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Confrontations between security and JMP demonstrators

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori and Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Nov. 29 — Up to 24 people including journalists were injured and another 25 were arrested during demonstrations by the opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) last Thursday in Sana'a. The demonstrations were organized in protest against the electoral preparations carried out by the ruling party, the General People's Congress (GPC), regardless of the opposition's objections.

Eyewitnesses reported that around 1,500 security men surrounded the demonstration venue, Al-Tahrir Square, to prevent thousands of the JMP supporters from joining the demonstration. They maintained that security forces used tear gas and gunfire to scatter the crowds which marched in the streets leading to the square.

However thousands of protestors were able to breach the security cordon and those who could not took to the streets of the city. They raised slogans denouncing the way the ruling party is dealing with the electoral process and

demanding fair and transparent elections. In response to the protests, the GPC called its supporters to march on the streets of Sana'a for an early celebration of independence from the British on Nov. 30 and the successful completion of voters' registration.

The confrontation was carried further in the media as both official and opposition newspapers exchanged accusations. JMP statements in the press demanded a legal trial for the security men who opened fire against protestors. "These outrageous aggressions against citizens are another addition to the government's record of crimes and violations of human rights. The government is responsible for the bloody confrontations that took place during the demonstration," the statement said.

Similarly, the Ministry of Interior held some leaders of the JMP responsible for the confrontations, confirming that those involved in the riot would be held legally accountable, either as individuals or as political parties.

"The JMP and the GPC requested permissions to hold their processions at Al-Tahrir square in Sana'a. The

supreme security committee of the Ministry of Interior held a meeting Wednesday morning to look into the requests and decided to prevent both sides from holding any activities at Al-Tahrir Square," said a source at the Ministry of Interior.

"The committee allocated the Tahrir Sports Stadium for the JMP activity and Al-Sabeen Square for the GPC. However, the JMP beckoned its supporters to gather at Al-Tahrir Square, which prompted security apparatuses to take the necessary precautions to prevent the JMP supporters from reaching the square."

The opposition's demonstration is part of a series of activities the JMP is organizing in the different Yemeni governorates to stop the parliamentary elections from taking place next April. The demand is to change the electoral process from the individual candidates system to the proportional list system, and to increase the representation of both the opposition and independent candidates in the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER).

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JMP demonstration near Sana'a University. The protestors raised banners calling on the government to quit playing games and to stop corrupting the elections.

Global crises, natural disaster shake Yemen's economy

By: Jane Novak For the Yemen Times

SANA'A, Nov. 29 — Yemen's oil-reliant economy is in trouble. Known oil reserves are depleting. Low global oil prices make economic diversification and budgetary rationalization urgent concerns. The outbreak of piracy in the Gulf of Aden harms potential growth sectors including Aden port, off-shore oil blocks and Yemen's LNG project. Swelling numbers of Somali refugees, as well as Somali pirates, burden the economy. The struggling non-oil economy was dealt a blow from devastating floods in October. These

factors combine to create an economic storm brewing on the horizon of 2009.

Dwindling oil supports irrational spending

Oil revenues fund over seventy per cent of state spending. Confirmed deposits are dwindling and will be largely exhausted within a decade. Production decreased from the 2002 high of 460,000 bbd to about 300,000 bbd in 2008 as blocks 14 and 35 begin to bottom out. High oil prices previously offset production declines, but oil prices dropped from over USD 120 in July to under USD 50 in November. The 2009 state budget is based on the expectation of higher sale prices and includes a deficit of seven percent of GDP.

Efforts at fiscal rationalization and budgetary restraint have been weak and inconsistent. Oil subsidies account for a third of spending and benefit large scale oil smugglers as well as the poor. About a quarter of the budget is lost to corruption, but few high officials face legal proceedings. In November, the Al-Saleh Mosque opened in Sana'a at a

cost of USD 60 million amid concerns development programs are underfunded.

Yemen is in a water crisis; 2007 spending on the water sector was 1.1% of GDP. With unemployment estimated at 40%, social security funding totaled 1.1%. Health care services cover only half the nation. Health sector spending was 3.1%. Military spending consumes about 7% of GDP, among the highest in the world.

Expenditures for the Sa'ada war (2004-2008) are estimated at over YR one billion. Although a truce has been reached with the rebels, the state is in

negotiations with the Chinese firm Chin Shida on new weapons purchases. It also contracted with the Ukrainian defense ministry (Odesaremservis) to upgrade Yemen's fleet of 47 RSK Mig-21's at a cost of several million dollars each. The work will enable the Migs and Yemen's L-39 trainers to deploy precision guided weapons. With the anticipated drop in oil revenue, unabated high military spending will undermine already meager basic services. Transition to a non-oil economy is another urgent concern that faces an array of challenges.

Continued on page 2

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Preventive campaign against malaria in four governorates

By: Ali Saeed

SANA’A, Nov. 28 — In line with efforts to free the Arabian Peninsula of malaria, the Ministry of Health through the national malaria control program has initiated a preventive campaign in four governorates, Sa’ada, Hajja, Hodeidah and Mahwit for 39 days starting from Oct. 25.

Director of the National Malaria Control Program Dr. Adel Al-Jassari said the campaign aims to radically reduce the number of patients and deaths related to malaria by fighting

the disease vector, which is the mosquito, in the targeted areas by spraying houses with pesticides that are of long-term effect and carrying out the recommendations of the ninth Yemeni-Saudi meeting of the shared committee in combating malaria in the boarder areas.

Stressing the efficiency of the pesticides, Al-Jassari confirmed there were no negative side effects since the dose is very small and that's the reason they are so expensive.

The spraying process is considered to be one of the most effective methods

to prevent malaria and will be used annually until the rate of disease infection is reduced by half. After which the campaign will enter a phase where malaria would be under control, Al-Jassari explained.

The campaign will take place in two stages. The first will target areas in the governorates of Sa’ada and Hajja, while the second will target areas in Hodeidah and Mahwit. The total targeted population is around 376,524 people in 15 districts.

The team carrying out the campaign consists of over 700 workers, 173

observers and 32 supervisors. The quantity of pesticide to be used will be used is about 2,423 kg.

Using insecticides with long-term effect is one of the best ways to combat the disease and involves spraying all the surfaces where mosquitoes could be found including walls, roofs, stables and even beds. The efficiency period of the pesticides varies according to the type, composition and climate. The period of effect usually ranges between a couple of weeks and six months.

In the recently flood-stricken areas of Hadramout and Shabwa, the spray-

ing team is now working now in the Hadramout districts of Wadi Hajr, Broom and Maifa'a where they are using the more advanced method of fog spraying, according to Al-Jassari.

Insufficient financing, lack of awareness and problems created by local councils are part of the challenges facing the spraying team on the ground, says Al-Jassari.

He requested more cooperation from authorities in targeted areas. "We ask the targeted areas to cooperate with spraying teams, especially local councils and official bodies," he said. Al-

Jassari added that these bodies have important roles in the campaign success and stresses the importance of raising awareness among citizens to increase cooperation between targeted people and the spraying teams.

The next areas that will be involved in the campaign, the director said, are the district of Musiamair in Lahj and Socotra Island. He pointed out that the campaign was targeting the four governorates together because they all contained areas currently infected with malaria and were not immune from the disease, even in winter.

National symposium on child poverty in Yemen

By: Ola Al-Shami

SANA’A, Nov. 28 — The urgency of dealing with complications that arise due to child poverty and disparities were discussed at the two-day Symposium of Child Poverty in Yemen last week.

Using more child-focus surveys such as the recently published 2006 Multiple-Indicator Cluster Survey, the UNICEF and the national authorities are examining child poverty in depth. In the opening speech, Dr. Nafissah Al-Jaifi, Secretary General of Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood stressed that addressing this problem was a social responsibility.

This is the first national child poverty symposium and is considered an

important forum for key decision makers. The event was attended by over 50 participants from government, international organizations, donor agencies, civil society and academia.

Discussions focused on the necessity of education and the role of influential social programs such as the microfinance industry to resolve and support problems related to child poverty. "These programs are necessary for the breadwinner to provide for his family members and educate his children to equip them for a brighter future," said Fawzia Noman, the Director of Girls Education Department in the Ministry of Education. Some conflicting views were expressed regarding the definition of poverty. Alberto Minujin, a research fellow with the International

Affairs Program, introduced the global definition of poverty. However, participants did not agree that definition because it allegedly did not apply to Yemen. Mona Basharahil, member of Consultative Council, said that a person who can afford to buy soup for his family worth YR 150 and qat with YR. 400 at least, is definitely not poor.

The necessity to cooperate with society and spread awareness appeared to be the most agreed on factor according to Yahya Abdullah Al-Mutawakel, General-Director of Kindergartens in the Ministry of Education. He also demanded that every person in the symposium to do the best to reduce child poverty and to find means of a better life for poor families.

The symposium concluded with a

number of views on how to better help poor children which were emphasized by the child parliament representatives who demanded the participants to be considerate towards the children's needs.

Twelve year-old Shima Ali said, "We need to play, to study and to express our opinions freely and you can help us and support our demands"

The symposium was organized in order to create a broader understanding of opportunities and constraints related to reducing child poverty and disparities in nutrition, health, education, protection and other MDG outcomes in all levels, while also re-orienting the national level policy focus from the problems towards a dynamic debate on the solutions.



An estimated 60 percent of 30,000 street children in Yemen work and sleep on the streets.

Tourism and the challenge of climate change

By: Ismail Al-Ghabri

SANA’A, Nov. 27— To address the challenges to the Yemeni tourism sector, a seminar titled 'Tourism responding to the challenge of climate change' took place at the Taj Saba Hotel in Sana'a this month.

The gathering asserted that joint efforts must be made to respond adequately to several threats such as global warming and carbon dioxide emission that constitute a serious danger to life on earth.

It also aimed to strengthen cooperation between individuals and entities to meet the challenges of flood disaster on the tourism sector as well as to

determine the future scope of the national strategy for tourism development in light of the effects of climate change.

The seminar discussed four work papers. The first was aimed to cope with the effects of climate changes within a sustainable tourism development strategy. The second paper evaluated the effects of natural disaster of floods on the marine environment in the governorates of Hadramout, Shabwa, Al-Mahra and Socotra Island. The third working paper reviewed the global climate change impacts on Yemen and the proposals to address them. The fourth and final paper explained the effects of floods on the

historical and natural tourism in the province of Hadramout.

The symposium concluded with the following recommendations. Firstly, it recommended preparing a draft for national strategy for the sustainable development of tourism as an integral part of the national strategy for development, and developing an action plan for joint work between the Ministry of Tourism and private sector tourism companies.

Secondly, it suggested recycling components of waste into organic fertilizer. The symposium also called for an efficient method to deal with forecasted disasters and climate change through the implementation of a sys-

tem to monitor and follow up on results of climate change in order to take action and preventive measures to reduce losses.

Local communities should play a positive role to safeguard tourism potential resources against unplanned and random construction on the mouths of valleys and water floods. They must work for the aim of protecting cultural property, historic monuments and archaeological sites through carrying out the necessary repairs and maintenance on a periodical basis, especially in ancient and historical cities.

Thirdly, it advised increasing the role of the media to promote awareness

about climatic, environmental, tourist issues and the necessity for authorities to launch assessment studies of environmental impact prior to carrying out development projects such as the construction of roads and bridges. For example, it cited the project of the coastal road to connect the Gulf of Aden to the south and MIDI to the north, in addition to the international highway project to connect the northern and southern areas and reach the remote border point in the east of Yemen. There should be commitment to rebuilding houses and buildings struck by floods in the provinces of Hadramout, Al-Mahra and Shabwa using the region's traditional architect-

tural style.

Further, a special and independent budget must be fixed for the Ministry of Tourism to recover disaster-stricken archaeological sites in addition to the establishment of a fund for the disaster sites for each historical city.

Other recommendations that were also presented at the seminar included the formation of task forces to carry out field surveys and assess damage in sites of interest to tourism, in addition to the cooperation of local authorities, ministries and relevant entities to unify their visions within one committee to implement a rehabilitation process for endangered sites and cities important to tourism.

Somali surge to Yemeni coasts increases

By: Ibrahim Al-Wad'ee and Yemen Times Staff

SANA’A, Nov. 27— Despite the fact that the voyage from Somalia to Yemen usually takes about 36 hours, it is no deterrent to Somalis eager to flee their war-torn country. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that more than 38,000 people made the dangerous crossing by boat from Somalia to Yemen during the first 10 months in 2008, nearly 10,000 more people than those who made the same journey dur-

ing the whole of last year.

