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[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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Inquilab (The Revolution), Mumbai

Editorial, 5 August 2011, Friday

1. Palestinian Unity and UN Membership Bid

There are around 195 countries in the world. Among these 192 countries have UN recognition and are its full members. It is for this reason that people always say that there are only 192 countries in the world. The argument here is not whether there are 193 or 194 or 195 countries. The point is that 122 of these countries recognize Palestine. However, it is nothing but hypocrisy, selfishness, serving of personal interest and lack of respect for rights and justice that Palestine is not recognized by the United Nations. After going through a historical phase of deprivation and hopelessness and living among heart-wrecking memory of destruction, now when the Palestinians want that the UN give recognition to Palestine according to the pre-1967 borders, so that they get a fair opportunity to present their case at the international forum, there is no voice to echo with the Palestinians. Palestine finds itself alone as always. The US as usual has given a 'thumbs down' to Palestine. The many claims and promises of President Obama have transformed and have become useless and the EU as usual has given evidence of its double standards. Even the Muslim countries have also been silent spectators to all these; nevertheless, the Arab League voiced its support for the Palestinian bid in its Doha meeting

which was held two days ago. This hypocrisy shall be seen in the context of the recent formation of South Sudan which was carved out of Sudan and its immediate recognition by the West, on the other hand the Palestinians who are actively working for their freedom and self-determination and above all their identity for more than half a century have not been given their due rights. This is not an ordinary injustice but a universal suppression sanctioned with the seal of shamelessness.

The new ray of hope that has now come is certainly a result of the agreement between Fatah and Hamas along with thirteen other Palestinian groups. There is no doubt that if Fatah would have accepted the Hamas victory and the partisan powers would not have pitched Fatah against Hamas to indirectly support Israel then there would have been no split in the Palestinian nationalist movement. However, as it is said late but right; this compromise between the groups was the essential need of the hour, especially when Palestine is seeking UN recognition. Actually, a united leadership will always give a better impression to the larger world than a single leadership of Mahmoud Abbas or Khaled Masha'al or anyone else. Much better results are expected from the Sunday (7 August) meeting among these groups. If it succeeds, then it will certainly be a boost to the Palestinian cause and will be a new beginning. This Palestinian unity has given sleepless nights to Israel and so on the day when this agreement was signed, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu "sadly" said that "whatever happened today in Cairo is certainly a severe setback to the peace process. This agreement is a major victory for terrorism." These words are a proof of Netanyahu's worries over the issue. If Israel could get so nervous by this unity between Palestinians groups Hamas, Fatah and others; it could only be imagined what would become of Israel when all Muslim countries join hands. Tel Aviv would realise its true worth in matter of seconds!

Source:

<http://epaper.inquilab.com/showtext.aspx?boxid=9272826&parentid=138929&issuedate=05082011&edd123=Mumbai>



Roznama Sahafat (Journalism Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 5 August 2011, Friday

2. A Commendable Decision by the Israeli Supreme Court

It is a common perception among people in general and Urdu newspaper readers in particular, that every Israeli is a fierce enemy of the Muslims, Arabs and especially the Palestinians and is thirsty for their blood. It is not only unnatural but also a completely wrong perception. All Israeli Jewish people are not Zionists. The dominant majority of the Zionists comprise of those Jews who emigrated to Israel from Eastern European countries like Russia, Hungary,

Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Germany and Austria. There are a lot of differences and tussle between these people and the Jewish people who have inhabited Palestine for centuries. The Palestinian Jews do not like the domination of these foreign Jews who came from Eastern Europe, and the former group believes that they are being suppressed. The differences between them crops up from time to time. The two groups of people have a very different attitude with regard to the Palestinian Arabs. The Palestinian Jews are Arabic speakers and feel more intimate to Arabs. In the context of the Palestinian statehood, the number of people who believe that the two-state plan is the only solution is increasing within Israel as well. However, the most crucial point is that, in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the Israeli forces captured Arab territories including large parts of West Bank and Gaza Strip. For any settlement, Israel will have to return these territories. But Israel, brushing aside all international rules and laws, started building settlements for Jews emigrating from these Eastern European countries on the captured territories. When the international community condemned Israeli actions unequivocally, subsequent governments accepted the regions as belonging to the Palestinians and that no one could build permanent settlements except the Arab population, but they kept postponing the question with regard to the dismantling of houses constructed by non-Arabs. With regard to these there have been instances of fighting between Palestinians and the illegal settlers. As the pressure from the international community increased, the Israeli government succumbed and demolished some of the settlements, but this was done just to swindle the international community. The Israeli government adopted a policy of double speak. On the one hand, they kept on sending bulldozers and cranes to dismantle the colonies to give a false impression to the world, while on the other hand they provoked the people to protest against this to save their buildings and houses from being razed to the ground. This drama went on for some time. Israel kept telling the world that it is trying to dismantle the colonies and also acknowledges the fact that the true owners of the territories are Arabs, but when the people are out on the roads to protest against these measures then the government cannot massacre its own people. Eventually some Palestinian Arabs knocked at the doors of Israeli Supreme Court. The Supreme Court had earlier given a decision that the land is the rightful property of the Palestinians and shall be returned to them but it remained only on paper. The decision that has now been given by the Supreme Court has shocked the Benjamin Netanyahu government. On 1 August 2011, the Supreme Court Judge Dorit Beinisch issued an order to the government to vacate a settlement in West Bank, where about fifty Jewish families were living, since it is built on the territory owned by the Palestinian Arabs and hand it over to its rightful owners immediately. The Honourable Judge further said that if the settlers refuse to vacate their houses, then the colonies should be dismantled by March 2012. It is a direct order to the government of Israel by the Supreme Court. It is very difficult for the government to not follow the Supreme Court's orders because this decision has been well publicized in the global media (except perhaps the Indian media) and not obeying the Supreme Court orders will completely expose Israel. This Israeli Supreme Court order was welcomed all over the world especially in the Arab world and has been termed as a positive step. The important point is that, a number of Palestinians, encouraged by this decision, have now decided to go to the Supreme Court. This is a new problem for the already embattled Netanyahu government. This also demonstrated the fact that Israeli state follows the rule of law.

Source: http://www.sahafat.in/archive_delhi.html



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

Editorial, 9 August 2011, Tuesday

3. Syria: The Writing on the Wall for Bashar al-Assad

Syria has practically become a hell for its own people. The largest eastern city of Deir ez-Zor that witnessed demonstrations against the Bashar al-Assad government from time to time was attacked by the Syrian security forces on Sunday (7 August) morning. The President of Syrian Human Rights Committee Abdul Rahman said that a number of tanks and armoured vehicles entered different parts of the city and attacks on protestors have continued since then. According to the statistics by the demonstrators, since the beginning of protests against the government in mid-March about 1650 people have been killed and thousands arrested. Some of the sources have informed that heavy bombardment has continued since morning in the city of Deir ez-Zor that lies 450 kilometres south from Damascus and the conditions are so serious that people have not been able to escape to adjoining areas for refuge. It has also been reported that some soldiers have preferred to defect rather than fire at civilians. It seems that cities have been divided into small areas for military action against people resulting into siege of several areas. Almost the same situation exists in the city of Hama. It has been reported that every Friday around four hundred thousand come out on streets to protest against the regime. In spite of the repression and cruelty unleashed on the people by Assad regime the enthusiasm of people has not been dampened.

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has asked Bashar al-Assad to stop use of military against civilians. According to the UN spokesperson, the Secretary-General tried to have a telephonic conversation with Bashar al-Assad several times but Assad did not answer his calls. It clearly shows that the Syrian President has no respect for the sentiments of the international community. The GCC has also expressed deep worries over the spread of violence and extraordinary use of force by the regime. Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan is sending his Foreign Minister to Damascus. He has said that they cannot be a silent spectator to the events occurring along the long border of the two countries. The way in which Assad is dealing with the situation indicates that even the efforts of the Muslim countries may not yield results. Bashar al-Assad seems to be in agreement with Muammar Qaddafi that the only way to deal with people who are demanding change is to annihilate them. People only want the freedom in their country and the right to live a dignified life but these demands, it seems, are not considered worth accepting by Assad, that is why he is transforming Syria into hell. Like any other dictatorship, the solution that Assad has for this problem is to crush people so badly that his regime becomes absolutely unchallenged and he is also of the foolish opinion that the country's wealth is his personal property. It becomes difficult to change the mind of such people.

President Assad considers these protests to be a foreign conspiracy and has said that it is a war by Muslim fundamentalists, which is just an excuse to use force against people. The people want a democratic government. The successful protests in Egypt and Tunisia have motivated them to protest because they want to get rid of the family rule. The people want an end of the monopolization of power by the minority Alawite group. It is pleasing to see the majority of protesters being Sunni Muslims, but they have support from the other communities including the Christians and the Alawite Shias. Had some kind of tension cropped up between different groups then it could have led to a civil war like situation but Bashar al-Assad could not get such an opportunity.

