

Tribal reconciliation collapses

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The initiative forwarded by the President to settle feuds and promote peace amongst Marib tribes is failing, said Sheikh Muqrih Yahyah of Murad tribes in Marib.

"Peace procedures in some disputed cases have not been finalized, and committees assigned to achieve the reconciliation have not performed their duties well," he added, in an appeal to the President to take care of this important and noble aim.

If it succeeds, Al-Yahyah said, it adds an honor to the great record of the President as remarkable as the Reunification, since it would save the blood of many tribesmen.

He explained that revenge is originated in border disputes between tribes. "Fighting starts, and revenge continues, because the state is oblivious to the condition over here."

He confirmed that if the government

did its duty and summoned the concerned sides before problems erupt, obliging them to conform to Sharia law, and tribal conventions, and punished violators, all people would abide by the law.

"The President suggested a general two-and-half-year reconciliation between Marib tribes, but procedures of the reconciliation have not been finalized. This casts doubt over the good-will of some officials who believe that if the state wants to avoid the danger posed by tribes, it should allow them to continue fighting each other," he explained.

"It is a shame that tribal conflicts occur in 21st Century Yemen, while the government observes, without action, as though it is unconcerned, which is now the case."

Sheikh Al-Yahyah concluded his statement. He called on the good men to press the government to settle this case, which would not cost much, but would save many lives.

Workshop for handicraft representatives

TAIZ BUREAU

The Taiz Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) and the Handicraft Societies Union have organized a training program for handicraft and vocational societies in the city. The program is financed by the Social Development Fund.

The ceremony began with a Quranic recitation, and then some speeches were delivered by Abdul-Alim Hazza'a, head of the Union, Mufid Abdu Saif, director of the Chamber of Commerce, Eng. Ali Salah, representative of the SDF, Mahmoud Taimor, director of the SDF's branch office and Riyadh Al-Qusaimi,

director of training and qualifications.

Some 23 courses have been organized by handicraft and vocational societies including 16 devoted to training participants in skills that answer a need in the labor market and in how to start their own business, with a further 7 for promoting the skills of in-service workers.

The courses aim at providing a well-trained cadre, contributing to poverty alleviation, and reducing unemployment.

The speakers indicated the significance of continuing cooperation between the SDF and the CCI, and noted their appreciation for the contribution of Shawqi Ahmed Hail.

Women rights between theory and practice

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Within the framework of women rights in Islam, a symposium titled "Women's Rights between Texts and Application," was held by the Women Studies and Training Forum, from 16th-17th August.

At the beginning of the symposium, Suad Al-Qadasi delivered a speech, and Misk Al-Junaid reviewed the program of the forum.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Daghshi then presented a paper on making judgments by prudence and its effect on women's rights. He confirmed that the divine address is general, putting special emphasis on women's issues in certain verses.

"The problem comes when we try to imitate the west," said the paper, "we reject this" and so does the Islamic culture. This is a different civilization, we can not drag a woman from the house to the workplace, based on the excuse that she is equal

to man, despite the obvious cultural, social, and biological differences."

Mohammed Al-Odainin presented a paper on the misinterpreted texts of Sharia, which were used to plunder women's rights. He mentioned prophetic sayings misinterpreted by some people such as "Women have incomplete mind and religion". He also reviewed Quranic verses that distinguish women.

Nabil Al-Soufi explored the subject of how the absence of social justice has effected women's rights.

Dr. Ra'oofah Hassan presented a working paper on domestic violence directed towards women, from the Islamic viewpoint.

The theme of women and their rights remains controversial among Islamic sects. There is no one categorical opinion on the issue of women's rights. Even the moderate sects who call for unifying the view on this issue, lack a well-defined unified opinion.

Transport Syndicate continues strike

ADEN BUREAU

The Aden branch of the transport syndicate has gradually resumed its strike in protest over the interference of the local authority on the work of the committee. The committee was formed by Dr. Yahya Al-Shaibi, the Mayor of Aden, and aims to find solutions to the deficiencies of the bus and taxi stations.

The committee had started finding solutions to the problem, but when the

Mayor of Aden left for London, the local authority began to interfere in the work of the committee and to hamper its activity, subsequently compelling the transport syndicate to resume going on a gradual strike.

There are 6000 vehicles running inside the governorate. The chairman of the transport syndicate in Aden has set a number of conditions to end the strike. The conditions were related to the improvement of the flow of traffic in the governorate.

The Malaysian education promotional tour

YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A delegation of Malaysian university professors and teachers began on Tuesday, August 10 a promotional tour for education and study at Malaysian Universities in the presence of a number of Yemeni academics and interested students as well as Malaysian Ambassador to Sana'a.

The Malaysian teachers presented a detailed explanation of the enrollment and admission process.

The Ambassador, in his opening speech, praised the deep relations between the two countries and high level of cooperation in all fields including education.

Dr. Ali Abbas, Director General Yemen International Health and Education Consults said that the objective of the visit of the Malaysian universities delegation was to assist the

Yemeni students who wish to go to study in Malaysia and to remove any difficulties for admission at the Malaysian universities.

The delegation is expected to carry out similar promotional tours to Aden and Taiz governorates also.

Sana'a National Museum reopens

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The National Museum in Sana'a is going in the next few days to resume opening its doors to Yemeni and foreign visitors.

Whilst the museum was closed for maintenance it has been supplied with new archeological finds as well as the addition of some new halls.

"There are about 23 thousand rare objects in the museum, but only 2300 of these are on display," said Abdulaziz Al-Jindari, Director of the Museum.

Some 120 wood pieces with Psalter scripts written on them, dating back to pre-Islam ages and other bronze pieces are now on display.

He said work is complete in most halls and arrangements have been completed as planned. "There are new halls including the Pre-Islam Hall for finds of the Hadramout Kingdom and another for ancient Islamic gifts are on show. A new section is dedicated to Islamic coins from throughout history," he concluded.

Readers' Voice

Yemen Times features "Readers' Voice" a popular way for our readers to interact with us. This is your opportunity to have a say on world and local affairs.

This edition's question:

Do you think that the pullout of 70,000 US troops from Europe and Asia is a genuine move or merely for elections?

- It is just a move to win more votes in elections
- No it is a genuine and sincere move
- I can't tell

last edition's question:

What do you think would the ongoing violence in Najaf lead to?

- Killing or arrest of Moqtada Sadr 46%
- Something else 35%
- US forces would give up and accept Sadr's terms 17%
- Moqtada Sadr will surrender 2%

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"History Faking" at the Al-Saeed Forum

A lecture titled "The crime of faking history" was delivered August 12th, by Dr. Raghib Al-Sarhani at the Al-Sa'eed Forum. The lecture was attended by Sheikh Abdul-Jabar Hail Sa'eed, Sheikh Abdul-Ghani Humaid, Dr. Abdullah Al-Thaifani, and a number of other university professors.

The lecturer, a professor of kidney and urinary tract anatomy at the

University of Cairo, is interested in historical research. He reviewed history as a general theme and offered a summary of Islamic history with a special reference to the historical texts that did not have a firm basis in contemporary literature.

Discussions and questions took place at the end of the lecture between the attending professors and the audience.

Kuwait Cultural Week in Sana'a

In the frame of Sana'a as the 2004 Arab Cultural Capital, the Yemeni capital is going to host from September 18th-23rd the Kuwaiti cultural week, which is to be organized by the National Council for Culture and Arts, Kuwait.

In a press release by the Kuwaiti Embassy in Sana'a, ambassador Abdul-Rahman Al-Otaibi expressed his happiness at organizing this function amidst the cultural activities hosted by Yemeni capital.

He pointed out the importance of culture in disseminating fraternity and love among peoples, referring to the

early Kuwaiti interest in the human culture with no aim but to benefit Arab readers and develop their faculties.

The ambassador appreciated that Yemenis' cherish publications from Kuwait such as Al-Arabi magazine and others.

The Kuwait Cultural Week contains cultural and artistic functions including a book fare, plastic arts gallery, theatrical show, cultural lectures, poetry nights and a concert.

Sana'a hosted in 2001 a Kuwaiti cultural week which was attended by huge crowds and highly praised by critics.

Yemeni Women's Union

BY FAHMIA AL-FOTIH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

The Yemeni Women's Union (YWU) concluded on Sunday August 8 a 2-day workshop focusing on how to manage small limited-income projects.

Fawzia Noman, the secretary general of YWU, told Yemen Times "The YWU is holding this workshop on the small limited-income projects within a program of improving the capacities of YWU branch offices. Several previous

workshops had been held with the aim of providing the branches with information on how to manage such projects, that YWU intends to establish in different governorates. Today we have 30 participants from 7 provinces. We intend to allow all participants to have a firm understanding of the concepts of small business management. In the future we also hope that the YWU branches can ultimately depend on their own resources through the projects that have been established."

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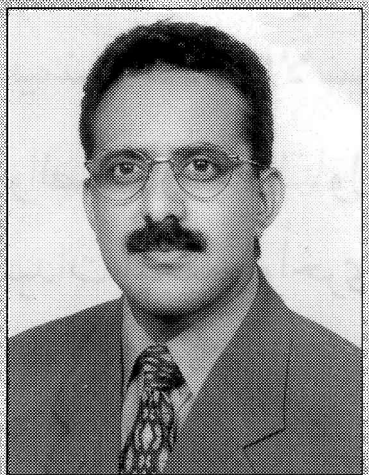
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Dr. Azzalab to YT:

"Among the objectives of the institute is to contribute to intellectual awareness in Yemen"

BY ISMAIL AL-GHABRI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Mass Communication Training and Qualifying Institute (MCTQI) is one of the pillars of the press. It is an outstanding scientific establishment, specializing in technical education and retraining press personnel, governmental and non-governmental establishments in Yemen. It utilizes field studies and undertakes research on approaches in communication sciences. Ismail Al-Ghabri of the Yemen Times interviewed Dr. Abdullah Azzalab, Dean of the MCTQI. Dr. Azzalab - who appreciates the role of the Yemen Times, which he considers a pioneering newspaper presenting Yemeni



Dr. Abdullah Azzalab, Dean of MCTQI

issues, since its foundation by the late Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf - welcomed us.

Q: Being the dean of the MCTQI, could you give the readers an idea about the institute and service it offers to national media?

A: First of all, I would like to welcome the Yemen Times, thanking you for visiting us, and informing the readers about this press edifice.

The MCTQI is one of the major press establishments in the country as it trains and qualifies pressmen in general by holding activating courses for staff of official and non-official press institutions, as well as holding courses on modern media skills. The MCTQI is divided into two main units: the training unit, and research and study unit.

In the field of training, the MCTQI provides a number of courses including

The institute is concerned with training and qualifying media personnel in general, in Yemen.

courses on journalistic editing, directing, radio and TV acoustic engineering, news and program presentation, awareness campaigns, disseminating journalistic and press websites, and journalism in other languages such as English.

The system of the research and stud-

ies unit includes a monthly activity named "the open day", on which journalists and reporters gather together and discuss the issues of their profession. Arabic and international experts are hosted in order to benefit young professionals in the field of journalism, and media in general. We have other activities we plan to conduct in the coming year, when resources are available. The purpose of them is to improve the media message. To our knowledge, the MCTQI is the only institute specialized in press training and qualifications in Yemen. The institute's objectives include:

- 1- Raising the capabilities of personnel in different media means.
- 2- Promoting the governmental media performance.
- 3- Forming a complete team of trainers and researchers.
- 4- Improving media training curricula and styles.
- 5- Contributing to the intellectual development of the country.

Q: What is the plan of the MCTQI, and how many courses does it offer annually?

A: Concerning courses, the MCTQI offers about 25 courses yearly. A draft annual plan is presented to the responsible media authorities, who study it thoroughly according to their need for courses. The MCTQI also organizes a group discussion on the media establishments' needs. In the light of the responses to the draft and the comments and demands of the institutions, we formulate a realistic plan and an annual training program. There are, however,

priorities based on the financial resources of the MCTQI. We also take into account the timing, so that it becomes convenient for the staff.

Q: What do you aspire to do in the future?

A: We have so many ambitions, and we have the right to them, because ambition is the root of creativity and basis for improvement. We hope the Cabinet will respond positively to our draft concerning reconsideration of the skeletal structure of the MCTQI and its components. This is in order to uplift the performance of the institute and enable it to train as many personnel as possible, besides organizing diploma programs for media staff, and civil service people in education and health and other sectors. There is a great demand by media establishments for training their staff in media skills, because media is an open realm for all to join.

We now are working diligently to branch the MCTQI in all provinces that accommodate press activities. We have signed memorandums of understanding with a number of Arab institutes to exchange experiences.

Q: How do you evaluate the reality of local press?

A: Media has plunged to the front line due to recent international changes. Media is living an interim and critical period, as the mass of information flows dashing and smoothly. News is now very much accessible. In my opinion, this advancement of media is a double-edged sword. The free, unrestrained, flow of information and press



One of the workshop organized by MCTQI

technologies, and cross-cultural exchanges, may have advantages in terms of understanding other peoples' cultures, but, on the other hand, it may have disadvantages, if it is not used properly to serve cultures and peoples. I do not exaggerate when saying we are living in press anarchy. The electronic media on the Internet, for example, so far has no regulations to control it. Anybody can have a website designed and then publish their stuff on it. There should be criteria, standards and conditions to control such projects. We are not against such things, but we hope a set of regulations will be issued to define professional conditions and organize the mess, to ensure the reader's right to a positive communication devoid of deception and fallacies.

Q: What is new at the MCTQI?

A: The institute has organized a group discussion involving key and professional partners in the media arena.

The discussion will be on the problems of media training in Yemen, and its prospects for improvement.

The discussion is essential to develop the media profession and enable official and private press establishments to do their duty, and convey their message well. The discussion included governmental, non-governmental and international organizations including the UNDP.

Q: Any last comment?

A: I thank the Yemen Times for following up and shedding light on all the activities of the MCTQI.

To lift it from the current deteriorating conditions it is suffering from:

Yemenia offers to manage Sanaa Intl Airport

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen Airways (Yemenia) offered to take charge of the management of Sana'a International Airport. Yemenia aims to restructure the airport and enhance its services to match standards set by other international airports.

In a press conference with tens of journalists from local and international media organizations, Yemenia's Chairman Captain Abdulkhalik Al-Qadhi responded to a question from the Yemen Times about the need to enhance Sana'a International Airport. He agreed that with the increasing demand it was necessary to rise to acceptable standards.

"We will be ready to take charge of Sana'a International Airport if the government allows us to. If the government is not willing to restructure and enhance the airport, then we are ready to do it ourselves, and we will be happy to be held accountable for all the actions we take, and we will ensure that we achieve positive results in the end." Mr. Al-Qadhi told Yemen Times.

From the verge of bankruptcy to competency

Al-Qadhi said during the press conference, which was organized as part of a tour to Yemenia's facilities, at its headquarters and at the airport, that Yemeni has achieved massive successes and reform in various aspects. "It is amazing how Yemenia has been lifted from the brink of collapse and bankruptcy in 1995, to becoming one of the major players in the region today." He said.