Almost 447 Somali refugees have arrived in the provinces of Taiz and Hadramout from Nov. 15 to Nov. 21, 2008. They were gathered and sent to the Al-Kharaz refugee camp in Lahj province, which receives up to 6,000 a month, most of them Somalis, with smaller numbers of Ethiopians and Kenyans.

According to the UNHCR, at least 616 people died or are considered missing since the beginning of 2008 due to the hazardous trip across the sea to Yemen. Often, refugees drown after

the boats they were on capsize or smugglers force them overboard and they have to swim to the Yemeni coast.

The number of Somali refugees in Yemen has raised government concerns in a country that already suffers from economic problems, notably due to the war in Sa'ada and the October floods in Hadramout and Al-Maharah, as well as a high rate of unemployment.

Officials confirm that the large surge of Somali and other African refugees to Yemen has put a heavy strain on resources and that the international community doesn't show much atten-

tion to solving their problem.

They say that the only solution to the situation, according to the Yemeni vision presented this past October during a UN meeting in New York, is to achieve political settlement in Somalia to prevent a new surge of refugees to Yemen.

UNHCR urged Yemen late last month to continue fulfilling its international commitments toward refugees based on the agreement Yemen signed in 1951.

Over 800,000 refugees from the Horn of Africa -mostly Somalis- live in

Yemen, according to Yemeni government statistics. The UNHCR has shown concerns over increasing public resentment toward the refugees, fuelled by the country's difficult economic situation. A UN documentary which dealt with the situation of the Somali refugees in the country has shown rising hostility in Yemeni society toward the refugees. Some of them, including women, have confirmed that they were subjected to aggression by Yemenis.

Dr. Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, said that Yemenis already face difficulties in terms of unemployment due to weak capacities of the government and may therefore think that the presence of Somali refugees in the country compounds their problem.

The government of Yemen recognizes Somalis as refugees and issues them with ID cards, co-signed by UNHCR, that legalize their stay, permit

freedom of movement and facilitate their access to employment and education. However, many children can not attend school because they do not have birth certificates. They are only issued to children who have a father with an ID card.

Forced to live in squalid conditions and without money, they cannot buy medicine, school supplies often have to beg for food.

Somalia has been deadlocked in a civil war since 1,991 and from that time it is still without a central government. Instead, it has an Ethiopia-backed transitional government that has been clashing with Islamic groups. Because of the civil war, the country has a large diaspora community, one of the largest of the whole continent. Millions of Somalis live abroad, and this excludes those who inhabit the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, Djibouti, northeastern Kenya, and Yemen.

Continued from page 1

Confrontations between security and JMP demonstrators

However, the government had not yielded and has gone forth with voter registration, causing riots around the country. Some of these protests have hindered the registration process and some electoral committees were prevented from registering voters.

A report prepared by Democracy Reporting International (DRI) and Human Rights Information and Training Center (HRITC) stated that a comprehensive reform of the legal and administrative framework of the electoral process is overdue. Reform should fully incorporate international standards for democratic elections such as Article 25 of the UN's International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights. This would improve future elections and contribute to political stability. There is still time to address some legal shortcomings ahead of the parliamentary and local elections in spring 2009, and for the SCER to clarify the implementation of legislation, for example by revising its electoral manuals.

The report confirmed that since the GPC and JMP have failed to agree on electoral reforms, there is a risk that the JMP will boycott the 2009 elections. Holding elections which are neither plu-

ralistic nor inclusive would be a significant backward step. Time is running out for the government and opposition to come to an agreement. It may already be too late to improve some aspects of the process, for example registering voters.

Democracy Reporting International (DRI) is a non-partisan, independent, not-for-profit group of experts. DRI promotes political participation of citizens, accountability of state bodies and the development of democratic institutions world-wide. DRI analyses, reports and makes recommendations to both the public and policy makers on democratic governance. DRI helps finding local ways of promoting the universal right of citizens to participate in the political life of their country, as enshrined in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Global crises, natural disaster shake Yemen's economy

Somalia launches pirates and refugees

Yemen's coastal location is a foundation of its economic growth strategy. However, instability in Somalia triggered a spike in piracy that is disrupting maritime shipping in the Gulf of Aden. The fourth bidding round for Yemen's eleven off shore oil blocks was postponed in August in part due to international concerns about security and sky rocketing

insurance rates.

High insurance costs also negatively impact Yemen's USD 4 billion liquefied natural gas project scheduled to come on line in May 2009. Yemen LNG, a consortium led by TOTAL, will have a capacity of 6.7 million tons per year and ship from Bal Haf Harbor, about 75 km from the epicenter of piracy. Likewise the renovation of Port Aden by Dubai Ports World is a linchpin of Yemen's economic diversification efforts. Security concerns led Norwegian shipping group Odfjell to discontinue sailing through the Gulf of Aden, and others may follow suit.

Chaos in Somalia means Yemen has to deal with refugees as well as pirates. A signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, Yemen provides automatic refugee status to those fleeing war. About 38,000 Somali migrants crossed the Bab al Mandab this year, and Somali refugees in Yemen are estimated to exceed a quarter million. Already burdened with a 43% poverty rate and 46% child malnutrition, the state has little to offer refugees in terms of immediate assistance or economic opportunities. Concrete international aid for Somalis in Yemen is slight.

Floods wash away non-oil industries

In Yemen's worst natural disaster in

recent history, flash floods in October killed 90, damaged over 3000 houses and affected over 650,000 people according to international estimates.

The massive flooding in Hadramout and al-Mahara left 30,000 in need of permanent shelter.

Infrastructure damage includes roads, schools, telephone pylons, bridges, health centers and water facilities. Relief efforts focused on humanitarian concerns of food and shelter. Environmental issues were largely unaddressed the first weeks. Consequently, the region is at risk for the outbreak of contagious diseases. The natural disaster hit the fledgling non-oil sector of the economy.

Thousands of farmers, bee-keepers and fishermen lost their livelihood and need both immediate and long term assistance. International agencies estimate damages and loss of income will exceed USD one billion. The financial shock of the floods by itself would be difficult to absorb, even with generous international aid.

The simultaneous occurrences of three shocks - the global financial crisis, piracy and the floods - magnifies their impact, and combined, threaten fiscal sustainability. Immediate and robust action on the part of the state is required to address the looming economic challenge.

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- Identify and select farmers; associations and establish good working relations with them
- Provide and execute training, workshops to the farmers to improve their agriculture and livestock skills and marketing knowledge; manage regular meetings/visits to the targeted farmers
- Analyze local crops and livestock market system and identify opportunities
- Prepare reports on each visit, plus weekly and monthly reports
- Perform any additional duties assigned
- Prepare documents for contracts and agreements and follow up on approved projects.

Qualifications & Skills required:

Applicants should satisfy the following requirements:

- Education: Graduate level university degree in agriculture science with good knowledge of agriculture extension livestock, horticulture and marketing
- Five plus years practical experience in the field of the crop & livestock development, extension and marketing.
- The candidates should have experience in dealing with rural communities in extension deliver, on-farm demonstrations and training
- Should be willing to work in the designated governorates for the periods of the contract
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- Candidates from the targeted area are most preferable.

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The candidate will prepare the following deliverables:

- Consultants must document daily operations and maintain activity files
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Call for the Expression (Eol) for the Supply of Goods, Implementation of Civil Construction Works, Provision of Consulting Services and the General Services.

As part of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) ongoing humanitarian and development projects in Yemen, the UNDP invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) from local and international Companies, who wish to be considered for one of the following disciplines:

- Supply of Goods (Equipment and supplies under the following Sectors: Electricity, Mine Action, Health care, Hospital facilities & Services, Water Sanitation, Vehicles, Armored Vehicles, IT, Communication, Furniture, Office supplies, Office Security and Safety and other types of goods).
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Interested Companies are encouraged to visit the website of UNDP Yemen www.undp.org.ye/procuremnt.php under (Vender Registration) for the registration purposes. The registered Companies shall be considered for UNDP's upcoming procurement activities under each of the above listed disciplines.

For any enquiries please contact the focal point in UNDP Yemen Office:

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- Assist in compiling of management reports through Oracle DISCOVERER.

SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT

- Assist staff in all forms of communication (networking, schedule appointments, phoning, copying etc.).
- Prepares and coordinates field visits of staff and visiting missions.
- Process contracts, payment requests, draft routine correspondence and proofread materials using proper grammar, punctuation, and style.
- Assist in translating letters if necessary.
- Coordinate office activities (meetings, workshops and conference) in and outside the Embassy.
- Attend & make minutes of Development Co-operation Staff meetings.
- Replace Receptionist — Switchboard Operator when required.
- Perform other functions as requested by the Development Co-operation Staff.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Completion of secondary education.
- At least 5 years experience in office logistic management.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Able to utilize MS-Office 2000 (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) to a high standard; affinity with data-base.
- Familiarity with e-mail correspondence.
- Proficiency in speaking and writing English and Arabic.
- Able to work independently, take initiative, and have a professional attitude.

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PO Box 463, Sana'a

Students of the Faculty of Languages: Between great expectations and reality

By: Almigdad Mojalli

Established in 1997, the Faculty of Languages at the University of Sana'a is considered to be one of the most effective learning centers to train the Yemeni workforce in language skills. Many young Yemenis aspire to join the faculty, confident that if they speak a foreign language fluently, they will have brighter career prospects. However, once enrolled, the latter complain of many obstacles to their learning, including a lack of classrooms and the scarcity of specialized foreign staff.

Expectations

Students study different languages as they aspire to join high-powered organizations, travel abroad and master the language of globalization. They consider learning a foreign language to be a promising skill for their travel overseas.

The most popular department in the faculty is the Department of English, and students who compete to be accepted to study there know that if they master the language it will prove an asset in the labor market. Some students who are not accepted even join another department for one year in the hope of later qualifying for a transfer.

"I decided to study German for a year and then to travel to Germany," said Izzaddeen Humaid, an enthusiastic second year student.

Ekhlas Al-Meqdam said, "I joined the English language department because I like the language and it is the language of the world and I wish to travel the world."

Mohammed Al-Khohlani, a third year student, stated that he joined the Italian department because he liked the language and wanted to prove that he could be as fluent in Italian as others are in English.

Amro, another student, hopes to secure a high-powered career in the corporate world and so he aspires to master the English language. His friends hope to join international organizations and work in multi-cultural environments.



High school graduates crowding to register for university. Many students land up studying a field other than their choice because of the lack of sufficient seats at Yemeni universities.

Obstacles

Students who succeed in the admission test and join the Faculty of Languages are shocked when they discover all the obstacles - in the faculty in general and the department of English in particular - that hinder their progress in learning. These include a lack of buildings for the English language department, the near-absence of native speakers as lecturers, an out-dated syllabus and an incomplete library.

Lack of lecturing halls

There is no designated building for the English faculty. Ever since the founding of the faculty, English language students have attended their classes at the Faculty of Shari'a and Law. Two months before the end of each academic year, the students are surprised when the administration asks them to leave the premises to make way for the students of the law faculty, who only turn up at the end of the

year for the final examinations. For a number of years now, language faculty students have spent the end of the academic year in the buildings of the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education.

Last year, to address this problem, the Faculty of Languages decided to schedule the final examinations three weeks earlier, to avoid clashing with the schedule of the Sharia and Law students.

Thaiban Al-Thaibani, a third year English student, angrily complains about the lack of designated premises for language faculty students, "We have no building and every year we study in the Faculty of Shari'a and Law, but at the end of every year we are asked to leave and have to look for another faculty to complete the academic year."

Dr. Hana'a Al-Sultan, head of the French department, emphasized that the lack of designated lecturing halls had affected both teachers and students,

"Honestly, the most negative factor is the lack of building. We only have four halls for the students in all four academic years in the old buildings of the Faculty of Education. Sometimes we find ourselves compelled to go to the building of the Faculty of Shari'a and Law, sometimes only available sometimes after 2:00 pm," she said.

Lack of native speakers

The lack of native speakers for each language represents another obstacle for the students of the faculty in general and of the English department in particular.

Although thousands of Yemenis who studied English at university were taught by Indians have succeeded to become professors at various Yemeni and Arab universities, the English students still complain about their Indian teacher's poor background and incorrect accent.

Thaiban described the Indian teachers as "a misfortune for the English department". He added, "The Indian lecturer with PhD needs another doctor to teach him. It is obvious that [the lecturers] have very poor academic background, and it makes us question their academic qualifications. If you ask him any question from the page that he is reading, he won't be able to answer you directly," he said.

According to Thaiban, the Indian accent presents another problem. "The accent and pronunciation is totally wrong," he stressed.

