

From Resistance to Resistance

Itinerary: From Erbil to Kobani

By Zanyar Omrani

Making up stories and telling a pack of lies to divert the common sense of my family and friends are part of the necessities of travel. ***Kobani*** is the main destination of travel, the city, which for days reeks with streams of blood, fetid and putrefaction, the city, which its recent resistance and determination has awestruck the whole world. The resistance of the city has proved to me that there is yet a glimpse of hope to exit the disappointing and desperate situation of daily life.

The contradictions in my statements led one of my friends to get very angry with me. He hung up the phone on me. Disturbed by the phone call I angrily walked up the stairs of the terminal towards "Can-Diyarbakir" the passenger cooperative. Two Kurdish youth from Turkey were standing there. The two greeted me in "Kurmanci" and answered my questions with smiles. After a while, they stared and looked at each other and continued their conversation in Turkish. I was amazed. Apart from my dreams and my mother's dreams, this was the first sign that made my travel to an abnormal land and territory rather stranger. He got 74,000 Iraqi dinars from both of us! I did not forget to mention that are two of us, two travelers who had decided not to stop until Kobani.

I have known "***Mahdiyeh***" for seven years. She left Tehran for Iran's ***Kurdistan*** to take photographs. We got to know each other and the history of our knowing dates back to a long time ago that one cannot cast any doubt on it. At first sight she is a good tempered and humorous woman as well as very compassionate. She is so kind-hearted that many envy of us, from taxi drivers to ticket vendors.

After a short stopover, the bus leaves Erbil for "***Diyarbakir***". It is 8 p.m. on Oct. 23. Perhaps, it would be better to go back to a few days ago. After a lot of backs and- occurred between the two of us, we finally agreed on traveling to ***Kobani*** instead of touring refugee camps. Honestly, I hate it when photographers either individually or collectively, wander through refugee camps. I hate it not merely because of the crocodile tears or the opportunity of fake jobs for even some of my friends, but mainly because I despise the trend of normalization of calamity and the minimization of travesty to some thousand pixels of color.

What is the main objective of "**Mahdiyeh**" behind this trip? Her insistence and perseverance for going to **Kobani** turned logical and hopeful although the possibility of cotraveling was close to zero until the very last minute. Yet **Mahdiyeh** had taken the main decision and no amount of reasoning and excuses would dissuade her from going.

We started research and reviewed all aspects and risks. Going to **Kobani** in its current situation seemed very difficult and impossible so much so that the Chief of Staff of the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Party {PYD} was amazed at our persistence. Mainly there are three main routes to get into **Kobani**!

The first route was from **Pishkhapour** Border. For this purpose, we had to get official approval from Iraqi Kurdistan government {KRG} in order to go to **Qamishlo** in Syrian Kurdistan.

The second route was from Turkish Kurdistan. We had to go **Diyarbakir** first and then to **Urfa** and **Sorouch**. From there, we could reach ourselves to **Kobani** from the Turkish border presents a logical excuse along with our signed and sealed passports. There was only one little problem here: the Turkish government was not even allowing the passage of mineral water to **Kobani**, let alone reporters?!

Hey you two, for what reason do you want to go to Kobani?

Officer, our intention for going to Kobani is for touristic purposes.

And of course, that would be impossible. Instead of going into Kobani, like all other reporters, we would have had to stay in **Sorouch** plains. We would have had to put on a uniform, helmet and waistcoat bearing the "Press" logo on it. And wait on preparing hot news on Kobani and then, return to **Urfa** hotels at nights.

And finally, the third route for going to **Kobani** was to continue our path in the same route, change our direction in **Sorouch** and illegally enter **Kobani**. Of course, in theory, this plan could work but in practice it was almost impossible. First, fighters and combatants of Kurdistan Democratic Party seemed to be the only succor. Second, Turkish soldiers protect areas yet not seized by ISIS with tanks and bullets. That one-kilometer meant playing with death, which could actually be the subject of a movie titled as, "Dancer with Death".

After many inquiries, we managed to find the Office of Syrian Democratic Party in **Sulaimaniyeh**. It had no official sign. We spoke and negotiated for two hours and tried every angle to convince them. Of course, they rejected our request categorically. But our continuous insistence compelled them to consider our request. We persisted and insisted repeatedly and they rejected us continually. We said to them: "We will find ourselves in "**Diyarbakir**" tomorrow."

The same night, we were given two numbers and our journey began immediately without even awaiting their call.

Leaving Erbil was a bitter farewell for me. I am writing these things with my illegible and bad handwriting. At this time, I sense *Mahdiyeh's* doubtful glances towards me. There is a small TV screen in each seat of Turkish buses and passenger can change the channels with placing headphone on ears and they can select channels themselves. In the beginning, I got very excited. Touring Iranian cities I always had to watch boring TV series from the beginning up to the end. But the plethora of these channels is only different in appearance. The main gist of them is mainstream populism, Turkish music video clips, collection of romantic TV series, and of course a brief review of the grandeur of the Ottomans. Most travelers have bent their head on this small box. I changed all TV channels repeatedly until I came across a channel which shows the road ahead of us. I let it stay there.

Assimilation of Turkish Kurds has engulfed all aspects of their lives, ranging from architecture, street, language, behavior to these very media outlets that have petrified all of them. Where lies the urge to this endless fighting?

