

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind

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Afghanistan's Mining Sector: Fantasy and Reality

The mining sector in Afghanistan, if boomed properly, can serve as a hope to boost Afghan economy to a large extent. Many years of instability and wars have influenced Afghan economy negatively, except for the last some years. The involvement of international community in Afghanistan has generated some hopes that Afghanistan may be able to stand on its own in the times to come. However, it would need to learn to live on its own. The complete withdrawal of international security forces from the country may raise various challenges for Afghanistan as far as the financial support and economic stability are concerned. Nonetheless, the country has to rely on its own resources and among them the mining sector can, undoubtedly, play a tremendous role.

According to certain calculations by US, Afghanistan may possess mineral deposits worth USD 1 trillion, which is really very large and includes the minerals like gold, iron ore, uranium and precious stones including emeralds. Unearthing all these mineral resources and processing them so that they are ready for use or export would definitely require large factories and a large number of human resources, which would provide the unemployed youth of the country an opportunity to avail employment.

Country's rich mine sector would ensure bolstering each and every sector of the country during the next 20 years but a proper administration is needed to protect the sector. It is really very imperative to understand that the large mineral reservoirs that remain untouched in our country can solve a large number of our problems but we are not able to avail such opportunity and mostly the way we administer it or plan to administer it is responsible for it.

It is really necessary that the legislative and administrative mechanisms in the country must strive to formulate and pursue the laws and policies that are for the benefits of the country and that involve the consultations and advice from the technical and professional persons.

It is an undeniable fact that the natural resources of the country have yet to be unearthed and there have not been even very basic work done in this regard. So, everything has to be started right from the very inception and that would require a lot of hard work and dedication. Hopeful expectations in this regard have to be backed properly by determined and practical measures; otherwise intention may end up in smoke.

Currently, Afghanistan has been highly dependent on international support to run its economic system. In the post withdrawal period there are possibilities that the international aid entering the country may reduce considerably. Though the international community has made promises that the support for the country may continue till 2024, the international political and economic circumstances point towards some other facts - they clearly depict that there will be a considerable decline in financial support to Afghanistan, if not complete negligence.

On the other hand the security situation in the country has been going through a deteriorating trend. The terrorism seems to be rising in some of the most important parts of the country and the security situation still remains a question mark. Threatened by insecurity major projects regarding the mining sector have been postponed. The ones that have been started are lagging behind their schedule. The international investors are losing their interest as they do not feel that their investment would bring fruit in such uncertain circumstances. Moreover, the regional ties regarding peace and security seem to be weakening and the reconciliation process seems out of shape. In fact reliable security still remains dubious.

In such circumstances, development of a strong mining sector seems a herculean task. The mining sector is not just about digging the minerals out of the earth. It includes a complete development of an infrastructure. It involves complicated processes, machinery and latest technology. Most importantly, it requires a reliable and working transportation system that must be free of risk and must prove helpful in transporting heavy equipments and human resource to the mountainous areas where minerals are located. In addition, the same transportation system must transfer the minerals that are dug out to different plants for being refined and changed to usable conditions.

The mining sector also requires strong, cheap and reliable communication system that must remain undisturbed by the culprits. As a matter of fact, for the whole process, in order to reach to its final phase, a lot of investment and a decade or more of peaceful socio-political circumstances are required. While forming expectations about mining sector, it is necessary for the government officials to keep in considerations all these facts.

Definitely, generations of instability have incapacitated Afghanistan to work on these resources but at the same time it would require, at least a generation if not generations of stability to bring these resources in use. It is not impossible; neither the purpose of this article has been to promulgate pessimism about the circumstances. Its main objective has been to remind the people of Afghanistan and most importantly the Afghan authorities to analyze the socio-political and politico-economic conditions rationally and try to comprehend the challenges appropriately.

After the challenges are understood appropriately, measures can be carried out to find out proper solution of the challenges. It is really encouraging that there are expectations from the mining sector, but these expectations must not be converted to fantasies rather they should be changed to realities through prudence and positive attitude.

PLA is an Army that Safeguards Peace

By Liu Jinsong

August 1st is the Anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. I hosted a special reception in the Embassy for this memorable day. In this birthday of PLA and military festival, we would have a common question: Why should we celebrate this military festival? What is the mission of military forces? What is the most important thing that should be cherished, struggled and protected by Afghanistan and the whole world? I believe everyone will answer with one word: PEACE!

Both Chinese and Afghans are peace-loving people. We have firmly pursued peace and made tremendous national sacrifices in chasing it.