A student, who requested anonymity, confirmed that the most significant problem he faces is the accent of the Indian professors. He said that the shortcomings in their accent mislead the students.

No lectures in the language laboratory
Students are allegedly deprived of lectures in the language laboratory, a room already equipped with audio visual material.

Many students from different departments complain that their timetables don't include any lectures in the language laboratory. "In the faculty, we have a language lab, but no lectures in the laboratory on our timetable. If students want to study in the laboratory, they have to go individually without teachers," a student in the English department said.

In most universities worldwide, study is mostly practical and based on research. The teacher and syllabus are only guides for the students and most of the learning is independent.

While most other students in Sana'a University complain about the amount of research they have to conduct every semester, students of the Faculty of Language complain that many of their teachers ask them to conduct research only in fourth year before their graduation.

"A [language] student is asked only to conduct research when he reaches fourth year," said Thaiban.

Aseel Al-Thale'e, a level four student in the English department, stated that the only research teachers had asked him to do was his final year research, usually supposed to be the last assignment of many. "The teachers didn't ask us to conduct any research," he affirmed.

Outdated syllabus

Students from different departments inside the faculty question whether they study in the Faculty of Arts or in the Faculty of Languages in view of all the

literature they are lectured on. The lack of practice also constitutes a barrier to language students.

"When we read magazines, newspapers or anything else, we find the language we read very different from what we study. We study one thing and find another in reality," Aseel Al-Thale'e pointed out.

"What is absent in this department is real practice of the language. Everything we study is theoretical and that's what makes us tired," said Humaid, "We can't find any native speakers to practice with."

Al-Zaikam criticized the faculty and went on to say, "This is called the Faculty of Languages but what we study is literature, not language. Studying language means studying the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, but here we study arts. If we want to improve our level, we have to go out and try to find native speakers to practice speaking the language, otherwise we will not learn the language," he commented.

In addition, many students feel that the faculty and its syllabus don't qualify them enough to be competent in their specialization.

"After graduation, most students only find jobs as teachers or secretaries although they studied English for four years," explained an anonymous student in fourth year in the English department, "It's a shame on both faculty and students." He added that students who graduate from institutes after only one year and a half often find better jobs than those who study at the University of Sana'a for four years and put the blame on teaching methods and the syllabus.

Insufficient resources

For students in university, institutes and school, a library is an essential part of the educational process, but the six departments of the Faculty of Languages do not recognize this need. Although there should be one library for each department, there is not even one for the entire faculty.

In this regard, Humaid complained that he studies German and is asked to make conduct research without an Arabic-German dictionary to check the meaning of the words he studies.

"We don't have library and sometimes we feel completely despaired, especially when we can't even find an Arabic-German dictionaries," he said

The faculty responds

Head of the Department of English Dr. A. K. Sharma denied that the Indian teachers have poor academic backgrounds. "These complaints are baseless. All lecturers who come to teach here have prior experience teaching in colleges and universities, because the University of Sana'a does not appoint teachers who have no previous teaching experience," Sharma stressed.

With regard to the lecturer's different accents, Sharma said, "As far as the accent is concerned, the British speak with a British accent, the Americans with American accent and the Indians with an Indian accent. In the same manner that you can't expect an American to speak with the British accent, you can't expect an Indian to speak British or American English. As all British or Americans do not speak in the same accent, all Indians also do not speak the same accent. What we look for in the accent is that one's speech is precise and clear. What matters in the English-speaking world today is that one should be easily understood by all those who speak English globally, irrespective of one's accent. However, when we have the choice, we go for those who have a native accent."

Students of the English department staged a sit-in last year to demand the university provide native-speakers to teach them. The university, unable to meet their demand, explained that native-speakers ask to be paid by the hour. As the university's budget cannot allow for such expenses, it instead employs Indian teachers who are paid on a monthly - not hourly - basis.

The Vice President of Sana'a University for Academic Affairs Dr. Ahmed Al-Kebsi stated that the financial budget is the main obstacle to the university hiring native speakers.

"American and British teachers want to be paid about USD10,000 a month while we give USD1,000 or USD1,200 for the Indian teachers. However, we are considering bringing in native teachers to help the university," Al-Kebsi said.

As for the alleged lack of research assignments, Sharma confirmed students' claims: "As far as research is concerned, we don't expect students in first, second

and third year to write research papers. Fourth year students themselves write research papers with great difficulty," he said.

"Writing a research paper entails knowledge, experience, information, skill, methodology, organization and logical strength. We do not expect students below fourth year to be capable of it. Students in the earlier stages of learning are exposed to different types of writing including essays, summaries, reports, letters and stories. Research writing is the most formal, technical and scholarly of all of these and comes at the end of studies when students are in fourth year," he added.

"There is no library as such in the Department of English. In the faculty as a whole, we only have an apology for a library. By any standard it can't be said to be satisfactory, but the number of books is gradually increasing every year," he commented.

Student responsibility

On the other hand, many students do praise both the faculty's teachers and syllabus, only complaining about insufficient oral practice of their language of choice.

A second year German language student said, "Language practice is very weak and I think that learning at an institute is better than in the faculty. Although our syllabus is very good, teachers don't give us enough time to practice. Some teachers just focus on particular students and neglect others," she resentfully said, "Another problem is the lack of native speakers to teach us the language and correct our mistakes."

Dr. Sharma stresses that students need to show more responsibility towards acquiring knowledge. "It is true that many students who graduate not only from this faculty but from any other faculty - and not only in Yemen but all over the world - do not have the knowledge and competence expected of a graduate, however, it is not because of teachers but because of the students themselves. Teachers can't study on behalf of their students, they can only show them the path," he said.

He explained that although the faculty's syllabus is for full-time students, nearly 80 percent of those enrolled have almost no time to study at home because they have jobs. According to him, it is easy to be a graduate but much more difficult to acquire the knowledge and competence required of one.

Sharma added that the students of the faculty should give up two bad habits to deserve their degree.

First, they should buy books instead of making photocopies. He explained that students who bought books would keep reading them every now and then, even after their graduation.

Second, they should cultivate the habit of reading classics in their original version, instead of in their summarized or simplified editions.

"Students who aim at specializing in English as a language and as an academic subject must get to the spirit of the language by internalizing it through reading the original texts. Reading notes, summaries and paraphrases may enable them to pass the examination but it can't make them feel quite at home in English," he added.

Progress in faculties

Other departments, such as the Department of Italian, have seen some real progress and development.

Mohammed Al-Khohlani, a third year Italian student, explained that in the past they had an Italian and a Yemeni teacher for all four years. Now they have four native Italian teachers.

"In the beginning, only 11 out of 70 students graduated from the department because of the shortage of teachers, but now we have enough teachers and the department has developed," he said. Now up to 40 students graduate each year.

There are ongoing discussions on how to better develop the education process at the Faculty of Languages.

Dr. Hana'a Al-Sultan, head of the Department of French noted that the department was about to hold workshop to reconsider the current syllabus and discuss ways of developing it.

Despite the great efforts exerted by the lecturers to improve the quality of education in the Faculty of Languages at the University of Sana'a, the lack of dedicated buildings, lectures in the language laboratory, a complete library and native teachers have shocked and disappointed the majority of its students and remain obstacles to overcome.



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Yemenis concerned over land appropriation

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For the Yemen Times

Illegal land appropriation has become a serious problem in Yemen. Vulnerable groups such as orphans or widows are the main victims of this unlawful practice by influential people, whether state officials or tribal leaders. Sometimes members of parliament are also involved in the appropriation.

"If your rival is the judge, to whom do you complain?" said Ahmed Al-Qaladhi whose two plots of land, located in the suburbs of Sana'a, were usurped unlawfully. "An influential man took my lands by force. He left some of his escorts in my lands and ordered them to protect it. He still intends to take over my third plot of land next to my house, which is the last one I possess."

Al-Qaladhi's house was attacked by armed men who left bullet holes on the walls, before they dragged him out of the house in front of his family.

"I wouldn't be surprised if they seized my house too. The government has enabled such criminals to hold positions of influence and, consequently, extort property of people and the law

is unable to take any procedures against them due to their influence," he explained.

Taqeyyah Nasser, an 80 years old widow, said her land situated on Khamseen Street in Sana'a was subjected to attempts of illegal appropriation by influential individuals.

"When the government built Khamseen Street, I was surprised to see military vehicles and soldiers occupy my land based on orders from higher up," she recalls, "They brought in a contractor who decided where to build villas and build fences in the land that I inherited from my late husband. I stood still and could not do anything."

Distraught at having her land stolen, Nasser headed to the street with little hope that someone may help her retrieve what was rightfully hers.

"I sat near the fence of the land until the procession of President Ali Abdullah Saleh passed from the street. I threw myself onto the road to block his procession and, when he stopped, I complained to him about those who had seized my land. He ordered the soldiers to leave the land and gave it back to me."

"God bestowed His care on me as the president passed by my land and

YT Photo by Saddam Al-Ashmori



A weak judiciary system and the lack of rule of law are behind the persistence of illegal land appropriation in Yemen.

returned it to me, but I am still worried about it. Other influential people may come again to seize it," she pointed out.

Nasser was lucky, but hundreds of others whose lands have been illegally seized were not.

Aden city was the first place in which citizens took to the streets to protest against such unlawful behavior by powerful men. As the protests escalated, President Saleh gave his orders two months ago to reconsider the situation and replace some of the leaders involved.

Arwa Al-Hamadani, a Yemeni now living in Britain, said that, when she came back from Britain to establish an investment project on her land in Aden,

she discovered that the land had been seized by someone supported by an official in the government.

"I showed all the property documents to prove that the land was mine but my efforts were in vain," said Al-Hamadani. "After a long struggle in court and through mediations, I reclaimed only half of it. The rest was later built on by the man who had illegally appropriated it, despite him not having a single shred of evidence to prove his possession."

The inhabitants of Hodeidah city have shared the same fate and complain of illegal appropriation of their properties in front of the government's eyes. The sons of Hussein Ghalib Al-Hutami

maintain that their father died of grief after having spent too long demanding justice after his land was seized by influential officials.

In a letter of appeal sent to the president and circulated by local media outlets, Al-Hutami's sons said that they had been searching for justice for 15 years in the court but to no avail. Even security forces had not dared to carry out court orders to evict those who seized their land. They maintained that the latter had stolen their land at gunpoint and explained that they had taken over the land because of its good position, large size and the high price of land in the area.

Many Yemenis have been victims of

illegal land appropriation. While some have reached an impasse and were unable to reclaim their property, others are still struggling to regain their rights. Although they possess the documents to prove their possession of land, it is those with influence who are able to build on their land without permission or evidence of ownership.

These legal land owners continue their struggle to regain their lands, hoping that one day the judiciary will wake up and put an end to the farce that influential people practice against them. They maintain that those in power who violate the law are exploiting their positions in order to oppress them and confiscate their rights.



