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



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### Political Aspect of Yemen Conflict Dominates over Human

There are two aspect of Yemen crisis –namely the political and human. Seeing ground realities and multiplying causalities and political favoritism played by regional and international powers, the former seems to dominate over the later. According to Red Cross the situation in Yemen's mainly the southern city Aden is catastrophic, as forces loyal to the president battles Houthis in the streets. It is said that the naval, air and ground routes are cut off, worsening the humanitarian situation difficult. Similarly, Doctors Without Borders declared the situation worsening by the day.

The war waged at the level witnessed in Yemen seems ruinous given the ordinary masses turn soft target of aerial raids. The human aspect of Yemen war has earned lots of miseries of Yemenis. There are thousands of causalities reported and still a multiplying figure injured. The rest are left to flee the incessant aerial raids and bombardments. This is worsening state of affairs for the champion of human rights who have resorted to observe complicit silence the whole human catastrophic condition without even condemning the raids on civilian populations.

There are large number of people hit by catastrophic effect of war and are forced to be displaced to some save sanctuaries. They are in dire need of basic commodities of life –as poverty, hunger and thirst are mercilessly chasing to put off their lives. According to statistics of United Nations there are some 1,850 people killed, 7,394 injured and more than 500,000 displaced as a result of the conflict raging in Yemen since late March. The UN has repeatedly stressed that many of those injured and killed do not pass through health facilities, meaning the actual toll could be higher.

Earlier, a five day truce was observed amidst serious violation from the two sides to help evacuating the trapped civilians, provides medical aids to the injured and recovered the dead bodies buried beneath the torched buildings. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) accounted humanitarian pause in Yemen insufficient to reach all those in need of food. The WFP had estimated to reach out to 738,000 people but hardly could deliver food to half constituting only 400,000 people during the pause. The pause, also helped the agency to carry out assessments on the ground across Yemen, which had "exposed enormous difficulties for thousands of civilians displaced by conflict."

Reportedly there were around 400 Yemeni politicians and tribal leaders launched talks in Saudi Arabia on the future of their war-torn country, but the Houthis who control the capital and much of northern Yemen did not participate. Apart from discussing the installation of three-day truce the restoration of Yemen's exiled president took grand position on the list discussion. Nonetheless, non-participation of Houthis could not help carry forth the negotiation to a meaningful conclusion.

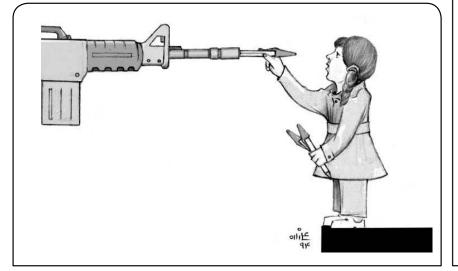
Since late March, Saudi Arabia allied by Arab states has led airstrikes against the Houthis and allied military units loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The air campaign is aimed at weakening the Houthis and restoring to power internationally recognized President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who fled the country in March in the face of a rebel advance.

On the other hand Arab states led by Saudi Arabia pledge their allegiance with the kingdom vowed to support the ongoing aerial operation against the Hauthi rebels who are said to have advanced towards the capital Sana. Formerly, the meeting of Arab League took place in Sharm el Shaikh where the members of Arab League, Arab states, including Egypt, Jordan and most of the Gulf monarchies, have thrown their support behind a Saudi Arabialed campaign of airstrikes to counter advances Houthi movement in Yemen; Washington is providing only intelligence and logistical support, but Saudi Arabia is leading the bombing while Egypt, with the largest Arab army, has pledged to send ground troops if needed.

Going through ground realties of Yemen conflict we find political dominance exert harder to turn around the game in the favor of the mightiest. Both Saudi Arabia and US wants to install a president in Yemen who could protect their interest in the Bab Al-Mandeb, the Gulf of Aden, and the Socotra Islands. The Bab Al-Mandeb is an important strategic chokepoint for international maritime trade and energy shipments that connects the Persian Gulf via the Indian Ocean with the Mediterranean Sea via the Red Sea. It is equally important for Saudi Arabia and its allies and Iran and its allies. Consequently, both century long rivals are flexing their muscles to exercise control over Yemen.

Yemen thus entails immense strategic importance, for whole gulf countries including Iran. As long as a congenial solution agreeable to all factions is sort out the human blood will keep on flowing amidst the widespread indifference of international community and muscle pulling regional powers.

Factually, the entire scenario seems an internal power sharing formula whether is not devised or not effectively implemented. It is said the central government of Yemen had promised doing away the grievances of laymen which were blatantly violated. This is prime factor that led Houthis comprising Shia and Sunni undertook to revolt against the central government.