Perhaps, the answer to this question could be found by walking through the alleys of *Diyarbakir*; scrutinizing the difference of their social class. Or, maybe, it will be more confusing. I do not know. I lose my patience thinking about class and Kurds.

We may be in *Diyarbakir* in 10 hours. I feel sleepy and my head is full of ideas about an adventurous and dangerous journey. At the end of the journey, what would I feel reading these statements?

Will Kobani be released from the hands of fundamentalist forces at last?

Is return even a possibility? The latter thoughts cared me to the bone.

I take a look at *Mahdiyeh who dozing off*. Turning off the small magic box, i.e. little TV screen's of the bus, I don't sleep until reaching Ibrahim *Khalil's* checkpoint.

*

It has just passed noon. I lay at the highest point of the castle or wall of *Diyarbakir* under the sun. As a matter of fact, I do not really know if it is a castle or wall? I guess I would have to call it a "castle" due to the existence of streets in its prolongation. The glittering sun in the sky of *Diyarbakir* gave a feeling of warmth to me as I spent a cold time last night.

We were searched thoroughly in six areas which was both disrespectful and inevitable. The security officials searched and inspected our body with an X-Ray machine on both sides of *Ibrahim-Khalil* checkpoint. The body search lasted for at least three hours. We got off the bus, did fingerprint scan and got on the bus so many times that we completely realized the difference between air and land travel. Lack of road bumps does not summarize the prestige of air travel. Rather, depending on one's class background and ability to afford buses or planes, he/she is not searched as thoroughly or at least not as concretely. As soon as we fell asleep, there was another checkpoint be bodily searched again. We passed from villages of *Shernax*, *Batman* and many other cities and small villages until we reach the passenger terminal of *Diyarbakir*, the city where there color of revolutionary movements of the 1980s and 1990s is yet felt in there. At this time, I lose sight of *Mahdiyeh* for half an hour.

At the first glance, this city does not differ considerably from other cities of Turkey but this is only the surface. More than 30 people had been killed in this city two weeks before our arrival who had participated in a rally to condemn the position of Turkish government adopted in the face of *Kobani* resistance. The said situation can be understood in this city with the Turkish officials being on alert with their water-spraying and bulletproof military tanks standing on guard in the city.

Choppers were circling above the sky of *Kobani* every half an hour. I am not sure whether anyone up there saw my middle finger held upwards them or not?

To handle affairs, the first thing to do was eating food and buying a SIM card for our mobile phone.

Learning that a SIM card there costs 30 million Lires shocked me.

- One can buy a car in Iran with 30 million.

Then, he understood the price difference in Iran and Turkey smilingly. We wandered around the streets of downtown *Diyarbakir*. The city seemed very populated with heavy traffic. I felt dizzy and after eating a sandwich, I continued my way towards the "castle" where I am writing down these notes. At this time, I dialed a number and a young girl answered. I told her everything that I wanted to say and then, she sent a telephone number of the decision-making center of *Kobani* to me via SMS/text message in order to inform them of our decision. When we phoned there, they told us that we cannot accept or admit anyone even if they were recommended by *Salih* Moslem, the Leader of Syrian Democratic Party. In other words, they would not admit us. I had to explain everything to them from the beginning. When we persisted, they promised us to do something. They told us: "You should stay at *Diyarbakir* for two days in order for us to make a better decision after everything became calm."

Staying for two days without any plan in this populated city was enough to rack our brains out. I phoned them once again and then, they were convinced somehow. At last, they gave us the telephone number of one of the trusted individuals in order to make necessary arrangements. It was decided to meet the mentioned person in a place near **Sorouch**. At the end of conversation, he raised our hope and told us: "Do not worry and hurry. You come and will continue our resistance altogether."

Hearing this gave us a good feeling as if I were one of them. But was I? Of course not.

We had a lot of time so we walked along the city. Oh. My God, a host of masked girls! Why are there so many of them?

We walked almost all pavements and sidewalks of the city until we got lost. All of a sudden, we found ourselves at the artistic center of **Tigris and Euphrates**. There was a tableau adorned with three colors which indicated its relationship with Kurdistan workers Party (PKK). Naturally seeing pictures of **Abdullah Ocalan** cannot surprise me. The street leading to this center was called "**Balekcelarbası**". The friends at this artistic center named it a Kurdish name i.e. **Seri MasiWana**.

The mayor of **Diyarbakir** is one of the members of Kurdish People's Democratic Party {HDP} and a good opportunity had presented itself to restore the Kurdish identity of the city once again. When we entered the center, we were faced with an environment quite different from what we had seen in the city, ranging from architectural design to the faces of people who were spending most of their precious time at this center. Water fountain at the central part of the yard with vases alongside it had bestowed a specific pleasure to this center. At this time, a hasty cat jumps and goes up from the window of a music class of the center.

There are music, painting and theater training classes at the small and large pavilion booths of "Tigris and Euphrates Artistic Center" with the centrality of Kurdish art and culture. The traditional teahouse has been adorned with the pictures of artists and victims of their respective party. They tell us that police forces used to attack the center everyday collecting the images hung on the walls. Then, the police would replace the flag of Turkey with pictures of artists and victims.

