agency at ≈ 26 million.

The Parliament recommended using the loan only for implementation of the project and making sure from the international standards while implementation.

It also insisted on importance of choosing a qualified consultation company to supervise the project to insure doing it on time and raise periodical report to the parliament about work process in the project.

Kuwait embassy offers 30,000 to Al-Tahadi Society in Sana'a

The Kuwaiti embassy in Sana'a offered \$ 30,000 as support for

Al-Tahadi Society for Disabled People. According to the statement of the embassy, the grant comes within the brotherly relationship between Yemen and Kuwaiti peoples.

In a meeting with the head of the society Jamelah al-Baidani, the Kuwait ambassador Salem al-Zamanan wished such assistance would help in carry out a project of setting up library for the people of special needs. Al-Zamanan also highlighted activities of the society.

Their News

Somali Cameraman Wins International Award

Somali news cameraman Abdullahi Farah Duguf has won the 2008 Rory Peck Award for News. The award honours freelance coverage of on-the-day news, where the focus is on the immediacy of the story. The winning footage Two Weeks in Mogadishu was shot in September 2007 and describes the human misery in the war-torn capital.

Abdullah Farah Duguf, known as 'Duguf', has been working as a cameraman in Somalia since 1993. He has also worked extensively with international broadcasters and agencies as a fixer, in particular APTN. Duguf says that the deteriorating situation in Somalia over the past two years has made it almost impossible for him and most other journalists to operate there. He has decided to seek refuge in Djibouti for the foreseeable future.

Duguf's footage shows distressing scenes of violence, destruction and human misery in Mogadishu as the insurgency erupted into almost daily battles on the streets. Duguf captured the terrifying level of violence on the streets where there is nothing to shield local people - or journalists. At one point he became a target himself. In the city hospital he met a man whose wife and three children had just been killed in a mortar attack on their home. And in the makeshift camps outside the city, a woman asked him to film her starving children.

The judges said the film had "drama, vividness, humanity and context". One said: "This is one of the most difficult stories in the world to tell. But he told it with clarity, courage and an amazing eye for detail. The camerawork is extraordinary in the circumstances."

Duguf says: "In this civil war local journalists have become a target. During this filming assignment I received a lot of threats and intimidations as have other journalists, but despite this danger I worked very hard to ensure I remained anonymous. Never in the past 17 years have

conditions been so insecure, dangerous and chaotic."

Algerian Journalist Wins 2008 Lorenzo Natali Award

Algerian journalist Nassima Oulebsir's article 'These children not allowed to attend school' has won the first prize in the Maghreb and Middle East category of the annual Lorenzo Natali Journalism Prize. The article, which tells about children who are denied the right to school because their parents were previously members of underground armed groups, led to a major debate about children's rights in Algeria.

Nassima Oulebsir has been a journalist and international reporter since 2001 and has received several journalism prizes. The main subjects she covers are human rights and development, ranging from education to HIV/Aids and childhood. In the winning article Oulebsir gives a detailed account of the ordeal of hundreds of children who are denied access to school because of the political activities of their parents during the civil conflict in Algeria. Oulebsir writes about the suffering of these children and how the authorities are ignoring their fate, despite promises to take charge of them.

Oulebsir's winning article can be read here.

The second prize in the Maghreb and Middle East category was won by Mehdi Sekkouri Alaoui and Youssef Ziraoui (Marocco) for their article 'On the Targuist sniper's trail' and the third prize was won by Anne-Marie Jazzar-El Hage (Lebanon) for her article 'The difficult adaptation of African housekeepers'.

The Lorenzo Natali Prize was established by the European Commission in 1992 and is open to the press worldwide.

Entries may come from journalists using any of the 21st century media: radio, television, written press and on-line.

Arab Free Press Forum to Tackle Pressing Issues in the Region

Which are the behind-the-scene manoeuvres Arab government use to control the media? What are the obstacles faced by the independent press in countries such as Egypt, Syria and Yemen? These and other questions will be addressed by the 3rd Arab Free Press Forum, taking place in Beirut on 12 and 13 December.

Organised by the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) and the Lebanese An-Nahar daily, the 3rd Arab Free Press Forum will look into the most pressing issues of the independent press in the Arab region.

"We wanted to stress the capacity and determination of the independent press despite continuing pressures, hardships, threats and sanctions of all kinds.

The commitment of publishers and journalists to carry on and challenge those who try to silence them is remarkable, and we wanted to acknowledge it," says Virginie Jouan, Director of Press Freedom and Development Programmes at WAN.

Among the speakers in the panel 'Oblique Government Tactics that Impede a Free Arab Press' are Ibrahim Issa, Editor-in-Chief of the Al-Dustour newspaper in Egypt, Moussa Ould Hamed, Publisher of the Biladi newspaper in Mauritania, Mazen Darwich, President of the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression and Abdel Karim Al-Khaiwani, former Editor-in-Chief of the Al-Shoura newspaper in Yemen. The other panels are entitled:

- The Changing Face of Arab Blogging
- The Appeal and Influence of Pan-Arab News Media
- The Business of Newspaper Publishing in the Arab World

Around 120 leading publishers, journalists and press freedom advocates from across the Middle East and North Africa are expected to meet in Beirut to discuss these issues at the joint initiative of the World

Association of Newspapers and the Lebanese An-Nahar daily newspaper.

Distripress Elects President from the Middle East

For the first time in its 54-year history, the Zurich-based Distripress has elected a President from the Middle East. Tony Jashanmal, Director of the Jashanmal Group headquartered in the United Arab Emirates, was voted as the president for a three-year term. The elections were held as part of the Annual Distripress Convention in Istanbul.

Press release "With the growing importance of Asia and particularly the Middle East in the global economic landscape it will be my goal to increase the membership of Distripress from companies in this region," said Jashanmal in his acceptance speech.

Distripress is the largest organisation of companies involved in the wholesale and retail distribution of print media internationally. Distripress also champions the promotion of press

freedom worldwide.

Distripress supports the promotion of the international distribution of newspapers, magazines and pocket books. With the aim of a free international press distribution, Distripress promotes business contacts, supports a fair and efficient trade and intervenes in favour of press freedom. The annual congress is the biggest and most important market place for international exchange in the industry.

IFJ Welcomes King's Opposition to Jailing Journalists in Jordan

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has welcomed the King of Jordan's expression of support for press freedom after he said that journalists should not be jailed for their work. "His Majesty's statement reinforcing his opposition to the jailing of journalists is a very significant step for press freedom in the kingdom," said IFJ General Secretary Aidan White. At a meeting with top newspaper editors on Sunday, King

Abdullah said he opposed the jailing of journalists. The Press and Publication Law passed in 2007 by the country's parliament abolished jail sentences for press offences but some journalists have still been sentenced to jail under other legislation such as the Penal Code. The Press and Publication Law provides for excessive fines that have a crippling effect on the media.

The Jordanian Press Association (JPA), an IFJ affiliate, played a significant role in the negotiations leading to the decriminalisation of the Jordan media law through a constructive engagement with parliament. "The IFJ joins the JPA in calling for the reform of outstanding laws which allow the jailing of journalists in Jordan," White added. The IFJ represents over 600,000 journalists in 120 countries worldwide.

For further information, contact the IFJ, International Press Centre, Residence Palace, Block C, 155 Rue de la Loi, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium, tel: +322 235 2200 / 2207, fax: +322 235 2219, e-mail: ernest.sagaga@ifj.org, Internet: http://www.ifj.org/

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National strategy for local administration



Because of the centralized approach that had dominated the governance system in Yemen, many rural areas even if just on the outskirts of the main cities suffer from very weak infrastructure and lack of basic services such as water networks or roads.

By the Ministry of Local Administration

The national strategy for local government is the result of considerable efforts towards implementing the president's electoral agenda of promoting decentralization and expanding public participation in the running of local affairs.

This strategy is the outcome of parliament recommendations to the government to speed up the preparation of a national decentralization strategy according to the development challenges of the country.

It is the legal basis on which the government will prepare a national program to implement decentralization in a way to reflect, in both content and spirit, the president's initiative to develop a local government system.

The strategic analysis

For Yemen's particular approach regarding implementing decentralization in the region, a number of strategic planning methods were used in preparing and developing the strategy on both the analytical part and the con-

cluding part.

The analysis investigated the weaknesses to full implementation of the desired financial and administrative decentralized system and was based on data taken from a number of sources, including:

- the reports of annual performance assessment, the utility and functional survey of the year 2002 and the studies conducted by the ministry of local authority
- the results of the field experiments, studies and analyses conducted by the Decentralization and Local Development Project (DLDSP)
- the results of the filed experiment, studies and analyses conducted by the social fund for development with special regard to community participation and the institutional development of the local authority institutions
- the results of counseling with the basic sector ministries responsible for the basic public services

In addition, studies and background papers dedicated to the preparation of the strategy which was done by local, Arab and foreigner experts were also reviewed.

The national strategy

The first step in building the strategy involved forming a strategic vision, mission and goals for the government to work on by 2015.

The second step focused on defining the strategic direction that the government- and all of the local and foreigner development partners- should commit to during the process of building and developing the local government system in a way that guarantees achieving the strategic vision by 2015.

To define the form and content of the desired local government system, a number of general principles were submitted to give direction to official and public efforts through the process of building and developing the local government system. The latter were derived from the Yemeni constitution, constitutional amendment projects presented by the president, the strategic vision of Yemen for the year 2025 and United Nations decentralization guidelines.

Strategic points were defined according to the legislative system, the constitutional structure, local human and financial abilities to develop the local government system.

Implementing the strategy

At this stage, the proper mechanism to implement the strategy was suggested in a national program defining the executive program, the required budgets, and institutions responsible for its implementation - not only the Ministry of Local Administration, but the government as a whole.