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وشركة كنيدان تكسن بتروليم شرق الحجر المحدودة - قطاع " ٥١ "

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بأحر التهاني والتبريكات إلى

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30 نوفمبر

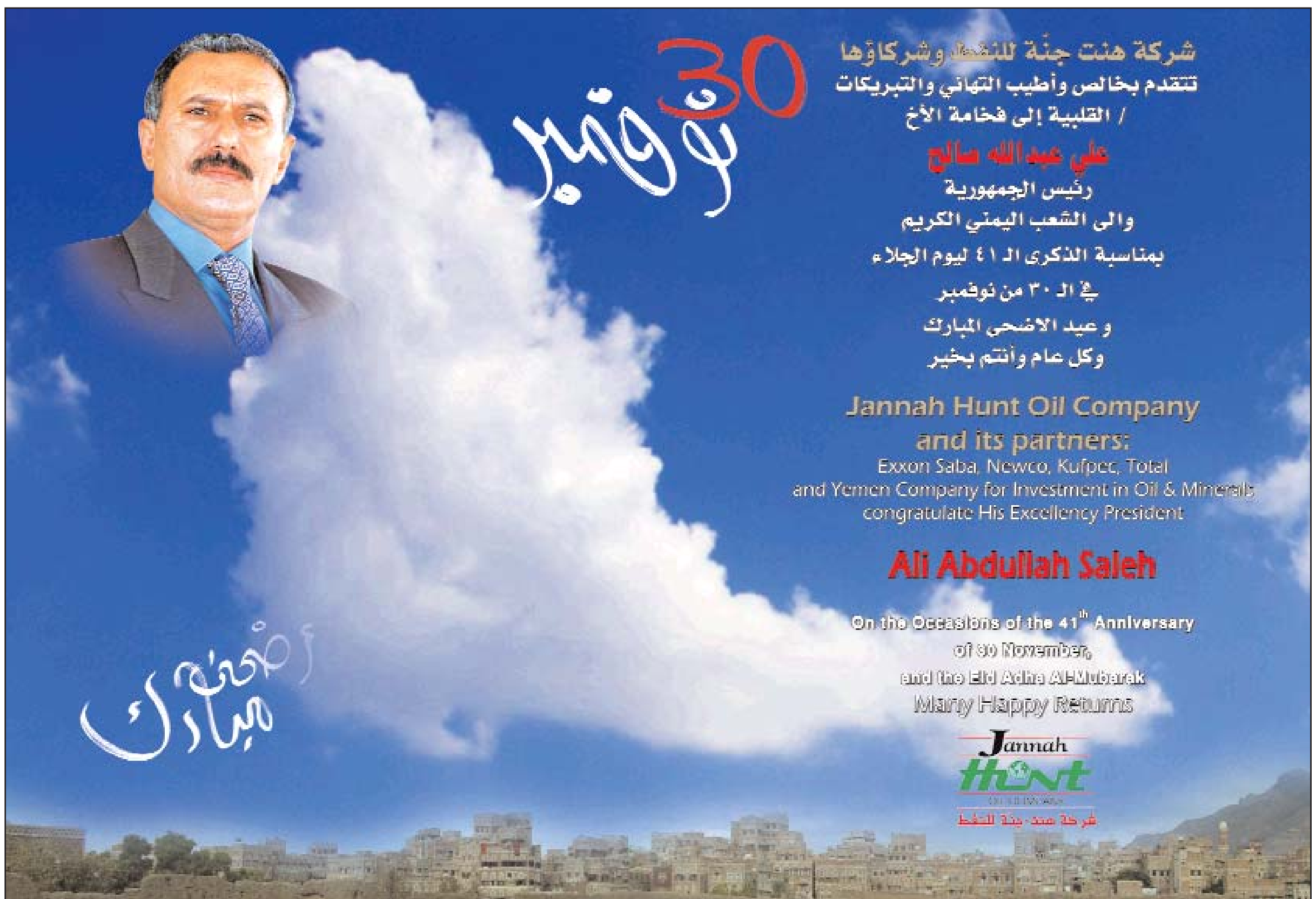
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Many Happy Returns

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OMV



30 نوفمبر

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/ القلبية إلى فخامة الأخ
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Words of Wisdom



In the Third World today, the rulers have no fixed budgets or allocations, even when these exist on paper. The rulers simply spend as they please. Actually, the only limiting element is the lack of funds or the general poverty of the country.

Here in Yemen, this problem exists in a shameless way. Just a couple of weeks ago, a number of government palaces built by foreign aid were simply given away to the top president's men.

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

OUR
OPINIONWriting about
the children

Two of the four categories of UNICEF's first media prize on child rights went to Yemeni Journalists. Mohammed Jabri working with IRIN, Online Humanitarian News Services won the Internet category because of his news article covering a movement to encourage girls' education and a new study on street children. And Samir Mohammed al-Math'haji, working with Sana'a Radio, first channel for the radio category for his series: From the memory of children which is on youth discussing key issues in their lives from their early adolescent days.

A journalist from Syria won the TV category while one from Egypt won in the press category.

The fact that two of the winners are from Yemen says something. It gives hope that there are some Yemeni journalists who are using their talent and profession to make a difference and are targeting issues regarding the younger generations to help create a better future.

The selection of the stories was based on the writing and message delivered through them whether to decision makers regarding child issues or to the children themselves in hope to make them see the world through a more constructive perspective and perhaps act upon it.

In a time where there is so much struggle and unrest in Yemen, such journalists and such initiatives are very much needed. We need people like Mohammed and Samir to convey a different message than the depressing one which dominates the press and even in social gatherings. The pieces chosen were solution-oriented aimed at promoting development and protecting children's rights. This kind of journalism is what won them the awards and is what makes the journalists behind them the real heroes and role models for all Yemeni journalists.

We are trying to do this in Yemen Times, although it is a very difficult task. Mainly because many of the topics that are worthy are either taboos, or don't have much background and statistical information. More so, the media message needs to be constructive and attractive in order to attract readers and convince decision makers to act upon. Many times a well written media report can create significant change in both policy and the community levels. And when it comes to youth and children, it is more crucial to give the correct information so that it helps make the desired change.

Congratulations to Mohammed and Samir for doing an excellent job. I hope that other journalists will follow through, and realize that good work doesn't go wasted or unappreciated.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Ba Sondwa and the tears of wise men

By: Jamal Mohammed Al-Ja'abi

Like other wise men in this nation, Mohammed Salem BaSondwa, advisor to President Saleh, has realized that Yemen is exposed to an immense threat and that the situation has reached an impasse. There is no doubt that the situation has evolved from bad to worse due to catastrophic policies followed by the ruling party and its government, but I only felt a moment of real fear when I saw the wise man BaSondwa bursting into tears.

Regretting the dire situation of the country, his words and tears were daggers stabbing at my chest and my blood flowed on its blades. How is it possible for me to tolerate being sadly affected by his tears, the very reflection of a clear conscience, moral and historical responsibility in hard times?

"I am very sad at the state of my homeland,

which is progressing backward. We now live in a homeland where patriotism cannot protect any of us while tribal and ethnical affiliation may do," BaSondwa said. He couldn't control his feelings since he is a real reader of Yemen's history and an artist whose tears reflect his sadness.

BaSondwa is a great politician and one of the few leaders who liberated South Yemen from the British occupation. It is difficult for him to remain unconcerned about the dire situation and conditions in the country, which has turned out to be so difficult for the government and people to overcome.

His sadness was not exaggerated

Like any other man, BaSondwa has human feelings and he may feel sad, happy, tragic or angry in his domestic and social life. But as a politician who suffered a lot and resisted the strongest occupation forces in the 19th Century, and as a senior government servant

who held key positions in the government and served his homeland and people for long years in various political and diplomatic positions, it is difficult for anybody to say BaSondwa was exaggerating in expressing his sadness.

It is the tears of great and wise men when they see that their homeland, which they love and adore, is progressing toward unprecedented collapse while the government pays no attention to what happens on the ground.

BaSondwa, who is advisor to President Saleh, is often said to have never been asked for advice or consultation in a press interview. Thanks to his wisdom and experience, he realizes that Yemen is undergoing the worst turmoil in its history while the country leader doesn't seem to listen to advice given by his advisors. This leader has only listened to the evil advisors surrounding him in government and the

ruling General People's Congress (GPC).

In the lives of the people, there are moments captured on camera to reflect historical situations in their homeland. Following the June Calamity in 1967, cameras took photos of Jamal Abd Al-Nasser drying his tears after his resignation speech. The scene of pulling down the statue of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein stood for the occupation of Iraq for the second time. Immortalized scenes of this sort are numerous.

However, BaSondwa bursting into tears as he was speaking during a consultative meeting held by the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) was worth capturing by television cameras. Years on, we will admit that the tears shed by the wise man constituted an alarming sign, which the government failed to understand.

Source: Al-Sahwa.net

Elections in Yemen and the U.S.,
an unjust comparison

By: Abdu Saif Al-Qasali

To start with, I will not congratulate the U.S. president-elect Barack Obama, who is ancestrally from Africa, for the victory he scored in the most recent American presidential elections. However, I will specifically congratulate the Arab and Muslim leaders for the election of Obama as a caliph for Muslims, particularly as those leaders were the first people to congratulate Obama, and how they congratulated him made me imagine Obama as a caliph for Muslims, not a President for a Christian state that proved to be evidently biased on the Israeli occupation of Arab lands.

We should also not forget that this Christian state is responsible for a state of insecurity and lawlessness in Iraq, plus crimes against humanity that took place in the Abu Ghraib jail in Iraq and in the Guantanamo detention center in Cuba.

Undoubtedly, Obama's win to lead the

strongest state in the world shocked those interested in U.S. politics as the man is black, of an African origin and a poor family. His father was Muslim and had an Arabic name [Hussein], which is why many Arab and Muslim leaders now bet that the new American leader will treat them differently, compared to the treatment they received from previous U.S. administrations, be they republican or democrat.

Certainly, a particular complex will remain with Obama and the black man is expected to do his best in order to get rid of this complex. He is bound to be more Christian in order to confirm to his Christian state that he has no relations with Islam. He is also expected to deal with white people as if he is whiter than them in order to avoid charges of discrimination and bias in favor of black citizens.

The first message made by Obama was very clear to the Arabs and Muslims, who celebrated his victory, and to the conservative Jews. Through this message, Muslims and Jews may know the real face of Obama in his leadership of the United States. The message is that of

Obama's selection of the Israel Jew Ram Emanuel, a member of the U.S. Congress, to hold the post of White House Chief of Staff.

This choice was hailed by Israel and denounced by the Arabs. In addition, the Reuters News Agency quoted special sources as saying that more than 80 percent of potential nominees to occupy the post of Secretary of State and other key posts in the new U.S. administration are either Jews or have relations with the Israeli lobbies in the U.S. This fact may limit the optimism of the majority of Arabs and Muslims, most notably the leaders with expectations of positive relations during the term of the new U.S. President.

Why are the Americans lucky?

I apologize to the kind readership since I seem to have digressed from the title of this article. However, I realize that it is unjust to compare the Yemeni elections with the U.S. ones. The Americans are lucky they don't have a ruling party named 'General People's Congress'. They don't have a ruling party to control the official satellite channel in favor of its candi-

date.

In the U.S., there are thousands of satellite channels and the government can't intervene in the policy of any of them. All the media outlets in the western country are independent and liberated from the government's dominance. In the U.S., there are neither official newspapers, an information ministry nor a 'Lawzi' [Yemen's information minister], and the Republican Party that has been ruling the state for eight years under Bush doesn't exploit the state's resources in favor of its candidate. And Obama did not win because he is black.

It is the legacy left by the republican Bush in the U.S. that led the Americans to punish the Republican Party through the ballot boxes. What happens in the Western state is totally different from what happens in the Arab states where the people are held responsible for mistakes committed by their leaders. Whenever a leader commits a mistake, he turns to punish his people for what he himself did.

Source: Marebpress.net

Arrests, protests, violence and
the constitutional reference

By: Abdullah Al-Wazir

The political standoff between the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) and the ruling General People's Congress (GPC) continues to escalate with the former insisting to stage projects rejecting

the voter registration process, currently undertaken by the latter and its government. The opposition coalition also distributes publications encouraging citizens to boycott the process.

The GPC, on the other hand, has taken other procedures by employing security personnel to disperse protests against the voter registration and arrest some JMP activists. In Taiz governorate, the security authorities arrested two members of the Taizziya District's local council Mohammed Ali Saeed and Mohammed Yasser Ali, who are affiliated with the Islah and Yemeni Socialist parties, over their participation in a sit-in organized by the JMP against the voter registration process.

These actions are not limited to Taiz as there are other protests and sit-ins staged by JMP supporters in other governorates where the authorities order security personnel to disperse protesters or arrest them. Sometimes, the security troops fire live bullets at protesters leaving some killed.

In other southern governorates, most notably those witnessing the effective presence of political activists and leaders, the situation looks totally different. Acts in these governorates are not only in the form of protests and advocacies for boycotting the voter registration process, as protesters reject the presence of voter registration staff

in their areas for reasons that have nothing to do with the JMP, which claims that the election system be reformed.

Political activists and leaders in southern governorates reject the presence of voter registration staff in their areas for particular demands that remain unmet, which results in armed attacks against the staff and clashes with security personnel.

The situation is catastrophic in both cases, and therefore needs workable solutions, most notably as the Constitution and laws are violated by security personnel, who arrested peaceful protesters or those who distribute JMP publications inviting people to boycott the voter registration process in some governorates. Frankly speaking, security personnel commit massive legal violations.

Citizens are entitled to boycott the voter registration process and encourage others to do so like the ruling party and its government are entitled to call on citizens to go to voter registration centers. In some governorates, the Constitution and laws are violated by those who practice violence against voter registration staff to hinder progress of the process. Those individuals have no right to behave this way, nor are they entitled to prevent any citizens from approaching voter registration centers.

During his visit to Abyan governorate,

Brig. Yahya Mohammed Abdullah Saleh, President Saleh's nephew, said that citizens are not entitled to boycott the process. He also affirmed that others are not entitled to prevent citizens to go to registration centers.

All parties must be law-abiding

The words uttered by the President's nephew reflect the democratic right of all parties, which are all, be they security personnel or those practicing violence against voter registration staff, recommend to prove their being law-abiding people.