Assad had announced last week to bring limited political reforms and allow people to form political parties, but there seems to be a gap between his words and actions. This is a tactics to quieten the protesting people. If he would have implemented his promise, then he would not have permitted his troops to open fire at unarmed civilians like enemies. For the time, what is evident is that a number of the Arab countries, including Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, UAE and Saudi Arabia are not in agreement with Syria and they argue that the regime should bring reforms and concede to the people's demand for right to live in dignity and respect. In lieu of this attitude of the Arab countries; the US and European countries have threatened Syria with more sanctions, however they have not given any indication of adopting the same policy as they did in Libya. Probably they have realized the failure of their interventionist policy in Libya.

Source: http://www.etemaaddaily.com/EtemaadArchive_files/august/09/editorial.html



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi

Editorial, 10 August 2011, Wednesday

4. Emerging New Dynamics in Turkey

Turkey has become the reference point for the international media. Likewise the think tanks have taken a special interest in it. Political leaders in East and West have kept a close eye on Turkey. It has become a significant point of study for the historical and political analysts; it has remained an embodiment of hope for the *Ummah* (Islamic Nation) for a long time. Once again people are looking up to it with a lot of expectations. Although Turkey has always enjoyed its position of special importance in both the East and the West due to different reasons which remains intact. The changes that have taken place in Turkey in the last few years have shaken the Western corridors of power. Some of the people there are watching in awe the dismantling of webs which had been created with great effort. The creators of these webs had tried to make it fool proof to keep it intact, but they had forgotten that there is a more powerful

entity that oversees the universe. The events of the last ten years in general and last two-three years in particular in Turkey have sent shock waves in the Western world. Even the imagination of the events sends ripples among them. How painful it is for the West to watch the razing of its fort built on very strong system like pack of cards can be imagined from the western attitude towards Turkey that has been evident now and then, to the extent that some people are now saying that it is the punishment for our own doing because all tactics is being reversed and every shot is missing the target.

The situation in Turkey is such that in the past eight years it has not just stabilized the weakening economy but has also based it on strong fundamentals. Its industries, traders, human resource are finding new avenues and markets, its builders are now taking international projects and they are getting praised for their service. Whereas Turkey was a sick economy ten years back, which was facing inflation and was living at the mercy of the international financial aid organizations, it has now emerged as a strong economic power; while on the other hand the US and Europe are facing severe economic crises. They are still struggling to come out of the economic crisis that they found themselves trapped in 2008. Every passing day is bringing forth a new problem for them. Both the Dollar and the Euro have devalued. On the other hand Turkish Lira is gaining value and stabilizing. The economies of many European countries have already collapsed. Turkey which was earlier eager to be a part of European Union is now hardly bothered about it; if included it would be good, but if this does not happen then also they would not care much. Until yesterday, Turkey was criticized to be a weak democratic state to the extent that even a small military nudge can dismantle its democratic institutions, but it is now being seen with immense surprise how the military has accepted the subservience of elected representatives and democratic institutions. Whatever expectations were there from the military have been drowned in the last few days, now the situation in the country has changed so much that it has created a new confidence in Turkey. This self-confidence is being manifested in the emergence of Turkey as a strong player in the international politics; the Turkish leaders and intelligentsia are rethinking keeping the new situation of Turkey in mind.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=10-aug-2011



Roznama Munsif (The Judge Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 10 August 2011, Wednesday

5. Increasing International Pressure on Syria

The international pressure on Syria has increased against the suppression of voice for democracy and revolution by use of force. Even the closest allies of Syria have been

compelled to withdraw support from the regime.

After the changes brought forth by the revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia, anti-government protests began in Syria as well. But in the recent times, the protests have gained momentum as did the reaction of the government to repress these movements. This has continued since last month and each day the struggle is becoming more and more intense. President Bashar al-Assad has not been able to stand up to the expectations of the people. Rather than promoting and accepting the democratic norms, he is bent to crush the movement in the most undemocratic manner. In both Libya and Syria, the tendencies to demand democracy and to dismiss the present political structure could be seen quite evidently. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries such violent and revolutionary tendencies could be seen elsewhere and it sent ripples in the international politics. A similar storm could be seen in the twenty-first century in countries like Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria. In the coming years these events could prove to be historic in determining a new definition for democracy. Along with democracy, human rights would also come as a part of the package. In this history, however, dictators as Assad would be recalled in the same way as Hitler or Mussolini are referred to.

