Chapter V
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CONCLUSION AND FINDING

This is the concluding chapter of the thesis. It includes a precise summary of the present work and significant conclusions drawn at the end of the work. This chapter is also an attempt to get a conclusion from the current information.

The concept of security is continually widening. Traditionally, national security concept meant protection for state and people from external and internal military and non-military threats. Today, concept of security is widely used to give safety to the people from war, violence, genocide and terrorism, food, water and environment, etc. However, causes behind poor national insecurity are many types like economic backwardness, social unrest and religious extremism etc. Thus, these factors are also gaining importance in security studies. When the traditional security concept encompasses with socio-economic threats it is termed as human security. In this study, concept of national security is used broadly instead of human security. Therefore, a focus is made on political, social and economic aspects of security which are directly influencing security of Yemen by creating violence and armed conflicts.

The security challenges to the nation are both internal and external. But the nation security planning in the modern world no longer adopt a purely negative approach of identifying threats and then fashioning responses to counter them. It requires a more comprehensive approach of conceptualizing the goals and objectives of a nation and then creating a positive environment to ensure that the path to progress and security it tranquil and harmonious. Both internal destabilizing influences and external pressures have to be taken into consideration, but in the framework of fulfilling the goals of national interest.
Political journey of Yemen during the last 80 years was full of turmoil and violence. External forces were extremely active in Yemen. During Cold War, Yemen suffered a lot and never saw political stability because of interference by the two super powers and Saudia Arabia. Political instability caused economic backwardness and loss of life of many Yemenis.

This research study is an attempt to understand the early past of Yemen and the major security challenges. The nature of study is descriptive so the methodology of this study is based on historical and descriptive research. The research study is largely based on both primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources comprising of, report published by international and national agencies, books, journals, pamphlets etc.

Yemen is sparsely populated - half of the country is uninhabitable and its Arab people are largely rural. The sites of several prosperous civilizations in ancient times indicate that Yemen was a poor and forgotten land for more than a thousand years. The discovery of oil in the area in the late 20th century held out the prospect of economic development and somehow easier life if not better for the people of Yemen.

The Republic of Yemen was created in 1990 out of the unification of the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and the People Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). YAR was commonly called North Yemen, and the PDRY was generally referred to as South Yemen. Sana'a is the capital of the Republic of Yemen. Yemen is a largely desert land; there are no permanent rivers in the country and little natural vegetation besides scrub and bush.

Yemen is in all respect a poor country and has little industry. It is totally dependent on remittances sent from Yemeni's working abroad. It also depends on oil and foreign aids, but there are mineral deposits in the south. What makes Yemen important is its strategic location.
Background of Yemen

The written evidence about the history of Yemen has been found since 1200 BC. The Kingdom of Saba and Marib Dam are evidences of the glorious history of Yemen and its importance in the spice routs. Therefore, from that period the security linkages between Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula have been continued till today. Before the Ottoman period including pre-Islamic period of 5 centuries, Yemen had gone through political turmoil. There was no sustainable peace and visible economic development. Yemeni people saw many small and big arms clashes either on their soil or on foreign soil. They also witnessed continuous instability in political order because of two reasons: first, rise of a Shiite clan, Zaidism on Yemeni soil and second, influence of internal clashes among Islamic kingdoms for political power in Arabia.

Yemen was divided between the Ottoman-controlled north and British controlled south. Each of them had a different history until the country got finally unified in 1990. The Ottoman Empire left North Yemen in 1918 and British withdraw from the South Yemen in 1967. When the violence grew to uncontrollable levels, the process for the unification of the two states started. In May 1990, the Republic of Yemen was formed bringing an end to the long-established territorial disputes between the two Yemen’s. Yemeni leaders then declared a democratic society with a multiparty system and a broadening of individual’s freedoms.

Yemeni societies experienced a long span of peace and development during Ottoman period. Besides gaining Turkish military knowledge, Yemen also adopted Turkish aesthetics. Long term security established by Ottoman was disturbed when British came to Aden and established military bases and colonies. Yemenis still can feel the spirit of Ottoman influence in their day to day lifestyles, something that fascinates the rest of the world.
The Ottomans and the British eventually established a de-facto border between north and south Yemen, which was formalized in a treaty in 1904. This separation of Yemeni society led to weak law and order, political turmoil, cost of life and assets and civil wars in 20th century. Nonetheless, the presence of European and British brought many economic and social changes in Yemen. The real importance of Aden in modern world trade was proved by British. After British withdrawal, North Yemen and South Yemen became mere pawns in the hands of two super powers during Cold War. Political leaders from both Yemens were confused by external powers and they were fighting with each others. Yemeni people experienced severe political turmoil and weak law and order situation from 1967 to 1994. During this period, foreign interference in Yemeni security was mainly due to Saudia Arabia, Egypt, America, former USSR and Iran. The internal security challenges in Yemen have foreign linkages.

