

FROM THE URDU PRESS

No. 24

1-15 June 2011

29 Jamadi Al-Akhar-13 Rajab 1432 Hijri

[Note: Using editorials as an indicator, this series presents views, understanding and attitude of the Urdu periodicals in India towards various developments concerning the Middle East. The selection of an item does not mean the endorsement or concurrence concur with their accuracy or views. Editor, MEI@ND]

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Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi

Editorial, 1 June 2011, Wednesday

1. Support for Change

The G8 has suggested Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi to step down as he has lost the right to rule. The G8 summit held on 26-27 May in the commune of Deauville in France discussed a number of issues but Middle East remained in focus throughout the meeting. The statement issued at the end of the summit was focussed on the prevailing situation in the Muslim countries, especially in Arab world. It has expressed its worry on the situation in Libya and has reiterated that NATO will finish its task of freeing the people of Libya from the atrocities of its ruler. The US, France and the UK had same opinion on the issue, while Germany and Italy agree on it, but are not as enthusiastic. Italy is in a peculiar situation; it is in a state of dilemma because of its relations with Libya. Even though France too is indebted to the Libyan leader but it has other interests as well. Russia's position is completely different. The US, the UK and France have claimed that Russia agrees to the statement issued at the end of summit but it

has been reported that the Russian President has expressed strong objections against NATO actions. He agrees that Muammar Gaddafi has lost his legitimacy but at the same time he has termed the NATO action as unnecessary. Likewise, the statement criticises the Syrian leadership for the atrocities on pro-democracy campaigners, which it says shall be immediately stopped. It should be remembered that when the US President Barack Obama announced his new strategy for Middle East, he also asked the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to promote democracy or step down. Other members of G8 countries also want to completely support the wave of change in the Arab world.

The G8 not just wants to extend political and moral support, but intends to provide material help. The US has announced some financial aid on its own. Britain also intends to do this and is on way to take measures. Other Western nations have also planned in this regard and now G8 has formally announced it. As per the joint statement, G8 has planned for financial aid to Egypt and Tunisia. Accordingly, in the next two years these two African countries will receive US\$ 20 million in aid from G8 for promotion of democracy. Earlier also the US and its Western allies have committed their help and encouragement to the pro-democracy elements active in the Arab world. Force is also being used for it. NATO is being used for the same but the African nations have objections on NATO action; the African Union has already expressed its strong objection on the issue, because the NATO action has further deteriorated the situation. They think that the issue needs to be solved politically, no one can support dictatorship but imposing something from top is also a kind of dictatorship. It is a matter of concern that to what extent this change, that may come as a result of this imposition from top, will last, the larger issue is to what extent it would benefit the people. As this will not consider the wishes and aspirations of people rather it would be considerate of foreign interests. That's the reason people are doubtful about the plan and objectives of big powers and developed countries. It can be assumed what kind of change these powerful countries want to bring and what would it result into. The reason such announcements are hardly welcomed.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=01-june-2011



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 5 June 2011, Sunday

2. The Condition in Yemen is Worrying

The revolutionary zeal among the masses in Muslim countries is no doubt a sign of change but some powers are misusing this wave of change to instigate violence which creates doubt about the intentions of international powers. If citizens of a country themselves destroy its pillars then how important the state would be for them. This is also worth notice that among the people who have chosen the path of protests what kind of people can be a threat for internal security. Weakening of the pillars of own house will weaken the base of their own refuge. In the context of above lines, the ongoing events in Yemen are distressing and gloomy. Violence involving the military, the rebels and civilians is at the peak. Recently the Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and the Prime Minister were injured in an attack on the Mosque at the Presidential Palace during the Friday congregational prayer. The tribal group which is protesting against the President bombarded and shelled the Mosque, both sides exchanged fire after that and it is likely that the anti-Saleh group wants to push Yemen into a civil-war like situation. Six security guards were killed during the fight. The people of Yemen are still struggling for the ouster of the regime like in Tunisia and Egypt. While President Saleh has been seen putting conditions for relinquishing power. The Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Parliament Speaker and Governor of Sana were injured in the rebel attack which is a real worrying phase in this violence. The Mosque inside the Presidential Palace was attacked by the tribal militia aligned to Sheikh Sadiq al-Ahmar wherein three rockets hit the Mosque wall. The Deputy Prime Minister and Security Advisor to the President Rashid Ali was injured in the attack. The al-Ahmar family, which is the leader of Hashid tribe, has emerged as a major rebel group in Yemen. Which country is free from ills? The anger against the ruling class is common to all countries but it has taken a really bad shape in Yemen, which can be estimated from the attack on the Presidential Palace. This is the first attack on the Presidential Palace after pro-democracy protests started in Yemen. In fact, this is an act of revenge. The government forces had attacked and destroyed homes of two tribal leaders and a military general who defected from Saleh camp. This attack further fuelled violence in Yemen. The houses of two brothers of al-Ahmar family, Hameed and Himyar, were destroyed. The ruling group has not taken any measures to end violence. If the government would have taken notice of the rebellion and had taken steps to reduce people's anger then violence would have diminished. The government forces antagonised the rebels by firing on Sheikh al-Ahmar's home which led to the targeting of government buildings and ministers' residence by the rebels. The government residential place has become the centre stage of violence and power struggle in Yemen. This area has almost fallen into the hands of tribal groups. The Yemeni President has said to his American, British and Gulf friends and mediators that he is ready to relinquish power peacefully while avoids showing this commitment made to the mediators among his close circle. As a result the strongest and influential tribe is fighting with the government forces. The situation in Yemen can become peaceful if Saleh relinquishes power and steps down on his own. Otherwise this anger among people against the ruler who stuck to power can create a civil-war like situation. Other countries