"This was only made possible by the collaborative efforts of the airline's staff and management, and with the encouragement of the state. I am glad to say that among fierce competition in the region, we have not only managed to survive, but in fact, we have achieved record sales in this year."



Captain Abdulkhalik Al-Qadhi

Investments in health

Yemenia officials also mentioned that the airline has focused on enhancing its provision of health services for its staff by expanding the Yemenia health service center - by hiring more doctors and constructing more buildings. Concurrently, Yemenia has also invested in the health sector by becoming a major shareholder in the Saudi-German Hospital, which will become Yemen's largest and most advanced hospital. The hospital is expected to raise the overall health standards of the country, by strict adherence to international health service standards.

60% discount for journalists

Furthermore, Captain Al-Qadhi announced a 60% discount on market

ticket sales for all Yemeni journalists. "We have decided to take this step to ensure our commitment to supporting journalists and their mission to pursue the truth and present it bluntly to the public", he said.

"We are always keen to building bridges with Yemeni journalists because we believe in transparency and openness. We respect articles seemingly critical of Yemenia when they are based on facts. In fact we encourage this, as it helps us to fix our own problems. On the other hand, we strongly disagree with any attempt to use the press for blackmail or defamation."

Difficulties assessed

Mr. Al-Qadhi mentioned a number of difficulties facing the airline including the fierce competition of airlines in the region. "We are facing competition from airlines that are heavily supported by their governments. We are still competing with them, despite the big gap between us in terms of government support", Al-Qadhi commented.

"We are now expanding our fleet, by purchasing new planes and we are expanding our maintenance services and spare parts unit, which includes over 37,000 parts. We are doing this to become stronger players in the region, and we hope that we will succeed with the support of our clients and fellow citizens."



During the workshop on Challenges of Media Training in Yemen:

UNDP-Yemen to help develop Yemen's media

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

During the workshop on "Challenges of Media Training in Yemen and Future Prospects" held last Saturday in Sanaa by the Mass Communication and Training Institute, Mr. James W. Rawley, the UNDP's Resident Coordinator, asserted the important role the media needs to play in the process of Yemen's development.

In the workshop that focused on the difficulties and challenges facing journalists and media organizations in Yemen, in the field of training, Mr. Rawley noted that in order to help media be more influential, training journalists should be a priority.

"There is still a great need for strengthening the media in Yemen- professionally and, technically. This is critical, not least since the media needs to play a major role in increasing awareness and stirring local dialogue on key

development priorities necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and other long and medium-term national plans." Mr. Rawley said.

Yemeni Media to receive more UN attention

Mr. Rawley also added that information and communications officers of the UN system in Yemen are currently developing a common UN framework for dealing with the media, as well as assessing how best the UN System can scale up its support to the media sector, both technically and substantively, in a more coordinated manner.

"I would like to congratulate the Mass Communication and Training Institute—which is a leading institution mandated to offer media training opportunities for media practitioners—for taking this initiative to assess the needs of media training and to stir discussion among key national and international counterparts. This effort will no doubt contribute towards ensuring that the

media in Yemen will play an effective role in promoting awareness about Yemen's development efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015." Mr. Rawley added.

Mr. Rawley pledged to continue supporting Yemeni media institutions to become more active as a bridge between the public and the government.

"To conclude, let us work towards the media in Yemen becoming not only the watchdog against any human rights or any other violations, but also an important vehicle through which all Yemeni people will be able to voice their concerns and fulfill their aspirations." Mr. Rawley concluded.

It is worth noting that the media in Yemen, especially the independent media, has been suffering from underdevelopment and lack of international assistance and support. Only recently have a number of initiatives from the Danish Government and European Union started focusing on this important pillar of democracy.

Youth development conference contributes to development

BY YASSER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The 2004 Youth Development Conference, organized by the Yemen-Canada Cooperation Council, was concluded on Wednesday 12th August, in Sana'a. Some 130 participants from different parts of the country took part in the 5-day conference. The conference aimed at introducing the Millennium Development Goals, which include 8 permanent ones for pushing development forward, and decreasing poverty by 2015. The conference focused on the eighth goal, which is attaining international partnership to maintain

development through the training of Yemeni youths in several management fields pertaining to Yemeni economic development. They are going to be trained by Canadian experts in leadership and teambuilding skills.

The conference also aimed at helping other segments in the Yemeni community that try to improve local development partnerships, and involve Yemeni youths in the development process in order to raise the level of Yemen.

Experts from Yemen, Canada and Britain gave a number of useful lectures.

The conference is funded by several Yemeni and Canadian companies and the local UN's offices, and Sana'a

University.

The participants were selected according to certain criteria such as previous involvement in development activities, and writing articles spelling out their opinions on the nature of the Millennium Development Goals.

Some of the participants were nominated by the World Bank and the UNHCR.

The Yemen-Canada Youth Council was established one and a half years ago. It is a youth organization seeking to strengthen relations between Yemen and Canada and participate in the social and economic development in Yemen and Canada, and promote cultural relations and dialogue between the two countries.

Lebanese cultural event in Sana'a

By Y. AL-MAYYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Inauguration of Events of Lebanese Cultural Week took place in Sana'a Cultural Center, on Saturday 7th Aug. 2004. It was attended by Khaled Al-Rowaishan, the Minister of Culture & Tourism, Mr. Ghazi al-Areedhy, the Lebanese Minister of Culture, Dr. Abdul-Aziz al-Muqaleh, the Cultural Consultant to the President of the Republic, in addition to members from a number of Diplomatic missions in Sana'a. The Lebanese Cultural display included artistic parties as well as poetic and readings of high literature.

The Yemeni Minister of Culture and Tourism, Khaled al-Rowaishan, has confirmed that the Lebanese cultural event is part of the celebrations of Sana'a being as the capital of Arab Culture, and has emphasized that the Lebanese week is an especially marvelous pearl. Lebanese artisans will not only present Lebanese culture but will also present the best of what their nation has in poetry, songs, music and culture. He ascertained that the historic links between Yemen and Lebanon have existed for many years.

Mr. Ghazi al-Areedhy, the Minister of Lebanese culture, has confirmed that Yemen and Lebanon now enjoy many ties, and that the attack which the Arabs are facing is actually a cultural attack causing accusations, provocation, defamation and suspicion to the many, by some of those who want to disfigure our culture and history, as the accusations have involved the whole, and split up in all the directions. Further, he said, "the Lebanese participation will not be a seasonal. Our being here is to confirm the depth of the relationship between Lebanon

and Yemen." And he added "We, by such activities, events and by being open to contact each other i.e. between the Lebanese and the Yemeni educated people, are also strengthening the relations among each other represented by a continuous and permanent friendship."

It is worth mentioning that Lebanese Cultural days have included the read-

ings of Joseph Hurrah's poems and works by other Lebanese poets.

The Lebanese delegation have visited a number of the governorates of the Republic, one of which is al-Mahweet Governorate where they have been acquainted to a number of historical, archaeological and agricultural places. As well, they were familiarized with the old quarter of Sana'a.

مبروك الخطوبة

أجمل التهانى والتبريكات مكلفة بأريج الفل والياسمين نهدىها الأخ

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معاذ طاهر محمد السقاف، بسام أحمد السقاف
وكافة الأهل والأصدقاء

مبروك الزفاف

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زيد المنتصر

بمناسبة الزفاف الميمون

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Iraq peace mission in Najaf, Baghdad blast kills 7

NAJAF, Iraq, Aug 17 (Reuters) - Iraqi political and religious leaders trying to end a radical Shi'ite uprising flew into Najaf on Tuesday, where U.S. troops and militia fought pitched battles near the country's holiest Islamic sites.

In Baghdad, insurgents fired a shell into a busy street, killing at least seven people including two children.

The new violence, especially the challenge from radical Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, highlighted the massive security headaches for interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi barely seven weeks after he took over from U.S.-led occupiers.

The eight-member delegation landed in Najaf on U.S. military helicopters, hoping to persuade the firebrand cleric to call off a rebellion that has hit eight cities and rattled oil markets.

"This is not a negotiation. This is a friendly mission to convey the message of the national conference," delegation head Sheikh Hussein al-Sadr told reporters at a military camp.

The delegation had put off travelling by road to the southern city after insurgents threatened to ambush them.

Aides to the cleric who is the icon of Iraq's downtrodden Shi'ite masses have said he welcomed the idea of sending the team but have not said whether he will meet the mission.

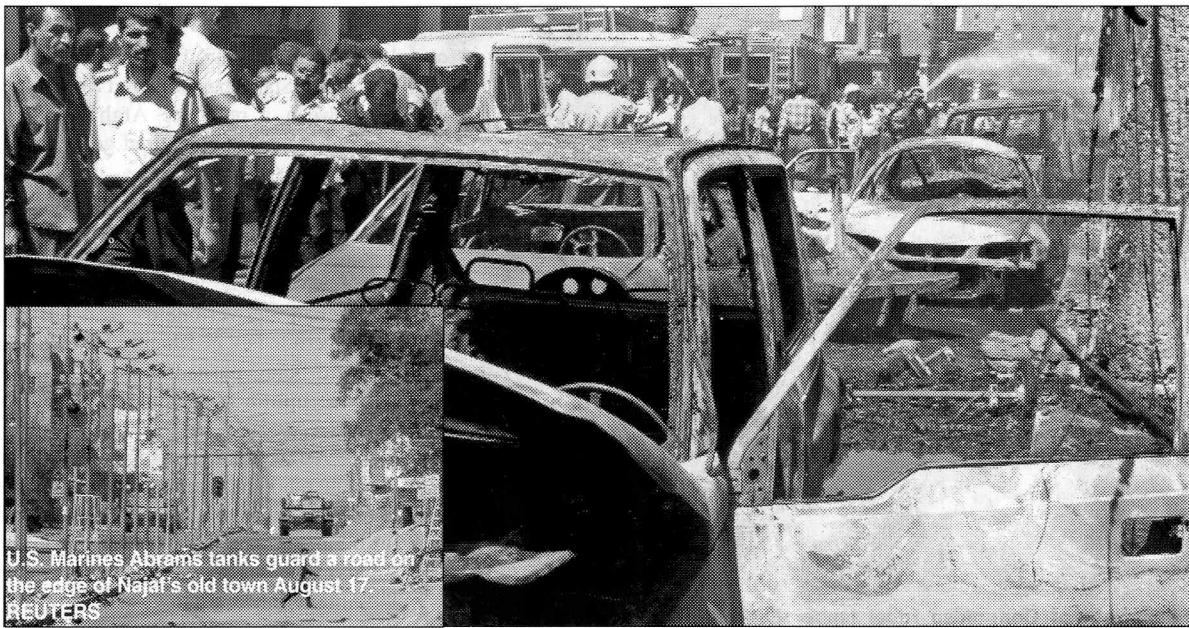
Speaking during a trip to Turkey, interim President Ghazi al-Yawar called on Sadr's Mehdi Army militia to stop fighting.

Violence in Baghdad

The attack in Baghdad's bustling Rasheed street wounded 42 people, destroyed at least five cars and left pools of blood on sidewalks. Some officials said a roadside bomb caused the blast.

It followed a mortar attack near the fortified Green Zone compound where the political and religious leaders were meeting to select a 100-member interim national assembly. Officials said it was unclear if there were any casualties from that attack.

While the rebellion has undermined



U.S. Marines Abrams tanks guard a road on the edge of Najaf's old town August 17. REUTERS

Iraqis survey the wreckage of destroyed vehicles at the scene of an attack in the capital Baghdad August 17. A shell killed seven people in a busy Baghdad street on Tuesday and U.S. forces fought pitched battles with Shi'ite militia in the holy city of Najaf. REUTERS

Allawi's authority, he is walking a tightrope with passions in the majority Shi'ite country at boiling point over U.S. troops fighting near Najaf's sacred Imam Ali Mosque and a vast ancient cemetery.

Explosions echoed across the old city and thick smoke rose into the sky as U.S. tanks and armoured vehicles took positions near the holy sites where Sadr's militia are entrenched.

A Reuters photographer was wounded in the leg while covering the fighting. The photographer, an Iraqi, was treated for bullet fragment wounds at a U.S. combat hospital and later released.

Iraqis meeting on Monday to pick the assembly agreed to send the team after Sadr's weekend peace talks with the government collapsed and the cleric vowed to fight to the death.

The Baghdad meeting is expected to select the assembly later on Tuesday to oversee the interim government until January elections, but Najaf has dominated

the three-day gathering.

Once appointed, the interim assembly will be able to veto legislation with a two-thirds majority, approve Iraq's 2005 budget, and appoint a new prime minister or president should either resign or die in office.

Clashes also erupted overnight between the militia and U.S. forces in a poor Shi'ite suburb in Baghdad called Sadr City.

The Health Ministry said 14 people had been killed and 122 wounded in Sadr City in the past 24 hours. Witnesses said two teenage girls were among the dead, killed in U.S. shelling of the slum district where Sadr draws much of his support.

Broadening their uprising from the urban battlefield, the Mehdi Army set an oil well on fire in southern Iraq on Monday, the government said.

The unrest also forced Iraq to keep a main southern oil pipeline shut on Tuesday, reducing export flows by almost

half.

The delegation will try to give the cleric a letter, urging him to leave the shrine turn his militia into a political party.

But the scion of a Shi'ite clerical dynasty, aged about 30 and the most powerful opponent of the United States and the interim government, has shown little sign of compromise.

He has demanded U.S. forces leave Najaf and the government grant an amnesty to his fighters as part of any deal. Thousands of protesters have joined Sadr in the Imam Ali Mosque, promising to act as human shields in the city of 600,000 people some 160 km (100 miles) south of Baghdad.

The French fiancée of a U.S. journalist held hostage in Iraq has appealed for his release, Paris-based Reporters Without Borders said, adding that Micah Garen's family had not heard from him since Friday when he disappeared with his translator.

Malaria adds to Darfur's woes - U.N.

SISI, Chad, Aug 17 (Reuters) - Marauding Arab militias in Sudan's Darfur region continue to prey on refugees and are crossing into Chad to steal cattle and kill civilians, U.N. officials and Chadian villagers said on Tuesday.

The United Nations also added malaria to the list of threats facing more than a million displaced Sudanese, who are dying at a rate of about 1,000 a day from hunger-related diseases in what the U.N. calls the world's worst humanitarian disaster.

In Sisi, a remote village on Chad's border with Sudan, villagers said the Sudanese militiamen, known as Janjaweed, had raided as recently as Aug. 8 to rustle 260 cattle.

"They killed a herdsman that day. Since the start of the trouble they have killed 15 civilians from here," said Adama Hassan Hamadi, an elderly man who spoke for the village.

"We are not at peace because our village is right next to the border. The Janjaweed come to take our cattle, especially before the rains, and if we refuse to hand them over they kill us," Hamadi said.

In Geneva, the U.N. refugee agency UNHCR said 525 refugees from Darfur had been registered in eastern Chad over the past three days, signalling a possible fresh exodus after a two-month lull.