Supervision and evaluation

A system of supervision and assessment was also suggested to evaluate the transparency and efficiency of the program's execution. The assessment mechanism aims to discover and correct deviations from defined strategic goals before it is too late.

The commitment of the technical team in charge of preparing and developing the strategy in all its stages was invaluable:

First: in dealing with such a complex issue, juggling the horizontal components of state responsibilities, the vertical components of the local and central administration and the social dimension.

Second: in conducting deep analytical research into the current local authority in Yemen, its positive and

negative applications and in emphasizing the importance of promoting the decentralization process in a complete and balanced framework.

Third: in involving representatives from all institutions concerned - representative of the local authority, civil society organizations as well as local and foreigner partners in development- and in developing the local government to enrich the strategy.

To achieve this goal, the following steps were taken:

1. Holding workshops that included representatives of the heads and members of local councils, executive institutions and the civil society organizations in all governorates, including the capital's municipality and nearly 35 percent of the republic's districts.

2. Holding two workshops in the Universities of Adan and Dhamar which included representatives of the House of Representatives, academic staff, local councils, executive institutions and civil society organizations, during which the main strategic points were reviewed, discussed and enriched by the attendants.

3. Designing a website for the strat-

egy (www.nslg-ye.net) for the purpose of communicating with the public, receiving their remarks and inquiries in addition to deepening the awareness of the importance of transferring power to a local government system.

Foreign expertise

To involve foreign development partners, a display of the strategy's components was presented in the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and attended by representatives of foreign missions to Yemen and international development organizations. The finer points of the strategy were discussed with development partners in a series of bilateral meetings.

To make use of the international expertise in enriching the strategy, the draft of the document was presented and discussed with a number of international experts in the Yemen and during visits to foreign countries, notably France and Denmark.

In the conclusion, we put this national work in your hands hoping that you will approve its proposal to the ministries' council so that a national program for the strategy's execution can be prepared.

Decentralization of governance in Yemen

By: Khaled Fattah
Doctoral Candidate
University of St Andrews-UK

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the stage of international donors has been decorated with numerous banners under whose slogans countries in the developing world should march to good governance. One of these banners highlights that decentralization of governance leads to effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, transparency and responsiveness of local governments. Another big banner emphasizes that decentralization brings officials closer to the people, empowers citizens and creates a larger space for public participation. With united Yemen in mind, how true and applicable are these slogans?

Before jumping to answers and conclusions, let us first of all recognize the following important facts. First, decentralization of governance is not an event, but rather a long term, multidimensional and cross-cutting process that is dominated by the views of post industrial capitalist societies. Second, there is no single model of decentral-

ization that is optimal for all countries. Third, decentralization and centralization are not 'either- or' conditions. Finally, when we talk about the vital role of local government in the decentralization process we should avoid limiting the discussion to the conventional administrative bodies such as municipalities and districts. An equal attention must be paid to social units such as the family, school, university, and, in the case of Yemen, the tribe. These units are major suppliers of perceptions regarding important decentralization-related values such as delegation, empowerment and participatory decision making. Despite the criticism over the motives and the textbook approach of some international donors operating in Yemen, let us admit that it is foolish to dismiss the repeated calls of such donors for the ineffective and corruption-infested state agencies in Yemen to start marching towards all the great values associated with good governance. There is no argument here about the merits of, for example, bridging the wide gap between Sana'a-based governmental bodies and the millions of people residing in the 38284 villages of Yemen. For these millions and oth-

ers residing in the hundreds of districts outside Sana'a, the bureaucrats and politicians who run the affairs of the central government are too far away from the daily experiences of individuals and their families, and too far away from the needs and problems of local communities.

Politicians and bureaucrats, on the other hand, often blame Yemen's topographic destiny as the main obstacle in bridging the central-local gap. They argue that the lack of physical communication, which is due to lack of resources and the scattering of the population in rigid and inaccessible mountainous areas, is at the heart of the centralization/decentralization problem. In my view, however, it is not the geographic distance that should be blamed. Rather, the psychological distance of central government officials from the citizens they are supposed to govern. Most of the central government's policies and activities at the local level are seasonal and driven by short-term political interests that are developed within the context of concentrating power and maintaining the privileges of the ruling party. In addition, such imposed activities in the

form of, for example, infrastructural projects are presented, when delivered, as gifts from the central government not as basic rights of local population.

Unfortunately, the existing dilemma of local governance in Yemen will get worse as long as the policies of central government are not driven by demand from local citizens. For planning and implementing state activities at local levels, it is essential for Sana'a-based decision makers to realize that failure at the local level of governance can pose a serious threat not only to government power but also to state legitimacy. In the minds of the people of Yemen, whether they live along coastal plains or on highland plateaus, the images of the political system are shaped by the degree of responsiveness of local governments. When civil servants in a governorate, municipality, district or sub-district can not solve simple problems such as doctors' absence from the local clinic or teachers' absence from the local school, people will defiantly question the ability of the central government to address the much larger and more complex problems related to national economy, security and politics.



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The primary reasons why the Yemeni opposition is ineffective

By: Dr. Nassser Mohammed Nasser

Criticism by itself doesn't mean hostility, prejudice or discrimination against the individual or party being targeted by criticism. Instead, it means anatomy and diagnosis with the aim of identifying weaknesses and limitations in order to rectify and overcome them as such may help improve status of the targeted party.

This is the message of criticism and critics, which we need to understand and deal with in this context. Undoubtedly, if opposition exists in any country, it invariably reflects a healthy phenomenon, plus clear evidence of community development and progress toward breaking the state of stagnancy and monotony.

In addition, having an opposition alliance is pondered upon as a forward step on the democratic course, however, presence of such an alliance doesn't necessarily imply effectiveness. In Yemen,

the opposition exists but it lacks effectiveness. So, what are the reasons why this opposition is ineffective? The following points give an answer to this question:

One: There are some opposition figures who exercise politics and trade activities at the same time. Therefore, growth of their broad commercial interests has become correlated with survival of the current regime via suspicious deals, tax waiving and provision of other facilities. These figures turned to give a top priority to their commercial interests.

Two: Some opposition figures are involved in cases of terrorism, murder and embezzlement of funds they collected under the guise of charitable services. Consequently, those figures have become merely helpless cards at the hand of the regime, thereby possessing no will to do something for politics.

Friendly opposition

Three: Some opposition figures get

small benefits from the regime such as luxurious cars and other gifts. They benefit from the regime, on the one hand, and on the other, they enjoy good economic conditions, and therefore needn't sacrifice them. Those figures want a friendly opposition, which they can run by amicable concessions, not from jails and detentions.

Four: Opposition figures and civil society activists understand well how huge cruelty and barbarism they must confront will be if their opposition constitutes a serious threat to the regime. They also understand that there are famous leaders, who lost their lives as a result of cruelty and barbarism. Those leaders include Jarallah Omar, former Assistant Secretary-General of Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), Hassan Al-Huraibi, Majid Murshid and tens of active opposition leaders, who were assassinated or killed in maliciously plotted incidents.

Five: Grassroots and fans supporting

the opposition are ineffective too. These people don't interact nor do they back any parties raising their demands and concerns before the regime. As a result, movements of party leaders and civil society activists turn out to be individual adventures without any relation with citizens (grassroots and opposition fans), who behave as helpless viewers of what happens between the government and opposition activists.

In conclusion, had the west, after being defeated by Muslims in the reign of Islamic Caliphate, remained machinating collapse of Muslims and glorifying the great achievements reached by the once exalted Romanian State and conquests of its great men, the whole world would have remained experiencing darkness of the medieval ages. The west did not do so. It began promoting self-criticism until it changed itself and the entire world.

Source: Al-Wasat Weekly

COMMON SENSE

Palestine and the US elections (Final) Don't expect the peace yet

It really saddens this observer to see how many Arabs expect to have a turn of events in the region with every presidential election in the United States. While there is no harm in wishing for a change of heart (at least to being fair and objective) by any new President, especially if the President should come after the likes of George W. Bush. It goes without saying that any wishful thinking that Barack Obama will bring Jerusalem back to the Palestinians is exactly just that - wishful thinking.

There is a major problem in this region in that the Arabs are really still far behind in so many ways that it is becoming almost difficult now for most of the people in the region to relate to most of the developments of the world, let alone keep up with them. The Arabs are so backward politically that there seems to be a strong incongruity between most of the Arab leaders and their constituencies. The latter have been lied to, cheated and dehumanized by their leaders to the point where the Arab World, or the feelings and aspirations of the Arab citizens have no weight in the determination of the foreign policy of most of the Western powers (except with the respect to the petty foreign aid or bread crumbs that are given disguised as humanitarian assistance). Whatever the case, when it comes down to the truth, we really do not need anybody's leftovers, if the Arabs really had the right notion of how their resources should be allocated and managed. But with the lot of "leaders" that are the worst batch of leaders this nation has known in a long time, far surpassing the former "autocrats" and kings that prevailed in the last century, in oppression, miserliness and a total lack of culture and civility. There should be no great expectations from any new Administration in Washington, even if the President's parents were born in Mecca, because there is no leverage that the Arabs have in the determination of American foreign policy and how the interests of the United States should be directed. Furthermore, the Americans know full well that the determination of Arab decisions does not come from the masses in "the street" and thus they are not concerned with how these Arab masses feel as long as they cannot get their own leaders to sense their feelings! The Arabs are indeed in a precarious situation, where they can't even hope that their leaders would ever bring them back into the community of rapidly developing nations.