We put the blame on those who spark violence to hinder the voter registration process, but this must not blind us against violations committed by security personnel in arresting peaceful protesters. This is unacceptable. The problem needs intervention of judicious people to solve it according to the Constitution as the only applicable reference. This is what we always urge to have taken place.

Stressing the necessity of applying the constitutional reference, nobody, even senior government officials, is allowed to violate the Constitution and laws put into effect. All parties involved should abide by this reference if they want to have their disagreements and discrepancies settled.

Source: Al-Balagh Weekly.

SKETCHED OPINION



By: Samer

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Tel: +967 (1) 268-661

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

E-mail: yteditor@gmail.com

Letters: yteditor@gmail.com

Advertisement: ads@yementimes.com

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Sakkaf

CEO
Khair Aldin Al Nsour

Managing Editor
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Khaled Al-Hilaly

Mahmoud Al-Assamiee

Mariem Al-Yameni

Ola Al-Shami

Offices

Aden Bureau:

Ridhwan Alawi Ahmed

Tel: +967 (2) 347-057, 346596

Fax: +967 (2) 347056

Email: ytaden@y.net.ye

Taiz Bureau:

Imad Ahmed Al-Saqqaf

Tel: +967 (4) 217-156,

Telefax: +967 (4) 217157

P.O.Box: 5086, Taiz

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Al-Sahwa.net, affiliated with the Islah Party
Thursday, Nov. 27, 2008

Top Stories

- Thousands of Yemenis protest against the manipulation of the electoral process
- Journalist arrested by Beidha security authorities over criticizing corruption
- Opposition refuses extension of local council's term

Yemen's opposition has described the extension of local council terms approved by the parliamentary majority of the ruling party as a coup against the political life in Yemen, the website reported. It added that opposition parties released a statement, strongly rejecting this extension, considering this step as evidence of the ruling party's desire to despise the current democratic margin and control politics in the country alone.

Opposition parliamentary blocs left Parliament on Sunday holding the ruling party responsible for any consequences, after Parliament voted on Sunday to extend the term of local councils from three years to seven years.

On a side note, the website reported that Yemen's political scene has reached a deadlock due to differences over election systems and their rules, mainly as the ruling party insists on applying its mechanisms ignoring

demands, raised by Joint Meeting Parties (JMP).

Among the demands raised by the opposition alliance are barring government officials from using their influence to affect the vote, confining the registration of voters to their place of birth or residence and guaranteeing the neutrality of public financing and state-run media during election campaigns.

According to the website, GPC lawmakers broke proposed amendments of the election law and approved the old SCER in a way contradicting an agreement reached between the two sides.

After the SCER launched a schedule for voter registration committees to start their job, JMP declared its refusal of those committees labeling them as illegitimate, and urged its members and supporters to boycott the voter registration process.

Thousands of Yemenis have streamed into streets throughout Yemeni provinces protesting against what they called attempts by the authorities to rig the upcoming elections by forging voter registers.

Yemen's security authorities have usually launched arrest campaigns against opposition activists and supporters and opened fire on several occasions in an attempt to impede demonstrations. Security forces arrested dozens and wounded others over the last few days.

JMP branches in various Yemeni provinces further warned the authorities that they will escalate protests if their repressive practices are not suspended.

JMP had called for raising peaceful

struggle and boycotting the registration process, stressing the necessity of holding free and affair elections to develop Yemenis' political life and solve the state's numerous crises created by the authorities and their poor policies.



Al-Eshteraki.net, affiliated with Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP)
Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2008

Top Stories

- Yemen Human Rights Observatory demands those detained over protests be released
- YSP Leader Yasin Numan: Powerful officials' interests go to hell and long live the homeland
- Hadramout rally rejects electoral manipulations by ruling party, postponement of local elections

The Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) last week organized a huge popular rally strongly rejecting the way elections are individually controlled by the ruling party, the website reported. The rally involved hundreds of opposition supporters, who came from various areas to the YSP office in Mukalla where the rally was held.

Clarifying how the ruling party is attempting to individualize the elections, Chairman of Islah Party Branch in Hadramout Saleh Basurrah said addressing the participants, "Your presence draws an expressive picture rejecting all the forms of oppression,

injustice and property theft. You also demonstrate an alive will to restore your rights from an oppressive authority."

He added, "The ruling party may say that he has disputes with the JMP over composition of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER), however, this is part of a wider issue. It is usual for the elections to help improve citizens' living standards, but what happens in Yemen is totally different as people's living conditions worsen whenever there is an election."

The rally also strongly objected to a decision taken recently by Parliament to postpone the next local elections, which were due in spring 2009, for another four years, according to the various local official and independent media outlets. The vote followed a government request to amend an existing law to extend the councils' tenure. The decision sparked angry protests from opposition lawmakers, who walked out of the session and called on voters to boycott the elections. "The ruling party has overturned the basics of democracy," said a statement released by the opposition Common Forum, which groups Al-Islah (Reform) Party, the main Islamist opposition party, and the Yemeni Socialist Party.

The last municipal elections were held at the same time as the presidential ballot in September 2006, when President Ali Abdullah Saleh, incumbent since 1990, won another seven-year term. The government justified its request on the grounds the term of the existing councils is too short and that holding elections would be expen-

s i v e . The rally was organized as part of a series of protests held by the opposition parties and their fans around Yemen, after negotiations with the ruling General People's Congress failed to reach a compromise.



Al-Motamar.net, affiliated with General People's Congress (ruling party)
Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2008

Top Stories

- GPC leader: crimes committed by the JMP require punishing its member parties
- Good turnout for voter registration process in Mahra province
- Parliament extends local councils' term for extra four years

Parliament passed on Sunday an amendment extending the term of the current local councils for extra four years, the website reported, adding that the extension will begin from the date of the expiration of the current local councils, according to the amendment of article 171 of Law No. 25 of 2002, which also concerns the amendment of the Local Council Law No. 4 of 2000.

The amendment also provided that internal elections of the Secretary-General and heads of specialized committees should be held in half of the tenure of local councils.

Under the chairmanship of Speaker

Yahya Al-Rae'i, Parliament also ratified the extra finance agreement for updating Civil Service signed between the government and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) worth \$ 14 million.

On a side note, the website reported that the European Union praised the Yemeni Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum SCER's performance in carrying out recommendations in the report, released by the EU Election Observation Mission following the last presidential and local elections in September 2006.

Head of the SCER's information sector Abdu Al-Janadi told Al-Motamar.net that a meeting was held at the SCER offices in Sana'a on Sunday with a European delegation to discuss comprehension of the report and procedures that have been carried out in this regard, confirming identical viewpoints in implementing EU recommendations.

Al-Janadi added that the delegation understood the need of some recommendations for legal amendments and expressed satisfaction over the progress of the SCER in translating the report on the ground.

He went on to say that the delegation also hailed other SCER procedures regarding stages of the electoral process, particularly registering and amending voter records, pointing out that the delegation is communicating with all political parties to settle discrepancies between them and the ruling party. Al-Janadi also said the Europeans showed annoyance concerning the attacks on field committees and demanded reinforcement of laws against the perpetrators.

A lasting poison

By: Norman Manea

Next year will mark the twentieth anniversary of the collapse of communism in Europe. Liberated from the complexity of knowing too much about the cruel past, the young people of Eastern Europe's post-communist generation seem uninterested in what their parents and grandparents endured.

Yet the recent revelation of the Czech writer Milan Kundera's presumed complicity in the face of Stalinism is but the latest of the long half-life of a toxic past. Other examples come to mind: the accusations of collaboration with the secret police raised against Lech Walesa, Romania's public controversies surrounding Mircea Eliade's fascist past, and the attacks on the alleged "Jewish monopoly of suffering" which equate the Holocaust with the Soviet Gulag.

Friedrich Nietzsche said that if you look in the eye of the Devil for too long, you risk becoming a devil yourself. A Bolshevik anticommunism,

similar in its dogmatism to communism itself, has from time to time run riot in parts of Eastern Europe. In country after country, that Manichean mindset, with its oversimplifications and manipulations, was merely re-fashioned to serve the new people in power.

Opportunism has had its share in this, of course. In 1945, when the Red Army occupied Romania, the Communist Party had no more than 1,000 members; in 1989, it had almost four million. One day after Nicolae Ceausescu's execution, most of these people suddenly became fierce anticommunists and victims of the system they had served for decades.

Residual traces of totalitarian thinking can also be found in the hostility to former dissidents like Adam Michnik or Václav Havel, both of whom argued that the new democracies should not exploit resentments or seek revenge, as the totalitarian state did, but instead build a new national consensus to structure and empower a genuine civil society. Former generals of the secret police and members of the

Communist nomenclatura, untouchable in their comfortable villas and retirements, must derive great pleasure from watching today's witch hunts and manipulation of old files for immediate political purposes.

But the case of Kundera appears different – though no less disturbing. In 1950, Kundera, then a 20-year-old Communist, reportedly denounced to the criminal police as a Western spy a man he had never met – a friend of his friend's girlfriend. The man was later brutally interrogated in a former Gestapo torture facility and spent 14 years in prison. Kundera's name was contained in the investigating officer's report, which was authenticated after a respected historian discovered it in a dusty Prague archive.

The reclusive Kundera, who immigrated to Paris in 1975, has declared that "it never happened." Moreover, Czechoslovakia's fearsome secret police, who had every interest in silencing or compromising the famous dissident writer, never used the incident to blackmail or expose him. Until more information is forthcoming, both from

Kundera and from the authorities, the case will not be solved "beyond reasonable doubt." But if it happened, the case calls for a deeper reflection.

As far as we know, Kundera never was an informer before or after this incident, and we cannot ignore that he later freed himself from the compulsory totalitarian happiness that communism propagated. Indeed, his case also serves as a reminder that the early 1950's was the most brutal period of "proletarian dictatorship" in Eastern Europe – a period of great enthusiasm and terrible fear that poisoned the minds and souls of devoted believers, fierce opponents, and apathetic bystanders alike.

Moreover, Kundera's case is hardly unique. In 2006, the Nobel Prize-winning German author Günter Grass's disclosed that, 60 years earlier, he was, as a teenager, a member of the Waffen-SS. Similarly, a few years ago, the world was shocked to learn that famous Italian writer Ignazio Silone had, in his youth, collaborated with the fascist police. Daily life under totalitarianism, be it communist or fascist, was

routinely based on a deep duplicity whose effects are longstanding.

I don't agree with those who say we should not be interested in the dark episodes in the life of a great writer. Why not? We should be interested not for prosecutorial purposes, but in order to gain a more profound understanding of a bloody, demagogical, and tyrannical Utopia – and of human weakness and vulnerability. We may even consider it a rewarding testament to an artist's ability to overcome his past mistakes and still produce priceless work.

But can we justifiably defend morally compromised artists and intellectuals on the basis of their work's merit, yet condemn ordinary people for often less grave offenses? An egregious example of this was the way followers of Romanian philosopher Constantin Noica defended his support for the fascist Iron Guard and his later collaboration with the Communists, while at the same time condemning even a generic cleaning woman for mopping the floors in the offices of the secret police. Shouldn't that cleaner's

drudgery to support her family, children, and her own survival be taken equally into account?

Life under totalitarianism was an extreme situation that requires us to apply special, nuanced rules to all the captives of that ordeal. In order to understand that epoch, we have to know and carefully judge often ambiguous and overwhelming circumstances, never simplifying a multilayered daily reality for the sake of current political goals. If nothing else, in order to forgive, we have to know what we are forgiving.

In Eastern Europe today, old and young alike stand to benefit from that lesson. Moses wandered with his people in the desert for 40 years, until they had rid themselves of the poisonous slave mentality.

Norman Manea's most recent book is The Hooligan's Return. He was awarded the Medicis Etranger in 2006. Copyright: Project Syndicate/Institute for Human Sciences, 2008. www.project-syndicate.org

Morals and the meltdown

By: Robert Skidelsky

After World War I, H.G. Wells wrote that a race was on between morality and destruction. Humanity had to abandon its warlike ways, Wells said, or technology would decimate it.

Economic writing, however, conveyed a completely different world. Here technology was deservedly king. Prometheus was a benevolent monarch who scattered the fruits of progress among his people. In the economists' world, morality should not seek to control technology, but should adapt to its demands. Only by doing so could economic growth be assured and poverty eliminated. Traditional morality faded away as technology multiplied productive power.

We have clung to this faith in technological salvation as the old faiths waned and technology became ever more inventive. Our faith in the market – for the market is the midwife of technological invention – was a result of this. In the name of this faith, we have embraced globalization, the widest possible extension of the market econ-

omy.