The new arrivals had reported "constant looting" by the Janjaweed who had also blocked people trying to leave, said UNHCR spokeswoman Jennifer Pagonis.

The U.N. Security Council has given Sudan about two more weeks to prove it has made progress in improving Darfur's security situation or face unspecified sanctions. The U.N. estimates that violence in Darfur, where rebels took up arms in early 2003, has killed 50,000 people and displaced some 1.2 million,

including about 200,000 now in Chad.

Rebels and rights groups accuse the Khartoum government of backing the Janjaweed — a name that may derive from the Arabic for "devils on horseback" — to crush the rebellion and conduct a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Darfur's non-Arabs.

Malaria on the Rise

Sudan, which put the Darfur death toll at about 5,000 and denies supporting the Janjaweed, has pledged to the U.N. to set up safe areas for the displaced, disarm the militias and cease military operations.

U.N. envoy Jan Pronk urged Sudan's authorities on Sunday to speed up the process and said the Janjaweed remained a threat.

Health officials said recent heavy rains had added to the misery in the camps for the internally displaced by creating breeding grounds for mosquitoes that carry malaria.

Some 18,770 cases of malaria had been diagnosed among displaced Sudanese in Darfur since early July, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said, resulting in 14 deaths.

The spread of malaria, which is endemic in Sudan, follows a hepatitis outbreak which has struck 1,000 people and killed 27, mainly in West Darfur, WHO spokeswoman Fadela Chaib said.

"Water and sanitation are a big problem in the whole of Darfur. We are worried," Chaib told a news briefing in Geneva.

The crisis has also put enormous strain on Chad, one of the world's poorest countries.

In Sisi, villagers said the number of huts had about doubled to 450 in the past year to accommodate refugees from the same Massalit ethnic group. Food was running low and the village had cut back on meals to conserve stocks until the next harvest due in December, the villagers said.

Families of jailed Palestinian join hunger strike



Protesters hold a large Palestinian flag and pictures of prisoners as they attend a protest rally in support of Palestinian prisoners inside Israeli jails, in Gaza August 16. Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails began a hunger strike for better conditions on Sunday. Israel declared psychological war on hunger-striking Palestinian prisoners on Monday, saying it would barbecue meat outside their cells to try to break their will. REUTERS

RAMALLAH, West Bank, Aug 17 (Reuters) - A group of wives and mothers of hunger striking Palestinian prisoners vowed on Tuesday that they too would not eat until Israel met demands for better treatment and more frequent family visits.

More than 1,500 prisoners, seen by Palestinians as symbols of resistance to Israel, started a liquids-only fast this week to demand more frequent visits, better sanitary conditions, public telephones, and an end to strip searches.

Israeli officials call the hunger strike a ploy by prisoners to secure easier communication with militant groups waging an almost four-year-old uprising. Israel's security minister said he did not care if they starved to death, while prison officials said they planned to barbecue meat outside the cells to try to break their spirit. Organisers of the solidarity fast in the West Bank said only a few women had stopped eating so far, but dozens more family members were expected to join in coming days.

"Today I am starting a hunger strike. I am drinking just water and juice," said Riham Maschal, whose son is serving a five-year sentence at a jail in the Negev desert on security-related charges.

"For two years I have not seen him. They reject it on security grounds," she said. "Even my daughter, they rejected her."

The Palestinian Authority has called on people to hold a one-day solidarity fast on Wednesday.

Health checks for strikers

Israel's prison authority said it had started weighing hunger strikers and was giving medical checks, but had so far seen no health problems.

About 7,000 Palestinians, excluding common criminals, are being held in Israeli civilian prisons or military jails, according to the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem. About half are either being detained without charge or until the end of criminal proceedings against them.

The remainder are convicted of security-related offences.

"They are prisoners of a people suffering under occupation," said Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei, visiting the solidarity protest tent in Ramallah.

"We appeal to the whole world to listen to the cry of the heroes of freedom."

Sitting in the tent, Palestinian women held up framed pictures of sons and husbands.

Yusra Muhammed Mustafa, whose husband is serving a 220-year term for killing Israeli soldiers, said she was on a "symbolic" hunger strike of liquids and fruit, upset that four of her five sons were unable to visit their father.

"For four years the children haven't seen him.

Only the youngest one has seen him, my smallest son," she said, adding they were rejected on security grounds.

Umm Muhammed, who was also fasting, said she had not seen her prisoner son for 11 months, and was on an open-ended strike. "How can I feel hunger when I am here and my son is in prison," she said.

"Does he feel no hunger?"

Iraq president vows to press on for peace in Najaf

ANKARA, Aug 17 (Reuters) - Iraq's interim President Ghazi al-Yawar vowed on Tuesday to keep pushing to end a rebellion in Najaf after security worries forced political and religious leaders to delay a peace mission to the holy city.

The group had been due to travel to Najaf on Tuesday to try to persuade radical Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr to end nearly two weeks of fighting between his loyalists and U.S. troops, but postponed the trip after threats from insurgents.

"We in the government are very keen to save any drop of Iraqi blood," Yawar told reporters on an official trip to neighbouring Turkey.

"(But) we do not want painkillers. We want a real treatment for the problem ... We are still calling on these people to stop this nonsense and join the political process."

He did not spell out specific measures to end the crisis.

Iraqis meeting on Monday to pick an interim national assembly agreed to send the delegation after Sadr's weekend peace talks with the government collapsed and the firebrand cleric and his Mehdi Army vowed to fight to the death.

The rebellion has killed hundreds, and passions in the majority Shi'ite country are at boiling point over U.S. troops fighting near holy sites such as the sacred Imam Ali Mosque. Yawar said the interim government could not accept Sadr's attempts to set up his own military, legal and prison structures outside Iraq's national framework.

"That cannot happen anywhere in the world," he said.

"Give me one country anywhere in the world that would tolerate something like that and I will agree to do it. But definitely we cannot leave the law in people's hands according to their wishes."

The head of the Najaf delegation said the mission would still visit the

tense city some 160 km (100 miles) south of Baghdad, but declined for security reasons to say when.

Sadr has shown little sign of compromise, demanding U.S.

forces leave Najaf and the government grant his fighters an amnesty as part of any deal

Kurdish separatists

Yawar repeated his pledge to stop Kurdish separatists using bases in northern Iraq to launch attacks on Turkey, but acknowledged that direct action against the rebel Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) would currently be hard.

"Concrete steps? That's a good question," he said. "We are trying by maintaining or reinstating stability and

security in Iraq... We are moving forward. It's a matter of time and hopefully it will be a short time."

Clashes between Turkish security forces and PKK guerrillas have increased sharply since the PKK ended a unilateral six-year ceasefire in early June, and Ankara has blamed the rebels for bomb attacks in Istanbul last week that killed two people.

The 20-year conflict has killed more than 30,000 people, mostly Kurds, including more than 60 in the past two months.

Turkey has long been pressing the United States to crack down on the PKK in northern Iraq, but analysts say U.S. forces may be reluctant to open a new front while they try to contain insurgencies elsewhere in the country.



Interim President of Iraq Ghazi al-Yawar addresses the media during a press conference in Ankara, August 17. REUTERS

S.Africa soldiers probed for theft, rape at border

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 17 (Reuters) - South African police have arrested five border soldiers accused of robbing Zimbabweans and are probing reports women were raped and forced to swim back home in the crocodile infested Limpopo River.

Police spokesman Fanie Molapo said on Tuesday the arrests followed a three-month investigation sparked by a series of accusations of abuse by soldiers at border posts against people trying to cross illegally into South Africa from Zimbabwe.

"They were arrested on Sunday ... They've been charged with theft," Molapo said, adding further arrests may follow.

He said the men, due in court this week, included the commander of a unit stationed at the border who is accused of stealing possessions and cash from victims before deporting them.

He added that investigations into the rape allegations were being hampered because victims were difficult to track down once they returned home.

Post-apartheid South Africa has become a haven for those fleeing conflict and poverty all over Africa, especially from neighbouring Zimbabwe which is facing a crippling political and economic crisis.

Congo peace hangs in balance after Tutsi massacre

KINSHASA, Aug 17 (Reuters) - A renegade commander in Congo threatened on Tuesday to resume fighting after last week's massacre of Congolese Tutsi refugees while former rebels said the country's peace process had "broken down".

Dissident leader Laurent Nkunda, whose troops seized the eastern town of Bukavu in June to protect their Congolese Tutsi kin, demanded an inquiry into Friday's slaughter of 160 people at a camp in neighbouring Burundi.

He said the Kinshasa government must guarantee the security of the Banyamulenge — as Congo's Tutsi are known — and vowed not to stand by if they were attacked again.

"I am not attacking right now," Nkunda told Reuters by phone from the eastern border town of Goma.

"I will be here in Goma mourning for a few days. By then hopefully the people of good faith will have taken the appropriate decisions," he said. "This won't happen again."

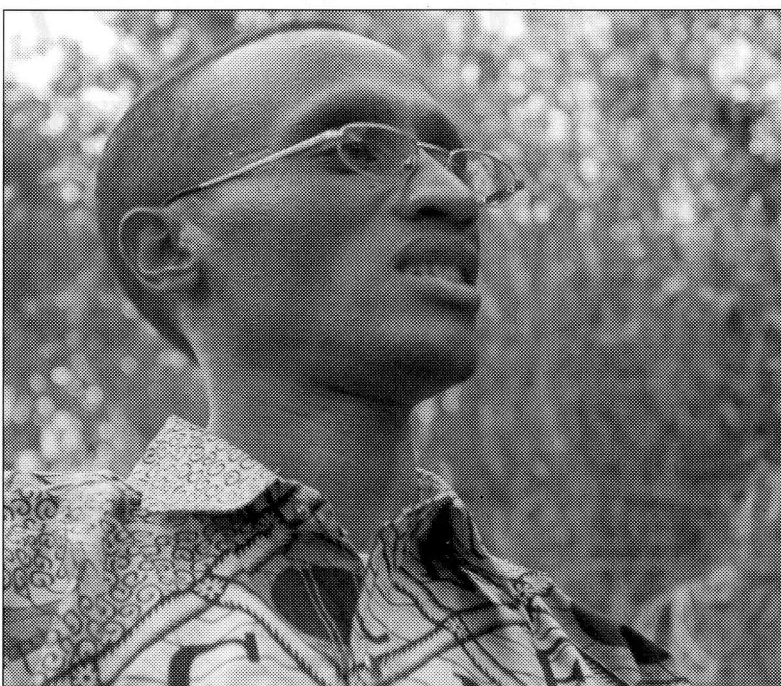
His comments came as leaders of RCD-Goma, the main, Rwandan-backed rebel group during Congo's 5-year civil war, gathered for talks in Goma.

"The process has broken down and we need to repair this break down," Azarius Ruberwa, the head of RCD and one of Congo's four vice presidents, told United Nations radio.

"We need to stop, re-read the (peace) agreement and the conclusions of the negotiations because it is incomprehensible that, during a peace process, genocide of Congolese people takes place abroad," he said.

Western diplomats in Kinshasa said there was a risk the RCD might pull out of the transitional government meant to shepherd the Democratic Republic of Congo to elections in 2005.

Ruberwa and other RCD senior



File photo of Congolese rebel leader Laurent Nkunda taken July 21. A renegade commander in Congo threatened on Tuesday to resume fighting after last week's massacre of Congolese Tutsi refugees while former rebels said the country's peace process had "broken down".

REUTERS

officials — most of whom are Tutsi — on Monday attended the mass burial of the 160 people shot, hacked and burned to death on Friday night.

GOVERNMENT WORRIED

A Hutu rebel group fighting in Burundi has claimed responsibility for the attack, but the RCD has accused the Congolese army of taking part in the killing.

Both Rwanda and Burundi have said they might cross into Congo if the Kinshasa government fails to disarm the Hutu rebels still on its territory and their allied militia.

"We are worried as we are being threatened by everyone. Rwanda has threatened to attack. Burundi has threatened to attack. Now Ruberwa has threatened to stop taking part in the transition," government spokesman Henri Mova Sakany

said.

"This is a plan to destabilise the process."

Tiny Rwanda has already invaded Africa's third biggest nation twice, in 1996 and in 1998, to rout out Hutu extremists who fled there after committing the 1994 Rwanda genocide.

Rwanda's second invasion triggered the war which at its height dragged in six African armies. Three million people died, mostly from hunger and disease.

The conflict was declared over last year and a transitional government bringing together President Joseph Kabila and his former foes set up.

But progress towards peace has been slow and the June revolt in the east highlighted the challenges facing the government as it tries to restore its authority across the vast country.

U.S. brokers ceasefire in western Afghanistan

KABUL, Aug 17 (Reuters) - The United States has brokered a ceasefire between a renegade Afghan militia leader and the embattled governor of the western province of Herat, Washington's envoy to Kabul said on Tuesday.

Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad said he was asked to help by both the Afghan government and Herat Governor Ismail Khan, whose forces were being pushed back by a renegade militia commander, Amanullah Khan.

"A few minutes ago there was an agreement between Governor Ismail Khan and Amanullah to cease fire at 4 o'clock this afternoon (1200 GMT) and to begin moving forces by Amanullah southwards towards Palmal Khan an area 30 km or more south of Adraskan," Khalilzad told a news conference.

The envoy said he had spoken to both the governor and Amanullah Khan to broker a ceasefire in the factional fighting that has created another headache ahead of Afghanistan's first democratic presidential election on October 9.

"Our expectation is that the agreement that has been made will be honoured," Khalilzad said.

U.S. military personnel accompanied Afghan National Army troops sent in to restore order in Herat in the past couple of days, and U.S. "air assets" were monitoring the situation, the ambassador added.

Khalilzad declined to say whether any explicit threat of the use of force was made to Amanullah.

But the U.S. envoy said he "made sure he (Amanullah) understood where we stood".

SIGNIFICANT CASUALTIES

Last year, the United States used airpower to quell unrest between factions in the same part of western Afghanistan.

Khalilzad said there had been significant casualties. At least 21 people were killed as Amanullah Khan's forces wrested control of a disused airbase at Shindand over the weekend.

And in fresh clashes, local and foreign sources said, Amanullah Khan's men pushed in to Adraskan district, north of the base and just 40 km (25 miles) south of Herat city.

Khalilzad stressed that Ismail Khan, a powerful mujahideen leader who had helped the U.S.-led overthrow of the Taliban in late 2001, was the legitimate governor of Herat.

But, the envoy said, the causes of the conflict with Amanullah Khan needed investigation and there had been fears the violence could have taken on an ethnic dimension if it was not stopped.

Accusations that Amanullah Khan's forces included elements of Taliban and al Qaeda were also being checked, he added.

President Hamid Karzai sent hundreds of soldiers from the fledgling Afghan National Army (ANA) to Herat province over the past few days.

Ismail Khan is a strong critic of Karzai, whose U.S.-backed government was installed after the overthrow of the Taliban.

Factional fighting dogs Karzai's efforts to unite and rebuild Afghanistan after some 23 years of war. He also faces an insurgency from remnants of the ousted Taliban and their allies, who are bent on disrupting the forthcoming election. The U.S. military leads 18,000 soldiers in Afghanistan hunting for Taliban and al Qaeda operatives.