are also helping bring peace in Yemen. President Saleh has agreed to sign the peace agreement proposed by the GCC but the time and date for signing has not been fixed yet. As a responsible ruler, Saleh should be aware of the problems his people are facing. If Saleh accepts the proposal by the GCC then it can help Yemen come out of the chaos it has fallen into. The situation can be brought in control with the help of co-operation between civil and military authorities.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr5-16>



The Etemaad Urdu Daily (The Confidence Urdu Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 11 June 2011, Saturday

3. Syria too under Threat of Intervention

What turn the situation in Syria will take? What President Bashar al-Assad wants? How can he control the public anger against his dictatorial rule? These are some questions which have remained unanswered. One thing is clear, that Bashar al-Assad is using everything in his capacity to hide what is going on in Syria and especially in the town of Jisr al-Shugour. In other words, he is trying to fool the world. He is a dictator and had learned from his father to crush dissident. Armed gangs killed 120 policemen in North-Western Syria. However, the protestors differ on the government's statistics about the death of soldiers. Who are those being termed as 'Armed Gangs' by Bashar government? This is an example of the similarities found among dictators. Why the government is not giving details about them. It's easy to term them as 'Armed Gangs' or 'Terrorists'. They try to gain sympathy around the world. Another aim is to make a point among the Western countries that they are also facing the similar violent groups which they are calling terrorists. These armed gangs are practically working for the government. They are attacking the opposition as well as the police and soldiers.

The world is no more oblivious of the conditions in the revolution-affected countries in the Middle East. Syria and Yemen or any other country cannot bluff the international community. Bashar al-Assad is getting into the trap of Western countries despite all his shrewdness. A resolution on Syria will soon be placed in the UNSC. The text of the resolution was prepared by France, Germany, Britain and Portugal wherein the killing of and atrocities on peaceful protestors has been criticised and the Syrian government has been asked to immediately control violence. Veto holding members of the UNSC, China and Russia, have refused to be part of this resolution. That's why it has been said that the Western countries can fail in their plan as either China or Russia can use their veto. Russia has been supplying arms to Syria for a long time. So, Russia is an ally of Syria. Russia will not allow any move that can affect its arms supply. The

region is passing through a very unstable phase after revolution in many countries which has also promoted anti-Americanism among people. The ruling class is already not happy. The people are also getting dejected due to failure in formation of new government and restoration of democracy. Russia and China want to have a better relation with the Arab world after the changing circumstances, to promote their own economic and military interest in the region.

The West wants to control Syria through its UNSC resolution and wants to extend their goodwill among the people of this country by acting against the atrocities by the Bashar al-Assad government. However, Russia and China seem to strengthen ties at government level, but at a time when the democratic movements want to root out the anarchist elements in the Arab world, the Chinese and Russian stand is worth noting. When the world was divided into two blocks the use of veto by anyone had importance. But when differences occur between the ruling class and the people; the governments do not hesitate in using force, which gives the reason for intervention but what is happening in Libya is completely a violation of UN resolution. The NATO forces have not cared about the security of the civilians even though the resolution mandated the implementation of 'No Fly Zone' with the condition to protect civilians. The West has not yet succeeded in dislodging the Gaddafi regime. If the Libyan experiment is repeated in Syria and the West faces similar fate there; it can severely affect the position of the Security Council.

Source: <http://www.etemaaddaily.com/editorial.html>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 13 June 2011, Monday

4. Worsening Condition in Middle East

The kind of situation prevailing in many countries of the Middle East for the past several weeks due to protests, rebellion and violence may not be a problem for rest of the world, but the attitude of neighbouring Muslim countries is appalling and indicates that the rulers in these countries are completely oblivious of the situation. Neither do they seem to be interested in pressurising the governments of the countries where the people are protesting to find a peaceful solution of the problem, else it would give an excuse for the Western powers to intervene in their internal matters and they would suffer the same fate as Libya.