Most Arabs who had witnessed the last half of the last century will be quick to point out that states like Egypt (under King Farouk), Iraq (under the Hashemites and Nuri Elsaed), and Saudi Arabia (under the reign of King Faisal) were projected to vie with Japan and many of the Asian Tigers (Korea, Singapore and Malaysia). What happened? Thanks to the great revolutions of Egypt and Iraq, the wheel of progress was rendered permanently flat. There was some progress on the surface, but culture and intellect was laid to rest. Even Mohammed Al-Baradei (General Manager of the International Atomic Energy Agency of the United Nations), in an Egyptian television interview a couple of months ago, recalled sadly how much the Arabs have lost in terms of culture and education, not to mention the political dehydration most of the Arab citizens have been subjected to. The Arabs are politically numb now and their leaders have no desire to jolt some life into the masses, because they enjoy being unchallenged by anyone of the likes of Obama who could stir the masses to demand "change" and access to the resources of the land to harness them for the progress of the nation and for strengthening our position in the world, lest this nation remain the ridicule of all the other rapidly developing nations. Even Vietnam, which has gone through half a century of warfare, is now enjoying rapid development. The observer is inclined to conclude that most Arab leaders have no stomach for any freedom for their people, so one should not expect them to hand down progress and freedom of expression on a silver spoon to the Arab masses. Of course, it is not easy for an Obama to rise from the midst of the Arab masses, because in the Arab World, some countries insure that mosques are closed immediately after prayer times, so that people do not mingle and assemble for any political discourse or even to discuss what was on the Late Show! We are also busy with such incomprehensible fiascos like Darfur, Somalia and even the tense political situation in Lebanon (which was once an "example" worth admiring), because of the ugly political games that our leaders enjoy playing, especially as they are not subject to any accountability by their people for misusing the resources of the countries they rule. Once all this stops and our leaders become accountable to their people rather than their bosses in Washington or elsewhere, then the Arab people will guide our leaders as to how Washington can see things the way the Arab in the street sees them. Stuff like that can only come from the bottom up and not from the top down. So for the near future, regrettably speaking, there is no hope for the Arab case in Palestine or anywhere else for that matter.

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



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

The regime is involved in a face-to-face fight with multi-party system

By: Ahmad Abdulmalik Al-Maqrani

The Yemeni authority is working harder and harder toward more political congestion. It is also progressing shamelessly toward annulling the multi-party system in the country in a practical manner. Therefore, the ruler sees no one beside him except for a queue of yes-men and helpless clubbers.

The authority doesn't intend to impose an unannounced monarchic system of governance as some politicians speak about frequently. Instead, it plans to produce formal elections via which it intends to abolish the multi-party system just after it began to be applied on the ground. And the policy of liquidation, elimination and cleansing of political activists until the extent of cracking down on teachers and ordinary employees, dominance over the judicial authority, oppressing journalists and vote rigging in a way making any election worse than the one before reflect practical practices to

annul the multi-party system.

Supposedly, the authority that doesn't think about any real development in the country as much as it cares about its survival and stay in power succeeded just in controlling the electoral programs with the intention of boasting them on the various occasions, as well as on the front pages of newspapers.

When the authority eliminates all the political and national forces through legal violations, frauds and vote rigging, plus black magic and misguidance, this implies that it achieved its malicious objectives and intentions.

Let us imagine that the upcoming parliamentary election, scheduled for April 2009, will have been conducted, in one way or another, according to the authority's desire and what it wants to produce. Will the authority end the theatrical stage at this limit or will it fuel other problems and then attribute them to certain political parties with the aim of eliminating these parties, according to an agenda to be outlined by ruling party brokers?

I don't rule out that certain parties in the government plot to create conflicts and disputes between the various political parties and organizations, according to their injudicious dreams. Some of these dreams have been achieved, but not as you like and hope to get done.

Rigged votes produce abnormal reactions

It is normal for a rigged electoral process to produce abnormal reactions that may be similar to practices of vote rigging. When the political field is filled with barriers and obstacles, it will eventually generate new political forces with the same problems and conflicts for the same reasons as a reaction to arbitrary practices followed by the authority. Such new forces will arise from all the various social groups.

Through its unwise actions and practices, the authority is fueling a new sedition, particularly as it never listens to statements given by wise men from outside its institutions. We don't know whether the authority still has judicious men, who may do something good for this nation.

We had been suspecting that the authority is spreading fears and concerns nationwide that the country may become like Somalia, which is plagued by endless conflicts and vulnerability as a result of unwise practices followed by its consecutive governments, in order to justify its mistakes.

Seats at the expense of security and development

We realize that there is a group of people within the authority, who practically attempt to take the nation into an endless sedition. It is an ugly selfishness via which the ruling party attempts to control all the Parliament seats in the upcoming election at the expense of national security, peace, stability and development.

People will never be submissive to the authority. They are many times bigger than the regime and all the political parties. The unwise political actions followed by the ruling authority will never help it attract people to support it during the upcoming election.

Source: Al-Ahale Weekly

YSP pays the price of its alliance with Islah Party

By: Adel Al-Shujaa

The past time period clarified that Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) suffered a big loss as a result of its alliance with the Islah Party within the so-called Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), which also includes other smaller parties. JMP proved not to be the kind of successful and more able coalition to attract people's support. The most recent local council election showed that JMP member parties are naturally based on high-ranking coordination, not on a strong coalition, particularly as their grassroots did not abide by agreements reached by the coalition member parties. JMP also failed to establish joint institutions.

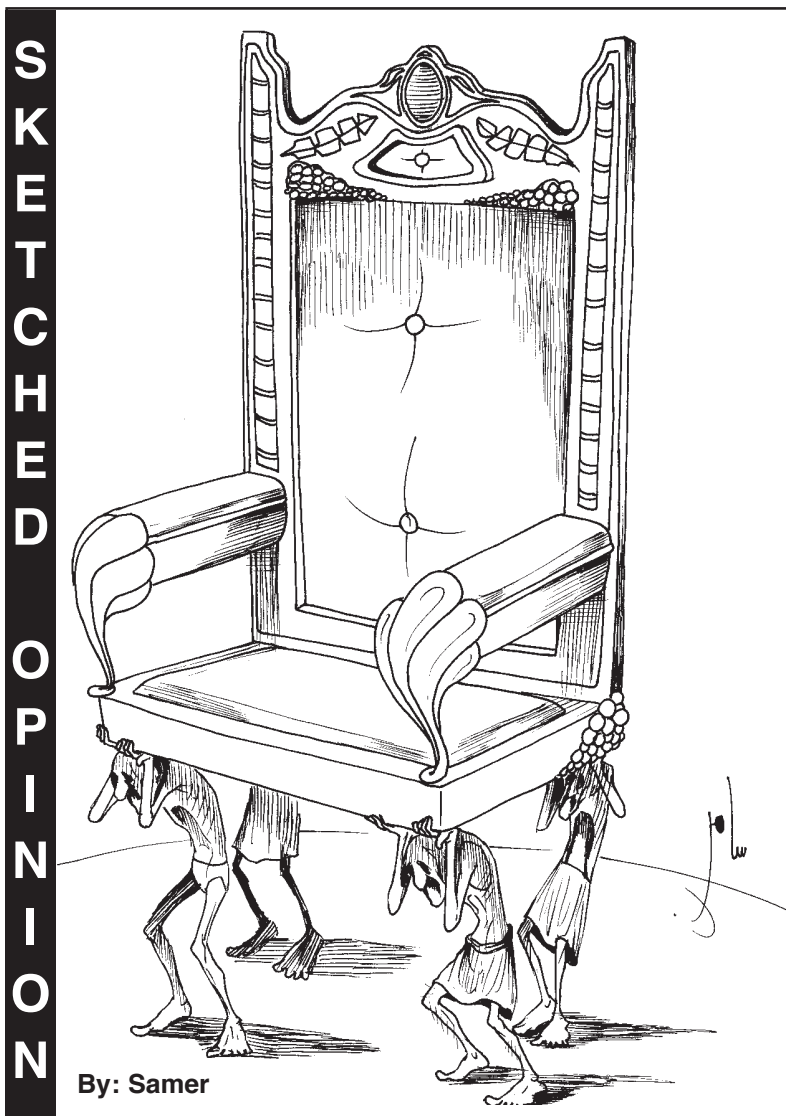
The JMP's experience says that YSP is the only loser in this coalition while the Islah Party managed to drag this party into the box of South Yemen's issue and suggest temporary programs, which were represented by talk about retirees, political prisoners, and annulling the idea of democratic transformation and connecting it with other regional and international transformations.

YSP leaders have understood that the Islah Party progresses toward democracy

but with hesitant steps while being moving toward establishing a system, characterized by dialogue but under its own supervision and guardianship. The nature of the democratic system indicates that cooperation between YSP and the Islah Party is impossible under either's supervision, however, such cooperation may be achieved through an intermediary and under the supervision of an authority that practices a real behavior toward both parties and make them neutral.

This talk is not a kind of adventure, but those casting doubt on its authenticity may have a glance at the European experience that embraced the democratic process before us. The region becomes gradually less sharp while liberalism made calm steps toward labor representation. If YSP wants to recover and helps in carrying out a real political reform, it must first realize the ongoing international changes and continuous expansion of capitalism, which our country has become part of. It should also identify the ongoing crises that hindered development, helped increase unemployment and produced a spare army of idle laborers, who are impossible to be contained according to the current YSP program.

These developments necessitate that



By: Samer

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Source: Al-Thawra Daily

US media ownership

Taqir Washington

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 deregulated as well as created new regulation for the previous United States Telecommunication Laws. With this came a wave of corporate mergers and acquisitions which produced a handful of multi-billion-dollar media conglomerates. Ownership of the media is now concentrated in the hands of just a few mega-corporations. Among the major corporations that currently dominate the US media landscapes are; Times Warner-AOL(CNN), Disney(ABC), Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation(FOX TV), General Electric (NBC), Viacom(CBS), Bertelsmann and others.