Presence of "Dengbej"s is another interesting point that attracted my attention in this center. These were similar to reciters and readers of Iranian **Shahnameh** (*Book of Kings*), Kurdish fables and myths who were reading by heart within the framework of their specific musical rhythm. The process of assimilation of Kurds had even included "Dengbej"s, But after reforms and changes happened in Turkey, the silenced voice of "Dengbej"s can be heard once again at such centers and teahouses. "Dengbej" **Mustefa** performed some of his artistic work. The specific movement of his hands attracted my attention. The

content of ""Dengbej's" songs cover a whole range of topics but they are more concentrated on the reminiscence of collective migration and evacuation of villages, consecutive wars and rereading battles of Sheikhs and later Kurdish guerrillas against Ottomans and new Turkey.

"*BeshimGouk*" is the name of a 30-year-old girl painter who is a graduate of "fine arts" at Tigris University. At one of these rooms, she focused and looked at her painting canvas and said to me: "Most of her painting tableaus manifest and depict pains of desperate and homebound Kurdish women in traditional and patriarchal settings."

"*AhmadYilmaz*" is a 28-year-old young man who is the head of this Center. Turning to the history of this Center, he said: "The previous name of this Center was "*Mesopotamia Artistic and Cultural Center*".

In 1991, when Turgot Ouzel, Turkish Prime minister of the time, adopted some changes in Turkish society, the Center was founded in Istanbul. After two years, the Center was relocated to *Diyarbakir*. The Center was closed down for three years with the invasion of police in 1996, which led to the arrest of all members of the Center. The Center resumed its artistic and cultural activities in 1999 once again. Then, the police attacked the Center after one month and then, it was shut down again for four more years. Despite threats and warnings, Tigris and Euphrates Artistic and Cultural Center have been open to the public and enthusiasts since 2003. Ahmad added that Turkish Court fines the center once in a while instead of banning it.

It is twilight. With the resonating voice of "Dengbej's", we leave "*Diyarbakir*" for "*Urfa*". "*Urfa*" is the city of pomegranate and color. The city is home to Kurds, Arabs, Turkish citizens and now Syrian refugees. Girl sex-workers, who seem to have come from Syria, wander the city without any purpose. In the bus on our way to cheaper hotels, we get to know a Palestinian-American woman and man. They had also tried to follow the same path to Kobani but to no avail. We got a bit worried when we heard this. We rented a room at the hotel where they were staying. The hotel did not have proper Internet connection and the water tap did not even work. When we entered the room, I spread myself on the bed. We will let tomorrow decide for itself.

*

At 6:00 a.m. in the morning, *Mahdiyeh* woke me up. We had to meet the person at one of the villages near "*Sorouch*" at 9:00 sharp. We went to passenger terminal. When we found ourselves at the terminal, we saw a white color van, which the words "*Sorouch*" had been pasted on it.

The driver of van said: "The bus will start moving in one hour," and immediately after, he asked me: "Do you want to go to **Kobani**?"

I answered "No" due to the security condition. After 20 minutes, we spoke with passengers standing at the terminal. At this time, I found a co-traveler. He speaks as if he knows the road very well. He is from "**Efrin**" of Syria and had left Damascus for **Kobani** in order to defend the city. He had a lush beard and was handsome with compassionate and kind eyes. Then, I phoned the person that we had to meet at 9:00 and I apologized to him. When, we arrived to the police station checkpoint, we were very scared but fortunately, nothing special happened.

Extreme stress, contradictory and uncertain promises, did not allow me to write an introduction about **Sorouch** city.

We did not do much there. We stayed in an alley where the Kurdish Party Office was located. We stayed in a multi-story building, which was at the time- being used for different purposes.

For this reason, the building is named "Mala Gel" i.e. House of Nation. The House of Nation was filled with Syrian Kurdish refugees along with some wounded persons-. I participated in a short and brief dialogue with one of the functionaries of this center or "House of Nation" who pointed to the difficulties of refugees.

He said: "The Turkish government claims that it has managed to support approx. 200,000 refugees while Turkish government actually covers only 7,000 refugees. Our party and 40 other nongovernmental organizations from across Turkey are supporting the remaining part of the refugees, ranging from provision of tent, blanket to food."

Mehmet Doymaz the Official in Charge of Foreign Affairs of People's Democratic Party {HDP} in **Sorouch** complains about the complicated and stressful situation of refugees and says: "We ask government to take the issue into serious consideration and help us in materialization of our objectives."

When DAESH terrorist group attacked **Kobani** during the early days of invasion, a host of people left the city and flocked to Turkey. When people flocked to Turkey, 300 Kurdish youth were arrested by the Turkish soldiers and officers during the early days. Pressure of public opinion and people of Turkish Kurdistan forced them to open the borders and allow them to take haven during the turbulent days.

More than 150,000 people have become refugees as a result of DAESH terrorist attacks and these refugees were deployed in the cities of "Urfa" and "Sorouch". According to **Mehmet Doymaz**, Kurdish parties, 40 nongovernmental organizations across Turkey were tasked with meeting basic and preliminary

demands of a great number of refugees. Unlike its claims, the Turkish government undertook supplying and meeting requirements of approx. 6,200 refugees ONLY. In response to my question on statements and position of Turkish President **Recep_Tayyip_Erdogan**, saying that **Kobani** is beyond Turkish land and territory and is not attached to Turkey, he said: "It is right. This border is a governmental border but it is not legitimate in our view!"