North Korea talks still on, China tells Downer

BEIJING, Aug 17 (Reuters) - North Korea's refusal to take part in working-level talks on the nuclear crisis prompted a diplomatic flurry on Tuesday with China, the host of the talks, at the heart of efforts to keep the process on track.

Beijing said no date has been set for the talks on dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear programmes but gave no indication that the meeting had been cancelled, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer told a news conference.

In a sign that China was fully engaged in trying to set up another round of talks, top Chinese diplomat Shen Guofang met in Beijing on Monday with Ri Gun, North Korea's chief delegate to the working-level talks.

On Monday North Korea had ruled out attending the working-level talks and questioned the entire negotiating process, blaming hostile U.S. policy for its tougher stance.

"The message I had from the Chinese was that ... no scheduled time has been determined for that meeting, not that the meeting has been cancelled," Downer said.

The Australian minister later began a visit to North Korea, the official KCNA news agency reported.

Before leaving Beijing, Downer had said he would use the opportunity of his rare talks in Pyongyang to try to convince the isolated communist state of the advantages to be gained by abandoning its nuclear programmes.

"We hope to be able to assist in moving the process towards a successful conclusion," he said.

The working-level talks have been expected in advance of the next round of six-party talks involving North and South Korea, the United States, Russia, China and Japan and set for late



Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer gives a speech at Beijing's Tsinghua University in China's capital August 17.

attending the next full talks due in September.

U.S. and South Korean officials attributed these comments to pre-talk bluster and said they hoped discussions would go ahead as planned.

Officials said working-level talks could be held immediately preceding the full talks, as they were before the last round.

A MARATHON PROCESS

During the third round of talks, in June, analysts said a door creaked with the first sign of real negotiations after the U.S. side offered aid from other countries in return for North Korea agreeing to dismantle its nuclear programmes.

However, China's Ning indicated that Pyongyang was seeking direct U.S. help and that this was a stumbling block that Washington must address.

Negotiators had sought to hold the talks last week. When they failed to take place, diplomats suggested North Korea could be seeking to drag out the process as the U.S. presidential election in November approaches.

Beijing has played host to three rounds of talks.

Yang Xiyu, one of the Foreign Ministry's top pointmen on North Korea, said China did not possess the key to the deadlock.

"This is our difficulty. We can only play a mediating role of promoting peace and talks. Our goal is to let the United States and North Korea hand over the keys to unlock this problem," he told U.S.-based Chinese portal Duo Wei www.chinesemedianet.com.

The crisis over North Korea's nuclear programmes erupted in October 2002 when U.S. officials said North Korea had admitted to working on a secret programme to enrich uranium for weapons. North Korea denies having such a programme.

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المواساة لأسرة

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الأسيفون:

الشيخ / هشام صادق عبد القوي

وإخوانه

New-look Berlusconi greets Blair for Sardinia trip

PORTO ROTONDO, Sardinia, Aug 17 (Reuters) - British Prime Minister Tony Blair had probably hoped for a quiet, discreet visit to his Italian counterpart's villa on the Sardinian coast.

Instead, he ended up on a walkabout through a packed upscale resort at the peak of the holiday season, led by Silvio Berlusconi decked in flowing white clothes and a bandanna.

An evening meal — accompanied by Neapolitan songs — ended with a fireworks display in the colours of the Italian and British flags spelling "VV Tony", standing for "Viva Tony" or "Long live Tony".

The Blairs' trip to Berlusconi's luxury Sardinian estate has come under heavy fire in the London press, with editorialists accusing the British leader of seeking freebie holidays and questioning his friendship with the flamboyant Italian.

"For the freebie-loving Blairs, arriving as house guests at Berlusconi's 100-acre Sardinia estate ... is an act of naivety, or greed, or an expression of the thrill that Blair has for the rich," the Daily Mail wrote last week.

The two-day stay with Berlusconi, who is Italy's wealthiest person, also coincided with heightened security across Italy following numerous threats from Muslim militants.

"The concept of 'low profile' is of course relative," daily La Repubblica wrote on Tuesday about the Sardinian walkabout, in a spread entitled "A new look for Berlusconi".

Italian newspapers all carried photographs of a tanned and beaming Berlusconi walking the Blairs through teeming Porto Cervo, brushing aside safety fears.

"In linen trousers and bandanna, Silvio takes Tony to work the crowds," wrote newspaper Corriere della Sera.

The Blairs, on holiday in the Tuscan estate of an Italian aristocrat, travelled to Sardinia on Monday on what Berlusconi described as "a visit to a friend by a friend".

The centre-right prime minister, however, did not miss out on the chance to score a political point with the crowds.

"Who stole your tooth?" he asked one little girl in comments reported by La Repubblica. "You tell that mouse that if I catch him, I will feed him to the communists."

Hamburg 9/11 suspect part of hijack group: Witness

HAMBURG, Germany, Aug 17 (Reuters) - A Moroccan accused of aiding the Sept. 11 hijackers was a regular member of their circle, a former member of the Hamburg Islamist group that included some of the attackers told a court on Tuesday.

Sahid Nickels, a witness who was himself part of the group of Muslim students in the late 1990s, said Mounir el Motassadeq attended meetings in the north German city with Mohamed Atta and others involved in the 2001 suicide attacks in the United States.

His statement followed evidence last week from Ramzi bin al-Shaibah and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, two top al Qaeda leaders in U.S. custody, who told interrogators that Motassadeq was not part of the innermost cell that drew up the Sept. 11 plot.

Nickels said Motassadeq had been a regular member of the group, which often talked about how "something had to be done against America."

Nickels said he himself had joined the group in 1997 but left in 1999 as the tone of its members, including Atta and two other Sept. 11 pilots, Marwan al-Shehhi and Ziad Jarrah, became more radical.

He said the group regularly discussed anti-American ideas but



Mounir el Motassadeq awaits the start of his trial on the third day of his retrial, in Hamburg, Germany August 17. Motassadeq is a Moroccan accused of providing logistical help to the Hamburg al-Qaeda cell that included suicide pilots Mohamed Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi and Ziad Jarrah. REUTERS

that he had never heard detailed plans for an attack on the scale of the Sept. 11 hijackings.

"I had no idea that anything as big as that would happen," he said.

A written summary of the interrogation of al-Shaibah and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed provided by U.S. authorities indicated that al-Shaibah had testified that Motassadeq was not an influential member of the Hamburg cell.

He had attended meetings at the home of Atta, the man who crashed the first plane into the World Trade Center, and had engaged in vitriolic anti-U.S. discussions but had no knowledge of the Sept. 11 plans, the testimony said.

Motassadeq, the only man to be convicted over the 2001 hijack attacks, was found guilty in Germany last year of aiding the Sept. 11 attacks and sentenced to 15 years.

But he won a re-trial in March this year when a higher court ruled that his lack of access to bin al-Shaibah's testimony was unacceptable.

Another Moroccan member of the Hamburg group, Abdelghani Mzoudi, was acquitted on similar charges earlier this year but faces a prosecution appeal.

French FinMin hints at bid for ruling party job

ARCACHON, France, Aug 17 (Reuters) - Finance Minister Nicolas Sarkozy gave a strong hint on Tuesday that he will bid to lead France's governing conservatives, a job that could put him on a collision course with President Jacques Chirac.

Sarkozy told party workers in southwestern France he wanted to reach out to nationalists and centrists and end internal divisions that had cost the right elections in the past.

France's most popular politician said he would announce late this month whether he would run for chairman of the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP), a job he seems almost certain to win.

"The question of my candidacy for the presidency of the UMP wouldn't even have been raised if you had not been so active, if your voices hadn't been so strong," Sarkozy told a meeting of 900 party workers.

"But this is only the beginning... Be confident, I now know what my responsibilities are — I'm not in the habit of ducking them," he said.

Chirac has vowed to sack any minister elected to the post, made vacant by the resignation of the president's close ally and ex-prime minister Alain Juppe over a party finance scandal.

The threat, made during Chirac's traditional July 14 national holiday TV interview, was seen as a clear

attempt to stymie Sarkozy's presidential ambitions.

The 71-year-old incumbent has yet to say whether he will run again in 2007.

Advisors to the finance minister say if Chirac does sack Sarkozy, he will have to explain to the party and to public opinion why the post is incompatible with a cabinet job.

Sarkozy's waspish tongue and stout defence of liberal economic policies has in the past seen him portrayed as a partisan and divisive right-wing figure.

After he backed Prime Minister Edouard Balladur against Chirac in the 1995 presidential campaign, Sarkozy was accused of betraying his

former mentor and declared "pariah of the galaxy" for a large part of the traditional right, one aide said.

On Tuesday, Sarkozy said support for him should not be seen as a betrayal of anyone and that he wanted to be the "man who rallies as much as possible" to the right's cause.

"We must learn to draw strength from our differences. We are not the same? Well, so much the better, neither are our voters," he said, a clear nod in the direction of the centrist UDF party which has refused to merge with the larger UMP.

Sarkozy also said he would campaign for a 'yes' vote in next year's referendum on the European Union constitution.

Russia arrests three men for role in Uzbek blasts

MOSCOW, Aug 17 (Reuters) - Russia is holding three men suspected of helping to organise a series of bombings in Uzbekistan earlier this year and may extradite them to their homeland for trial, police said on Tuesday.

Uzbekistan was rocked by blasts in capital Tashkent and ancient city Bukhara in March and by three suicide bombings — two outside the Israeli and U.S. embassies — last month.

The central Asian state blamed Islamic radicals for the attacks, and Russian police said the arrested men — brothers Tulkan and Erkin Baibayev, and Bakhrom Sultanov — were linked to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan.

The United States says the movement is linked to al Qaeda.

"According to the documents that we have, these people were on the wanted list for previous terrorist acts, including in March this year in Uzbekistan," said Yuri Demidov, head of the Interior Ministry's 'T Centre' anti-terrorist unit.

"Their extradition to Uzbekistan is being studied," he told reporters, adding that the men were arrested in May and June.

Uzbekistan is a close U.S. ally in its war on terror and gave the Pentagon access to an airbase for its attack on the Taliban militia in neighbouring Afghanistan.

President Islam Karimov says Islamists are trying to overthrow his secular government to set up a hard-line state along the Taliban's model.

But human rights groups say many young men are driven into the arms of religious groups by widespread poverty and the mass jailing of dissidents by the strongman president.

Lithuania agrees to hand jailed rocker to France

VILNIUS, Aug 17 (Reuters) - French rock star Bertrand Cantat jailed for killing his actress girlfriend Marie Trintignant in Lithuania last year will be allowed to serve the rest of his eight-year sentence in France, the Baltic state said on Tuesday.

"Yes, we have agreed to send Mr Cantat to France to serve the rest of his sentence," Justice Ministry spokesman Dainius Radzevicius said.

Trintignant, 41, a member of one of France's most famous acting families and a mother of four, died last August of head injuries sustained during a fight with Cantat in Vilnius where she was shooting a film.

Cantat, lead singer of French rock band Noir Desir (Black Desire), was convicted of homicide by a Lithuanian court in March for beating her to death during a hotel room brawl.

The 40-year-old rocker, who had faced a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison, told the court he slapped Trintignant during a heated row, which caused her to fall and hit her head on a radiator. He said he had not intended to kill her.

Trintignant's death after five days in a coma shocked France. A daughter of film star Jean-Louis Trintignant, she had starred in films since childhood. Her funeral was attended by a host of celebrities.

"Now we are waiting for a response from France, including their agreement to take Mr Cantat into their custody for the rest of his sentence," Radzevicius said.

"If everything goes without any problems, Mr Cantat should be in France by the end of the year."

Under French law, Cantat's lawyers can apply for a conditional release after he has served half his sentence.

YUKOS gets more cash but seen ready for bankruptcy

MOSCOW, Aug 17 (Reuters) - Russia's YUKOS raised \$357 million to put towards a \$3.4 billion tax claim on Tuesday by selling a stake in a gas venture to partner TNK-BP, as analysts said the company was technically ready for bankruptcy.

YUKOS is trying to pull together every penny it can to pay down the potentially ruinous tax bill, and Rospan is the first non-core asset it has managed to sell. YUKOS itself is banned from selling assets but Rospan was owned by a subsidiary.

It is looking for ways to raise money on sales of non-core assets to prevent bailiffs from selling its core oil units.

Sources close to the deal said YUKOS had sold its 56 percent stake in Rospan to BP's Russian vehicle, which owns the remainder, just as a court refused to suspend collection of the tax payment.

"The transaction took place today," one source said.

With the company's ultimate survival in doubt, analysts said on Tuesday that the core owners of YUKOS, led by its incarcerated founder Mikhail Khodorkovsky, may be preparing to declare the firm bankrupt to try to protect at least some of their money.

Despite surging oil prices, YUKOS on Monday reported a net loss of \$2.65 billion in the first half of this year, compared with a net profit of \$1.35 bil-

lion a year ago.

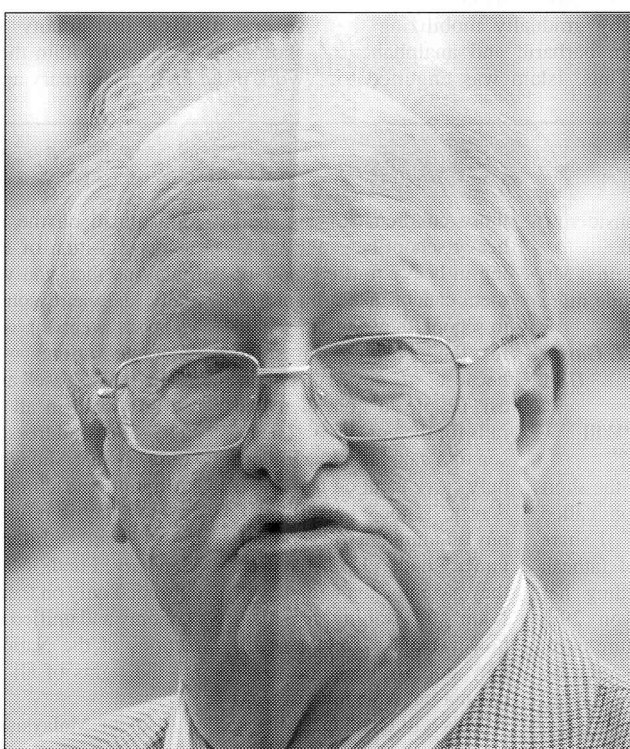
The figures are under Russian accounting standards, which are generally ignored by investors, but analysts say they could allow it to go into liquidation.

YUKOS has been ordered to pay \$3.4 billion by the end of the month. Bailiffs are taking money from the company's accounts, making it hard for Russia's top oil exporter to fund operations.

The company has come under intense pressure over tax arrears in a judicial campaign that many analysts see as being directed by the Kremlin, apparently as punishment for YUKOS's major shareholder, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, after he used some of his massive wealth to further political ambitions.