For the sake of globalization, communities are de-natured, jobs offshored, and skills continually re-configured. We are told by its apostles that the wholesale impairment of most of what gave meaning to life is necessary to achieve an "efficient allocation of capital" and a "reduction in transaction costs." Moralities that resist this logic are branded "obstacles to progress." Protection – the duty the strong owe to the weak – becomes Protectionism, an evil thing that breeds war and corruption.

That today's global financial meltdown is the direct consequence of the West's worship of false gods is a proposition that cannot be discussed, much less acknowledged. One of its leading deities is the "efficient market hypothesis" – the belief that the market accurately prices all trades at each moment in time, ruling out booms and slumps, manias and panics. Theological language that might have decried the credit crunch as the "wages of sin," a come-uppance for prodigious profligacy, has become unusable.

But consider the way in which the term "debt" (the original sin against

God, with Satan as the great loan shark) has become "leverage," a metaphor from engineering that has turned the classical injunction against "getting into debt" into a virtual duty to be "highly leveraged." To be in debt feeds the double temptation of getting what we want as quickly as possible as well as getting "something for nothing."

Financial innovation has enlarged both temptations. Mathematical whiz kids developed new financial instruments, which, by promising to rob debt of its sting, broke down the barriers of prudence and self-restraint. The great economist Hyman Minsky's "merchants of debt" sold their toxic products not only to the credulous and ignorant, but also to greedy corporations and supposedly savvy individuals.

The result was a global explosion of "Ponzi" finance – named after the notorious Italian-American swindler Charles Ponzi – which purported to make such paper as safe and valuable as houses. By contrast, the virtuous Chinese, who save a large proportion of their incomes, were castigated by Western economists for their failure to understand that their duty to humanity

was to spend.

The key theoretical point in the transition to a debt-fueled economy was the redefinition of uncertainty as risk. This was the main achievement of mathematical economics. Whereas guarding against uncertainty had traditionally been a moral issue, hedging against risk is a purely technical question.

The main uncertainty in life – the destination of one's immortal soul – nudges one toward morality. Even the existence of mundane uncertainty gives rise to conventions and rules of thumb that embody the best of human experience in dealing with the unknown. The abolition of uncertainty abolishes the need for moral rules.

Future events could now be decomposed into calculable risks, and strategies and instruments could be developed to satisfy the full range of "risk preferences." Moreover, because competition between financial intermediaries steadily drives down the "price of risk," the future became (in theory) virtually risk-free.

This monstrous conceit of contemporary economics has brought the world to the edge of disaster.

Obviously, the traditional moral taboos surrounding money had to be loosened for capitalism to get going centuries ago. For example, the classical prohibition on usury was softened from a ban on charging interest on all loans to a ban on charging interest on loans for which the lender had no alternative use, i.e., for charging interest on "hoards" or cash balances.

Without the development of debt finance, the world would be a lot poorer than it is. Yet going from one extreme (keeping one's spare cash under the bed) to the other (lending out money one does not have) is to cut out the sensible middle.

The prudential supervision regime initiated by the Bank of Spain in response to the Spanish banking crises of the 1980's and 1990's shows what a sensible middle way might look like. Spanish banks are required to increase their deposits in proportion to their lending and set aside capital against assets in their off-balance sheets.

With little incentive to manufacture "structured investment vehicles," few Spanish banks created them, thereby avoiding excessive leverage. As a result, Spanish banks typically make

provision to cover 150% of bad debts whereas British banks cover only 80-100%, and Spanish homebuyers must pay between 20% and 30% deposit on a house, whereas 100% mortgages have routinely been given in the United States and the United Kingdom in recent years.

H.G. Wells was only partly right: the race between morality and destruction encompasses not just war, but economic life as well. As long as we rely on technical fixes to plug moral gaps and governments rush in with rescue packages that enable the merry-go-round to start up again, we are bound to keep lurching from frenzy to frenzy, punctuated by intervals of collapse. But, at some point, we will confront some limit to growth.

Robert Skidelsky, a member of the British House of Lords, is Professor emeritus of political economy at Warwick University, author of a prize-winning biography of the economist John Maynard Keynes, and a board member of the Moscow School of Political Studies. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2008. www.project-syndicate.org

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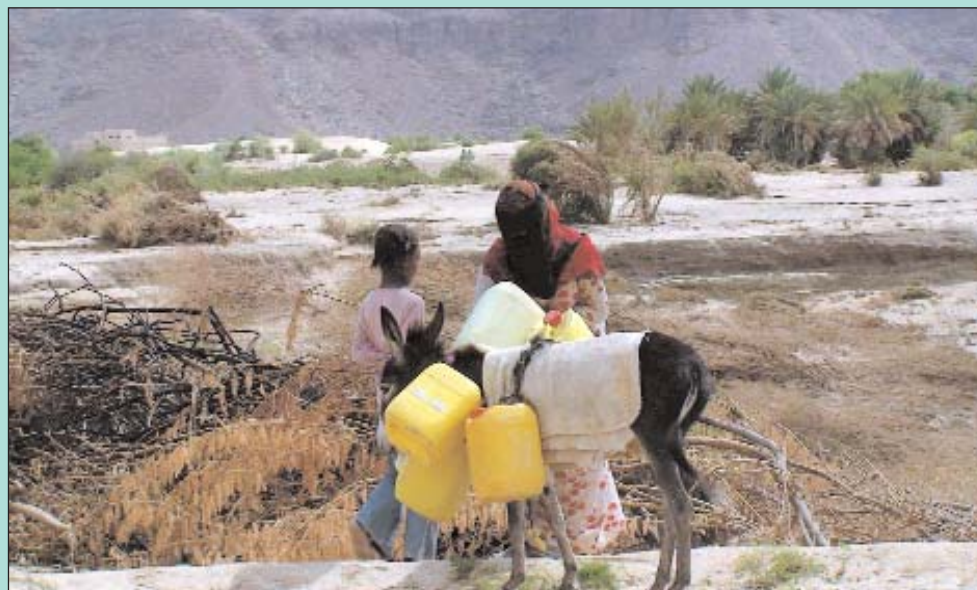
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Germany provides focused action to flood victims in Hadhramout

Following the devastating floods in Hadhramout, Germany was among the first countries to provide financial assistance for special focused actions in Hadhramout. The German Government through the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) has been working in Yemen for almost 40 years. Hadhramout is one of many focal Governorates in Yemen, where GTZ is providing long term technical support.

Germany pledged 100.000 EUR to provide assistance to Hadhramout after the floods using the GTZ programs already working in Hadhramout to assure fast implementation. GTZ-IWRM as part of the GTZ-water sector program distributed 1500 water filters (colloidal silver impregnated water filters) to families, following the flash floods that contaminated most water resources. There is an urgent need for such filters to ensure that people have access to clean water, specifically in areas where wells became contaminated by intrusion of dirty surface water. These filters have been distributed via the Local Council and the "Sons of Tarim Association". Many of the association staff members were trained on the use of the filter and they in turn will train citizens how to do so. Filters are distributed to remote areas without access to centralized water supply schemes.

GTZ has also provided extended assistance in collection and disposal of solid waste in many cities around Hadhramout. Another urgent action was collecting dead animals and burning them to avoid any outbreak of disease. Furthermore, smaller streets were cleaned using heavy equipments to assure access to wadis, dwelling areas and houses. The GTZ- Health program is currently involved in an assessment on the situation of the local health units to evaluate the help needed by the program.



After the flash floods people have to fetch drinking water out of contaminated surface water resources"

Colloidal Silver Impregnated Water Filters in Yemen



In 2007, gtz-IWRM of the Yemeni-German Water Sector Program improved a Yemeni Pottery to enable the production of high temperature ceramics using a gas fired kiln. The filters remove bacteria including E. coli and Vibrio cholera as well as Giardia and Cryptosporidium. Tens of thousands of filters have been distributed worldwide by organizations such as International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Doctors Without Borders, UNICEF, Plan International, Project Concern International, Oxfam and USAID. The PFP filter is simple in design, easy for families to use, and performs exceptionally well in laboratory as well as in field tests. With proper cleaning, maintenance and monitoring, this filter technology

can provide potable water for rural families that fetch their water from surface-influenced, contaminated sources such as springs, rivers, wells, or standing surface water.

gtz-IWRM therefore promotes the production and distribution of this filter (see picture) to be used in rural areas where access to safe drinking water is very difficult and water networks are not available yet. Using these filters also enables us to promote the rain water harvesting concept as a possible source for drinking water.

gtz-IWRM has been working on this subject, because drinking water supply in Yemen mostly relies on more and more scarcer groundwater resources. If we want to implement a sustainable water management concept, IWRM has to include a focus on domestic water supply. We strongly believe that most rural households could be safely supplied out of an integrated rain water harvesting concept which is supported by all partners.



Responsible water resources management will decide on survival and development.

Integrated Water Resources Management in Yemen

The gtz-Yemeni-German Water Sector Program, established in 2006, consists of five components. Component no. four is the Integrated Water Resources Management project (IWRM). The project helps the Ministry of Water and Environment and one of its authorities, the National Water Resources Authority (NWRA), to implement the water law from 2002.

A main aspect of the water law is the establishment of a decentralized structure to control and decide on water related projects and activities in the water basins. For this purpose, Basin Water Committees have recently been established in Sa'adah, Amran and Abyan with gtz-IWRM support. Bringing back the responsibility to the local authorities within the Governorates and water basins ensures that the implementation of any water supply scheme or water collecting installation will be recognized and approved by all representatives. The representatives of the stakeholders in the Basin Water Management Committee will act as a local water parliament.

Particularly in Amran and Sa'adah, where water is mostly supplied out of groundwater resources, it is very important that every stakeholder is aware of the actual precarious situation. Groundwater is a finite source, and in Amran for example, only pockets of groundwater are remaining. Recently selected deep wells to be used as monitoring wells for some years are already dry after a period of only one year. Recharge of the groundwater resources, assuming that it occurs, takes place within a time frame between a minimum of 50 years and up to several thousand years. And nobody should speculate on this time. This critical knowledge has to be communicated to the local people to assure their awareness and understanding of future decisions. Governors have to take over their responsibility and should take action at this previous stage to assure an extension of time before water will run out for drinking water supplies because of reckless use in agriculture.

In Abyan the situation is different but not much better, the groundwater sources are endangered because of salt water intrusions from the sea and overuse in the upstream areas which may cause conflicts on water rights. The intrusion of salt water into the sweet groundwater sources cannot be reverted. The only possible treatment is - closing the well.

Wadi Bana, the main water supply source for the Abyan Delta collects its water in at least four different Governorates. So far none of these Governorates is aware of the impact they could have to the downstream area in Abyan Delta and the huge agricultural farms in this Delta if they use more water or if they contaminate this surface water.

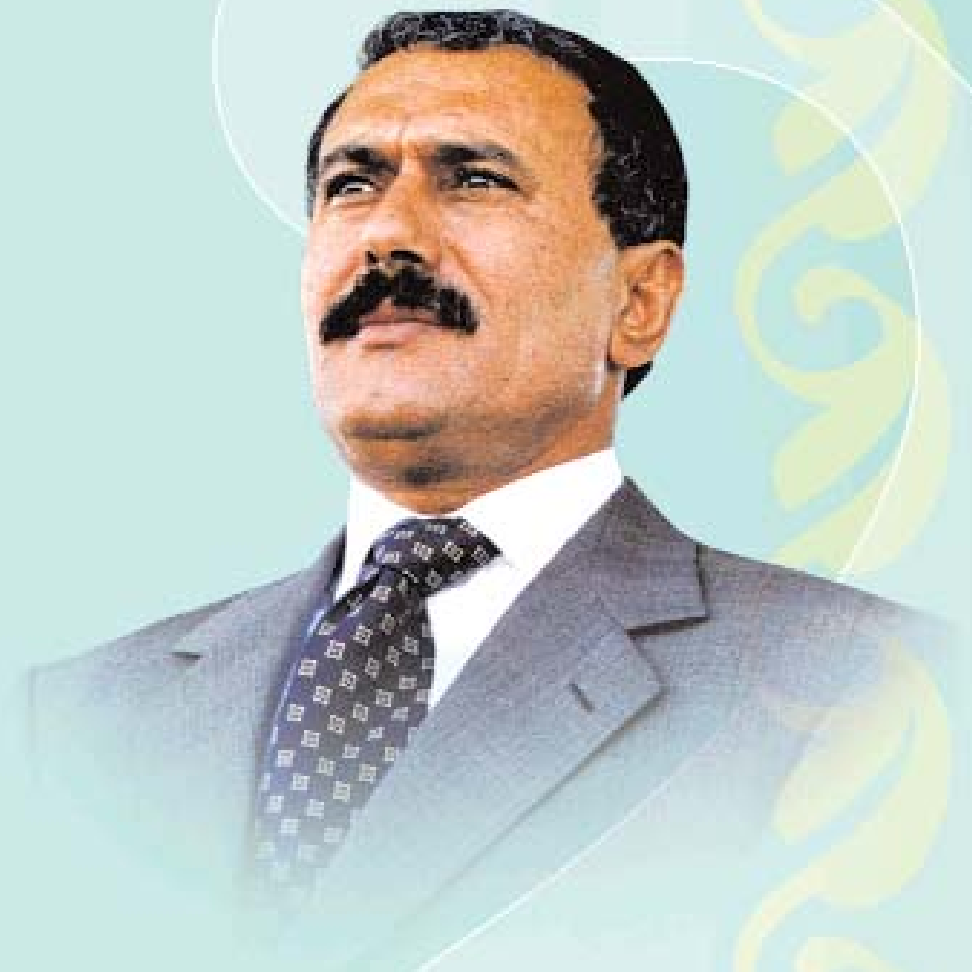
The support of the decentralization in the water sector has its own challenges. The decentralized structure is not implemented nationwide; the knowledge on how to judge new upcoming water schemes for a water basin is very rare. Decisions are not done in the light of knowledge but in focusing other motivations. Different Ministries and Donors still implement water related activities without informing themselves properly about the longer impact and the effect they will cause to the vanishing water resources.