This categorical response of the inseparable bond of the Rogue Revolution reveals the relation between freedom-seeking movements of Turkish Kurdistan- with the Syrian one.

It was expected that a conference would be held in the presence of Kurdish and Turkish authors in line with supporting **Kobani** people's resistance. For this reason, the city was more populated than any other days. When participating authors entered the lobby of the conference, approx. 50 news agencies and TV reporters covered the conference with their cameras. The conference was held at the Amphitheater of the Office of Party in the Turkish language.

The last photo of Abdullah **Ocalan**, the Leader of PKK with a white beard had been hung at the conference.

Since I cannot understanding Turkish language (knowing almost three or four words), I felt that all these authors were talking about peace and security.

The man, who had been coordinated to meet us, came toward us and said: "It is impossible. He noted the city deputy, Turkish frontiersmen and the arduous path as the main reasons that hindered us to continue our way."

These were not fresh subjects. At this time, we went to see the head of one of the affiliated centers and put forward the subject to him. He did not accept our request although he was right. At this juncture, a middle-age woman entered. She was a member of **Kobani's** Canton Assembly. We told her our story. At first, she dodged but raised our hope a little. She disappeared for some hours and then returned. After many discussions, she told us that you should be responsible for accepting the outcome and consequences of any incidents yourself.

There were some other people. In this part, I refrain from mentioning the details due to security reasons. Telephones were exchanged, indicating it is time to go.

At nighttime, we arrived at the first village after 20 minutes with the white-color van.

Before moving to the next village, we stayed there for half an hour.

Turkish government had ordered evacuation of these villages. It seemed that the Turkish government had lost its control on the village, because, tableaux of some illegal Kurdish organizations had been hung on external walls of a number of houses. We stayed in a cottage for a few hours for further coordination. Other friends, who were calling each other as "*Haval'*" i.e. "**comrade**" and refraining from telling their original name, asked us some questions and once again, they told us that they cannot take us with them.

Apparently, Turkish forces had wounded three of them some hours ago and there was a state of emergency at the border. I spoke with one of the unknown "*Haval'*" who had introduced himself as a Medical student.

Two frustrating hours were spent in order to convince him. He was right due to his responsibility. With our repeated emphasis on the acceptance of all risks, they took us along with some *Haval'* who were expected to join warfronts. Mohammad Ali and *Dijwar* were of our succors, otherwise, at least one of our backpacks were forgotten there. Shaking hands and kissing the boys and girls of the village goodbye, we started moving forward with the same white-color van some kilometers away.

It was 2:00 a.m. at midnight. At last, we arrived near the border. The sounds of bullet and military cannon would not permit losing our way. The watch tower could be easily seen. One stayed behind a destructed house for an hour and slept there a bit more. When I woke up with the voice of my friends, I was shocked with fear. Now, we were 40 persons and at this time, the guide arrived and told us important points.

I translated what the guide told us for *Mahdiyeh*. I became worried. I felt there was still away back, because, the white-color van was there. I knew that we would be leaving here for the city that **DAESH** had transferred all arsenals and munitions of *Mosul* and *Raghah* military bases to its borders. But we had taken our decision. Crawling and creeping behind the guide and with wounded hands and feet, we went on approx. one kilometer away. Our hands, heads and feet felt fruits of a large garden, separating Syria and Turkey from each other. In this situation, I became importunate to know whether this garden is the garden of cucumber, eggplant or banana.

I worried for *Mahdiyeh*. She was behind us a bit. I was hoping that she could tolerate her heavy backpack for a few more minutes.

Later, she told me that Mohammad Ali peeled the skin of an uncertain fruit and offered her one in that horrifying, horrendous and stressful situation. I reached myself to the barbed wires after one of the *Haval'* or comrades pointed at me. The sound of alarm and bullet broke the silence of farm. All *Haval'* i.e. comrades spread the blanket on the barbed wire and entered the land and territory of the destination country.

When entering the land and territory of the targeted country, no one is authorized to shoot. But it seems ridiculous to me. I am sure if such an event was happening in our country, certainly, we were shot until **Kobani**. When we reached to the surrounding area of **Kobani**, I asked my friends about the fruits of the gardens and I got my answer. Yes, that's right. I guessed true. All comrades from **Kobani** welcomed us. Our worn-out clothes gave us a satisfactory smile on our lips. The dogs barked continuously. After proceeding two kilometers, we reached the first patrol police station. The flag of the two protection forces in Kurdistan {YPG & YPJ} had been hoisted. The picture of the leader, who was leading the region beyond the border behind the bar, had been pasted to the control chamber of the patrol police station. At this juncture, a number of youth with rifles in their hands congratulated our arrival in one piece offering cigarettes to us.

After wandering there for half an hour and dividing 40 members of us to smaller groups, we arrived there with a TOYOTA passenger car, which was expected to stay there.

Mahdiyeh was taken to the room where it was special to women while I was taken to the room special to men. The lamps were turned off and at this time, my foot contacted a Kalashnikov. I startled. Among those members, some of whom then became my friends, I fell asleep despite the sounds of mortars.