Also on Tuesday YUKOS lost an appeal to pay off the tax debt with

shares it owns in oil company Sibneft. It still holds 20 percent of Sibneft after Chelsea football club owner Roman Abramovich and his partners, former



Head of YUKOS oil major board of directors and former head of Russia's Central Bank Viktor Geraschenko talks to a Reuters journalist in Moscow, August 16. REUTERS

Sibneft controlling shareholders, pulled out of a merger.

The onslaught against YUKOS and Khodorkovsky is seen as a warning to

Russia's other super-rich businessmen to stay out of politics, which the Kremlin views as its domain.

SAVING WHAT'S LEFT

UFG brokerage said first half results showed YUKOS subsidiaries and its main owners, represented by Group Menatep, controlled about \$10 billion of YUKOS liabilities at the end of the second quarter, up from \$7 billion as of March 31.

Under Russian law, the courts must rule on whether a bankruptcy declaration is valid.

If a bankruptcy filing is accepted, the company comes under a "state of supervision", which shields it from the sale of assets and can last for months.

Analysts say they doubt courts would accept YUKOS's bankruptcy filing, but UFG said that because the company showed negative net assets

of \$2.1 billion as a result of growing liabilities, it could announce self-liquidation.

"In the event of self-liquidation ...

creditors would receive their money, while shareholders, including portfolio investors, may receive little or nothing," UFG said.

Menatep shareholders would be treated as creditors because of loans they have made to their own firm.

The company's chairman, Viktor Geraschenko, told Reuters on Monday the firm would refrain from declaring bankruptcy for as long as possible.

But Chief Financial Officer Bruce Misamore told the Financial Times newspaper on Monday the firm may declare bankruptcy soon.

SUBSIDIARIES SELL OIL

To protect its business, YUKOS appears to be hiving off business to subsidiaries and making intra-group loans, Aton brokerage said in comments on the first half results.

By granting oil sales rights to subsidiaries, the parent company keeps some revenue from going to its frozen bank accounts from being confiscated, thus keeping some money for operational activities, said Aton.

Russia's state railways company said on Tuesday that YUKOS was paying for shipments, including key deliveries to China, through its trading arms.

"We are shipping, they are pumping, the Chinese are paying," a railways spokeswoman said. "It is as simple as that."

Words of Wisdom



Individuals must be held accountable for the way they handle property, especially if it is publicly owned. Thus, drivers of government vehicles, operators of machines, an other people who have direct responsibility for government assets have to be constantly brought under supervision. By the way, this would also apply to traffic violations by government drivers. They should be made to pay for the tickets.

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



OUR OPINION

Sanaa International Airport:

Where time stood still

Sanaa International Airport was built in the 1970s with the aim of serving the limited number of travelers per year. Its capacity, services, and design were specified to meet the needs of a very small country with a few planes and handful of flights per week. It was more or less suitable for a country whose population rarely saw a plane flying, and less than 0.01% could even imagine flying on one.

Around three decades later, the airport remains the same. It has remained without expansion or improvement for more than 30 years. In fact, it has deteriorated in all aspects as it was poorly maintained and terribly managed.

Today, the airport is, with no exaggeration, a disgrace to our country. We claim to have developed in all aspects and fields, yet we have failed until today, to even add one extra room to this important symbol of our country's progress and identity.

Airports are among the first places that formulate the impressions of international visitors. In our case, Sanaa International Airport has become a negative symbol of our country. From the first moment, you are lined up for long hours waiting for your passport to be stamped in the immigration hall, to the harassment you receive by children insisting to carry your bags for you (for an often exaggerated cost), the whole experience of going through the airport is - for many people I know - simply a nightmare.

It is very difficult for foreigners to understand why the government has been neglecting the airport for so many years. They find it quite astonishing to see the carelessness in maintaining toilets, or the rude behavior of the military soldiers who continue to carry their pistols and firearms inside the small rooms.

I have even heard stories of those soldiers outnumbering the travelers on some occasions.

Nevertheless, I feel hopeful when I see the transit hall, with its elegant design, clean toilets, Internet services, and entertainment facilities. Realizing that these transit rooms have been totally managed by Yemen Airways, I expressed gratitude and respect to the national carrier, but at the same time, requested that the airline exerts greater pressure on the government to have this airport renovated or even rebuilt.

"As you know, Yemenia doesn't have any authority on the government concerning the airport. They said it is their business and we cannot interfere. It is a pity to see that this building has never been improved since the 1970s. I just hope that they would allow Yemenia to take over its management and then hold us accountable afterwards" said Captain Abdulkhalil Al-Qadhi, Chairman of Yemenia, when asked why the airline doesn't exert greater pressure on the government to modernize the airport.

It is fine for us to preserve historical areas such as Old Sanaa, Shibani and elsewhere, but to preserve an outdated airport is completely unacceptable.

How can we expect to have more tourists if it takes an hour for travelers to clear immigration, and if you see travelers almost jumping on one another when taking in their bags or moving in the halls?

It is amazing how Sana'a International Airport remains with so little attention, as if it doesn't exist. I still can't figure out why it has been abandoned for so long.

Looking at one of the walls of the waiting hall I found a hint. It was a wall clock on one of the arrival hall walls. It was stuck, with no motion. Only God knows for how many years it has stayed there with dead batteries. But it is not surprising, after all, our airport is the place where time stood still!

The Editor

Country in Education, and more particularly in Humanities (3)

By PROF. DR. MUHAMMAD SHAMSADDIN MEGALOMMATIS

B. Exploring Yemenite Identity, and Opening new Horizons in Education

1. Engineering or Humanities?

The study of the Past is not a pleasant, complementary function for colleges, universities and institutes that are mostly versed in Engineering, Mathematics, Law, Medicine and Economics. We all know that, throughout the world, several academic sectors, especially those related to the technocratic sphere, prevail and tend to be almost exclusive within universities. It is understandable to see a small African country putting a lot of effort into Medicine. It is expected that an average Third World country in Asia or America finds the need to form a young class of Civil, Mechanic, Electric and Electronic engineers. It is only natural that a country progressing towards Democracy and a Liberal Economy prepares a great number of barristers and brokers. But if the Humanities are minimized or not focused on, the efforts will fail. At the best, the country will be a Third World outpost, something like South Korea or Thailand, but can we truly compare these two countries' participation into the Global Cultural and Academic development with the leading positions of Spain (yet, with lower per capita GDP than that of South Korea!) or Poland (almost at the same level with Thailand with regard to per capita GDP)?

With the Spanish Archeological Institute at Athens and Cairo, with its celebrated Academy and Archives on the Discovery of Americas at Sevilla, Spain is a significant power in the re-establishment and the representation of the Antiquity, offering in several universities classes in Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Ancient Greek, Phoenician, Aramaic, Arabic, Farsi, Syriac, Mayan Hieroglyphics, African and Asiatic languages and scriptures. With its venerated participation in the 'Sauvetage de la Nubie' vast archeological exploration and saving excavations, carried out under the auspices of the UNESCO in the 60s in Upper Egypt and Sudan (with the purpose of saving excavated and non-excavated monuments that would be found under the surface of the water in the lake then under formation behind the High Dam of Aswan), Spain was given as present the Ancient Egyptian Temple of Debod that now stands far from the Egyptian sky and the vicinity of the Nile!

With the Polish leading archeological research in Coptology, Egyptology, Meroitic Studies, and Christian Sudan, it is not strange that, following its participation in the aforementioned UNESCO campaign, Poland was given an important number of frescoes from the Faras cathedral of Nobatia, the northern of the three Sudanese Christian states, while the rest have been transferred and exposed on the 1st floor of the Khartoum Museum. Polish universities are well versed in Humanities research covering all continents.

2. The Western European Search

Letters to the Editor

Haifi lacks supporting documentation

Hassan Al-Haifi's recent editorials while not completely dismissible are certainly a stretch with little supporting documentation. It is a take-off on standard conspiracy theory.

While I can agree that some warped minds may want to do the things he alleges, it is simply too far-out to believe in this chaotic disorganized world.

I agree that terrorists actions are bizarre and counterproductive to Islamic causes, but there are groups in this world that will do almost anything. Look at the Christian Fundamentalists, for example.

What surprises me is the support that the terrorists have from the Moslem "man-in-the-street." Unless the reporting is inaccurate, this support, for actions against Islam is

surprising, even considering the emotion involved.

Finally, it would help if Mr. Al-Haifi would provide more concrete support.

T. Gavan
USA

Impressed by "Will she continue?"

I was impressed by the short story of aspiration called "will she continue?". I share the same feelings of fateah Abdulkareem regarding her impression issued on 29th July 2004 in the culture page. I take those lines written by her to heart and they remind me of many sores. What a compassionate moment embracing your child is. What happiness, when I hug with open arms a little child. It is just gladness. It may not be accurately portrayed by words as it is an ecstatic gushing powerful feeling. That is why we may lose our mind to see

for Identity led to European Supremacy

It is essential not to idealize situations, and to be always accurate; Poland and Spain imitate other North - Western European countries, notably Germany, Italy, England and mostly France. It is mainly in Italy, France, Holland and Germany, where the great interest for the Antiquity started with the Renaissance, and then continued with the Classicism, the Romanticism, the establishment of Modern Classical Studies (based on Modern European Philosophical and Ideological Background - 'studies' of the Antiquity existed even in the Dark Ages), and last but not least with Orientalism.

But it must be clear, especially to non-European and non-American ears, that when we say Renaissance, i.e. Re-Birth (in French), we mean literally Re-Birth of Classical Antiquity, as the ideological and political, cultural and academic choice of those who contributed to this Re-Birth. The reason Western Europeans opted for that was precisely owing to their search, their quest for their identity, that was ultimately misrepresented by the Christian Dark Ages. It was a decisive step of rejecting a cultural identity (the Medieval Christian identity they had) in search of another, more genuine, more authentic and therefore more efficient identity, that they created by using ancient stuff, the literature and monuments they had in their hands.

Having been left for almost 1000 years at the margin of world developments that were mostly taking place between the Eastern Mediterranean and China (encompassing the Eastern Roman Empire, the Islamic Caliphate and its dependencies, as well as China), the Western Europeans realized that power means mainly Self-Knowledge, Self-Understanding, and correct Cultural and Political Representation of one's Identity.

Misrepresenting your Identity leads you to Death, this was the pillar of the Thought of Gigantic intellectuals, who searched in the Greco-Roman Pool to find out their real Identity, and extract from it the power to survive, expand and ultimately dominate the world. And they did do, because there was no equal Self-Knowledge, and Self-Understanding, and no correspondingly correct Cultural and Political Representation of Identity among their opponents - i.e. the Islamic World and China - to face them.

3. Western European Rise to Power, and Islamic Collapse

What is even worse is that, during the very critical phase 1500 - 1700, those who were conscious of the problem, (the class of Ottoman, Persian, Mogul Indian and Moroccan intellectuals, erudite scholars, and enlightened magistrates and rulers), were loosing power to obscurantist, ignorant, perverted, false religious leaders and semi-barbaric sheikhs, who were demanding urgently from the Sultan and the Shah, the decapitation of scholars and researchers - accused of being Satan's Instruments; and as Black Magic sorcerers - by gradually mobilizing the even more barbaric and analphabetic masses. Thus, Islam was engulfed to

total disappearance.

Three simple dates are significant:

1449: the Turk Ulugh Beg was in Samarkand the world's leading astronomer and mathematician, whose books were translated in Latin, and were to be studied by Copernicus (80 years later) and Galileo (140 years later).

1577: Taqf ad-din, leading astronomer at Istanbul, was continuing a 4500- year old Oriental tradition of Science, Exploration, Research and Knowledge, as depicted in miniatures from the Shahinshah-Nameh. But the magnificent Observatory of Istanbul was closed down two years later (1579) because of the perverted demand of the semi-barbaric sheikhs.

1799: When French scholars accompanying Napoleon studied Ancient Egyptian temples, the illiterate, ignorant and uneducated sheikhs of Egypt were mobilizing the barbaric masses against study, exploration, and excavation projects. But at the top of the Islamic civilization, 1000 years earlier, study of the Past was considered as top intellectual activity and leading endeavor for a Muslim intellectual.

The collapse was complete in 1799. In terms of Tabari, Ibn Rushd and Makrizi, Islam did not exist anymore.

4. Imposition of the Colonial Cultural, Educational Scheme

The imposition of Colonial rule occurred in parallel with the development - mainly by France - of the Colonial Ideology that consists in a perplex system that

1) in its practical aspect takes the form of

a) an academic and cultural dependence (of every 'colonized' country) on France and more generally on Western Europe, and

b) total absence of interconnection, interrelationship and interaction among two 'colonized' countries.

Two brief examples will clarify the two points.

a) An Egyptian studying Egyptology, an Iraqi studying Assyriology, a Tunisian studying Ancient Punic, a Greek studying Classical Archeology, an Afghani studying the History of the Great Empire Kushan, an Indian studying Prakrit, and an Abyssinian studying Gueze have certainly a far better ability to study their subject matter in Paris, London, Muenster, Louvain, Den Haag and Rome than respectively in Cairo, Baghdad, Tunis, Athens, Kaboul, Delhi or Mekele.

b) You cannot study Cuneiform Assyrian Babylonian in Cairo, or Prakrit in Baghdad, or Egyptian Hieroglyphic in Tunis, or Gueze in Athens, or Classical Archeology in Kabul, or Punic in India.

2) In its theoretical aspect, the Colonial Ideology takes the form of

a) erroneous Greco-Romano-centrism

b) forged Orientalism

c) lack of interconnection among several fields, since many subjects should be developed within the framework of an inter-disciplinary approach.

COMMON SENSE



By Hassan Al-Haifi

An Ideology without Moral Substance:

Zionism is anti-semitism

The latest effort to promote any stance or opinion against the evil backdrop on which the Zionist movement *must rely on* as "anti-Semitism" is no more than a continuation of the series of deceptions and twisted moral affinity that shrouds the modern Zionist Movement. Needless to say, Anti-Semitism, long used to distort an ethnic tie to territorial claims based on religious heresy, has worn out as an acceptable slander tool, which was often used against any objectors to the establishment of a state based on sheer chauvinistic dogmatism, clouded in groundless spiritual assertions. So, Zionist ideologists have turned to asserting that anti-Zionism is in itself anti-Semitism. One is not sure, if this is meant to imply that for the Semites (i.e., the Jews, for Zionists only recognize the affiliation of Jews to the Semitic race), there is no departure from Zionism. Why? Perhaps, the success of the anti-Semitic jab has worked so well in bringing about some sympathy for the Zionist Movement, especially after the Nazi persecutions against some of the Jewish communities in Europe (which other ethnic groups also encountered to the same degree). However, there is a growing trend towards questioning the legitimacy of Zionist persecution of the Palestinians and the continuing aggressive lawlessness of the Zionist state. Zionists wish to tie any such criticism with the anti-Semitism that has worked well in the past towards advancing the Zionist agenda. This serves a two-fold purpose: It instills among the Jews of the world, many of whom question the morality of Zionist dogma, the aura of a perpetual anti-Semitic feeling of persecution that only Zionism will stand up to. Furthermore, it introduces a strong sense of the power of the Zionist Movement to stand as the only force that will uphold and defend the interests of the Jews everywhere.