Therefore someone has to understand Integrated Water Resources Management is more a political than a technical approach. IWRM has to change minds and habits and not only to track drilling rigs or judging the rational of drilling licenses.



Appropriate systems for sanitation and water distribution are needed everywhere, otherwise it will be a constant source of water borne diseases.

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H.E. President

Ali Abdullah Saleh

And the government
and people of Yemen

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of 30 November,
and Eld Adha Al-Mubarak
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Executive Manager, Deputy Executive Manager and all staff of
Safer Exploration & Production Operations Company

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وإلى الحكومة اليمنية

وكافة أبناء الشعب اليمني

بمناسبة الذكرى الـ ٤١ ليوم الجلاء

في الـ ٣٠ من نوفمبر

وعيد الأضحى المبارك

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المدير التنفيذي وفأبه وكافة منتسبي
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Congratulats His Excellency President

Ali Abdullah Saleh

On the Occasions of the 41th Anniversary

of 30 November,

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شركة اتحاد المقاولين العالمية (C.C.C.)

CONSOLIDATED CONTRACTORS INTERNATIONAL COMPANY - SAL

Jambyia craftsmen encouraged to substitute rhinoceros horn with garnet

By: Ismail Al-Ghabri
and Alice Hackman

Jambyia craftsmen, concerned authorities and academics this month attended an awareness-raising workshop on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), during which experts urged craftsmen to replace rhinoceros horn with alternative materials in their daggers.

The workshop, organized by the General Environment Protection Authority and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), aimed to promote conservation-friendly international trade in wild animals and plants so as not to threaten their survival, and to introduce alternatives for illegal materials such as the rhinoceros horn used in manufacturing traditional Yemeni daggers or jambiyas.

"The over-exploitation of animals and plants for the purpose of trade has led to the extinction of some species and to the endangering of others that will become extinct if not protected by all groups of society," said chairman of the General Environment Protection Authority Mahmoud Shedewah.

Shedewah declared that the Environment Protection Authority was working in cooperation with other concerned entities to prevent the entry of illegal wildlife products such as rhinoceros horn into Yemen. He added that, in the past year, the environment protection authority had launched a training program together with the IFAW for specialists working in customs to familiarize themselves with species prohibited to enter the country.

Shedewah said, "Yemen has issued laws to protect animals and has prohibited the importation of rhinoceros horns."

He added that efforts were being made in coordination with competent authorities to encourage the use of gar-



Black and White Rhinoceros horns were equally prized by jambyia craftsmen for dagger handles up until the 1990s, and Yemeni demand has been a notable factor in the rise in poaching and plummeting of African rhinoceros numbers over the last three to four decades.

net, a local dark red stone, instead of animal horns to make jambyia handles, and stressed the importance of promoting the use of alternative materials in the production of these traditional daggers to preserve rhinoceros from extinction.

Omar Baashan, head of the CITES unit at the General Authority for the Protection of the Environment, presented national legislation in line with the CITES agreement to those attending the workshop.

IFAW program director Dr. Ahmed Mohamed Al-Sayed, who summarized the CITES agreement during the workshop, explained how rhinoceros horn trade endangers the survival of the species.

The African rhinoceros: hunted for its horn

Yemen emerged as a major market for African rhino horn during the 1970s, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Black and White Rhinoceros horns were equally prized by jambyia

craftsmen for dagger handles up until the 1990s, and Yemeni demand has been a notable factor in the rise in poaching and plummeting of African rhinoceros numbers over the last three to four decades.

Although The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) banned international trade in rhinoceros horn in 1977, it was a few decades before Yemen was to sign and apply it.

In 1997, when Yemen signed the CITES agreement, wildlife trade monitoring network also known as TRAFFIC found that only 2,400 black rhinoceros and 7,562 white rhinoceros remained in the African wild from a total of 70,000 rhinoceros in 1970.

By 2006, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) was reporting fears of the black rhinoceros being extinct after several scientific expeditions failed to find any trace of the species' presence in its usual habitat in West Africa. Although the

IUCN now says that conservation efforts have successfully increased numbers of black rhinoceros in designated areas on the African continent, it ranked the species as "critically endangered" on its 2008 Red List of Threatened Species.

Following the collapse in oil prices during the mid 1980s, a shift in local mentalities, and government regulations following Yemen signing the CITES agreement in 1997, rhinoceros horn use in Yemen has now decreased, according to the WWF. Nowadays, the greatest threat to the small African rhinoceros population remains the popular use of ground rhinoceros horn in traditional Chinese medicine, although China signed CITES in 1981.

Rhinoceros horn powder, similar in texture to fine hairs, is believed to have aphrodisiac properties and is sometimes mixed with Viagra, according to some reports. TRAFFIC estimates that, in 1996, 1 kg of unprocessed rhino horn was worth almost USD 1,000. It was believed at the time that, after Yemeni craftsmen had used all the smuggled rhino horn they could for jambyia handles, leftover shavings and powder were then re-exported illegally to East Asia for traditional medicinal purposes.

Armed conflict and political instability in West Africa, as well as resurgent demand in the Asian market for the prized powder have undermined conservation projects and boasted a resurgence in poaching this year, according to the UN's Environment Programme, but conservation efforts have continued.

Two weeks ago, Yemen participated in the CITES Rhino Task Force to prevent the escalation of rhinoceros poaching and the illegal trade of their horns in Nairobi.

The meeting was attended by customs and police officers of attending countries, Interpol and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

Vacancy Announcement



SIPC is a subsidiary of SINOPEC. SINOPEC is rated as the 19th largest Company in the world. SIPC has 3 exploring blocks as an operator & 1 development block as a partner in Yemen. SIPC invites you to apply for the position of

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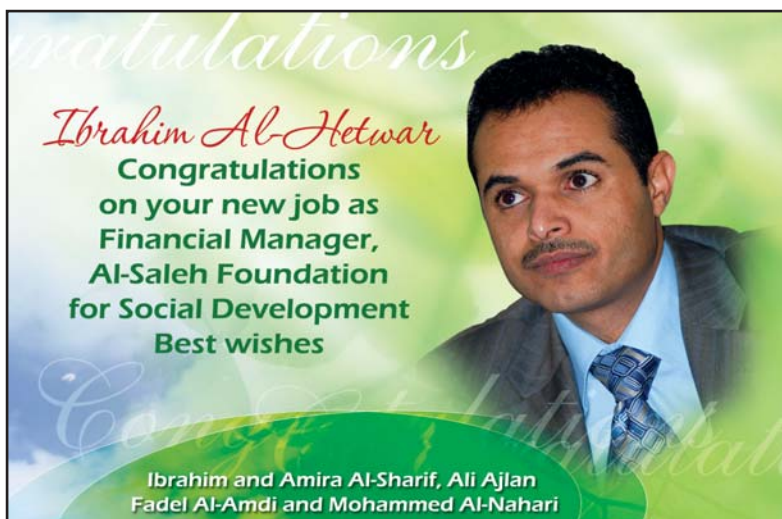
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- Accomplishing monthly statistical reports.
- Preparing and making presentations for Planning & Budgeting reports for PEPA, MOM, and partners.
- Organizing and preparing all budgeting documents for TCM/OCM/EAC meetings when required.
- Analyzing the performance of planning and budgeting.
- Communication with local government.
- Other duties related to planning & budgeting.

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- 5 years experience in planning and budgeting field.
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- Demonstrated proficiency in planning management including Yemeni work law, regulation, geology and procedures of oil production.
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- Analytical and critical thinking skills, with high attention to detail.
- Good English language & Good knowledge of computer skills.

Interested, please send your C.Vs and covering letter to:
The following e-mail: Recruitment@sipcyemen.com.ye
Note (only Short listed will be contacted for the interview)
Deadline for applying is 07 / 12 / 2008



Islamic Relief Yemen (IRY) in coordination with the European Commission (EC) Delegation in Yemen is organizing an **Information Day** for its Call for Proposals for which only local organizations are eligible under the **European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights**.

The Information Day will take place on **Wednesday 3rd December 2008 at Haddah Hotel, Sana'a**, from 9am – 3pm and will focus on raising awareness on the Call for Proposal mentioned above, explain the objectives and EC rules and procedures for submitting concept notes and offers under such call for proposals.

The objectives of this particular Call for Proposals are:

- Addressing Gender Based Violence in Yemen
- Support to the Implementation of the EU guidelines on Human Rights in Yemen
- Strengthening the role of media in the promotion of democracy
- Protection of freedom of consciousness/religion in Yemen

Only local organizations are eligible for submission of proposals under this Call.

Interested local NGO applicants wanting to learn more about the Call for Proposal should register with Islamic Relief Yemen on 01 418 596 / 4 ext 106.

Please note:

- There will be no travel expenses / per-diem / other expenses paid for attending the day.
- Lunch and coffee breaks will be provided on the day.

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الرويشان للسيارات والمحركات

Hamam Al-Hana: entertainment and a good scrub

One of the inherited architectural constructions from the Turks is the Turkish bath or hamam. There are hamams for men, and those for women. Large hamams have the two sections, and the entrance to the women side is always discreet or hidden following a conservative tradition of protecting women's privacy. We visited Hamam Al-Hana for women in Al-Asbahi and here are the details.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Despite some archeological discoveries that prove hamams to have existed prior to the Ottoman influence in Yemen, the most popular bath houses today are those built by the Ottomans or copied by Yemenis according to Ottoman tradition. In fact, UNESCO declared in 1986 a number of Yemeni hamams in Sana'a to be world cultural heritage sites.

Originally hamams were built adjacent to places of worship in order to cleanse the body and soul before entering the temple, but today hamams are independent constructions and are not linked to religion.

Most of the hamams built in recent decades are a modified version of the original hamams built by the Ottomans when they were in Yemen. In the Old Town of Sana'a, there are at least fifteen Turkish baths, their low roofs topped by

numerous small domes.

The modern modifications are designed to give the visitors more privacy and space, and the heating system has changed as today's hamams use diesel rather than wood or dung to heat the water and the building.

The hamams are distinguished with a large white dome from the outside. The inside is a cemented structure with various rooms and sinks all being heated from a huge stove-like diesel furnace in the basement. A clever ventilation system through a number of small windows on the ceiling is designed in a way to let the air out, but not in. Lights streams through their panes, although today light bulbs have also been installed.

A good scrub

A lady or more greets visitors at the hamam's entrance, usually a discreet door to the side of the building leading into a reception room with stairs descending to the actual hamam below

ground level. The keepers say the indirect entrance is to keep the privacy and protect the bathers from the open air shock after spending hours in a warm humid environment.

The large reception area is a cool dry room where women can undress, keep their clothes in a dry room and negotiate the day's adventure. Entrance fees vary from adults to children. Women pay entrance fee around YR 250 (USD 1.25) and children around YR 50 (USD 0.25). There is no age limit, but very young babies are not allowed into the hotter area. The keepers often sell herbs and scrubs that ladies usually use on their bodies or for their hair. They also offer to give visitors a good scrub for a fee a little higher than the entrance fee. Visitors can buy water and soft drinks during the course of the day.