*

From the time of reaching to **Kobani** up to our return to **Diyarbakir** which lasted for 10 days I could not write anymore. I was too weary.

Maybe the new environment caused writers block. Instead, I took films as much as I could. Maybe, pictures and films would reveal life more apparently and vividly than writing something on paper.

I wish I could finish my itinerary at this point. Since all institutionalized relations of our daily life are dissolved in **Kobani**, uttering the current relationship in this city was incomprehensible and indescribable. At the time of our arrival to the city, I had to confess that whatsoever I had written before the trip- was a great treason to this new lifestyle.

At the wee hours in the morning, I saw the persons that I miss them now very much. The place where we had been accommodated was the house of one of the homeless families that God knows in which camp they have died of coldness. Now, it was our room, at least until the mortars have not ruined it. It was full of the journalists and reporters who were providing reports and news for news agencies and TV networks near Kurdistan Labor Party.

The main media outlets established near Kurdistan Labor Party include: Hawar News, Firat news, Azadiwilat and Gondoum papers, Ronahi and Sterk TV channels.

These press reporters and journalists were covering related news alternatively with exchanging members from the early days of war.

The sound of power generator is so high that can hurt ears extremely and I wish one of these military cannons destruct it in the very near future.

At this time, *Mahdiyeh* is coming. She is very happy with full strength. The professional condition of job implies that we depart our path. Therefore, her perpetual presence is not felt in continuation of itinerary but her compassion and vastness of her smile is not- forgettable. The difference of intellectual and cosmology origin in each of us separated our path from each other. Irrespective of evaluation, this subject existed between *Mahdiyeh* and me. Angriiness and desperateness were some part of the situation between us. *Farhad, Haval'* as comrade, has now turned into a professional journalist, cannot speak Persian and English. Once again, *Mahdiyeh* said: "It is pity that I cannot understand his language."

At the first day, I said categorically: Better!

Farhad, who is the main member and coordinator of information services of People's Democratic Party of Kurdistan {PYD} at the city, asked us: "Who have introduced you?"

Answering the question agitated *Farhad* and made him angry. When I answered his question, he became agitated. For this reason, *Farhad* ordered to imprison us. It is ridiculous. If it is expected to be in prison, it is better to be in Turkey. How -could I say later that I was co-prisoner with a member of DAESH terrorist group?

With the intercession of *Haval* Dunya who is a member of Party Information Dissemination Center, the situation turned calm a bit. I am sure that *Farhad* had missed us a bit when we returned. During recent 50 days, face of *Farhad* became older. I shocked when I saw his photos before resistance movement. We got familiarized with others as they were very kind and compassionate extremely. They were communicating report for hours, one with laptop, the other with tablet and mobile phone.

The boys and girls, who reached to *Kobani* in this difficult and arduous condition, were neither grumbling nor exaggerating and overestimating their presence at the movement. This is the lost cycle of Iranian opposition. If someone gets imprisoned in Iran just for two months, he or she says goodbye with the world of politics after granting refugee in European country forever and will remind this two months in his memoirs lest a government came to power in order to determine pension for these two months.

Fighting should be learnt from these men and women. A considerable population of European dwellers of this movement has returned to **Kobani**, three of- them who were found with Swedish nationality were killed in **Kobani**

Every often, co-roommate were changing their place. At first, I thought that they may not like me to live in the same room with them and for this reason, they leave the room. But after, I understood that they changed their places alternatively and upon entrance of new manpower, they themselves leave here for Istanbul or their hometown. Volunteer youth constitutes most of them who have studied at Turkish universities in the following branches: Communications, Journalism and Cinema- or studying now.

None of them have put on press helmet and bulletproof waistcoat. They consider this as a symbol of being isolated from queue of fighters. Maybe this incautiousness of them is not wisely, but it shows the ridiculous manner of some people in farther hills like Sorouch, who are waiting for seeing whiff of fire from Kobani to hide themselves in shields.

Before first appearance at the central part of the city, it is better to brief a transparent view of fenced, encircled and surrounded city of **Kobani**.

It is said that canton **Kobani** includes the main city and 370 villages around it,- contains more than 300,000 people. When unrest started in Syria in 2011 and aggravation of situation after cutting off city water and power outlets by DAESH terrorist group (Islamic State in Iraq and Levant) since a year ago, more than 90 percent of these people evacuated their homes and reached themselves to beyond the border areas. Most of these evacuees fled to various cities in Turkey especially **Sorouch**.

When they left their houses, they took necessary appliances and equipment with themselves. But is it possible to- transit vehicle and car from Turkey?

Kobani railway, which connects this city to Turkey, is now considered as a line for the differentiation of hopeful people in its surrounding villages who have forced to flee the region with the aim of fearing of DAESH attacks. In view of " **HavalJudi**", who is responsible for east front of **Kobani** resistance base, the objective of Turkey is completely clear. They are dissatisfied by the resistance of **Kobani** and defending corps. In general, they are surprised and fearful. They want to block this trend by all their means. Turkey is after the establishment of a tampon region in **Kobani**, so that the country intends to demoralize and weaken role of Kurds for using Syrian war equation."