Whatever the case, the Zionist Movement needs to assert itself as the only standard for Jews everywhere to fall under and it is imperative that the scare of anti-Semitism is equated with anti-Zionism to further bind all Jews to the premise that Zionism is their only safeguard against anti-Semitism. For non-Jews the tie up is to ensure that the anti-Semitism charge is further capitalized on to ensure that those who criticize Israel or Zionism will face the charge of ethnic hatred against the Jews because Zionism and the "Semitic" race are inseparable and a bias against one is a bias against the other.

The Anti-Semitic charge is a farce in itself, because in actuality, the Zionist Movement is in theory and practice an anti-Semitic movement. What the Zionist Movement has produced in Palestine is a case of anti-Semitic persecution of the highest degree. The Palestinian Arabs are far more closer affiliated with the Semites of the region and culturally and ethnically have a greater affinity to the land that the Zionists are claiming to be the God-given property of the Semites (i.e., Jews). This does not do justice to the mercy of the Lord Al-Mighty, nor to the strong ethnic affinity that the Zionists claim for Jews as being Semites. In the case of the former, the Zionists are saying that God would find moral comfort in the continuing demise of the Palestinians under Zionist persecution as fulfillment of God's will. In the latter, if the Zionists claim to Jewish affiliation with the Semitic race has any merits, would it be ethnically logical for Semites to butcher their own brethren (the Arabs are the descendants of Abraham through his son Ishmael, while the Zionists claim that all Jews are the descendants of Isaac, the other son of Abraham)? But, the Zionists refuse to take note of this kinship and wish to only regard Jews as the only genuine Semites. This would be the only way they can try to give strength to territorial claims in Palestine. Thus, no effort is spared to ensure that Arabs are not even regarded as Semites at all and that only "Jews" are entitled to this ethnic affiliation. Needless to say the former are more genuinely and historically tied to the Semitic race, for the simple reason that they have occupied the region since time immemorial, whereas the latter have never had a firm footing in Palestine itself for any considerable period of time, especially the majority of the Jews who immigrated to Israel after the original Semites, the Palestinians were literally uprooted from their homeland. Most of these immigrants are more ethnically and culturally akin to the cultures they emigrated from than to the indigenous Palestinians they uprooted.

However, the trend towards having anti-Zionism equated with Anti-Semitism is further encouraged because there is really no real desire for ethnic association by current Zionists with the Arabs and thus no desire to even blend in with the indigenous "Semitic" cousins. This will become clearer when this column takes a hard look next issue at a long article of James Bennet of the New York Times about one of the most prominent icons of the Zionist Movement in modern times, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel, who is a full manifestation of all the evil attributes that are part and parcel of Zionist creed.

Zionism and Semitic association is simply a deception that has no merit on moral grounds and kinship affiliation. For one thing, the Semites (including the ancient Hebrews) have a strong inclination towards carrying the banner of spiritual moral affinity and the major monotheistic religions of the world originated with the Semites. Thus the desire to associate Zionism with Semitic ethnicity gives Zionism a moral spiritual accent by which

Letters to the Editor

Mohammad on the occasion of the transition of Power in Malaysia, then you will definitely find the reasons of why Malaysia went far on developing the Nation.

The real "Case" and I will use this word in all my articles and addresses, the "Case" is that Malaysians left corruption and dumped it far away, Malaysia refused funding from International Monetary Fund, Malaysians depended only on their simple economy and unified the three factions of the Nation, making the rights of all equal in all issues.

A lot of Malaysians don't talk about or even describe it, but let that speech of the ex-Prime Minister be a real example of what lies behind the success of Malaysia.

Until then "Allah Yehfaz Malaysia"

Mohsen Al-Jonaidy
aljonaidy@yahoo.com

"Allah Yehfaz Malaysia"

The Arab league, the Muslims and Malaysia. I urge you to read the speech of His Excellency Mahathir

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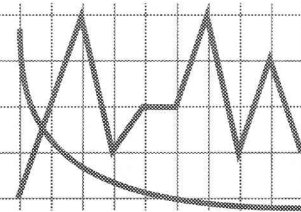
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YT Business



Serious steps towards,

Enhancement of economic partnership with Syria

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

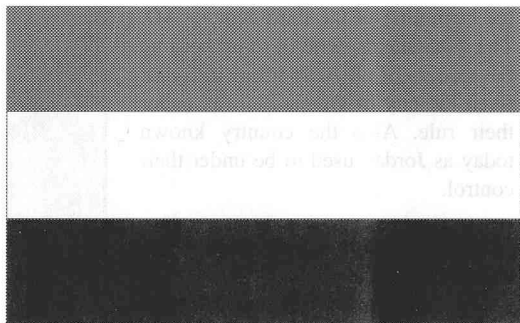
Yemen and Syria have taken serious steps for consolidation of the economic and investment partnership between the two countries by signing the executive programs on scientific and technical cooperation with regard to the fish wealth and agricultural cooperation.

The agreement has stipulated on exchange of expertise and training

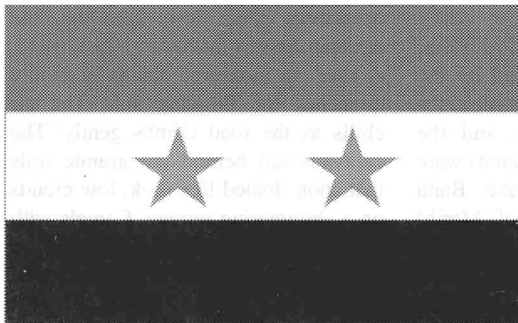
on systems of geographic information (GIS), fish cooperatives, monitoring via satellites and researches on fish that Yemen is in need of.

The agreement also includes training of Yemeni technicians in Syria in the area of breeding fish in reproduction basins as well as fish administration and statistics.

The agreement has covered the



encouragement of Syrian investors wishing to fish in Yemeni regional



waters and studying opportunities of fish reproduction in water dams.

With regard to agriculture, the agreement stipulated on an agreement of the joint technical committee at the conclusion of its meetings in Sana'a on cooperation in agricultural researches and protection of plants and animal wealth in addition to agricultural guidance.

The two parties have also agreed on cooperation in forests and pas-

Exchange Rate for the Yemeni Rial

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	184.7100	184.8800
Sterling Pound	343.6100	343.9200
Euro	228.5300	228.7400
Saudi Rial	49.2500	49.3000
Kuwaiti Dinar	626.8800	627.4600
UAE Dirhem	50.2900	50.3300
Egyptian Pound	29.8600	29.8900
Bahraini Dinar	489.9300	490.3800
Qatari Rial	50.7400	50.7800
Jordanian Dinar	260.5200	260.7600
Omani Rial	479.7800	480.2300
Swiss Franc	149.2300	149.3700
Swedish Crown	24.7700	24.7900
Japanese Yen	1.6682	1.6697

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

tures by the exchange of fruitful and bush trees seeds, the exchange of systems, laws and information and agricultural publications specified for botanic production and supplying Yemen with types of olive trees, fig and maize.

The agreement has not skipped the agreement on enhancing cooperation in food industries, encouragement of the private sector on the exchange of agriculture products and holding fairs for investment in fish wealth in Yemen.

Qat depletes water resources

It must be stopped

By MAHYOUB AL-KMALY
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Qat, according to a scientific-field study, is depleting our water resources. That must be stopped, and the demand and rapid dissemination of the Qat plant must be seriously taken into consideration in order to contain the problem.

The study confirmed that arable land currently utilized in Yemen is very limited, not more than 40%, in comparison to the expanse of arable land, estimated at 1.6 million hectares.

The study attributed the low size of the utilized arable land to the scarcity of the water resources. The study cited the tremendous expansion in the plantation of the Qat trees, which consume an estimated 8,000 cubic meters of water for each Qat-planted hectare - which is approximately 60% of Yemen's water resources.

The constant growing of Qat is considered a major agricultural problem that requires an immediate solution. Arable land must be expanded through the growing of vegetables, fruits and cash crops, not the Qat tree.

The Yemeni government has

recently approved carrying out a feasibility study on the alternative of importing Qat from the Horn of Africa, to reduce consumption of water on irrigation and to preserve the available water resources.

The study suggested urgently assessing the water problem, and launching a feasibility study into the establishment of water desalination plants, (at least in coastal cities that suffer from shortages of water, particularly Taiz, Al-Mukala and Aden), before it is too late to prevent a catastrophe on the population.

The study warned of the imminent threats that would result from the water crisis during the next five years, including the doubling of internal migration in the search for water.

The study recommended launching an awareness campaign on the importance of rationing water usage in government buildings, corporations, ministries and farms, industrial facilities, households and in agricultural irrigation methods. However, the study pointed out that the rationing process was not the permanent solution to the problem. It also urged the related authorities to double their efforts in establishing and building more dams and water barriers to benefit from rainfalls.



Low size of utilized arable land is attributed to scarcity of water resources and expansion in Qat tree plantation

Japan extends its support to implement 3 Grass-Roots projects in Yemen

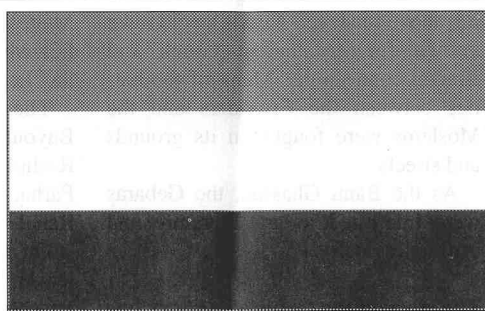
By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The government of Japan has decided to extend grants amounting to up to US \$251,706 to implement the following three projects in the current Japanese fiscal year (April 2004-March 2005), under the Japanese scheme called "Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects".

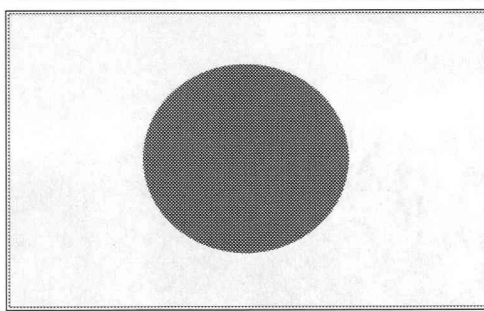
1) A project for the Implementation of a Water Supply System in Al-Jaradi District Al-Mahweet Governorate, amounting up to US \$89,164. The project aims at restoring a water

supply project, which the Government of Japan implemented some fifteen years ago. The project, which will be executed by Al-Jaradi Water Committee, will assist the inhabitants in obtaining sufficient drinking water through a better water network.

2) A project for Providing Equipment to Produce TV Programs to raise awareness of Solid Waste Management, amounting up to US \$81,522. The project is to be implemented by the Environmental



Awareness Center in Sana'a. The center will procure modern electronic equipment to produce TV programmes and clips, to be screened by Yemeni national TV stations, in order to raise awareness



about cleanliness issues country-wide.

3) A project for Providing Medical Equipment for the Mobile Ophthalmologic Clinic amounting up to US \$81,020. The project will

be implemented by Al-Nibras Health Society, a Yemeni NGO. The Society will use the grant to procure equipment necessary for ophthalmologic operations to be carried out at a nominal charge by its mobile clinic that tours different areas in Yemen to extend its services to the people in rural areas.

Agreements to this effect were signed today between Mr. Yuichi Ishii, the Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Yemen, and representatives of the recipients concerned, namely, Mr. Ali Al-Jaradi, Director of

Al-Jaradi Water Project, Mr. Sharaf Al-Hamzi Director of Environmental Awareness Center and Mr. Abdulmoghni Al-Barrag, Chairperson of Al-Nibras Health Society.

During the current Japanese fiscal year, four projects under the above-mentioned Japanese scheme, including the above three, have been so far been financed in Yemen, amounting to a total of US \$338,600. The scheme aims at supporting small-scale community-based projects in Basic Human Needs fields, such as primary health care, basic education and public welfare in developing countries, such as Yemen.

The link between the ancient Yemeni kingdom and the ancient Slovenian State of Carantania uncovered:

From Marib to Carantania



BY IRENA KNEHTL
YEMEN TIMES STAFF
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The oldest history of Yemen is connected with the city of Marib and its dam. Ancient Marib was the largest of the incense cities, it held a commanding position for the transportation of frankincense on the important caravan route that ran from the areas on the Indian Ocean to the shores of the Mediterranean. It was not until Adeeb Mahfood from Jamaica, and his cousin Hashem Hashem from Canada, in searching for their own original family in Yemen, uncovered the long suspected link between the ancient Yemeni kingdom and ancient Carantania. They provided history of the Gebara family and other Arab lineages a result of their seven year long research. What follows here is perhaps a personal journey, and search for a lost identity and history.

Chronology of the Area of Marib in Yemen

1700 B.C. Legendary date for the building of the dam at Marib.

1000 B.C. Sabaeans settle in the Marib area

950 B.C. Traditional day for Bilquis, Queen of Sheba (Saba), 925 B.C. Death of King Solomon.

800-700 B.C. Name of the traditional rules of Saba are known from about this time. They were called "mukarrib", the term probably meant "priest-king".

800 B.C. Traditional date for the "building of the dam at Marib". The reference here probably means the rebuilding of the dam, and possibly the building of the great sluices.

715 B.C. the successive Assyrian Kings receive tributes of gold, precious stones, spices, horses and camels from the Sabaeans.

600-500 B.C. Sabaeans send trading colonists to India.

587 B.C. Defeat of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. Prophet Ezekiel writes about trade with the Sabaeans at this time.

410 B.C. Karib il Watear listed as the first "king" of Saba. Change here is from "mukarrib" to "king".

100 A.D. Alhan Nahfan Hamadanid, King of Saba forms alliances with Hadramaut and Ethiopia.

200 A.D. and after Saba under the hegemony of Himyar. Himyar, kings calling themselves kings of Saba and Dhu Raydan.

Following two centuries is one of conflict with Ethiopia and Persia, siding first with one then another South Arabian fraction. This time is also one of ferment in religion with both Judaism and Christianity prominent at various periods.

Due to heavy rains and floods, the great dam at Marib was already destroyed. Proverb "scattered like the people of Saba" refers to that exodus in history.

622 A.D. Hijra, Mohammads flight from Mecca to Medina and beginning

of the Islamic era.