The People's liberation Army, led by the Communist Party of China, was born 91 years ago when Chinese warlords were conflicting, foreign enemies were besieging, the economy and society were withering, and the people were displaced. The members of the Communist Party of China and commanders and soldiers of the PLA shouldered the heavy responsibility of national salvation. They overthrown imperialism, colonialism and feudalism with flesh and blood, given the common people a peaceful homeland and a blue sky.

PLA, tempered into steel and never yield in spite of reverses, undertook Long March, defeated foreign invaders and created the new China with independence and sovereignty. Since October 1, 1949, those days when the imperialist and western powers could force China into surrender by simply setting up a few cannons on Chinese coastlines has gone for good.

PLA, a dauntless and unyielding armed forces, never fear any enemies or threats, neither hegemonism, power politics, terrorism, nor traditional and non-traditional threats.

PLA, faithfully implementing Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, Peaceful Development Road and New Security Concept, is always the builder of world peace, the contributor of world development and the defender of international order. PLA actively participates in UN peacekeeping missions, anti-piracy escort missions and international humanitarian rescue operations. Currently, nearly 3000 Chinese peacekeepers are serving in 7 UN peacekeeping regions. So far 13 Chinese servicemen sacrificed their life in the UN peacekeeping missions. In this Embassy, there are diplomats who did participate in UN peacekeeping missions in East Timor and Kosovo.

China is watching situation in Afghanistan closely, fully respecting on Afghanistan's sovereignty, strongly supporting the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peaceful process of

reconciliation and reconstruction, continuously deepening the defense and security cooperation with Afghan brothers, jointly countering international terrorists, safeguarding the security and safety of the Belt and Road construction, and jointly building the China-Afghanistan strategic partnership and community of shared future.

Under the strong leadership of H.E. Chinese President Xi Jinping, PLA is adhering to the principle of the integrity of flourishing the nation and strengthening the military, conducting an unprecedented military reform, promoting modernization of national defense and armed forces, building up the global first class armed forces with Chinese characteristics. The purpose of these measures is to effectively shape the situation, manage the crisis, contain and win the war. PLA is solidly making military preparations for all strategic directions, developing new combat and supporting forces, conducting actual combat military training, strengthening the operation of military force, enhancing the capacity to conduct diverse military missions, accelerating the development of military intellectualization, improving the ability of joint operations and universal fighting based on network information system, implementing the civilian-military integrated development strategy, promoting the transformation of military construction into a high-quality, efficient and technology-intensive one.

One of the highlight of this reception is the model showing of a batch of the latest Chinese weapons and equipment. Instead of flexing muscles and selling arms, it is just to demonstrate the will and ability of the Chinese Armed Forces to defend its national sovereignty, security and development interests and maintain world peace, and ability of self-reliance and self-directed research and development. Since peace requires more than confidence, courage and collaboration, it also needs capacity and connectivity.

Chinese and Afghan experience over the past 40 years has shown that, peace and stability is the foundation of development and happiness. Without peace, previous generation could not share their achievements, present generation could not live happily, and next generation could not have a bright future. Peace cannot be realized easily through waiting, easiness and relying on others, the only solution to peace depends on the common understanding and joint efforts of all citizens, including the military.

Let us pray for peace and fight for peace together!

Liu Jinsong is the Chinese Ambassador to Afghanistan

Health Economics

By Mohammad Ibrahim Ehsani

Nowadays, we can number a lot various fields for economics. For example political economy, energy economy, agriculture economy, and so on...one of so important branches of them is health economy.

Regarding that, today health security and education is one of the most important economic obligations for embodiment a healthy, effective human source. Various countries at least set provision of hygienic and educational minimums as their most important programs for development. Developing countries, through lengthy years, hurt from lack of satisfactory life situations. Low indexes in hygienic improvement and its related costs in underdevelopment countries have caused dire influences on development process in those countries. Hygienic costs through improving health indexes, increasing in human recourse stock has its pleasant effects on economic growth in these countries.

In this study we scrutinize the relations between health or medical situations with economic parameters; consumptions and productions, and we manipulate economic analysis and methods to figure out this connection and his effects and influences on it. As an example they're studying effects of inflation rate on health or on smoking or on surgery's rate.

Kenneth Arrow, in his essay in 1963, illustrated good distinction between health and other commodities; as a result, from that time on, we recognize health economics, as a scientific spontaneous discipline among other economics' realms.