The three leading cable news networks in America today are CNN, Fox News and MSNBC, all which contain a 24 hour cable news channel as well as a frequently updated news website. CNN, founded in 1980 by Ted Turner, is currently rated as America's #1 cable news network, measured by unique viewers. CNN is owned by Time Warner which is the largest American media conglomerate today. Time Warner also owns a number of influential brands, such as Warner Brother's studio, Sports Illustrated and AOL Instant Messaging.

Fox News, as well as, Fox Television Network, 20th Century Fox, Fox 2000, the FX Channel and Publisher Harper Collins are all owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, which is the fifth largest mega-media corporation in the United States. Fox News has received higher ratings in average viewership than both of its chief competitors, CNN and MSNBC, and since January 2005, the station is available to 85 million households in the U.S. and the world. Fox News broadcasts primarily out of its studios located in New York City.

MSNBC is co-owned by Microsoft and NBC and is currently America's

third most watched cable news channel. It was founded by Microsoft and General Electric's NBC unit, now called NBC Universal since 1996. In December of 2005 NBC Universal took over the majority of the company leaving Microsoft with only 18%.

CNN, FOX News and MSNBC are owned by different media conglomerates, all having corporate siblings that are involved in various media sectors including newspapers, local TV stations, magazines and movie studios. For example Time Warner, the leading global media and entertainment company in the world, owns businesses in books, cable television networks, online services, merchandise/retail, magazines and film production companies. Magazines such as Time, Fortune, Sports Illustrated, Money, People, Life and Entertainment Weekly are all popular sources of news and information, whether it is for sports, global affairs, economics, or Hollywood gossip.

According to the Time Warner website, statistics show that Time Inc. is the leading magazine publisher in the US and the UK. It has approximately 150 titles worldwide, which are read by 340 million times each month by 173 million adults. This year 2006 both Time Magazine and Golf Magazine won National Magazine Awards. Time took first place in the general excellence category and Time's special report on Hurricane Katrina was recognized as the best Single-Topic issue.

Time magazine is an American weekly news magazine and became part of Time Warner with the merger of Warner Communication and Time Inc. in 1989. Following Time, as the second largest weekly magazine in the United States is another American weekly news magazine, based in New York, called Newsweek. Today it has a worldwide circulation of more than 4 million and is read by more than 21 million. Newsweek also boasts of it's many prestigious National Magazine Awards, given by the American Society of Magazines

Editors. A global network of correspondents, reporters and editors provide coverage of domestic and international events. Newsweek International is also published by Newsweek Inc. and it appears in more than 190 countries around the world each week. In addition, a weekly online magazine is provided for viewers at Newsweek.com on MSNBC. Newsweek is a strategic partner to NBC.

The third of America's most prominent weekly magazines is U.S. News & World Report, based in Washington D.C. and founded in 1933 as United States News. Through a journalistic merger between the United States News and World Report in 1948, the U.S. News and World Report magazine was formed and is now owned by U.S. News and World Report, L.P. Although both Time and Newsweek have greater circulation, U.S. News and World Report markets itself as being more consistently focused on important matters than it's leading competitors.

Among the most prestigious and influential newspapers in the United States today are, the New York Times, USA Today, Washington Post and Wall Street Journal. These newspapers dominate America's financial and political capitals and set the trends and guidelines for most other News sources. The New York Times is the largest metropolitan newspaper in the United States. It was founded in 1851 and is owned by the New York Times Company, which publishes the International Herald Tribune, The Boston Globe and 15 other daily newspapers. Also owned by the New York Times Co. are nine network affiliated TV stations, two New York radio stations, around 35 web sites, such as, NYTimes.com, Boston.com, and About.com. The company has been awarded 115 Pulitzer Prizes and citations.

USA today is another national American newspaper and is now owned/published by the Gannet Corporation. It is said to have the widest

circulation of any newspaper in the US being second to The Times of India in terms of world wide distribution. Gannet Co. is a large news and information company and operates as a leading international company with headquarters in McLean, VA. It operates in 41 states, D.C., Guam, The UK, Canada, Belgium, Germany, Hong Kong and Singapore. USA today is made available in 60 countries worldwide and is considered the largest newspaper group in terms of circulation.

The Washington Post, based in Washington D.C. was established in 1877 and is part of the Washington Post Company. The Washington Post Company has a number of other influential media and non-media holdings in various television stations, cable-television companies, web sites, government oriented IT tech magazines, and a suburban Maryland chain of community newspapers. Among these are; Newsweek Magazine, the online magazine called Slate and the Kaplan test preparation service. As of this year, 2006, the Washington Post has been awarded 22 Pulitzer Prizes, 18 Nieman Fellowships and 368 White House News Photographers Association Awards.

Lastly, The Wall Street Journal, another international daily newspaper based in New York City, is the world's leading business publication. It also publishes an Asian and European edition. Today, the Wall Street Journal comes in second place in terms of circulation, with USA today coming in first. Its' main daily financial newspaper competitor is the Financial Times, a paper based in London. The journal was founded in 1889 by the Dow Jones Company, which publishes the world's most vital business and financial news and information. The Company is comprised of four essential segments including the Consumer Media Group (in which the Wall Street Journal is included), the Enterprise Media Group, the Community Media Group, and it's Strategic Alliances.

SILVER LINING

America's "fulfilled dream"

The Americans disproved the doubts of many people who believed that America would not elect a black person as a president. They have proved that America is mature enough to take such an unprecedented step and have proved to people all over the world that the United States is indeed the promised land its main founders George Washington and Thomas Jefferson wanted it to be.

The landslide victory of the Democrat Barack Obama against his Republican rival John McCain is actually a turning point in the history of not only the United States but also of a world in which millions of people are still facing racism and discrimination. The civil rights fighter Martin Luther King stood in Washington in 1964 and said his famous phrase, "I have a dream". He devoted his life to the struggle against the racism his black peers were enduring during that time. The election of Obama is a culmination of the civil rights struggle for full equality and freedom for both black and white American citizens. It is the fulfillment of King's dream. This could have happened only in America, where race identity is no longer an issue in the decision-making of the American voter.

Millions of people enthusiastically hailed the victory of Obama not only because they had enough war and problems during the reign of the Bush administration, but also because they identified their personal problems of identity and racism with those of Obama and his family. I talked to many Americans with different backgrounds while I was there reporting this historic event and they told me Obama was able to inspire them with his "politics of hope", his campaign for change. Obama was able to bring youth, eloquence and a compelling personal history to the 2008 election and captured his party's nomination by advocating change in U.S. policy.

I have been reading Obama's book "The Audacity of Hope" which he authored in 2006; the book tells of the challenges he faced before reaching the Senate, the frustration he met with in this position, and his views towards several issues. He has been on a quest for his lost white-black identity and found the answer in his politics of hope. And indeed, Americans answered his call for equality between blacks and whites in their decision to take him in the White House without considering the race ideology that had in the past been the predominant language of US citizens.

Many people in the U.S. and in many countries all over the world have high expectations for the change Obama promised to introduce into the U.S. policy, both domestically and internationally. This puts the man and his administration in a difficult position. I know change takes time, but people are waiting to see signs that the promised change will translate into reality.

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



By: Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi

A summit of leaders and conflicts

In order to understand the depth and seriousness of the international financial crisis, let us explain it our way. One financial market in the United States - the Dow Jones, has lost two trillion dollars in one week. That is more than the US administration spent on the Iraq war in four years, and we have not reached the bottom of the crisis yet, nor do we know how it is going to end.

The volcano is still spewing its lava in every direction and threatening to produce changes of all sorts, political as well as economical. It has also become customary to ask whether it is the end of US supremacy, as it sits on the top of the volcano.

Because of the seriousness of the situation, the United States has called upon the leaders of 20 states to discuss the matter. This summit is in itself an admission that the crisis goes beyond and is bigger than the capability of the United States - the superpower and the

one most responsible for the financial crisis.

The crisis has evoked many rash conclusions; some of which are scientific and talk about the emergence of new superpowers; others more of wishful thinking and talk about the end of the US as a superpower, more out of hatred than on any scientific basis.

But no one can confidently claim of knowing what the end result is going to be. The volcanic eruption is still continuing, and it will be months, or perhaps years before the real results become clear. But most of what has been written about the crisis was expression of political opinions.

Those who hate the United States view the crisis as the last nail in its coffin, while those who believe in conspiracy theories, view the financial crisis as a US ploy to plunder the wealth of China, India and the Gulf. Yet there are those who prophesy that Russia will emerge as the world leader; those



By: Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed

who believe that it would be Europe's decade, and those who see it as China's decade.

Such debate is taking place all over the world and not just in our region - the Middle East. But one has to stress

that things are not yet clear; Superpower calculations are not merely economical. If they were just economical, Japan would have been classified as a superpower.

Nor is it just military; if they were military Russia would have continued to be regarded as a superpower, as it possesses the second largest nuclear stockpile in the world. The superpower quality is a cumulative effect of a whole range of integrated institutional activities.

Those who prophesy that it is the end of a superpower and the beginning of another, have to define the criteria on which they base their judgment.

According to Paul Kennedy, who is an authority on this subject and whose books have been translated into Arabic, power is firstly scientific, secondly economic, and thirdly military. Scientifically, the United States has 17 of the top 20 universities in the world.

Economically, it has 200 of the

largest 500 companies in the world. As for military, the United States spends 50 percent of world expenditure on manufacturing and development of weapons.

Emerging new powers such as China are dependent on US markets; and so is India. Both countries depend on US markets to sell their goods. Consequently, the recession that hit the US markets has immediate effect on industrial production in China and India.

Moreover, US Bank losses threaten China's gains as most of China's money is in US banks and any weakness of the dollar means a diminution in Chinese financial reserves that are kept in the form of US bonds.