Civilians are yet living inside the city. They have stayed in the city with their will and perseverance. They are in the city in order to help fighters to –eradicating **DAESH** terrorist group even with heating ready-made conserve and also washing and cleaning their houses.

Villagers, residing at the outskirts of **Kobani**, who constitute considerable population of the city, have constructed quasi houses with tractors and vans at fifth km away from the city and also one meter away from barbed wires of the borderline, were watching their villages using hunting cameras. It is for more than fifty days that they were waiting DAESH's exit from there and returning to their hometown. I asked one of them, who had put on a headband in Arabic costume, the main reason to stay in this difficult and arduous condition. In his response, he told me that we are hopeful to takeover and retake our city from hands of this terrorist group. Therefore, they prefer to tolerate coldness of the mobile tent.

The children, who remained at the city, shouted while seeing my camera: "We do not exit." One of them, who became- agitated of our questions , answered: "We should help our comrades with all our body and soul."

The power generators with their ear-hurting sound supply power for main places and drinking and non-drinking water wells of the city for some hours. The said issue has increased the possibility of outbreak of diseases across the city and children are more exposed to these diseases.

Flies also created nuisance and disturbance to us. In some cases, flies bestow happiness to us. Because increasing of flies shows the increasing of Daesh's deaths.

I spoke with one of "**Havals'**", who is the official in charge of eastern front in **Kobani** with regard to the general situation of clashes at the 50th day coupled with the general coordinate of forces arrangement from the two sides. He said: "Presently, threat has been removed."

"In a nutshell, I can say that nothing threatens us."

I asked him: "Why you say such statement whereas the 30 to 40 percent of main swathe of the city are at their hand. Moreover, some border and strategic villages around **Kobani** have been occupied by DAESH."

Most of their logistic contributions are provided via this border and by Turkey and there are two strategic points in the city which is controlled by DAESH terrorist group, one of them is the "**Mishtenur**" Hill and the other is "**Welfare Ministry**".

More than 60 percent of the city has been devastated and destroyed by **DAESH** group. Of total 360 villages in **Kobani**, more than 90 percent of them are at the control of **DAESH** forces. But it is better to know that we have evacuated the mentioned villages with predetermined and preplanned program. It should be noted that these villages are not reliable and trusted architectural designs and can be destroyed with heavy artilleries and arms. We stationed our forces in four corners of the city. We could neutralize many techniques and facilities of **DAESH** there. We did not have any warfare tank and their artillery was useless as well.

Many heavy weapons are so powerful that can destroy villages but these weapons do not work at cities even with heavy arms.

At the first glance, retreating and saving life of our citizens was considered as the most important point. Presently, **DAESH** has lost its spirit and power and anything does not threaten **Kobani**.

It should be noted that **Kobani** is nestled on a fertile plain. Its vicinity to the Kurdish villages and cities of Turkey has bestowed inhabitants of the city to use telecommunication lines. In some parts of the city, houses had been constructed that have attached to its border houses at the extreme border point with Turkey. **Nasrin** says that inhabitants were using the high-speed internet network of their city but presently, such system is at the control of **DAESH** forces. Hence, the telephone line (**SIM card**) that we had bought in Turkey helped us in **Kobani** as well. Naturally, Turkish government is taking advantage of this issue. We found out a deep comprehension of various dimensions of resistance during our 10-day alternative patrol from across the city and war front. The maximum congestion of clashes and conflict can be found in eastern part of **Kobani** and the regions, occupied by **DAESH** forces, can be found at this area. Southern and northern part of the city is calm to some extent, but all parts of the city have been turned into debris as a result of throwing cannons and bullets as well as strike of bombs of coalition forces during these two months.

The mass of destructions in **Kobani** is so high that people can hardly recognize their houses. For recognition of devastated house, one should refer to the family photos. Here, this is my photo and then, it can be concluded that here is the place we were living.

In recent days, with the increase of suicide attacks of **DAESH** forces, one could not find an intact window.

We prepare ourselves to go to the city slowly. **Farhad** guides us to various parts of the city. He reminds us some main and necessary points. Most streets have been covered with a curtain with the possibility of presence of **DAESH** forces in there, so that one cannot be seen by them. We followed our way cautiously

at the order of the guide. At the early days of patrolling and during preparing report, one of the reporters of the Party was wounded as a result of strike of shrapnel exactly in front of my eye. Then, he was taken to the small hospital of the city. However, the said issue made me awake in order to take the said issue into serious consideration.

Leaving house for both civilian and non-civilian of the city was subject to the specific rules and regulations. This issue was- agitating me in the long course of travel. I wanted to walk freely in all parts of the city. But it was impossible even for the fighters. At any rate, we managed to take a walk in four main parts of the city.

Water tank of every house was the first equipment which destroyed after strike of the mortars and shrapnel. In this line, some cannons and fuse grades struck mosques of the city. The wounded and tired persons are resting in safer alleys with their guns at hand which have adorned with three colors of green, yellow and red. We can see some old men at the other corner who were preparing their guns for shooting towards the enemy. The uniform of men is made of yellow triangular fabric while uniform of women is made of green-color fabric.

"Graveyard", "Hospital" and "Welfare Organization" of the city are at the hands of **DAESH** forces. The condition of wounded and patients have turned more chronic, not due to the shortage of medical equipment, rather due to the blockade of borders for transferring the wounded to Turkey.