After the unification of Yemen, the Gulf crisis erupted, resulting in the severing of Saudia and Kuwait aid and severe reductions in aid by the western donors, including US. The economic effects caused by the Gulf crisis, combined with the Government mismanagement, sharply heightened Yemen’s economic plight and it was unable to provide services to its citizens. This resulted in the political infighting and a two month civil war in the mid 1994.

After civil war of 1994, Yemeni government is concentrating on internal security challenges. During the period of last 15 years, the main challenges that emerged in the Yemen are mainly related to economic development, poverty and water scarcity. However, the existence of religious extremists in remote tribal areas is creating many threats to law and order, and is as an obstacle in the way of socio-economic development. Militancy in Yemen is not only creating security problems for Yemen but more importantly, its internationalization is affecting adversely the security of Arabian Peninsula as a whole.

For the past four decades Yemen has been in a state of disorder in its
policies and security due to unsettled situation of the country. This has badly reflected on its economic, social and cultural status. The revolution of 26th September 1962 in the North of Yemen prior to unification had caused a national conflict, which continued for about seven years and left behind many other social problems from which the people have suffered till today. Moreover, after the independence of South Yemen from the British colony during the 70’s, the two parts of Yemen started a new political and military conflict to claim ruling over various parts of Yemen. This conflict continued till the 80s. And as a result of this continued conflict, violence increased and this drove the country backward and hindered its development economically, politically and socially.

Presently, Yemen, which is known as the training center of Al-Qaeda also felt threatened by the rising strength of extremist within Yemen. Yemen with its rugged landscape and remote regions provide shelter for terrorists. Tribesmen in Yemen control parts of the country not under the authority of Central Government. They sometimes provide shelter to these individuals for their activities. Such incidents also weakened the development process of Yemen. The events of 9/11 have marked the beginning of Salih’s close cooperation with the United States. The presence of Al-Qaeda in the remote tribal areas, and porous frontier of Saudia-Yemeni border leading to arms trafficking that occurs within this zone. Gun running in this region is a severe threat because of its linkage to the extremist. All these factors attract the interest of the West, particularly US.

National Goals, Values and Interests

There are many ways in which national security can be defined, though in recent times it has come to be accepted that it is no longer merely a defensive reaction to external threats. In a somewhat passive approach, it can be defined as ‘defence against challenges to a nation’s vital interests’. In a more dynamic formulation it may be explained as ‘promoting national values and ethos in a positive manner within the nation and in the external environment’. Both
Security Challenges in the Arabian Peninsula

approaches are relevant and may overlap. At a period when national consolidation is more important, the earlier approach may predominate. After consolidation, the promotion of positive values and interests become more relevant. In any case, there has to be a clear formulation of the goals of a country and an identification of the core values of a nation. It is only after this that the security challenges to a nation can be perceived in their correct perspective.

Internal Security Challenges

Human development needs peace. Without any doubt, peace is the most fundamental prerequisite for human development. If internal conflicts and violence lead to political instability then peace will not be seen in the country. Moreover, low human development many times creates disturbances to the peace. The main goal of national security is providing peace to the people, but if there are continued foreign interferences in a country’s security affairs then the peace may not be achieved. However, only socio-economically disempowered citizens bear this situation. With increasing awareness and economic development these citizens started to become empowered, and oppose foreign interferences either peaceful ways or by violent ways. In Yemen, these complex security challenges are very much discernible.

According to Human Development Report 1999, Yemen is a poor country in the Arab world having a rank of 153. The situation is not improving steadily because of many social and political insecurities present there, which attract more government funds and these work as obstacles in the way of economic development. Yemen is located at the south end of the Arabian Peninsula and has been facing a lot of problems ranging from poverty to the security challenges.

Socio-economic challenges to security are severe in Yemen. The first is that high dependency of Yemeni economy on oil revenue. And the second is water scarcity coupled with food scarcity. Water and food security are the pillar
of national security of any country, particularly when such a country suffers a scarcity of water resources. The importance of water is not only limited to its use for drinking and irrigation to produce crops and food but it is equally important for sustainable development because water availability is inextricably linked to public health, unemployment, poverty, girl’s education and development in general. Therefore, water scarcity and competition for it may be a cause for economic and social instability, harming social peace and national security, especially in light of the fact that 53 per cent of Yemen’s workforce is employed in the agricultural sector.

Qat, which covers some 40 per cent of the irrigated area, consumes 60 per cent of the usable water in Yemen. For example, the total volume of water used annually in Qat irrigation in Sana’a province surpasses 60 million cubic meters, around double the volume of water consumed by the city of Sana’a itself. Many influential people are heavily involved in agriculture – especially the farming of Qat. In general, all surface water resources – 60 per cent of Yemen’s renewable resources already are being exploited beyond the level of renewal. This very rapid development has brought with it major problems. Ground water is being mined at such a rate that parts of the rural economy could dry up. Areas under greatest pressure are the central highlands, the western region and coastal plains.

The depletion of water resources in some rural areas forced their inhabitants to emigrate to nearby cities or the capital, therefore, causing a bigger demographic crisis in cities where there is over-demand of water, electricity, sanitation services, hospitals and schools.

