YEMENI CIVIL WAR

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Everyone knows that something is going on in Yemen. But what exactly is happening there? Well, simply put Yemen has become a living hell for the Yemeni people, especially young children who have to struggle for their survival. Children in Yemen have to constantly suffer from the lack of food, while girls and women in Yemen have to face atrocities such as forced niqab, child marriage, divorce shame, and domestic violence.

The Middle Eastern country Yemen as we know it today was actually formed quite recently, when south Yemen and north Yemen joined together in 1990 after many years of fighting over different ideologies on how the country should be run. But their union was just a false step towards stability, for in reality, the seeds of conflict had been sown too deep in the soil: the government and the rebels (Houthis) were at loggerheads with each other.

The situation peaked in 2011 when countrywide protests forced the resignation of then president Ali Abdallah Saleh. During this tumultuous period his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi became the president faute de meiux. However, he failed in his efforts to keep the people happy, taking advantage of which, the Houthis gradually annexed almost all the West-Yemeni States. By the end of 2014, the situation had devolved into a civil war. When the rebels - “backed by Iran” (stated by Saudi Arabia, but denied by Iran) - took over the capital city of Yemen called Sana’a, President Hadi was forced to flee to Saudi Arabia. With the incumbent government in refuge in Saudi Arabia, the conflict escalated severely in March of 2015 when Saudi Arabia and eight other Sunni-majority states launched bombs and air-strikes in Yemen, with the aim of reinstating power to the “legitimate” Hadi government, and pushing the Houthis out of power.

But international diplomacy isn’t so straightforward, is it?

The Houthi rebels weren’t a fan of the Hadi government ruling over them, and thus they formed a new ruling group with a leader called Mohammed Ali al-Houthi. Most countries including the UK and the US, did not accept the formation of a totally new faction, and the war continued. There were calls for ceasefire, but their implementation was nowhere to be seen.

Now 5 years down the road, the war has not stopped, and the fighting has had a devastating impact on ordinary people who live in Yemen.

Currently, Yemen is suffering from what has been called the world's worst humanitarian crisis in the last 100 years, and one of the largest man – induced famines.

The famine in Yemen worsened after the 5 th of November, 2017, when the Saudis, with the help of the United States, tightened their sea, air and land blockade. The tightened blockades leading to restricted deliveries of food and fuel, and roads and buildings being destroyed has led to millions of people not having the basic essentials that they need to live. People just can’t afford the luxury of having food in Yemen.

The famine has been compounded by an outbreak of cholera, with as many as 5,000 new cases daily. Devastation of Yemeni infrastructure, health, water and sanitation systems and facilities by the two parties’ airstrikes led to the spread of cholera as they obliterated the Yemeni public water infrastructure.

About 80% of the population, or 24 million people, are in dire need of humanitarian aid, including 12 million children. 66% of the Yemini people have barely anything to eat, 64% have no access to healthcare, 58% have no access to water, and 11% are severely malnourished, and with the COVID-19 Pandemic the situation has become even worse. Why is our help important?

In keeping with being “human”, it is imperative that we become a bit “humane”, and such crises prompt our action as we read this from the comfort of our homes. Yemen needs OUR help, and we have the privilege to save the lives of tens of thousands of people, especially children, who are suffering and are not able to live a normal life like us. It is our duty, as responsible global citizens, to help people in such dire conditions. How can we help?

By playing Games!!!  Yes, you’ve read it right -Freerice.com is an interactive vocabulary game in which every time players answer a question correctly, an advertisement appears on their screen. Seeing One of these advertisements triggers a financial payment to the World Food Programme (WFP) to support its work, saving and changing lives around the world – like that of the people in Yemen.

The ShareTheMeal App also helps us provide assistance to the people in Yemen. With just a tap on our phones -and a payment of merely $0.80 USD or roughly Rs. 60 can provide for the meal of 1 suffering child. A single donation from 3000 miles away has the capacity to save a life. ShareTheMeal is an initiative of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), and the money received is used to provide food to famished people all around the world. Since launching the app in 2015, it has helped provide aid to some of the largest food crises in the world including Yemen, Syria and Nigeria, and over 75 million meals have been funded by users from over the world.

Alongside this of course, voluntary contributions can always be provided to aid the situation in Yemen.

It is our responsibility to provide support to people in Yemen, and other similarly affected areas. As global citizens let us all take individual steps to aid the life of someone suffering in Yemen.

We can't help everyone but everyone can help someone – Ronald Reagan.