The reliable and informed sources say that most of **DAESH** forces have been wounded and hospitalized at hospitals in "*Urfa*".

Across the city thoroughfares, main streets and alleys, broken tableaus of shops and destroyed houses could be seen easily. Most wounded people with their hand full of blood could also be seen everywhere in **Kobani**. Restaurant, mess hall, pharmacy, drugstore, haberdashery, supermarket, minimarket, and a great number of money's exchanges could be seen across the city. At the portal of one of the money's exchange, the following statement could be seen: "Drafting, ordering and transferring money to Iraqi Kurdistan, Turkey and Europe is possible."

I was thinking of returning. From where we can transfer or change our money. One of the tableaus was standing intact in its place. The following statement can be read at the shop window of exchanges: "We are at the service of customer and will do out utmost efforts in order to gain satisfaction of customers."

Now, where are these persons who can render services to us?

I saw a key-selling shop in a land that its door can be opened with a kick and simple gun. It was disgusting. Moreover, we saw some broken tableaux with Kurdish and Arabic names. It seems that Kurdish names have increased more and more after expulsion of forces of Baath regime and control of city by *Democratic Unity Party_{PYD}*. The colorful Kurdish clothes are considered as symbol and manifestation of Kurds in whole parts of Kurdistan and these clothes have preserved their status in the worst condition of assimilation as well. Standing at the doorstep of tailor's shop, I saw mannequin and dummies lying on the ground. At this time, my feet contacted with the power wire.

Sometimes, *TOYOTA* cars bearing *DAESH* logo were passing beside us with full speed. At the first time, I became frightened but later, it was specified that these cars were laden with the loots which have been taken from *DAESH* members. Sometimes, I had to crawl towards the destroyed houses. Unlike common imagination, family photos are not of paramount importance, because, none of families have included them in fugitive suitcases. Under such circumstances, gold, money and documents and certificates are more important.

Depending on the severity or intensification of clashes, U.S. warplanes and fighters were targeting some parts of the city every often. The ground is shuddering and shivering below my feet and at this time, smog engulfs a large part of sky of the city.

All people of the city are in alert condition and sounds of bullets have disrupted minds of those people working in information services center of the Party. Every night, they must be in alert condition. There is a Kalashnikov beside bed of each of them which have leaned against the wall.

I told myself that if a strong bullet hits the house, I cannot prevent from destruction of house. It is better to go to sleep. The bullets as thrown by *DAESH* forces were horrendous and these bullets could strike at any part of the city. The friends that I spent the night with them told me that this house was the ninth they had changed. All previous houses had been destroyed by *DAESH* terrorist group.

I accustomed to the environment of the city every day in a way that sounds of mortars were familiar with me and sounds of bullets had turned ordinary and normal to me. Even, I learnt how to work with Kalashnikov. For the first time, I put my hand on trigger of gun. In previous, I was afraid of putting my hand on trigger. At this time, I pointed the gun to the target greedily.

I was busy interviewing for some days. The presence of women in *Kobani* was unique and unprecedented. They are present in every parts of the city. My first interview was conducted with Ms. *Aseeh* Abdullah the Joint Chief of Staff of Democratic Unity Party. Presence of a leader especially a female leader in the Middle East is promising news. However, women have played a leading and

constructive role in other parts of Kurdistan region. They also have had an important role in vast parts of Turkish Kurd regions as well.

Undoubtedly, more than 60 percent of guerrillas, that I saw them in **Kobani**, had come here from various parts of Turkish Kurdistan. Impact of all-out presence of Kurdish women in other parts of Kurdistan in previous freedom- loving movement as well as vast support of Turkish Kurds from current resistance of **Kobani** should not be ignored. '**EvindarBotan**' is one of the courageous women and for this reason, I got her viewpoint on the corporal and physical difference of man and woman. She said: "Everything is based on self-credence and invigoration of will."

"We fought with **DAESH** forces along with men in equal condition," she said.

In most cases, women blocked advancement and progress of **DAESH** forces which have occupied one third of land and territory in Iraq and Syria. However, **DAESH** forces failed to attain victory while facing with women. Our revolution is the revolution of women as well. We, women, fought with **DAESH** in tandem with men. While seeing guerilla, a lovable and handsome 16-year-old girl, I paired my feet in order to pay tribute to her as a military salute.

Commander "**NarinEfrin**" is another woman who is known and famous for his brilliant activities in war against DAESH forces. I wanted to interview with her but Farhad did not allow me. He said that she does not interview with anyone at this messy situation of war.

Well, I will wait until situation gets better!

In a relative calm afternoon, I was sitting in the room with **Mahdiyeh** when **Farhad** called me. At this time, a robust and tall woman with influential eyes entered along with three- girls. They came near us and we saluted them. Ready- made conserves, pickles, pickled cucumbers and other foods had been warehoused for rainy and arduous days.

The tablecloths of guerilla were adorned with delicious foods, because, guerillas have different duties in various hours of a day. This tablecloth is prepared in most hours. But cigarette and tea can be found easier than Kalashnikov.

Both men and women participate and incorporate in provision of bread. Division of these resources also required compiling a defined program which is transferred to the destination with **TOYOTA** passenger car.