Wrapped in a towel or wearing a loose skirt around the upper body, women enter a warm steamy area from which several smaller cubicles can be seen. The hamam is a traditional steam bath of two heating levels and different settings. The one in the center is used by latecomers when all the inside cubicles are reserved or occupied by those who want a break from the heat and steam. There are no doors in the hamam, except for the toilets and curtains for small showers rooms.

Each room has a cement sink in its four corners where a tap runs with warm water. Visitors have to bring their toiletries and a mug for pouring water on themselves. When they are comfortable and soaked in the steam, the scrubbing gradually begins and those who want to apply henna or ghasl [a mixture rocks and herbs] on their hair do so. The keepers offer to scrub visitors, and do a very good job of getting all the dirt out.

Women apply a number of mixtures containing natural ingredients such as yogurt, olive oil or even egg on their bodies for cleaner smoother skin, all the while exchanging beauty tips as they do so.

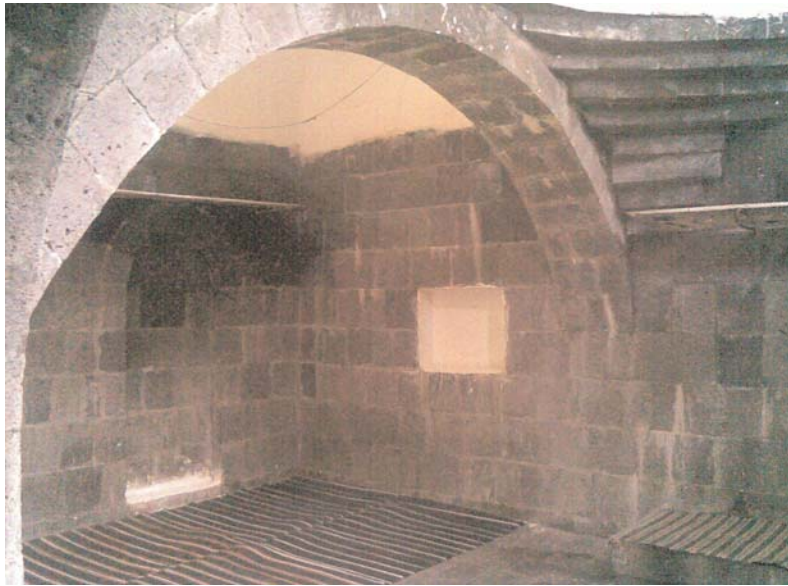
Gossip and bride hunting

Not only is the hamam a good place to get clean and relax, it is also an excellent opportunity for gossip. The keepers explain that they hear many stories about the women and their lives. It is a place for women to talk about their problems without reservations, even if some of the women who meet each other in the baths will not necessarily cross paths again.

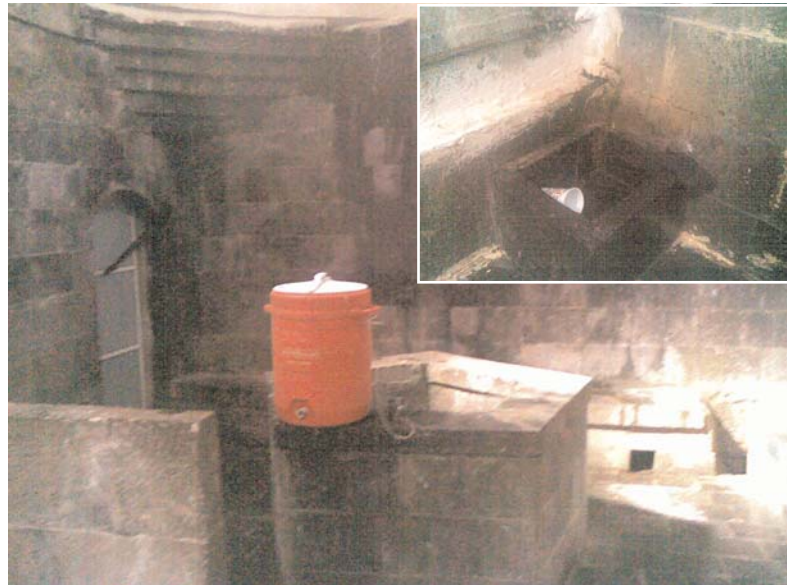
"I instantly know what kind of a person it is, whether they are good or bad, and what kind of temper they have," said Hamam Al-Hana keeper about the visitors. She explained that all guards are let



A lady or more greets visitors at the hamam's entrance, usually a discreet door to the side of the building leading into a reception room with stairs descending to the actual hamam below ground level



The hamams are distinguished with a large white dome from the outside. The inside is a cemented structure with various rooms and sinks all being heated from a huge stove-like diesel furnace in the basement.



down and the women simply become themselves when they visit. It is also a good place to find beautiful brides, she said. Older women appraise the younger ones and ask them about their families and where they live if they think they have found a prospective bride.

The hamam is an emotional place, according to one of its keepers. Some women bond, others argue about almost anything. At times, women who can't stand the heat faint or their blood pressure drops and the keepers need to revive the fragile ladies quickly and carry them to the cooler areas to relax.

"Our biggest problem is paying for diesel, because it is getting expensive and we can not charge our visitors much," said the keeper.

Some own their hamams while others like the keepers in Hamam Al-Hana rent the place at a fixed sum to the owner. In Hamam Al-Hana, the keepers pay a monthly rent of YR 200,000 (USD 1,000) regardless of how many visitors or how much they made that month.

The summer and wedding seasons are good for business, and many women come to visit during the Eid holidays to relax and unwind.

Expression of Interest

Ministry of Education Development Project (BEDP) Project Administration Unit
Technical Assistance for the Design of a Project Management Information System

The Project Administration Unit (PAU) is interested in hiring two individual consultants to assist in the design of Project Management Information System (PMIS). The PAU consists of four units. The PMIS will assist in the integrated management and coordination of all units of PAU.

Period of Assignment: Initially the assignment duration is seven months which could be extended by mutual consent, if needed.

Assignment Commencement: 15 Dec 2008.

Assignment: Two full time consultants will be hired for this assignment. The consultants will work out of the PAU premises, and carry out the following tasks:

1. Analyze the different components of the current PMIS;
2. Complete the design of the current system according to the administrative needs of each of the different units that comprise the PAU;
3. Unify the current databases so as to include all data pertaining to projects on a common client-serve architecture;
4. Integrate all the current project sub-systems into one system and one main interface for all users, and eliminate redundancies;
5. Design a user classification, and an authorization system, and create a dedicated window for each user and for each unit;
6. Create standard report formats for each unit according to its needs, and build into the system the capability of generating customized and "smart" reports;
7. Redress all weaknesses of the current design (e.g. user friendliness issues, redundancies, incomplete data base etc.);
8. Design a system to allow the MIS team to track sensitive data operations made by users, in order to ensure the integrity of the data;
9. Design and test a detailed and user-friendly user's manual for the PMIS, and train all users of the system;
10. Provide hands on follow up training and support for three months to all users of the system. Identify remaining system issues, training needs, etc. and correct all identified problems;
11. Implement monitoring and follow up procedures to track improvements in system use, accuracy and completeness of data produced, time saved, and user satisfaction.

Qualifications: The successful candidates will have a bachelor or higher degree in IT systems (computer science or equivalent), a minimum of 2 years experience in system programming and languages, documents confirming that the consultant has programmed similar systems, have developed systems using an SQL server and used application program language VB6 or VB.net. The candidates must have the ability to work with teams in a collaborative manner, and be fluent in Arabic. Experience in working with projects is desirable, as is competency in English.

The PAU invites eligible consultants to submit their applications with their CVs by **December 3, 2008** at the address given below.

The Project Director
Basic Education Development Project
60 m Southern Rd-Bait Meyad
Tel: 00967-01-619160, Fax: 00967-010619219 or to
Email: PAU Director: a.al-arashi@y.net.ye

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A Group of companies in Yemen invites high qualified candidates to submit their resumes according to the requirements set forth below:

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Job Title: Finance Manager

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- Master / Bachelor Degree in Accounting.
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- Good Computer-Literacy knowledge.

Job Ref. No.: CIM01/RG

Job Title: Control & Inspection Manager

Qualifications & Experience

- Bachelor Degree in Accounting / Audit.
- CPA or ACCA certificate (Preferred).
- Minimum (10) years experience in the field of Accounting / Audit.
- Adequate knowledge of English both written & oral.
- Good Computer-Literacy knowledge.

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باسم محمد عبده الشيباني
Basem M.A. ALshaibani
صنعا - شارع حدة
امام مركز الكيم التجاري
Sana'a-Hadah St.
Infront of AL-komaim Center
P.O.Box: 5465
Res.Tel-1: +967 1 266 375
Res.Tel-2: +967 1 505 290
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World cyclist leaves track in Yemen

YT photo by Amira Al Sharif



Pushkar poses with his bicycle at Bab Al-Yemen in the old city of Sana'a.

By: Alice Hackman

A Nepalese peace activist, Pushkar Shah traveled to Yemen from Djibouti on a ship with 300 oxen, and cycled from Mocha to Sana'a in four days.

He might perhaps be a slightly odd sight in his bright lycra shorts and t-shirt as he peddles through the Yemeni countryside, but one that has been met with warmth by its inhabitants. As he cycled from the Red Sea coast up to Sana'a in swirls of dust with children shouting "I love you" in his tire tracks, Pushkar was impressed by Yemeni hospitality.

"Yemenis are very nice people," he says, "Even if they do not speak the same language, they try and communicate."

Pushkar - jokingly called "Pushcycle" by his friends- has been traveling round the world on his bicycle for the last 10 years. He has cycled

through 135 countries before Yemen, and intends to visit 14 more before going back to Nepal.

"I chose to spread the message of peace around the world," Pushkar explains, "My journey is one of peace, against war and fighting."

Pushkar's mission springs directly from personal experience. His father was killed by terrorists when he was young, and he was arrested several times and subjected to torture as an activist in Nepal's 1990s popular movement for democracy. Disillusioned by the failure of peaceful protest and the persistence of violence in his country, Pushkar decided to make a difference by setting off on his epic cycling journey round the world.

He chose the bicycle for its simplicity. "All you need is determination and peddling power," he grins. He is now riding his third bicycle, a present from Sir Edmund Hillary, New Zealand mountaineer and long-time

friend of Nepal, after his second bicycle was stolen in Auckland in 2001.

"Sir Edmund Hillary died last year, but he still accompanies me on my journey," he proudly says.

With more than 205,000 km to his name and up to 500 kilos of accumulated souvenirs waiting for him back home, Pushkar has a whole string of stories to tell. He escaped kidnappers in Mexico, wrestled an armed assailant in Barbados, ate dog meat in South Korea, bartered with taxi drivers in Mali, danced with the Gurkha brigade in Scotland, and cycled with elephants in Botswana.

But the experience has also been a humbling one, particularly in Africa where food was sometimes scarce and people expected him -the "white" man- to help them by giving them food or money. As Pushkar has no sponsor, he works when he can to earn money, but mostly relies on the hospitality and donations of others to complete his goal of cycling round 150 countries by 2010. In Africa, he says, it was sometimes difficult to persuade people that he really depended on their hospitality.

Pushkar's favorite thing about Yemen is fool or bean stew, which he eats as often as he can. He has chewed qat on several occasions, but politely says he is still not sure if he likes it. When he cycles past Yemenis having lunch and they invite him to join them, he happily casts his bicycle aside to eat in their company.

From Sana'a, Pushkar plans to travel on to explore the rest of the Arabian Peninsula while the weather is still cool, before slowly making his way back to Nepal where, in 2010, he plans to climb Mount Everest to strike the flags of all the countries he has visited on its summit. He eventually wants to return to his birthplace at the feet of the Himalayas to write a book about his travels and help the village, perhaps as a teacher.

When asked if he feels he has reached his goals, Pushkar is philosophical. "I am happy and satisfied with my work, but one man cannot change the world," he says, "Peace is through action, and we all have to be a

peace messenger. The world is one house and we are the family of that house."

As he hops back on his bike to complete the last year of his adventure, perhaps Pushkar will have inspired a few Yemenis to look beyond borders with newly-felt compassion towards the rest of the human race. Or perhaps he will simply have motivated someone to dare, like him, to leave home with nothing more than the clothes on his back and cycle off into the unknown.

"Wherever you are, when night falls, drop the bicycle and pitch your tent," are his last words of advice for those who want to follow.

Pushkar's progress can be tracked on www.pushkarshah.com.

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