# Economic Challenges and Afghanistan

#### By Dilawar Sherzai

The role of economy is of immense importance for a nation. Economy is for a country as circulatory system is for a body. As in the absence of circulatory system blood cannot be pushed through different parts of the body, similarly, without economy, currency and other rudimentary necessities of life cannot reach to various parts of a country. Mostly, the other systems in the country, like social and political systems are greatly reliant on the economic system. Certain thinkers even believe that the nature and features of others systems are determined by the economic system. Consequently, it is imperative that all the countries in the world must sustain strong economy so as to have constancy and reliability. There are diverse facets of an economic system.

Businesses or trades form one of the most important ones. If within a system there are steady investments and different businesses take roots, the system is believed to be on a track to growth and richness. From the inception of human society, human beings have required businesses so as to have their necessities satisfied. During the course of human history, businesses have taken different forms and features and presently have touched today's advanced form.

The under-developed and developing countries of the world that require founding durable economic system need development and sustenance of different businesses to a great extent. The authoritative people in such societies have to ensure that the businesses have every opportunity to flourish.

There are certain requirements for businesses and investments to advance. Amid them stability and security play the most compelling roles. If different systems within a country are steady and there are not major fluxes every so often, the ground is said to be prepared for the investors and businessmen to take the plunge and launch their businesses.

Businessmen want unswerving results from their investments and they detest seeing political and social changes interrupt their businesses. The evil like insecurity also plays major role in dispiriting businesses and investments. Different incidents of terrorism and killings force the businesses to go bankrupt, and terrify the investors to invest. The societies marked with insecurity do not have consumers going to the markets and relishing the luxury of shopping different products.

Afghanistan is one of the same types of country where insecurity has been influencing the economic life to a high level. Both national and international businessmen are not willingly eager to invest in all the sectors and they do not see confident prospects of their businesses. As insecurity has been devastatingly influencing the country, the expansion in the basic infra-structure has been scanty.

The worries and reservations of the Afghan market have made the international investors to think several times before they take an initiative

to start their businesses in the country. Although there can be great opportunities in Afghanistan as the country is blessed with different types of mineral and other natural resources, the economic infra-structure has not been able to get enough attention.

Now, the country's economic system has to face yet another challenge. There are reports the SAIL-led consortium of leading Indian steelmakers has now decided to scrap the proposed \$10.8 billion steel Hajigak iron ore mine project in Afghanistan, which was conceived in November 2011. Some believe the reason may be political but, in fact, there has not been much development in the project since 2011. The sevenmember consortium including JSW Steel, JSPL, NMDC and RINL, developed the plan to set up in phases a 6.12 million tonne steel plant, an 800 MW power facility, create infrastructure for mine development and necessary infrastructure at a cumulative investment of \$10.8 billion over 11-15 years. This was meant to be the biggest foreign investment proposal by Indian firms. However, hopes slowly turned into worries over security concerns caused by, as some believe, militant attacks on the Indian consulate in Herat, on a SpiceJet plane at Kabul airport and on a UK embassy car in Kabul. Trying to decrease the susceptibility of the project in the war-torn country, the investment plan was later trimmed by 75% to just \$2.9 billion for a 1.25 mtpa steel plant, 120 MW power plant and for creation of necessary infrastructure. Even that has been given away now as the security situation in the country does not seem

Afghanistan needs to have strong economy so as to stand on its own, especially after the most of international troops have withdrawn. The international aid and assistance that have been coming to the country for the last some years have been reduced and Afghan economy will be tested to a large extent. The country has to start from the basic infrastructure development and have to reach to a strong economy, wherein the businesses are able to run without any distress and inconsistency. An environment has to be developed that can be rousing for both the national and international investors. Furthermore, the golden chances wherein Afghanistan can apply maximum and can get the best outcomes from must be discovered and they should be reinforced so as to thrust the country towards self-reliance. Alternatively, the businessmen and investors must also keep the national interests in their deliberation while they establish their businesses and start getting the outcomes from them. They have to keep this in their minds that the society as a whole has certain rights that have to be fulfilled by them. In similar fashion the international investors must also deal with the circumstances in Afghanistan as special and must keep both their interests and the support for Afghanistan in their consideration.

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## Ordu; A Hidden Paradise in Turkey!