The Syrian security agencies are inflicting terror on the people at the behest of the regime. Syria is not even respecting the diplomatic code of conduct. A few days back the French and American consulates were attacked. Both these countries are advocating the cause of protesters. It is difficult to trust their intentions that they are doing so with the intention of promoting democracy, because the US has already created a lot of mess in Iraq and Afghanistan in the name of democracy promotion. The NATO forces have continued to spread its tentacles under the shadow of the US. Wherever military starts asserting its authority, democracy as such comes under threat. The manner in which the US policies have pitted one state against another in the recent years, its interference in the internal matters of any country is bound to create doubts. The terror that the world confronts today has actually also been a fruit of the US policies.

In order to crush the people's movement in Syria, the rights of the people are being transgressed upon. The government forces have begun to crush the movements ruthlessly in all the cities of Syria. In the cities of Damascus, Homs, Deraa and Hala the army is using tanks and armoured vehicles are to cruelly massacre the people. Foreign journalists are not being permitted to enter these regions. From March till today tens of thousands of people have become homeless and about 2,000 people have been killed. The government forces have not spared old people, women or even children. The UNSC and many pro-democracy countries have criticized the high-handedness of the Syrian government. However, this seems to have no impact on Assad. Even now he is saying that the situation in Syria is under control and the government is extending reforms but it is the duty of the state to face the criminals, meaning those who raise their voice for democracy are criminals. Until now Saudi Arabia has remained silent on the matter. On the other hand, the Arab League had said that interference in Syria would make the situation worse there; however, it seems that even for them the lines have been crossed and therefore they severely criticized the actions of the Syrian government and demanded that the violence on people should be stopped immediately. Now, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Kuwait have recalled their ambassadors and have dubbed the Syrian state as "the killing machine". These actions and criticisms brought out by the Arab League and Saudi Arabia have been considered to be of tremendous significance by experts. The Syrian President should in fact take some lesson from

the fate of formers rulers of Tunisia and Egypt because even they were under the impression that no power in the world can remove them from power, however the storm of revolution swayed them to their fateful destinations.

Indifferent to the criticisms made by the Western countries, Syrian President may just pay heed to the criticisms by the Arab countries. Bashar al-Assad should put a stop to the violence unleashed by the army on the people and try to listen to their aggrieved voices. If this does not happen then once again the world would witness a bloody revolution.

Source: <http://www.munsifdaily.com/epaper/10aug/pages/page6/news1.html>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 10 August 2011, Wednesday

6. The Deteriorating Situation in Syria

The situations in Syria do not seem to be leading towards normalcy. Public anger is rising due to use of force for curbing the protests and has resulted in severe criticism of the Bashar al-Assad regime at the international level.

In the eastern city of Deir ez-Zor in Syria, the way the government used tanks in order to crush the protesters resulting into the death of more than 80 people proves that the government wants to forcefully dispel the protests. In spite of this, protests have continued in many cities and the resistance against the government is continuously spreading. The Assad regime is facing intense international criticism on the above mentioned incident. Saudi Arabia has severely opposed the use of force on people and has recalled the Saudi ambassador from Damascus. Although in case of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia did not even issue any critical statement against the rulers but had rather sent troops to assist the Bahraini rulers suppress the protests, but in case of Syria the Saudi stand is more sympathetic towards the people. Though it is a positive move on part of Saudi Arabia, the need to do so could also have arisen due to the American pressure. It is well-known that the US is staunchly against the Assad government and on many occasions the Assad government has faced severe criticism from it on the question of the latter's anti-people stand. However, in the light of these facts, the problem is that the Syrian regime is not ready to understand the situation and in spite of trying to win the hearts of people it has adopted a very aggressive and authoritarian behaviour. The death of about 80 people in the military action during the last few days is the proof of this foolish policy of Bashar al-Assad. The GCC has also asked Syria to immediately stop the 'cycle of violence and killing' unleashed in the country, demanding that the government should start serious reforms and provide full rights to its citizens.

The GCC stand becomes all the more significant because they have been a supporter of Bashar al-Assad. Even after Assad was accused of playing a role in the assassination of Rafiq Harari, the GCC supported Assad; but the manner in which Syria is inflicting violence on its people, the GCC also has toughened its stand against Assad. On the other hand, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has also appealed to the Syrian regime to stop repressing the people. According to Ban Ki-moon, in his telephonic conversation with Assad, he has given him a firm message on this. He will present his report on Syria on 10 August to the Security Council. The UN policy on Syria will become clear only after a discussion on this report.