Thus, the whole world is tied to the US economic wheel, positively and negatively. If it runs fast the world runs with it; and if it slows down the world suffers recession. The world economy is also tied to the dollar to the extent of

domination. The dollar makes up 60 percent of the world's currencies.

The talk about the world's helm and who sits at it is a matter of concern for all, including us, as it indicates the wind direction in our region as well. But this will not happen quickly and clearly; it will be slow and at times confusing, because there is no clear successor, given the number of big powers competing for second place.

Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed the general manager of Al-Arabiya television. Mr. Al Rashed is also the former editor-in-chief of Asharq Al-Awsat, and the leading Arabic weekly magazine, Al Majalla. He is also a senior Columnist in the daily newspapers of Al Madina and Al Bilad. He is a US post-graduate degree in mass communications. He has been a guest on many TV current affairs programs. He is currently based in Dubai.

Source: www.asharqalawsat.com

The way forward

By: Kofi Annan

The ink is hardly dry on the communicate from Saturday's Group of 20 meeting, where members pledged to work together to revive their economies. Time, political will and in particular the Obama administration will determine whether the goals and ambitions set out will be realised. But the communicate's significance should not be underestimated.

First, that the pledge should emerge from a G-20 meeting-a forum of advanced and emerging countries-rather than, say, a G-8 or OECD meeting, bodes well for a more inclusive response to the global economic crisis.

Events of the past few months have again underscored that no single country or small subset of countries, even the most powerful or wealthy, can manage the forces unleashed in our globalised world. The Washington meeting potentially represents the beginning of an era of unprecedented cooperation for concerted action on other equally pressing issues, such as climate change,

food security and poverty reduction.

Second, it is proposing a process and a timetable both to brake if not reverse the slide into global recession, and to reform the international economic architecture. To date, response has been in crisis mode. But the underlying issues require a sustained response, being systemic in nature: insufficient regulation and supervision of the financial markets; unsustainable energy policies; unpredictable and insufficient assistance for the most vulnerable; and uncoordinated macro-economic policies.

These issues could not be more relevant for Africa. The economic meltdown has come at the worst possible time. Notwithstanding the persistence of conflict and untold humanitarian tragedy in far too many places, including the Horn of Africa, Darfur, eastern Congo and Zimbabwe, the continent has enjoyed a decade of real progress, albeit starting from a low base relative to other parts of the world.

Africa has seen growth rates that are higher than in the past, impressive increases in foreign direct investment and breakthroughs in governance,

accountability, education, disease control and the quality of life.

The current crisis comes as Africa struggles to maintain this positive momentum after a year of rising food prices and unprecedented volatility in fuel costs. Food and fertiliser are punishingly unaffordable for consumers and farmers. Recession and slowdown in high-income countries, as well as China, India and the Middle East, are resulting in plummeting commodity prices and exports, reduced remittance flows and decreases in foreign direct investment.

African leaders face an almost impossible challenge: how to protect their fragile economies and vulnerable people from global recession at a time when their revenues are decreasing. Maintaining levels of public investment is the basis for political stability and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Inability to do so could have profound consequences - in terms of unemployment, poverty and social and political tensions.

Last week, at the Tunis meeting of African ministers of finance and central bank governors, the outlines of a way

forward were agreed: continued macro-economic stability, strengthened regulation and oversight of financial institutions, and renewed efforts to improve governance and accountability structures.

African countries want to diversify economic activity, strengthen regional infrastructure and recognise the need to create the conditions to encourage investment and domestic savings.

At a time when private capital flows are diminishing, increased access to loans and grants from the international financial institutions and predictable development assistance, are critical.

Failure to honour aid commitments would be a breach of faith and potentially disastrous for the ability of Africa to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. For richer countries, this is not about charity. It is about self-interest. By helping Africa to build roads and railways, power plants, and irrigation and water treatment systems, donors will increase capital exports to Africa at a time when their own industries are facing a collapse of demand.

Aid can be a global stimulus - a

powerful way to convert excess capacity in wealthier countries into long-term and high-return benefits, including quick recovery from high unemployment. There is an important brokerage role to be played-to encourage partnerships between governments, development banks, export credit agencies and the private sector to catalyse this two-way stimulus. Development assistance can also contribute to global security. Problems in one country, let alone one continent, cannot be contained within borders. If African countries cannot overcome the many social and economic challenges they face, these problems will spill over rapidly.

Migration to Europe, for example, cannot be managed without addressing the social and environmental fundamentals that are contributing to both conflict and mass movement of people.

Africa still has a long way to go; too many leaders remain unaccountable to their people, and the capacity of regional institutions to prevent and manage conflict remains weak. But in my lifetime, and in the last decade, there has

been enormous progress.

Since the 2002 Monterrey meeting on Financing for Development, a compact has been emerging. Richer countries will put development issues at the heart of global agreements, whether on finance, trade, climate change, intellectual property or other pressing issues. Developing countries will prioritise good governance, accountability and the Millennium Development Goals.

Success in tackling the great challenges before us requires genuine partnership and mutual accountability. The least-developed countries must also have a voice and be fully represented in the institutions empowered by the global community to take the lead.

Whether the G-20 meeting on Saturday was a success or not now depends upon the follow-up. It will have served us well if it launches a new era of inclusive economic cooperation and diplomacy.

Kofi Annan, the former secretary general of the United Nations, is chairman of the Africa Progress Panel. Source: www.khaleejtimes.com/

Indonesia – no recession in world's leading Muslim economy

By: Dr. Terry Lacy
For the Yemen Times

Following the election of President Obama there is likely to be a slow recovery in confidence in the United States financial and banking system. A recession is unavoidable in the US and EU, but with only a downturn in developing countries.

This crisis of confidence in the Western banking and financial system comes during the dying days of the most unpopular American Presidency in living memory. Financial mismanagement and weak regulatory frameworks have devastated the US economy making the rich richer and the poor poorer. Two million Americans may lose their homes. Millions in the US and Europe will lose their jobs.

Yet the devastating legacy of the Bush Presidency leaves open great opportunities for Indonesia, the Muslim world and the developing countries of the South.

Indonesia can play a key role in leading the Muslim world towards economic recovery, and help minimize the impact of global recession.

First by managing its national economy to maintain growth, demand, imports and exports. The nominal Gross Domestic Product for 2009 is projected at \$547 billion. Indonesia is already in the top 20 economies of the world.

Indonesia is currently overtaking Belgium and Sweden. It will soon overtake Turkey, the Netherlands and Austria as it enormous size, resources and population come into play. It is a strong candidate to join the top ten economies in the world within two decades.

Second, by mobilizing investment for oil, gas, energy projects, bio-fuels, infrastructure (roads, railways, ports), manufacturing and retailing sectors. It needs over \$40 billion for electricity alone, to finance an additional 40,000 Mwe of power by 2025. Indonesia will become a nuclear power, and plans four power stations. Total foreign investment needed overall during the next 15 years exceeds \$100 billion.

Investment is still coming from the US and EU (including Eastern European) but increasingly from the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China). Also from



The Golden Triangle ña new style commercial zone- was built in Thamrin-Sudirman corridor to push the urban skyline upward in response to high costs of land in key areas and the convenience of the automobile.

APEC countries like Canada, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and from ASEAN Member States (Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand). Investment is also coming in greater volume from the Gulf States, Saudi Arabia, Israel and South Africa.

Third Indonesia can help lead Muslim economies by using its economic size and prestige as a member of the U.N. Security Council to join Brazil, Russia, India, China and southern countries to bring about changes in policies and in the balance of power in world organizations dealing with trade, finance and development, especially the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organization WTO).

Indonesia has major reservations about the IMF following its own experience in 1998. German Finance Minister Peer Steinbrueck said that the world should not slip into creating a shadow world economic government run by an inner IMF council. Indonesia is also tired of being kept on the fringes in the WTO.

Asia and Southern Countries want a new deal. Muslim countries collectively represent an increasingly important source of capital, while Western liquidity has partly dried up. Muslim economies represent important investment sources as well as investment destinations. The

collective size of Muslim economies represents significant demand for Western goods and services, relatively unaffected by the recession in the West.

Indonesia can still deploy export credits, sovereign funds, Islamic finance and other non-traditional financial sources, such as environmental funds and carbon credits. Despite the global downturn Indonesia is still pulling in some bank finance. A \$140m syndicated loan for Excelcomindo for telecommunications expansion was announced recently. Low cost airline Lion Air are buying 12 Boeing 737 planes even though the required local cash contribution for the last four has risen to 30%. Lion Air will use its own cash to carry on expanding. St Miguel Corp of the Philippines is competing with a US led consortium to clinch a \$1.3 billion coal supply deal, to buy PT Bumi Resources from Bakri Brothers. There is money here and money coming in. Standard and Poors are holding Indonesian credit ratings stable and its credit rating may even be raised. Singapore could slip into recession but Indonesia will not, and the reason is mostly sheer size plus improved financial and economic management.

Indonesia is in a key position as the largest Muslim country in the world with a population of 230 million and a land

area of 1.9 million kilometers.

The Indonesian Gross Domestic Product was \$843.7 billion in terms of purchasing power and \$432.9 billion in terms of official exchange rates in 2007. It has fixed foreign investment of \$57.6 billion and holds \$9 billion of investment in other countries. It has over 3,500 millionaires holding over \$100 million each, of whom 70% live in Jakarta.

Its current economic growth is 6.5% and its feared may fall below 6% in 2009 due to reduced exports. Government will stimulate growth using the national budget which already reached \$100 billion in 2008. Government is confident it can hold growth at 6%. The World Bank has set aside a \$2 billion standby loan for 2009 only to be triggered if growth falls below 5.8%. In 2007 Indonesian exports were \$118 billion and imports \$86 billion, a trade surplus of \$32 billion, and foreign exchange reserves by November 2008 were \$50 billions.