#### By Muhammad Rasool Shah

In last few years, we witnessed an unbelievable increase in the wealth of some Afghans. This huge amount of money was then invested outside the country for buying houses or property. Some of them bought properties in Dubai and some other European countries but later on, Turkey became their favorite destination. Due to this, thousands of Afghans are living in Turkey or have obtained the long-term stay permits. Many of them have applied for Turkish citizenship as well and their cases are in progress while many others were able to obtain Turkish passport as well. Turkey is an ideal place for them due to a number of reasons. First, it is an Islamic country and Afghans are much sentimental and concerned about their religious beliefs. Some of them could have moved to European countries but they feared that their coming generations might lose their religious beliefs and cultural values. Secondly, there is much resemblance between the cultures and social norms of the people of two countries. Afghans are able to learn Turkish in the least time possible due to the similarities between the two languages. In the same way, Afghans are given much love due to historic events when Afghans showed their solidarity with Turks in WW1. In the same way, large numbers of Afghans visit turkey every year for tourism, medical treatment and higher education. Turkish government has granted thousands of educational scholarships for Afghan students who are now studying in different Turkish universities.

However, majority of Afghans have preferred to live in big cities of Ankara and Istanbul. However, these two cities are very expensive and so they had to spend large amount of money to buy property or houses there. However, I found most fascinating a province located on the Black Sea coast by the name of Ordu.

I was lucky to be invited by the Governor of Ordu for a visit of the province. Our group included of two journalists from Afghanistan along with a group of journalists from the Arab world. The aim of the tour was to introduce the hidden beauty of the province to the external world so that more and more tourists should also head to the province. While visiting Ordu, I listened two interesting sentences about Ordu that depict its beauty. One said, 'We hope to see the paradise in the hereafter but if you want to see the paradise in your life, you should come and see Ordu' and the second one said, 'In the hereafter when you will be taken to paradise and if you have spent some time in Ordu in your life, you will not feel yourself stranger there as it would be resembling to Ordu.' Both the sentences show the actual beauty of Ordu without any exaggeration.

When talking of the beauty of Ordu, there are two important factors contributing to this. One is the beauty and all the enjoyment associated with the beaches along the coasts of Black Sea. Ordu harbors a long coast of Black Sea, which makes it a wonderful place to relax, play and enjoy the memorable times on the beach. There are large numbers of hotels, restaurants, cafes and other recreational places along the beach where delicious foods or drinks add to the beauty of the beach and the Black Sea.

Another important factor is to visit all the mountainous places and green grassy plains where one can go on hiking or riding within the beautiful trees. It looks as if Ordu was a forest and they cut down trees to make

roads and build houses. When we reach to the plains, it looks as if green carpet has been spread wherever one looks and this gives a refreshing feeling to the eyes and the body. The cool and gentle air, the smell of flowers, the quietness of the environment and all other natural factors make this place a wonderful destination for all those who want to escape the busy life and spend some days in complete joy and relaxation. Its lakes, with their beautiful blue water provide a wonderful opportunity to take beautiful pictures and spend the best moments of your life with your friends and family members.

Another factor adds to the completeness of Ordu. On one hand, you can see nature and enjoy its beauty in the form of beaches, trees, grassy plains, high mountains, beautiful lakes and other natural elements. On the other, you can avail all the facilities that are expected of the modern cities of the world. Its beautiful roads, vast town-center for shopping, its modern and well-facilitated hotels and other facilities can give you all the enjoyment and convenience associated with the modern, metropolitan cities. Many of its towns like Unye also provide with all the needed facilities so at any time, you will not feel that you are not living in a big modern city. The ride of yacht in the Black Sea makes this city perfect. There are also

speedboats for those who like to enjoy fast waves in the sea.

On Friday, Ordu had the honor of having the first airport in Europe and third in the world that has been built on an artificial land by filling the sea. This beautiful airport would now connect Ordu to different parts of the country and the world so that tourists should be able to visit the province with convenience.

One of the modern facilities of recreation in Ordu is the aerial lift system of gondolas functioning between Ordu city and Boztepe hill. This gondola service was opened in 2012 and now it serves as one of the major tourist attractions for the city. Boztepe hill provides a beautiful and panoramic view of the city. Tourists can also enjoy delicious Turkish foods and ice creams and there are many stalls from where they can buy souvenirs for their loved ones.

Ordu is also the biggest producer of hazelnut in the world. While visiting the province, you can enjoy hazelnut in different forms, each carrying its own unique taste. The description of Ordu would remain incomplete if we did not mention the delicious Turkish foods served in the restaurants. As it is a tourist attraction so large numbers of restaurants and cafes serve variety of Turkish foods for the visitors and guests. Tourists can enjoy different types of Pide (Turkish pizza) but they should not forget to taste the fresh fish varieties caught fresh from the Black Sea.

Ordu is not much old city but there are many places like mosques and hamams, which are historic and interested visitors can also visit these places. In Unye, one of the towns in Ordu, a museum was recently opened that shows the life of a Turkish family in the Ottoman times. However, there are many museums in different parts of the province, inviting the attraction of tourists. In Ordu, houses were cheaper than many parts of Turkey. Their friendly people, beautiful environment and modern facilities make it an attractive destination for all the tourists from Afghanistan or other parts of the world.

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