The weather has turned a bit cold and the said issue can be grasped out since some of us got cold. Both *Farhad* and *Dunya* insisted to bring us tablet and syrup. Their compassion in that condition was very complicated in that situation. The sound of mortars could not force us to ignore beauties of this compassionate land. Communication of one of fighters via Skype with his mother was considered as one of the most beautiful scenes that I can remember.

Mother with white-color scarf was in Istanbul like Kurdish women wearing it in Kurdistan and was signing a lyric named "*Heyran*" for her son.

It was raining which had bestowed a specific calmness to the city. At the time of raining, *DAESH* forces had to respect rainfall. Those people i.e. *DAESH* who were killing innocent people ranging from toddler to the old men and women have presently remained quiet in front of the blessing of God i.e. rainfall. Rain is similar to a mother who has been embarrassed from her child but this son does not respect mother. Once again, shooting of machine guns disturbed calmness of the city.

The numbers of Chechens can be found among *DAESH* forces. 87 different passports, which indicate 87 countries, have been found there till now.

Unity and amity among people of the city are so dependent on each other that no one is ready to pour tear for the sake of his or her friend's death. Mobile phone of every single of fighters is full of photos of the comrades. The martyred friends were smiling and laughing- a few days ago and now they have attained martyrdom. Coping with the death of very close friends was so difficult to me, exactly similar to my surprise of prohibition of sexual relationship of fighters and/or charismatic of a name like *Ocalan*.

The specific importance of this battle can be found in a keyword entitled "Self-management Democratic system", a modern system which is followed with the recurrence of people to the arena of politics and their maximum participation as well as transition of nation- government system.

The activities of cantons are run by the councils and this issue is taken after from low to up. In an interview made with *Asieeh* Abdullah, she pointed some important subjects on self-management democratic system. According to her, the eras of centralist systems has come to end and will not be useful for the future of Syria. This project i.e. self-management democratic system is not confined to the Kurds or a specific political party; rather, all people can live in peace and security under the auspices of this system. For this aim, please look at the amicable coexistence of people in cantons. The reciprocal and mutual influences of various cultures can be observed with each other. *Asieeh* Abdullah has emphasized that a corridor should be set up to the materialization of this objective at the current sensitive situation in order to break siege of *DAESH*. This issue is of paramount importance for the continuation of resistance.

Civilians can be excluded and international organizations and freelance and independent media can be informed of current situation.

Consequently, world community can pursue situation of **Kobani** accordingly and humanitarian and philanthropic contributions will reach to **Kobani** via this corridor. When a person intended to join Kurdistan patriotic forces, they can act easily.

It is better to leave the city as soon as possible. The resistance of **Kobani** proved that every human is a citizen and every city can be the center of taking decision.

We stayed near the border for two nights in order to exit there in an appropriate time. Going out from **Kobani** is rather more difficult than entering the city. We were at the target of soldiers who had readied themselves to shoot us. We should have gone without taking their aerial shooting into consideration. We passed a bit more from the barbed wires and in the middle of the night, **Mahdiyeh** and other new friends disappeared suddenly. It was cold and our hearts were beating severely from fear. After a few seconds, they came and joined us. Then, we ran some kilometers away with heavy backpacks. My heart was aching and I was very tired. When we reached, it was night. We stayed at the same village when we wanted to go towards **Kobani**. The next morning, I saw persons who were finding a chance for entering the city. They wanted to join queues of fighters. "**Qadriyeh**" was a 28-year-old student of Master's degree who had left Istanbul for the same reason. Tomorrow of next morning, she was shot dead by Turkish border forces. Before her death, she had written the following letter; "This war is not confined to the inhabitants of **Kobani** merely, rather, it is a war which is related to all of us. I myself joined this unequal war for the sake of my family whom I liked them very much. I joined the war for the sake of humanity. We should join our hands together and fight with the enemy with all our means. if at the present situation, we ignore this war, tomorrow we will witness that bombs of enemies have fallen on our homes and at that time, we will feel ourselves alone."

When I heard that "**Qadriyeh**" has been killed, I murmur on streets of **Diyarbakir**: "Once again, revolutionary rhythms and verses should be recited at this moment."

Once again, I decided to go towards hotel of the city and mosque and at this moment, a murmuring sound made me to go asleep.

"Our destiny has intermingled to be killed in front of our homes and we have involved in a disastrous situation."

Footnote:

***Erbil**, also written **Irbil**, and known as **Hawler** is the largest city and capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. It is located 88 kilometres (55 miles) east of Mosul and has a permanent population of approximately 1.5 million as of 2013.*

Kobanî, or Kobanê, officially known as Ayn al-Arab, is a city in Aleppo Governorate in northern Syria, lying immediately south of the border with Turkey.

*The **Siege of Kobanî** was launched by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (also known as ISIL or ISIS) militants on 16 September 2014, in order to capture the town of Kobanî (also known as Ayn al-Arab) in northern Syria.*

By 2 October, ISIL succeeded in capturing 350 Kurdish villages and towns within the vicinity of Kobanî, creating a wave of some 300,000 displaced Kurds, most of who fled across the border into Turkey. Kurdish and Free Syrian Army (FSA) forces, supported by American and Arab airpower, continue to defend the city against the ISIL attack, as of early December 2014.