The level of poverty in Yemen is high: in fact, poverty levels doubled between 1992 and 1998, with the proportion of households below the poverty line rising from 19 per cent to 33 per cent. A 1996 World Bank study showed that 81 per cent of all of Yemen’s poor lived in rural areas. In addition, the health care situation is inadequate with only 55 per cent of the population having access
to health services. This could make many people like tribal’s uninterested in
democracy because they do not believe that democracy would help to improve
their living standards. As David Held stresses, “where the lot of the masses is
often that of acute hunger, or where disease runs rampant, the expectation of any
genuine democracy among such masses is naïve.”

The problem of educational backwardness is severe in Yemen. The
majority of Yemenis are illiterate. It was estimated that the total adult illiteracy is
47.3 per cent of the population (44 per cent male and 72 per cent female). A
recent report released by the government-controlled Social Fund for
Development indicated that educational levels in Yemen were the worst in the
Middle East and North Africa. This affects the democratic transition because
most of the people are not aware of their rights and still do not have the capacity
to make rational electoral choices. Ahmed Saif described how voters participated
in elections in Yemen, noting, “With the high rates of illiteracy, voters can
recognize and choose their candidates on a personal basis.” Apart from this, the
high level of illiteracy is home for unemployment, religious militancy poor use
of resources and political unrest. The education system is weak and suffers from
poor quality teaching, and the prevalent educational methods do not provide a
breeding ground for human rights and democracy.

External Security Challenges

The external threats to Yemen’s security are not from the Eretria and
Saudia Arabia since many disputes were solved by bi-lateral talks and by
International Court. But US is the main actor in respect of Yemen’s security
challenges. One side Yemen has direct military threat from US in case of
terrorism, and on the other side, Yemen is expecting human development
assistance from US.
The US position on the Yemeni unity was shaped by its desire to bring an end to the communist regime in South Yemen and to make sure that the country (the PDRY) that was classified as a terrorist state by the US government would now no longer exist. Another factor contributing to US support was the American desire for stability in the Arabian Peninsula. By the end of the 1980s, American companies already had investment in most of the Arabian Peninsula including Yemen. American policy makers viewed stability as an important condition for economic development in the region and also for normalization with Israel.

In addition, the US as the world’s only hegemony was, and is still, concerned with the flow of oil from that region to world markets. US policy makers seem to believe that threats to Gulf security come specifically from Iraq and Iran. In fact, significant dangers are developing from within the Gulf, and one of the most dangerous elements involves is local discontent over Yemen. Stability in the region requires adequate responses to the Saudia -Yemeni, Eritrean-Yemeni discords, and a changed approach to dealing with area security problems in general.

In the New World Order, US policy makers on Yemen must think systemically. If the United States is to maintain stability in the Gulf, it must be concerned with all of the states in the area; Washington cannot restrict its concern to the narrow focus of just a few Monarchy of Persian Gulf. A seemingly inconsequential entity like Yemen can bring the whole Gulf system crashing down, if its problems are not attended to.

Presently the US interests in Yemen are shaped according to the war on terrorism, economic benefits from huge gas reserve and oil, trade safety in Arabian Peninsula and working of democracy in an important Arabian country.
Moreover, US policy is based, entitled ostensibly to fight terrorism - a clear threat to the security of Yemen. Especially after that Yemen has become a theater of international conflict between the United States of America and the Islamic groups. Some loyal to Al-Qaeda and the militant group banned in the country. When the terrorist activities increased on the marine and in Yemen, US under the arrangements of military and security agreements with the Yemeni authorities opened the way for US forces to strike on Yemeni soil. The attacks on a Yemeni Al-Qaeda, which in itself constitutes a threat to the images of Yemen's security, stability, sovereignty and independence.

Having discussed the security challenges facing Yemen in detail, I would come to the key conclusions of this study as follows:

- There are increasing indications that Al-Qaeda is regrouping in Yemen. Recent counterterrorism measures in Saudia Arabia have forced extremists to seek refuge elsewhere, with a steady flow relocating to Yemen’s under-governed areas.
- The ceding of authority by the weak central government to local government has proved counterproductive by limiting control over volatile under-governed territories.
- The security situation is rapidly deteriorating. Fighting with Shi’i rebels in north Yemen has strained the army, and Yemen is unable to protect its coast from the recent surge in piracy.
- The poorest in the Arab world, with unemployment at 35 per cent, Yemen’s economy has been severely effected by the dramatic fall in oil prices and has few sustainable post-oil, economic options.
- Yemen is running out of water. Rising domestic consumption, poor water management, corruption, the absence of resource governance, and wasteful irrigation techniques are creating frequent and wide spread shortages.
• Yemen’s lack of food and water is complicated by the population’s dependence on Qat, a quick-cash crop that requires heavy irrigation to thrive. Farmers devote so much land to Qat production that Yemen is now a net food importer.

• The national security and military strategy of Yemen is facing the terrorist phenomenon from all aspects, through the broad use of all elements that constitute the nation; economic, educational, cultural, social, and security.