Indonesia has already lost some jobs in sectors like textiles. Some exports to the US and Europe fell by Quarter 4. The stock market, government bonds and the national currency also fell in value in the financial crash in the first week of October.

The government launched a securities buy back program spearheaded by State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and defended the rupiah by intervening in the currency market via the Bank of Indonesia (BI). The Government also took steps to increase liquidity and focused on getting inflation under control and on maintaining growth. The Government has increased guarantees on personal deposits to Rp 2 billion (\$190,000) which covers 100% of deposits for over 99.7% of 81 million bank accounts.

Indonesian banks are strong with adequate reserves, low non performing loans and almost no exposure to sub prime losses. Only a small group of investors lost money on Lehman-related instruments purchased via international banks.

The Indonesian inflation rate is declining from a high of 12% to maybe 9% by January with reductions planned to between 9% and 7% for the rest of 2009. The bank rate is being stabilized at 9.5% after 6 months of consecutive rises. It will be held for a while and then reduced to 7.5% in 2009.

Indonesian bonds are recovering from their recent nose-dive and the stock mar-

ket is stabilizing. Local economists say the stock market was over-valued and more normal values and returns will be restored as part of the local share trading cycle.

The Government is now focusing on trying to mobilize its massive \$115 billion dollar national budget for 2009, up from \$100 billion in 2008, to push projects and overall spending forward and help substitute local demand for declines in exports, with every hope of keeping economic growth for 2009 at between 5.5 and 6.0 %.

Despite the collapse of the BI subsidiary Indover bank in the Netherlands, there is no sovereign default. Indonesian

lent practices in the Stock Exchange.

Indonesia lost 10 years as a result of the 1998 banking crash when it put its fate in the hands of the IMF, which initially failed to understand local strengths and exaggerated local weaknesses. An historical photo shows President Suharto sitting at his desk, signing his own political death-warrant while the IMF Representative stood over him, as he signed the IMF agreement.

A lot has changed between the Asian banking crash of 1998 and the Wall Street crash of 2008. The economic balance of power in the world has changed and the balance of global power has shifted to the South and East. British Prime Minister



As of early 2007, Indonesias economic performance is more positive. In the last two years, Indonesia's economy has growing at a robust pace of 6 percent a year.

Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati and the new Central Bank Governor Boediono have taken a stand against previous mismanagement.

In contrast to the kid-glove treatment of failed bankers and financial managers in the West, who took imprudent and possibly illegal risks, the Indonesian Government is directing the work of its Corruption Eradication Commission and Corruption Court against corrupt central bankers and parliamentarians who took bribes.

The Indonesian Government also says it will pursue legally those who misused its name and dragged it into the Netherlands Indover bank collapse, by implying there were sovereign guarantees backing Indover borrowing when there were none. It also intends to pursue allegations of short trading and fraudu-

Gordon Brown recognized this when he urged the Gulf States and G20 to help stabilize the world economy.

In the 1998 bank crash Indonesia had no freedom and no choice. This time in 2008 Indonesia has freedom and is stronger, and can chose to tread its own path. Hopefully its greater strength and determination will inspire Muslim and southern countries not to panic in the face of recession in the West, but to work together to avoid the spread of recession to the South and to build and strengthen a new world economic order.

Dr Terry Lacey is a development economist who writes from Jakarta, Indonesia, on modernization in the Muslim world, investment and trade relations with the EU and Islamic banking.

The Ministry of Telecommunications & I.T, invites national and international contractors for the following Tender:

Tender	Tender Fee In YR	Source of Finance
Tender No. (03/2008) for the Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Acceptance tests of Mobile Radio Spectrum Monitoring and Direction Finder.	10,000(Ten thousands) Yemeni Rials	Governmental

Interested bidders may obtain the Tenders Documents containing detailed specifications and priced according to each fee mentioned above (on a non — refundable basis) from the Procurement & Stores Department at the General Directorate of Finance, at the Ministry of Telecommunications & I.T, Al-Jiraff, Airport Road, during normal working hours.

The tender offer should be accompanied with the following:

1. A Bid Bond or check payable for 2.5% of the bid offer valid for 120 days issued from a local bank in Yemen and certified by CBY unconditional and irrevocable.
2. A copy of valid Tax Card for the year 2008 with regard to local companies or Agents of foreign companies (A foreign bidder who is not already doing business in Yemen may provide a copy of the appropriate VAT registration document from his home country).
3. A copy of valid Insurance Card for the year 2008 with regard to local companies or Agents of foreign companies.
4. A copy of Registration Certificate for General Sales Taxes for the year 2008 .
5. A copy of commercial registration or updated authorization for the year 2008 .
6. Cost must include General Sales Tax .
7. Equipment shall be supplied CIP delivery to the Ministry of Telecommunications & I.T warehouse.
8. All costs of clearance and transportation to the Ministry of Telecommunications & I.T warehouses shall be borne by the company whose offer has been accepted by the Ministry of Telecommunications & I.T.
9. Offers must be placed inside envelopes or boxes sealed by red wax.

The Dead line for submission and question will be on Wednesday, 5/12/2008.

Bids should reach the Ministry of Telecommunications & I.T not later than 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday 17/12/2008. Tenders will be opened in public at 11:00 a.m. of the same day. Bids received after this deadline will be returned unopened.

Bid Opening will take place at the meetings hall of the Ministry of Telecommunications & IT, Al-Jiraff, Airport Road, Sana a, Republic of Yemen and at the same time mentioned above, in presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.

Potential bidders may inspect BDs before purchasing during working hours for a period of fifteen days starting from the first advertisement date.

Business in Brief

Canadian Nexen grants \$ 1 mln to eastern provinces of Yemen

Canadian Nexen Petroleum company has provided one million dollars to help the victims of the flash flood and heavy rains took place last month in Mahrah and Hadramout provinces.

The grant was offered during a meeting held here between Oil and Minerals Minister Ameer al-Aidrous and General Manager of the company in Yemen Gregor Mawhinney.

During their meeting, al-Aidrous and Mawhinney reviewed the company's future investment plans in Yemen, especially in the field of gas.

The two sides also discussed the company's activities in the oil exploration and production in its blocks in addition to its efforts in social development in the country.

Aden intends to economically twin with US city

Aden governor Adnan al-Jiffry held talks on Tuesday with the political attaché of the US embassy in Sana'a Kilmer Villain over possibilities of twinning between Aden and any United States city regarding economic activities in order to make use of its experiences to contributes to pushing the governorate's economic development.

The meeting focused on existing cooperation ties between Yemen and the United States in Yemeni coast guard training, combating sea piracy and means of boosting their horizons.

Al-Jiffry hailed existing cooperation ties between the two countries which witnessed progress in various political, economic, developmental, security and terrorism combating fields.

He reviewed current rapid development in Aden in all sides and growing investment coming to the governorate, specially in Aden Free Zone.

On his part, the US political attaché hailed development of Aden governorate in all fields and its significant tourist components.

Aden needs YR31.5 bln to improve infrastructure

The Supervisory Committee for Gulf 20th discussed on Tuesday the estimated budget of YR 31,593,854,000 required to develop infrastructure in Aden governorate.

The meeting reviewed the amounts presented by the various services sectors to cover costs of the projects necessary to host this significant sport event.

The amount has been distributed among road sector (YR3.9 billion), health sector (YR13.5 billion), electricity sector (YR4.4 billion), water and sanitation (YR2.2 billion), security sector (YR765.2 million), telecommunication (YR400 million) and cleaning and improvement (YR6.42 billion).

The committee demanded all these sectors to present studies for the projects they want to implement in two months, asserting that the amounts would be allocated according to the studies.

SEMC organizes seminar over risks of money laundering on national economy

The Studies and Economic Media Center (SEMC) organized on Tuesday a one-day seminar in Sana'a on "risks of money laundering on national economy".

It was organized in cooperation with Cooperative and Agricultural Credit Bank (CAC Bank).

In the opening session, CAC Bank Assistant Director for Commercial and Banking Affairs Mohammed Taqi said that the money laundering is one of the serious current issues, within globalization of economy, considering it as challenge in front of banks.

He said that the CAC Bank has set up special unit for money laundering and printing a book, which includes ways of discovering this act.

The book has been distributed to all branches of the bank across the country, he added. For his part, the head of the center Mustafa Nasr said that the seminar would contribute to create practical

view and help in efforts of combating this act inside and outside the country.

Nasr said that the center works to find out professional economic journalism and a partnership between press and private and government sectors as well as civil society and international organizations.

Rashid al-Ansi, advisor of CAC Bank board chairman for revision affairs and editor in chief of Al-Masrafiah Magazine delivered speeches, in which they called for gathering efforts to combating money laundering and protecting society from this phenomenon.

Cabinet approves report on Yemeni-Turkish trade

The cabinet approved in its meeting held on Tuesday report of Minister of Trade and Industry over results of the Yemeni- Turkish Joint Ministerial Committee's 4th round meetings held here last October.

The report dealt with the record of the meetings that included results the committee came out with in fields of trade, customs, metrology, small and middle industries, energy, transport, and consultative, contracting and tourist services.

On the other hand, the cabinet agreed on the executive program presented by ministry of culture over cultural cooperation between the two governments of Yemen and China till 2011 and directed completed legal measures needed for this purpose. The program aims at encouraging setting up direct relations between the cultural institutions and creative Chinese and Yemeni cultural, technical and creative unions including cooperation in field of antiquities, manuscripts, museums, theater and exchanging cultural weeks and technical shows for boosting friendship relations between Yemeni and Chinese peoples.