There are some important factors to distinct between health and other commodities like huge governmental interferences, information asymmetry, externalities, and presence of third person and his role in consumption (physician) and so on, these factors cause this kind of separation between health and other goods and commodities. As other commodities we discuss its demanding and supplying of health, micro and macro analyze in cure level and its market equilibrium, planning, budgeting...

Demanding of cure and hygiene is a derived demand of health; hygienic care will be demanded as an instrument and a breach to achieve a bigger share from health capital. Health demanding is unlike most other commodities because people want it for consumption and also for production.

Grossman's health production in 1972 has been so effective on these studies, this model assume that every person here is a producer and consumer at the same time, with time passing and no investment on health it will be shrunk. In Grossman's model, investment optimum level in health is occurred when

marginal cost is equal with marginal revenue. Trough the time health will be reduced; it shows interest rate with (r).

Marginal revenue of health capital is rate of return in market sections. In this model optimum level of health capital is influenced by factors like age, wages, and education levels.

In most researches has been analyzed 5 health market:

1. healthcare financing market
2. Market of nurses and medics' services
3. Market of cure services
4. Market of factors and institutions
5. Market of professional education

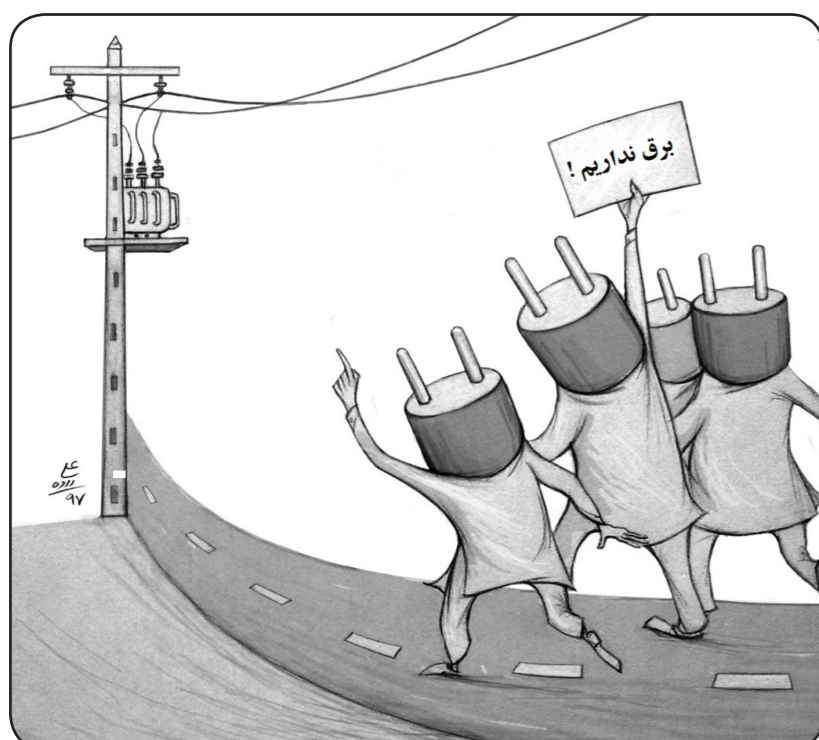
Although hypothesis of educational books' models of economic markets noticeably is so practical in hygienic and cure markets but, however there is important perversities also.

In our country, Afghanistan, I couldn't find any remarkable essay or book on this subject but we can look at yearly budget to perceive healthcare costs was so wavy and it s depend on Afghanistan economical, political situation without any long term plan. But there is also some expenditure beyond national budget, expended by feigners' NGOs.

There is one knowledgeable research from Chicago University that shows 30 percentage of England economic growth throughout 2000 years can be related to improvement in nutrition. Ample nutrition provides enough energy for their working and influence on partnership of workforce. Improvement in healthcare can increase quantity and quality of work force (Fugal, 1994). Improvement in health, not only, reduces from time consuming in diseases, but also, increase in work quality.

Health and hygiene, from several aspects, has this ability to influence growth and development, for a country the first indicator to mention is; better efficiency in comparing with others. Healthy work force can use from his physical ability more and better than others. And he has more creative and prepare mind. Beside this direct effect, hygienic and healthcare improvement in human recourse, leads to better motivation for education and achieving better skills. Because better hygienic and health situation not only can raise attraction of educational investments and opportunities, but also, with learning ability expansion, make people more talented for getting along with higher education level. And it also leads to lessen mortality rate and lengthen life expectancy for societies' people that this matter, itself, encourage people for more saving rates and capital accumulation.

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