Libya is not just facing civil-war but also faces NATO military attack, what is the legal basis of indiscriminate bombardment in Libya and killing of innocent civilians, women, children by the NATO countries who have declared the Gaddafi rule as illegitimate? Nobody can dare to ask this from NATO, but the other sad aspect of the entire issue is the role of Col. Gaddafi himself in letting the situation come to this juncture. If Gaddafi had understood the mood of public and realised the wishes of majority of its people then things would not have deteriorated to the current extent. If he would have handed over the rule to any of his confidants after ruling for such a long time, it would have helped lessen the people's anger but this was not to be.

The same situation is in Yemen, where President Ali Abdullah Saleh had to leave the country after being injured in a rebel attack, but he is still not ready to relinquish the chair. As a result the people are facing the brunt of fighting between rebel and government forces.

The situation in Syria is worse, the demonstrations against Bashar rule continues and are getting more and more violent. The government is using brutal force against the people which cannot be justified in any circumstance. The problem is Bashar al-Assad is also an eyesore among Western countries so he should be more cautious in taking any step, however, he is trying to suppress the voice of people through violence and brutal force. The bloody fight between protestors and the military in Syria is a warning bell for the regime as well as the country. Even though the American and Western conspiracies have also played its role in instigating the masses and the US is using all its resources to topple the current Syrian regime due to its close ties with Iran, but Bashar al-Assad could have been more politically mature in tackling the problem. The need of the hour is to avoid use of force against the people and orchestrate a peaceful transition of power so that the foreign powers could not intervene in Syria, as they did in Libya, and the country and the people remain safe from any big trouble.

It is not just a matter of Syria. Other Muslim countries should also learn some lesson from the happenings and work for democratic reforms to alley the anger amongst the people. These countries should realise that they can bet on American support only till the situation serves the US interest, the US stance will change immediately if the situation changes.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=21263&boxid=146331>



Roznama Munsif (The Judge Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 14 June 2011, Tuesday

5. General Elections in Turkey

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) is again looking to win the general elections in Turkey. The people have supported AKP this time due to economic progress. The Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan had announced before the elections that if the party gains power, he would resign on completion of the term, or immediately after the elections in other case, to make way for the younger leadership. If the AKP gains power it would be its third consecutive win. The party has ruled Turkey for the last two terms.

After the fall of Ottoman Empire, as the dictatorial regime of Mustafa Kemal Pasha gained power, efforts to end the Islamic identity of the government as well as the people took root. Kemal Ataturk brought in legislations to keep people away from Islam. Turkey was declared a secular state; meaning there would not be any state religion, even though Turkey has more than 90% Muslim population while Christians and others comprise less than 10%. Ideally Turkey should have been declared as an Islamic state with rights to minorities, but this was avoided. Ataturk ordered all the mosques to give prayer calls (*Adhan*) in Turkish language, the reason being his animosity with the Arabs and Arabic language. Women were prohibited even from wearing scarf. The constitution gave precedence to the military over the elected representatives. The military was given the right to dismiss the government. There is no other country in the world where the military has precedence over the elected representatives. The Christian countries, the so called flag bearers of democracy, never said a word against it, because Kemal Pasha had taken a number of anti-Islamic steps in Turkey. In other words, he was only promoting the crusader's agenda. That's why he was supported in his anti-Islam and anti-people actions. No democratic country ever asked why the military was given the right to dismiss the elected government when democracy is a government of people. It shall be remembered that the military executed the former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes for allowing the call of *Adhan* in Arabic. The AKP, which has Islamic leanings, worked at the grassroots level for a long time during the repressive rule and strengthened its roots among the people. The work was hard and full of dangers because if the military had got even an iota of proof that the party is working to promote Islam then it would have been banned and the leadership executed. The military in Turkey terms any Islamic activity as against national interest and the punishment is putting to gallows. Kemal Pasha and his friends became very good friends of Israel in their animosity with Arabs. Turkey supported Israel in the 1967 Six Day Arab-Israeli War. The good ties with turkey started to fade after the AKP came to power. Now the situation is that the Turkish PM strongly criticised Israeli actions on the aid flotilla carrying aid to the people of Gaza Strip.

It is very clear that the US and the West does not want the Muslim countries to reinstate their Islamic identity. The Islamic identity of a Muslim country becomes the biggest threat for them. They have a hidden agenda of indirectly ruling the Muslim countries. The death and destruction in Afghanistan is a proof of their goals. They start singing the rhetoric of democracy where it

suits their interest and resort even to military intervention in the name of democracy. On the other hand, if a Muslim ruler is their friend they forget to give them the lesson of democracy. The example of oil-rich Arab countries is there to see. The US and West have so successfully propagated and termed the people who have risen against its interest as terrorists that nowadays the term Muslim has become equivalent to terrorists. The people should learn from the patience and hard work of Turkish Islamists and work for freedom of Muslim countries. The AKP and the people associated with it are worth praise and congratulation.

Source: <http://www.munsifdaily.com/>

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