Rome was known as the furthestmost and northernmost capital that the ancient Yemeni diplomats were appointed to. Sabaeans also sent a diplomatic mission to meet Emperor Octavianus Augustus at the Greek island of Samos. Through archeological evidence there is proof of Sabeian presence throughout the East Africa from Egypt to Tanzania, and coast of India and Indochina

Tha Banu Ghassan

The political dynamics of Pre-Islamic Arabia can be summarized by the interaction of three major forces: the Gassanids, the Lakhimids, and the Kindah or Kinda. The Ghassanids were a south Arabian Yemeni tribe. Banu Ghassan, migrated north (of Marib) during the third and fourth centuries, but mostly after the break up of the great Marib dam and settled in the region of Damascus. Christian by religion, they allied themselves with Byzantium. They also agreed to protect the southern flank of the Byzantine Empire against the intrusion of other Arab tribes. This alliance held well throughout the wars between the Byzantines and the Persian Empires. Another group emigrated and settled in Hira, where they established the kingdom of Lakhama. During 6th Century, after the departure of the two major empires of the time, the Byzantine and the Persian, many Ghassanids allied themselves with the increasingly dominating Arab tribes from the heartland of Arabia. This political dynamic is important, because it is out of the interaction of the Arab tribes and the leaders of these kingdoms that the early Islamic community, and later the Islamic Empire, emerge.



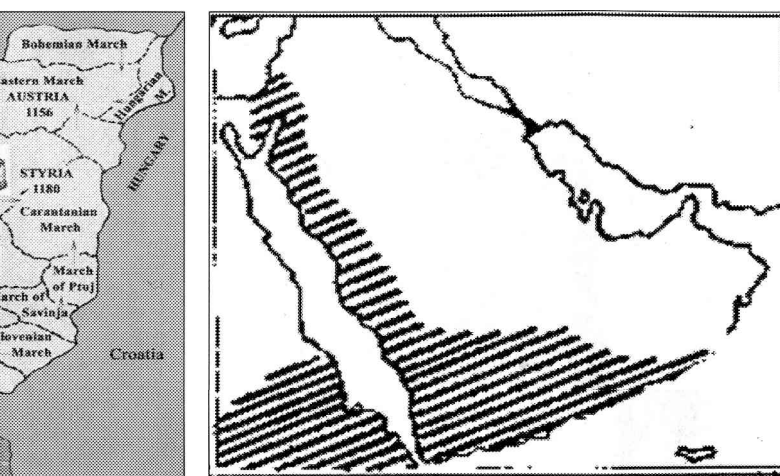
The map of Great Duchy of Carantania: present day Slovenia, Austria, northern Italy and the northern Adriatic Sea (courtesy Dr. Jozko Savli)

Their country was the caravan, their life the most unexpected of voyages. As any journey, theirs would be ruled by the twin houses of mystery and discovery. Their wrists experienced in turn the caresses of silk, the abuses of wool, the gold of princes and chains of slaves. Their eyes saw cities die and empires perish. And their camels moved forward in time with the rise and fall of its rhythm.

Once crowded incense road ran some 2,400 miles through Arabia, from southern Oman, through high Yemeni

mountains, across the dunes and black volcanic deserts of Saudi Arabia to Petra. In Roman times, a rugged journey of some 80 marches, offered challenges. To them frankincense symbolized divinity, an offering on a par with gold and myrrh, another Arabian incense also prized for medicine. Thousand of years earlier Egyptians were using the "perfume of the gods" for temple rites. The road to the Yemeni Arab sea coast is covered with frankincense groves. Only here do trees find conditions ideal. It is here that the Arabian desert makes a quick change. A roof of monsoon clouds suddenly quenches the blinding sun. The air chills as the road climbs gently. The caravans left behind the granite hills that soon floated like dark, low clouds on a shimmering mirage. Camels with their soft padded feet moved easier on that soft sand that skirts the southwest sand of the Empty Quarter, a great blank on Arabians maps. Small clay figures found in Yemen and dating from 1000 B.C are among the earliest depictions of the camel. Thriving on harsh vegetation that would starve other beasts, the camel provides milk, wool, meat and leather. As the Holy Kuran notes "only on them, as well as on ships, ye ride" Ancient ghost town Haribart, AlJubah, AlMasajid marked the way.

The glory of Sheba or Saba seems to linger in the ancient capital of Mareb, where the fabled Queen who brought to King Sulaiman "such an abundance of spices" may once have ruled. There is also an oval shaped temple of the shape of the moon. Past Najran some 60 miles to the north at Bir Hima, ancient caravans left thousand of inscriptions on the sandstone. Most the simple graffiti of rustics, some are illustrated



The map of Sabeian area of influence

with scenes of camel herds, a date harvest, ibex, hunters wielding spear. From Petra the incense traveled on to Gaza, across the Sinai to major processing plants in Alexandria, north to Palmyra and Damascus, east to Euphrates. Markings similar to those at Marib, perhaps a merchant monograph, were found on vessels at the other end of the incense route - at Gaza on the Mediterranean.

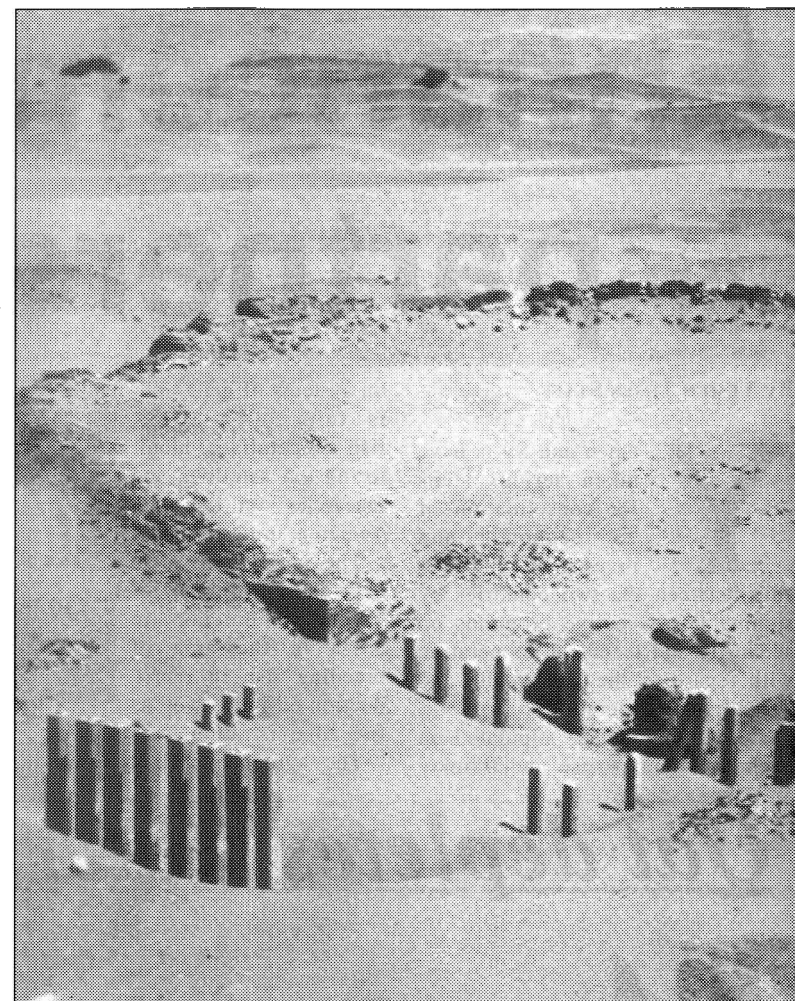
Amre, son of Amre from Saba emigrated with his family and many of his followers north (of Marib). They set-

tled in Houran. After their departure from Yemen, Houran became their first home. The land of Houran lies about twenty miles to the south of Damascus. It is a vast region with mountains, valleys and plains. The climate is mild and its soil fertile. The Ghassanids were named after the well where they first settled upon their arrival from Yemen. Amer El-Ghatreef, known also as "maussma", meaning the "Water of Heaven" for his generosity, became the first Ghassanid King. He lived about the beginning of the third century AD. The Ghassanids would soon become the leaders of all Arab tribes in Syria. Even the city of Damascus was under their rule. Also the country known today as Jordan used to be under their control.

*The Ghassanids - poets, men of literature and arts

The Ghassanids Kingdom extended as far as the Red Sea to the South and the Euphrates to the north, the Jordan and Yarmuk valleys were included in their realms, the city of Joulan, known today as Balkaa was their capital. The ruins of palaces, churches, castles, public baths, and aqueducts in Houran are evidence of the sophistication of their culture and civilization. The Banu Ghassan lived in a palace in the middle of the town and administered their vast realms. They traded extensively. The Greeks gave the Ghassanids kings the title "Elharith" and the kings of Hira the title of "El-Munzer". These two titles were equivalent to title of Pharaoh of Egypt, Negus in Abyssinia and Caesar in Rome. The Emperors of Constantinople gave them the tile of "Patrik" meaning the father.

The Ghassanid kings became known for their generosity. The last to succeed



The Moon Temple, one of the mysterious remains of the Sabeian Kingdom in Mareb

Greek Orthodox faith. Some of them still live in Azra, but the majority went to Damascus and Acre, some came to Arjeyoun and Kornet Shahwan.

Their features were confirmed as follows: high temple, big noses, prominent foreheads, fuzzy hair, small jaws, thin lips, beautifully straight teeth, well proportioned features, dark complexions, black eyes and beautiful figures. Further generosity, contentment, fondness of country life, bravery, distinguished looks and benevolence. In all ages and epochs the Gebaras -Jebaras -Jeberas - Sceberas went through, there were among them men and women who are outstanding in bravery, administrative work, learning, religion, and writings. Among them are generals, administrators, bishops, priests, monks, physicians, pharmacists, scientists, lawyers, merchants, and benefactors.

The Gebara family includes both Christians and Moslems. The Moslem Gebaras adopted Islam during the time of Arab conquest, and migrated with the respective Moslem community. The Moslem Gebaras went to El-Median, Yunbu, Asffan, Alexandria, Beer Sheba, Jub Jennine, Majdal Balhiss, El-Kerou, and Tripoli.

The places where the Christian Gebaras went are Damascus, Marjeyoun, Kornet Shahwan, Jebbata el-Zeit, Ammatour, Zahleh, Jell elDeeb, Ain Aiir, Aleppo, Alexandria, Austria/Slovenia - then named Carantania, which was probably known to them from their extensive trading contacts.

Was ancient Carantania their timber supplier? Slovenian scholar Dr. Jozko Savli says it probably goes back to a very old link that goes all the way to Yemen and to the ancient Sabeian kingdom.

Others proceeded to Greece, Turkey, the rest remained in Azra - A group of Gebaras who went to Alexandria (Egypt) proceeded to Malta and gave rise to one of the finest aristocratic Maltese families. Names of the families who settled in Merjyoum (present day Lebanon):

The Jebara, the Gholmia, the Bayouth, the Razook, the Andeel, the Rashid, the Naifeh, the Barakat, the Farha, the Hamara, the Farhood, the Rahal, the Theeba, the Mady.

On this autumn day, the yellowing leaves in Azra were more securely attached to the trees, their city was divided. Orchards have been laid to waste, the peasants would complain. And the night hid his face. How many great kings, or inspired poets, or intrepid travelers have never been able to attain the destiny which seemed prom-

ised to them? On each new shore, they attached the name of the homeland they had left behind. The Slovenian Julian Alps were the first mountain barrier separating the Mediterranean from Continental Central Europe. A largely mountainous region, almost half of it covered with forests, pastures, fields, vineyards and orchards. The snow fell continuously, covering the land with a veil of peace and serenity which nothing seemed able to destroy. They no longer saw land, nor sea, nor sun, nor the end of their journey, or weather they would encounter death or glory. Wherever you will go, some will want to ask questions about your skin or your prayers. Muslim, Jew or Christian, beware of bending before the multitude. When mans mind seems narrow to you, tell yourself that the land of God is broad, broad are His hands and broad is His heart. Never hesitate to go far away beyond all seas, all frontiers, and all beliefs. I for my part - so it seems - have reached the end of my wanderings.

The white community in Europe too is composed of three main cultures, western, eastern and southern. The "southern culture" in Europe is at least known and acknowledged. One thing is certain: half buried along the frankincense trail from the sacred groves of Yemen, to the fragrant alters of Rome, to the rose gardens of Damascus and the deep forests of ancient Carantania, waiting to be read, lies a compelling chapter in the history of man.

Apologia

I am much indebted to Adeeb Mahfood in Jamaica and Hashem Hashem in Canada whose mother was a real Gebara, for providing the lead, their family references and history. My profound thanks to Slovenian scholar Dr. Jozko Savli, and author of the book "The Slovenian State of Karantania".

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For Marib, the Sabeian Capital to Carantania will be published in full on Gebara family site and on Carantania web site of Slovene history: www.niagara.com/~jezovnik



A view of the beautiful mountain ranges in the Julian Alps

Continued from back page

The white mountain

We went to find a representation of the local authority, we did not find any. This tragedy is getting worse. With the fall of rain and the penetration of more water to underground soil, there is an increased chance of mudslides and more catastrophes.

Since this problem occurred just few days ago, the local council, the public works office and the related authorities, including the Red Crescent from a humanitarian prospective, remain inactive and absent. They have contributed nothing to assist the victims, except for the formation of a commission of inquiry to study and examine the phenomenon in order to present a report about to the governorate.

Who is responsible?

In order to find a possible remedy, we went to the Public Works office in search of a geological map as this office would be in charge of that, similarly to other countries of the world. We looked for the geological map, which is the guide that construction and architectural engineers would use as reference for the suitable areas and locations to carry their designs and works. The map would indicate the areas and locations situated in the path of earthquakes and volcanoes, but we were disappointed to find out that permits were granted without any reference to any safety or suitability considerations. No precau-

tious measures are in place to protect the lives of citizens or their funds. This is an indication of the level of negligence, apathy, chaos and ignorance, of the public works office in carrying out their duties.

If this problem has exposed the hidden nature of the public works, what do citizens expect from the public works, not only in Taiz city, but in similar areas? To solve this problem requires the suspension of issuing construction permits until the Public works, with the cooperation of the related authorities, has prepared a geological map of Yemeni cities and towns.

In order to include the view of the related authority, we headed to the office of the Public Works at Al-Mudhafur province, which the White Mountain is a part of. We met with engineer Mansour Al-Bahri, the director of the Public Works office in the province. We conducted the following interview:

Q: What are the causes of the cracks?

A: The cracks have been there since many years ago. However, many of them have been expanding and widening in recent years, which means there was a problem. After the office began to receive complaints from the residents on the white mountain hill, probably due to the rain falls, the office dispatched a team of three construction engineers to assess damage. I was the coordinator of the fielded survey. The primary assessment was to include a number of geological specialists. In light of that, a memo was sent to Ministry of Agriculture and irrigation where such engineers would be available. We obtained two engineers. However, they wanted to include to the team a number of university geology professors and experts in the field. The Taiz University dispatched 3 of them with equipment and apparatus to facilitate achieving reliable findings. We split into three teams to scope the area. Following several visits to the site, a

broad meeting was held in order to analyze the problem. It was very evident that the mountain was not solid-rock, but was of a more fragile type. The rainfalls are just exacerbating the situation, the more water absorbed by the soil, the more chances for widening the cracks and the faster the dissemination of cracked-branches.

Q: What were the procedures your office began undertaking or intended to, in order to treat the situation, if it could be treated?