On this regard, the cabinet agreed on the record signed between the ministries of culture in the two countries during the visit of Chinese vice minister of culture to Yemen recently. The record included assertion on quick carrying out the national library project by Chinese people.

مجلة الأسرة والتنمية
Family & Development

تقرؤون في هذا العدد

عماد السقاف يكتب:
مليارات للسيارات الفارهة
ومدن بلا اطفال

عبد الرحمن البديجي:
الإسلام أنصف المرأة
قبل الغرب

الشاعرة أمل طنانة:
سليمان العيسى
أيقظ شاعريتي

قضايا ساخنة
تحقيقات جريئة

متعة القراءة في كل بيت

المركز الرئيسي: تعز جوار مكتب اليمنية ٢١٧١٥٦/ف ٢١٧١٥٧ - ٠٠٩٦٧ ٠٤ - صنعاء تيفاكس ٠١٤٠٤١ - ٠١ ٠٠٩٦٧
E-mail: alosrayemen@yahoo.com / alosra@alosra.net

برعاية كريمة من دولة
الدكتور/ علي محمد مجور رئيس مجلس الوزراء

ينعقد

المؤتمر الوطني الأول للأمن والسلامة المهنية في المنشآت
First Conference for the Occupational Security and Safety in Yemen

والذي تنظمه

وبالتنسيق مع وزارة
الشئون الاجتماعية والعمل

فندق موفمبيك - صنعاء
26 - 27 نوفمبر 2008م

الشركاء:
YEMEN LING COMPANY, OXY, Dome, CANADIAN nexen, CONSOLIDATED CONTRACTORS CO., مجموعة شركات العربية, OMV, شركة النفط اليمنية (YPC), الشركة اليمنية لتكرير النفط, EPSILON Energy Ltd., AMI, Jannah OIL COMPANY, شركة صافي عدن, Weatherford, ANP, SAFER, MEX, shamlan, DNO, ?

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www.eps-ye.org/ossc Email:- ossc@eps-ye.org

أجمل التعاني وأطيب التبركات تعديها محملة بالف والرياحيه الأخ/

مختار هيثم يحيى
بمناسبة الزفاف الميمون

فألك ألف مبروك

المهنئون:
قائد الردفاني - نصر عبادي - منتصر قايد - خالد احمد - عبد ربه قايت - محمد قايت - حيك
الخائف حسين - فضل فاضل - عبد الدايم فاضل - ثابت عبد القوي - مفتي - فتح مفتي - وليد حياوي
- عبد الله ثابت - ياسين الاصبحي - وكافة الاهل والاصدقاء وجميع المحبين

عزرة العضايف وطارت الابل فرحا و ابتعاجا للاخوة/

أسامة شمس الدين الركناني
سلطان الجمعي
فألك ألف مبروك

عبد الله المسيحي
بمناسبة الخطوبة وقرب الزفاف

فألك ألف مبروك

المهنئون:
خليل سلطان - عبد الكريم البركاني
وكافة الزملاء في مؤسسة الكبوس وجميع الاهل والاصدقاء

أجمل التعاني وأطيب التبركات تعديها للشباب الخلو/

خالد علي محمد قاسم
بمناسبة أرتقاء المولود بالله والذي اسماه

عمرو
فألك ألف مبروك

المهنئون:
والدك / علي محمد قاسم - صادق علي - ابو الفيث - عبد الرحمن - عبد الله محمد
وهي خاصة جدا من خالد النجار وكافة الاهل والاصدقاء

Happy Birthday to Bobu

UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Title of Post: Assistant Protection Officer
Post Number: New — SB
Category / Level: NOA
Location: Sana a

Entry on Duty: 1st January 2009
Duration: One Year
Closing Date: 2nd December 2008

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

In line with the UNHCR policy of enhancing operational flexibility by having a workforce that takes full advantage of national capabilities and expertise in refugee hosting countries and countries of origin, a recruitment needs to be made of a National Professional Officer at the grade of NOA who will work under the direct supervision of the Protection Officer in the Branch Office Sana a. The incumbent who should be a national of Yemen with substantial knowledge of local conditions, is expected to perform the following duties, guided by the humanitarian principles and values of the United Nations, and adhering to the UN Code of Conduct:

Terms of Reference

1. Assist in dealing with individual cases or groups of refugees through interviews, correspondences, etc. and handle cases by taking the necessary steps with the local authorities;
2. Assist in assessing determination of refugees status, granting of asylum, prevention of refoulement or expulsion, issuance of identity cards and travel documentation;
3. Assess internal social and economic rights of refugees;
4. Maintain close contacts with local authorities and NGOs;
5. Keeps abreast of developments in the field of jurisprudence, legislation and regulations; &
6. Undertake other duties as required.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge and Skills: University Degree in Law, International Law, Political Science or related field
Experience: At least two years of previous job experience relevant to the function in an International capacity.
Others: Ability to use computer applications such as MS Word Excel.
Languages: Very good knowledge of English and Arabic.

For internal UNHCR candidates:
Staff may apply to vacant posts at their own level at any time. Staff with the required seniority may apply to posts that are one level above their grade. If no internal candidate with the required minimum seniority has applied, the post will be re-advertised internally with a reduced seniority requirement. Only qualified candidates who have completed at least half of the required seniority in grade may be considered.
Candidates who do not meet the criteria as internal candidates can be considered as external candidates.

For external candidates:
While priority will be given to Internal Candidates as per UNHCR guidelines, suitable External Candidates will be considered.

IMPORTANT:
Applications received after the above mentioned closing date will not be considered. All applications should be sent to:

**The Administration Officer,
UNHCR BO Sanaa
P.O. Box 12093
Sanaa.
Tel. Contact: +967-1-469771/2
Fax: +967-1-469 770**

To my dear daughter – River of Heaven

By: Samira Ali BinDaair

(These lines are devoted to my daughter Kawthar)

In the fervent hope of seeing you climb all the mountains ...journeys I can no longer take,I plodded you on

For I am like a caged lion in a jungle with no order.....defeated by crawlers

I tried to wash away disillusionment with the wanton ways of the world ,as I lived in your great dreams for humanity

Trailing behind your daring tread into kingdoms of hope and youthful triumphs;

I hid my tears taking joy in your crystal clear face and your joy and laughter,I dared not tell you all that my heart holds in store.....about all the battles...the victories and the losses..but with your probing mind you knew....reading the lines on my face and wordlessly giving comfort as you wiped my forehead;

As I held your little hand watching you grow,with pride mixed with fear in the Mirror of Time I saw the reflection of Myself and the same lines of strife on your tender brow.

Your sadness sometimes went beyond the childish tears of the loss of a precious toy. Oh, the endless whys and why nots...as oftentimes you asked..."Why do we put birds in cages while God meant them to sing songs of Freedom on beautiful trees"...I would smile and remember the words of the Caliph Omar who asked why we enslave people who were born free to their mothers. 'why did the little girl on the street wander on her own with torn clothes while you had plenty....

Why were the Sook Hamidiya and Ummayad Mosque only a shadow of Salahaddin and the dreary streets of Damascus seemed to weep for loss of glory and knowledge....why are the streets of Cairo full of people who no longer remembered lost causes in their feverish search for bread;" as with tears clouding your beautiful eyes,you talk to the little girl in Khan Akhalily and the desparate painter who monotonously repeated the sweep of his brushes on the dead canvas;

I took your hand in hope of leading you to greener pastures but.....you walked on relentlessly searching for days gone by.... in the` dark streets of Sayyida Zeinab....in vain searching for Aisha,Fatma,Safia and Umalkher. As we sipped Sahlab in AlFishawy I saw your gaze go beyond the crowds searching through the timeworn walls for Najeeb Mahfoodh,Tewfiq AlHakeem and Taha Hussein. You looked at the old woman next to us, and I knew you were thinking of "Kandeel UmHashim" while she was` discussing the rising price of food...Hopefully you looked at the` old man who wore the round cap of the old literary saloons, alas!talking about the latest film on "Melody Aflam". Did Syed Kuttub Mohamed Abdo ever come here ...to drink Sahlab and Karkade... Did Jamal Abdunnasser come here as he planned to nationalize the suez canaldid he ever pray in AlHussein Mosque.....where is everyone gone you silently asked yourself.

I could see your pain I could read the pain of loss of something you never really knew as I tried to buffer you from the discovery as you suddenly said to me, "I don't want to live in this world anymore....its empty

and shallow". I told you then,"the loss of a romantic dream is the price paid for wisdom gained".I have watched your desparate search for a clear identity in your obsessive love for Yemen....writing lines and linesstories of humanity caught in the struggles of life;hoping to find and give meaning to a world you no longer understood;

I sit here remembering the many evenings we watched the Sunset as together we weaved dreams of a better world; I have watched you in turn joyously listen to the refrain of Fairouz and Umkalthum or stand with raised hands to heaven on your prayer mat, fervently praying for the downtrodden asking God for forgiveness for having more than you need and to make the world a better place for them;

You and I always had an unspoken language of understanding...for we are kindred souls;

I always fear for you,dear daughter,and the` spirit that knows no bounds....and in panic I tried to rechart the journey of your life, and give you a new map but Alas! Who can change destiny ...who can stop the river from flowing....or arrest the` cycle of Life?

Even as the Seas separate us I can` feel your heartbeats with all its messages of love for humanity as I remember the little girl who once` said..."Mama you are` my best friend" when friends let you down ....and I wiped away your tears pointing to the` silver lining in every cloud in the sky.

Now all I have left are my incessant prayers for you to go forth dear child as God intended....for I know He will always be with you and even when I am gone my spirit will still live on in you.

How to overcome the catastrophic floods

By: Mohammed Rezz

rezqrezq@yahoo.com

Some philosophers asserted that a nation without a past, hardly ever get a promising future. That means a prosperous future must based on a wealthy heritage. Nevertheless, I can say that those should have been talking about the way of breeding a pure pedigree of horses or so. However, in the vein of having a nation or as I may say create an existence by the guidance of the great Lord The one who bless believers of him and then of themselves. Those confidant and determine people who are always look forward and meanwhile work very hard to build up their nation's present and future as well. In the contrary to that some of us are articulated speakers about the glory of our ancient history and civilization and when it comes to the future we need others to picture, design, and

make it if they would be kind enough to do so. How about having a scratch point in our country?

The recent floods that struck Hadramoot and other disastrous province ached our hearts and dominated our thoughts. We are in actuality concerned about our people there and surely about their properties. Many families become homeless and vulnerable to various epidemics. Water sources were contaminated and to top it all main routs were devastated. Nevertheless, we have to give a hand to them by any means necessary. Then what next, as far as I am concerned I think that we overcome the impact of it and start to consider how to rebuild. Not only as high as our ancestors did, but also more organized.

Avoiding the random scattered compounds, establishing well provided and completely- served underneath construction for expandable cities.

Why do not we try to benefit from

the surrounding such as the model of the UAE? One in a time must have heard of the incredible efforts of some western countries facing or preparing for natural catastrophes such as hurricanes, earthquakes and floods. For example in the United States of America, every other day they cope with numerous disasters here or there. With no comparison between the two countries, what we would have done if it were not for God's mercy. We are not supposed to resemble or be comparable to them over a night. Nonetheless, we would like to be our own slowly but surely. They had started from where we let go.

As I had reached the conclusion, of which I wish to be an initiation of something although a tiny thing, I have strong belief that we have a potential abilities resources and treasures, which we have to seek out and start with. Enhancing self-sufficient, determining to start from the scratch is the only approach to survive.

The Other Half Why man?! Why woman?!

By: Ahmed M. Ba-matrif

Frequently we hear such words at arabian or foreign media, and how often it creates roar and argument among people satisfied with and people furious against. If the woman comes of man's shoulder; therefore, he & she must make one soul. Man's & woman's need for eachother is instinct and not only sexual. Their relationship & need are a joint liability & completion.

Woman needs who shares her happiness and sadness while man also needs who shares his success and failure. Both can not live without eachother.

These biased logos & ideas towards oneseid; man or woman, will certainly expand the gap and exceed the difference between them. These ideas lead to discrimination between male & female gender which will keep them apart of eachother.

However woman & man always need who finds solution for their life

problems and approach their views, they need who seals the gap between them, and nor who creats & expand this gap. Man & woman must be aware of eachother's right and duty. They have to understand the importance of their union for life continuity on this planet. Life will not proceed unless they live beside eachother.

Eventually, man and woman, both, must admitt & state their need for the other, and they must know that they are the other half of eachother.

Mother's Fear

By: Nada Aldahyani

nadadahyani@gmail.com

Please stay at home my dearest son
When he wanted to be free, your
brother's gone

Don't leave this house, don't think,
don't pray

For those who did, are now beyond
sun

Your name is a sin, your belief is a
crime.

Go sleep and eat, draw trees, drink
lime

Don't use word "free". Be a worm or a
tree

Never say: "my right"; this is not its
time.

Through The Mind's Eye

By: Maged Thabet Al-kholidy
maged_thabet@hotmail.com



Elections and education: an unnecessary battle

The preparatory phase of the up-coming elections has started. The authorities have paid a good deal of attention to what is considered to be the basis of the elections' success and, as a means of effectively completing this first step in the electoral process, the Supreme Committee of Elections and Referendum has involved educators in voter registration. One may wonder why only educators have been selected for this mission, although it will clearly disrupt the educational process on a national level. This academic year was supposed to start in the middle of September and, by chance, it coincided with the middle of Ramadan. Students and teachers delayed going back to school, claiming that it was Ramadan, a month of fasting and worship. Of course, this did not only happen in one or two schools, but in almost all of them nationwide. No doubt, the authorities knew everything, but no action was taken. Instead of one week's holiday after the Eid, most schools -if not all of them- took a two-week holiday. Only after that did the academic year finally start. As usual, the school year began not seriously, but with what a teacher calls "revision" for at least a week.

And then, when education was finally under way, another national project came to victimize it.

Unemployment is a big problem in our homeland and a long list of university graduates are still looking for a job. Those who haven't managed to find a job in the private sector or set up an independent venture such as qat selling are still unemployed. They wait for the mercy of a few governmental placements that are less each year and often subject to mediation and payment.

Why not give these jobless graduates the chance to work in the elections? Wouldn't it be better to employ idle graduates instead of educators? These graduates would be both productive and financially independent, to their own benefit as well as that of their families and society as a whole. They would maintain their dignity and be given a chance to achieve their personal dreams. Such job applicants are already free. Their working in the elections would not negatively affect any productive process as has happened in the case of employees of the education sector.

Some people claim that educators are the best for the job because they are more aware of the responsibility of their mission, although the jobless graduates are just as educated and -in

fact- the direct products of their education. If the educators are responsible and enlightened, it follows that their students will be just as good.

Those who claim that educators benefit from more experience in the workplace should consider that a training course would more than prepare the graduates to their task. Clear-headed unlike the educators whose minds are full with teaching and personal problems, the young graduates may actually perform their job better than the teachers who were taken from their duty.

There is no need to go into more details since the registration phase has already started. I am not against educators themselves, but against the idea which has created a cleft in the educational process. The elections do not need to come in the way of education because there is a better alternative. I hope that this will be taken into account by the authorities in the next phases of the elections, and pray that the election succeeds in all its missions.

Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy is a contributing opinions writer from Taiz. He holds a Masters Degree from the English department at Taiz University and is the former editor of Taiz University's English-language magazine.

Chatting is a deceptive means

By: Mofeed Al-gaad

mofeed336@yahoo.com

Like a brilliant star Mr. Maged al-kholidy is always glittering through his good and effective articles. I read maged's articles since I was at college, so I am indebted to him in exciting the desire of writing . I am pleased to comment on his article " to chat or not to chat, this is the question (part 2)", published on 23 of October, issue number 1201. as a constant reader of Maged's series published in the reader's view page of Yemen Times I have been noticed that, Mr. Maged often discusses both the negative and the positive aspects of the matter, giving his personal opinion directly or indirectly in the last part. Thus Mr. Maged discussed the negative aspects of chatting in the previous article, and in the second article he discussed the positive aspects that may not sound logical .

First, Mr. Maged praised chatting as a cheaper means of communication, saying that: "one can chat and do other things in the network like researching, sending emails.

The cost is calculated as the time minutes for doing all these." This point could be applicable to those who enter internet cafes to entertain themselves and search through internet websites about unimportant topics to kill their boring time. yet, it does not sound good on the real researchers who are writing academic researches in various fields of knowledge, because real researchers do not have time to chat ore do things beside searching about their specific topics. They use internet websites for a specific goal in mind, so they may consider chatting as a means to waste time and money as well. I practiced this myself, I spend long months searching for references to support the topic of my research, and during these months I was busy in searching,

so I never chat any one though I have many friends.

second Mr. Maged described chatting positively as a faster means of communication, helping people to know each other despite the long distance among them. Chatting is a useful means for those people who know each other by their direct communication. That is to say, chatting is a useful means for people who are separated from their relatives and friend.

For example, a father works abroad, looking for a faster means to communicate with his family and friends in his homeland. In this situation chatting could be a helpful faster means to contact with people you love, but chatting among chatters, who know each other just through chatting, is not a faster means of communication but rather a faster means of cheating and deception.

Thirdly, Mr. Maged's statement "through the internet chatting, using programs like yahoo or hotmail messengers, one can establish relations in all the parts of the world" may sound true, but there is a question posed itself for those who believe in this statement. Which type of relation one can establish via chatting, or what sort of chatters one can chatting with? In actual fact, majority of chatters are morally corrupted, using chatting as medium to scatter their immoral thoughts among innocent people all over the world.

Therefore chatting ,in this respect, is immoral means that we should get rid of as possible as we can. To illustrate the point a friend of mine was chatting with unknown girl and after two days of their communication she send him two websites. When my friend opened that websites, he found terrible naked photos.

Finally, Mr. Mged described chatting as a life that give people chance to exchange information, news and ideas with each other. This

point looks true but what kind of information, news and ideas chatters exchange with each other. Looking at real life most of chatters use chatting to build illegal sentimental relations with other people in the globalized world, so chatting, in this respect, could be evaluated as a medium of exchanging sentimental expressions.

At the end of the article Mr. Maged requested his reader to discuss the topic accurately in order to take a final decision "weather to chat ore not to chat accordingly." But this isn't the matter, we can't decide to chat or not to chat, because chatting has negative and positive consequences. To chat or not to chat depends on chatters themselves and the type of relation among them, so we can't take a final decision as Mr. Maged said.

Let my hands be your wings

By: Enas Al_Radami (2006)
inassma22@gmail.com

*I have some thing to remember
That shakes my mind as a thunder!
But I don't easily surrender
I loved you since childhood
So deny me if you could
But I don't really think
You can afford to
Break me into pieces
My heart that life releases
Shall still go back to you
O'my father, let my tears
Wash you from sins
Let my hands be your wings!
Do you know?
How much I love you
Do you know?
How much I need you
Take me wherever you go,
for I can't bear life without you*



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By: Salah Al-Warafy
For the Yemen Times

Motorcyclists are unhappy with the



"I know that our work is noisy to most of people, but we must continue to feed our children", said Hamud, father of four, who earns a living for his family by ferrying around passengers on his hired motorcycle everyday from dawn until

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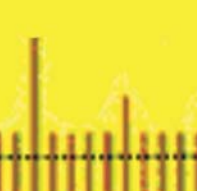
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