A: the geologists in the commission said that it was beyond our capability to attempt fixing the situation quickly. However, the first step could be to pave and asphalt the area to prevent underground water leakage in the residential part of the area. Then walls could be built on the eastern and western sides of the mountain. Of course, some citizens on a self-initiative measure have begun building walls. We, in turn suspended issuing new construction permits indefinitely or until the completion of the study. The citizens could also dry out the underground dogged sewage by connecting their homes to the main sewage network, and creating canals to derail rain water out similarly to the irrigation canals.

Q: what did the office present to the victims in the area?

A: we have requested for tents to be temporarily placed outside the demolished homes. We advise those who have only a portion of their homes demolished and are still living inside the remains, amid constant fear of collapse of the still standing part over their heads, at least, to evacuate their homes when it rains. What we are concerned with currently is to find an expeditious solution to prevent further slides.

Q: In other countries of the world, they have the so-called geological maps of their countries, which indicate the areas that are most vulnerable to encounter volcanoes, earth-



Thus the less damaged house looks like

quakes and mudslides, and the ones that are least likely to encounter such. This constitutes the primary requisite element to granting or not to granting construction permits. Where does this stand here in Yemen, at your office, at the present time?

A: we have included in the submitted recommendations the need to make geological maps for Taiz area. The office in 1997, submitted a request to the engineering syndicate to seek to produce geological maps that would permit designers and engineers to determine the best and most safe locations and areas for any construction work, providing that it was the least expensive approach.

Q: Does the absence of geological maps, and the random issuance of construction permits makes your office responsible to present compensation to the victims in the area?

A: Of course, we can not determine precisely what lays underneath the upper ground surface. Permits were granted based on examining the ground

surface of any construction site. Our recommendations have been emphasizing the importance to having the geological maps.

Q: But what will you present to the victims at the present time?

A: The problem is not exclusively connected with just the Public Works. The geological maps are the responsibility of Ministries of Oil and Minerals, Planning and International Development and the Public Works.

Q: I believe that you are evading my question. Will the local council and the Ministry bear the compensation to the damage-inflicted victims?

A: This is a matter that is up to the local council and the Ministry, which will determine what the final assessment might be. Our immediate role is to commence building the wall barriers that would reduce the chance of more landslides. The inflicted victims have the right to be compensated and the state's obligation and duty should be to assist them.



Consequences of geological map absence

إعلان

تعليق جامعة صنعاء عن تمديد فترة بيع الوثائق للمناقصة الدولية الخاصة بإنشاء القاعة الكبرى إلى يوم الثلاثاء ٢٠٠٤/٨/٣١، وسيتم فتح مظاريف المناقصة علناً يوم الإثنين ٢٠٠٤/١٠/٤ بحضور المتقدمين في المناقصة أو من يمثلهم.

مع العلم أن رسوم بيع الوثائق ثلاثة آلاف دولار لا ترد.

Announcement

Sanaa University announces the extension of selling the international tender documents for the construction of the Major Hall until Tuesday 31st Aug. 2004.

The tender envelopes will be publicly opened on Monday 4th October 2004 in the presence of the bidders or their representatives. The tender documents cost is non-refundable US\$3,000.

مطلوب مصمم

صحيفة يمنية رائدة تود توظيف مصمم ليقوم بأعمال التصميم والإخراج للصفحات والمواد المختلفة الأخرى وعلى الراغبين بالتقدم للعمل أن يستوفوا الشروط التالية:

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في فترة الدوام (8:30 صباحاً - 1:00 ظهراً) و(4:30 عصراً - 7:00 مساءً)

Yemeni Press.

A week in review

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr

Main headlines

- Fierce attack with shells on an army camp near Sa'ada
- Waela tribes declare their loyalty and support for chasing remnants of al-Houthi followers
- Positive repercussions of the president's remarks among the people looking for realization of accountability
- America deports a Yemeni student while traveling to another state
- Iran: All Israel and its weapons within range of our missiles
- Sheikh al-Mahdi denies fomenting against the Ismaeli
- Presidential promise to enable citizens to elect governors of governorates
- Hardliner Salafi groups rival Islah party for the domination over the university
- GPC's assistant secretary-general calls on opposition parties to think objectively for tackling problems facing the country
- The government offers YR 114 million to civil society organisations for the Year 2004
- Islah refuses to involve university in conflict with security
- News correspondents prevented from covering the final battle, al-Houthi moves from one village to another
- Merging two government banks after brushing aside the banks of agricultural loans and housing
- In six months, 40 people commit suicide in Ibb
- Arab organisation on freedom of the press demands protection for Yemeni journalists
- Rockets pound Sa'ada villages
- The president opens projects and lays foundation stones for other strategic projects costing YR 12.5 billion
- The president: Poverty, absence of justice and democracy, main causes of extremism and terror
- Cabinet discusses a project for regulating fishing
- FM: Arab League foreign ministers resolutions on Darfur depended mostly on the Yemeni working paper
- Nine world consultant firms for studying a project linking electric power between Yemen and Saudi Arabia
- Military Staff declares end of hostilities, conflicting news from Hamadan
- Constitutional rights violated inside courtrooms



Al-Ayyam daily, 16 August 2004.

Main headlines

- Military sources say al-Houthi controls three positions in Mran
 - About 200 students stage sit-in before Taiz University presidency
 - Journalists Syndicate Council approves holding branches elections during this month
 - Activities of 7 summer youth and students centers in Lahj concluded
- The newspaper's political editor says the president of the republic's talk to the leadership of the local administration and officials in the governorate of Ibb has received great interest and attention as well as satisfaction from all segments of the society because it touched on issues of the hour and woes of the public which some thought they were far from thinking and premonition of the first man in the authority.

Many Yemenis described President Ali Abdullah Saleh's talk as had borne concerns of the Yemeni public throughout the past years and has represented a warning for all those who have not taken the lesson, those who are assuming their posts and those around them. The president has given examples of bad phenomena in the state apparatus and the society such as bribery, fraud and extravagancy.

Since the president has diagnosed those phenomena of failure in such a frank manner, the majority of the people are now looking forward that the central apparatus of audition would undertake its role of accountability of all the phenomena spelled out by the president.



Al-Sahwa weekly, 12 August 2004.

Main headlines

- Al-Houthi, unknown fate and continued confrontations
- Aden local council's stance regarding the 2005 budget
- Large-scale denunciation for the ruling party's insistence on causing a rift in the physicians and pharmacists union
- Journalists specialized in economic affairs meet minister of local administration

Columnist Zaid al-Shami says in his article we hear many queries on the local, or regional or international reality, not for the purpose of influencing it or direct it but rather to

know it and then to adapt ourselves to its consequences and to concede what it would bring forth. This behaviour has led us to a stage of weakness and deterioration.

Around us there are live and active peoples who are not lazy or dillydallying and would not give in to their reality but rather work for changing it for the better and are keen to have a name and status among others. The question is why we as Arabs and Muslims lagging behind do and wait the act and work done by others? Why do we accept the other's aggression and conspiracies, as if our task is stopped at receiving the blows and get adapted to the events? If we do not get ourselves liberated and unleash our potentials and energies we would remain in this situation, we have then to get rid of the complex of surrender to get out of weakness and stationary and make our reality.



Annas weekly, 16 August 2004.

Main headlines

- Struggler Al-Foseil addresses a message to the president
 - Nassr Taha Mustafa: Mediation committee was a tactic for absorbing opposition stand
 - Al-Houthi still resisting at his hometown, the army getting ready for attacking al-Razammi
 - In Ibb, death sentence for a child killer, five-year imprisonment for other defendants
 - Journalists Syndicate to supply press cards for journalists
 - In a symposium organized by the Yemeni Center for Strategic Studies,
 - Private sector requested to build social safety net as part of its responsibility towards society
- Columnist Dr Hosni al-Jawshaie

says in an article the observer of the Arab reality who looks through a scrutinizing eye find there is a huge and perseverant movement of rejection by the Arab peoples of this painful reality. This movement is increasing day by day in its activity and expansion but it has not yet reached the degree of boiling anger and certainly it would in a short period.

Evidence of this rejection of this backward and corrupt and dictatorial reality began to emerge in many Arab societies in many Arab countries, especially the big countries with high population density and great cultural dimension. Intellectuals and educated class in those societies are leading this movement of rejection through passing documents signed by hundreds of social personalities and scientists and leaders of thought demanding Arab rulers to respect the mentality of those peoples and respect the constitution and not to monopolize authority or bequeathing it or extension for unlimited periods, as what had happened in one of the Arab countries. The intellectuals and all those under this movement also demanded the release of the freedom of political parties establishment, the freedom of press and a genuine democratic practice. This movement of rejection has its many excuses because the peoples have got impatient with those rulers who impose themselves by the power of arms.

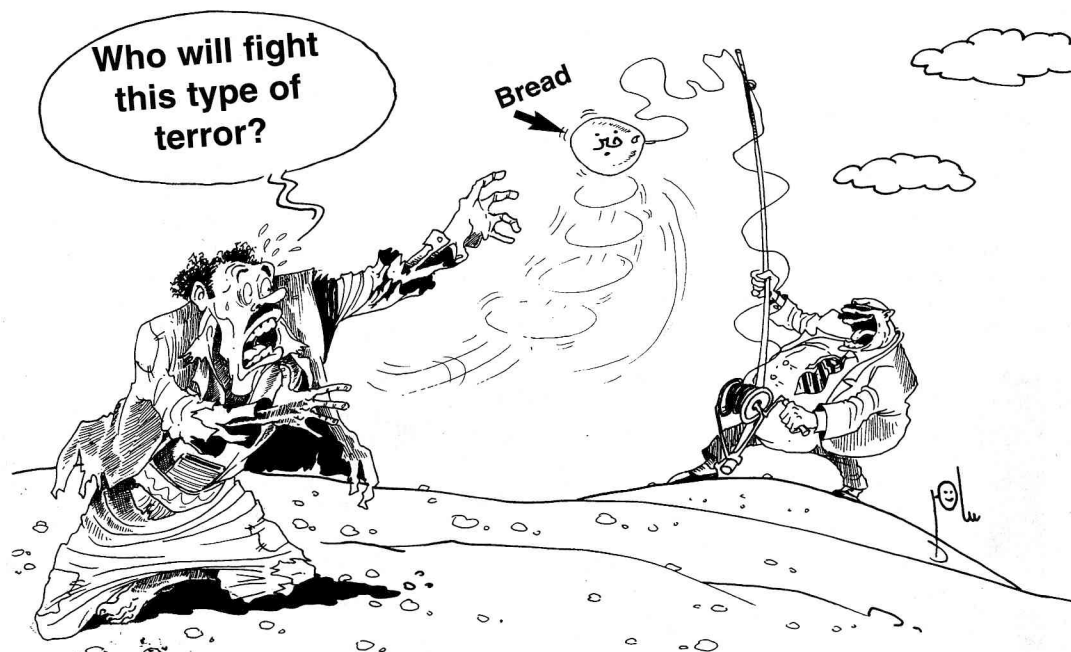


Al-Shoura weekly, organ of the Yemeni Union of People's Forces, 11 August 2004.

Main headlines

- Sa'ada sends distress calls, battles continue after failure of mediation
- Directives on not reducing fees of Yemen Mobile phone calls
- On Houthi support charges, politi-

SKETCHED OPINION



By Samer A.

cal security has been detaining children for more than a month

- 479 women, victims of security incidents in Ibb
- Central Apparatus searches for YR 12 million in Hudeidah education office

Columnist Abdulaziz Al-Majidi says in his article that fear is haunting hundreds of workers at the Textile Factory in Aden from a fate similar to workers of workers in installations that have been privatized before and led to their losing of legal rights they deserve from investments and the government.

A trade unionist committee representing 665 workers at the textile factory is now active to confirm rights of

those workers in Aden as the committee has found out that the privatisation measures did not include them clearly. The workers were taken unawares when they knew about leasing the factory to a merchant a time there was news about selling the factory. The sides concerned with privatisation in Aden have denied their knowledge about what is going on, including the governor.

There were introductions of anxiety the workers had to get prepared to before the month of last July, the date fixed for handing over the factory to the merchant to whom the factory had been rented. The government has stopped paying salaries of those workers from the state treasury and

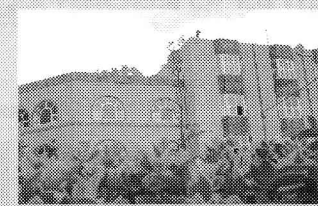
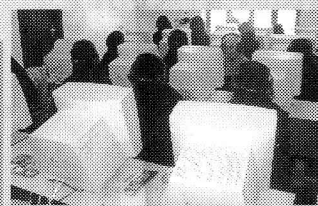
the beginning of the year 2005 would be a painful end for a relationship the workers thought the law of civil service and the law on establishment of the civil service fund would guarantee their rewarding them for their services. According to the decision taken by the council of ministers on 8 June 2004, the establishment of Al-Issa for trade, development and investment would undertake employment of the factory's workers and taking into consideration all their rights guaranteed by valid laws but the fears workers are related to non-commitment of the investor to his obligations and then the workers would face the same fate that befell workers at other installations that had been privatized.



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عبد اللطيف حميد غوبر

بمناسبة الزفاف الميمون

متمنين للعريس حياة زوجية سعيدة.

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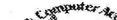
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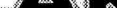


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The white mountain

By ABDULRAHMAN A. AL-JA'AFARI
YEMEN TIMES
TAIZ BUREAU

The absence of geological surveys for cities leads the future citizens to unknown dangers. The cracks on the white hill have destroyed many homes and creep towards the remaining ones. The local authority is slow to implement emergency procedures. The Housing authority bears the responsibility.

The white mountain is situated at Al-Qadhi valley in Taiz city. The nearby residents claim that the holes and cracks are not new, there were evidences of old cracks on the mountain. But, if the issue was known to some old residents, many new citizens, attracted by the location of the hill in recent years, were not familiar with the dangers of the mountain and its



Houses nearby effected with discernable cracks

fatal hill. They were surprised by the cracks and the imminent death and destruction that they encountered.

Old residents have witnessed moments of terror and fear, witnessing the collapse of their homes over their heads, being buried alive when the cracks and holes first struck or widened, causing immense cracks in the exterior walls of their homes. However, the situation has worsened in recent times since the cracks creep, like a giant snake, creating more branches that have effected the interior of many homes and buildings. And for some residents, the cracks have marked their graves.

The area is littered with totally ruined, uninhabitable homes, newly built homes, whose owners were getting ready to move in, and half-constructed houses that have added to the misery of their owners whose personal savings or loans went down the drain, and whose dreams of securing their

families from the suffering of paying rent and the threat of eviction, are in tatters.

Yusef Radman Al-Jubani, an effected resident took me to his homes, consisting of a two one-floor houses. In one, the construction work was complete while the other was half-way completed. He thought that he had accomplished his dream and had secured a permanent shelter for his family. But his dream vanished in seconds when the cracks reached both of his houses, instantly converting them into homes unsafe to live in - they are now merely remnants of a previously inhabited area. No one could feel the sorrow and grief that has stricken him. He told me bitterly that there was no other place to go to. "Here lays my soul and here I would stay regardless of the serious consequences" he said.

Continued on page 11



A house turned to ruins

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