But with the growing international pressure, it is essential for Bashar al-Assad that he changes his attitude towards people and use democratic means to solve domestic political issues. Although Assad says that the military is taking action against the armed gangs who are petrifying the people, but this is just deception and the truth is that in Syria the voices of the people are being suppressed by barrel of the gun. However, it is difficult to say whether this authoritative attitude will be of any help to Assad because it would not be easy to tackle both international pressure and internal disturbances. It would therefore be better for Assad if he lends an ear to the demands of the people and pave the road for democratic reforms.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=27385&boxid=2214968>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 12 August 2011, Friday

7. The New Alliance against Syria

The military action undertaken in Syria in order to crush the protests against the Bashar al-Assad government that has continued for almost five months has reportedly killed many people. Obviously a regime which is involved in killing its own civilians cannot be patronized or legitimized. The international community not only has the right to express its dismay against such massacre but they should also come forward to stop such killings and they should strive to protect the common people from being killed at the hands of the government. But such attempts can also not be appreciated or promoted under the garb of protecting people which in fact kills many more innocent people and civilians, as it happened in Libya. The United Nations Security Council, in order to protect the Libyan people from the onslaught of the forces of the Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, declared a “No fly Zone” over Libya and sanctioned limited aerial raids on Libya. However, due to this action a larger number of people have been killed by the NATO forces. This cannot be considered sympathetic to the Libyan people. Many cities in Libya have been destroyed; the eastern part of the country has been occupied by the

rebels, the common people are the worst hit by this, people are forced to migrate due to hunger and war, they are not getting sufficient international help. Moreover, Col. Muammar Qaddafi has also not been overthrown from power.

But it seems that the international community has not taken any lessons from the Libyan episode. The efforts to repeat in Syria the ploy to intervene in order to protect people have been started. Considering the military excesses on people as a very serious offence, the US has announced sanctions on a Syrian bank and mobile company. Before this Turkey had also told Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to stop use of force against people, whereas some of the Arab countries have also put substantial diplomatic pressure on Syria in order to get favours from the US.

That means a new alliance has begun to take shape against Syria under the US. There have been reports that the US President Barack Obama may demand resignation from Bashar al-Assad. Turkey, Saudi Arabia and others have already strongly condemned the Syrian actions against people. Nevertheless there has been no consensus with regard to actions to be taken against Syria in the United Nations. Though there was a proposal forwarded by the US, Britain, France, Germany and Portugal in the UN Security Council to involve UN High Commissioner for Human Rights with regard to the question of the same and the coordinating officers of the High Commission should be briefed about the situation in Syria. But due to the negative response from Brazil, China, India and Russia this could not happen. These countries emphasized on the need for focussing on diplomatic solution to the crisis in Syria.

Under the challenges posed by the prevailing international system, it is evident that the use of force will definitely prove to be quite dangerous. The international community should also keep in mind the fact that whenever there is a change in the regime or demands to bring change in the regime then more than the rulers it is the people who are affected. The people in the said country bear the brunt of action taken against such countries. Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya are the living examples of such havoc. People of these countries had to bear the brunt of the military and economic actions that were undertaken by the US and its allies as well as the NATO troops and they are suffering from it even today. Therefore, the international community should make sure that their actions do not have an adverse impact on the people. The same thing could be said with regard to the use of power. Under the guise of protecting some people the suffering inflicted on many others due to the military actions could not be considered just.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=27585&boxid=1933968>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 13 August 2011, Saturday

8. Bashar al-Assad's Fruitless Confession

S yrian leader Bashar al-Assad has confessed that some mistakes have been committed by his government. The visiting delegates to Syria from India, Brazil and South Africa were told by the Syrian President that he accepts that some mistakes have been committed by the Syrian Security forces and at the same time assured them that his government is committed towards reforms in the country.

This confession by the Syrian President has come at a time when there was pressure on him from across the world to be restrained in using force against the protesters and introduce democratic reforms in the country. Even the OIC has asked Syria to introduce democratic reforms. It is a different matter however that the countries preaching democracy are themselves not democratic. Nevertheless, there is pressure on Syria to introduce democratic reforms by not only the neighbouring countries but also by the UN and other countries. Actually the manner in which the democratic movements have taken roots in some of the Muslim countries in the recent times, and due to which the authoritarian rulers have been forced to step down from their positions, have made the other Muslim states take desperate steps to introduce democracy in their states in order to keep the people appeased and save their rule from being overthrown; however, the manner in which force has been used in Syria in order to control the demonstrating crowds have made the situation go from bad to worse. Hence, the neighbouring countries are afraid that if democratic reforms are not introduced in Syria at the earliest and the struggle between the rebels and the army intensifies then the condition would become more volatile. This can become a danger for them as well. The other states are also worried about the situation in Syria and there is continuous pressure on Bashar al-Assad to refrain from the use of force on the people. Bashar al-Assad met the delegates from India, Brazil and South Africa and confessed his mistakes whereas the Syrian Foreign Minister assured the international community that before the end of the year a multi-polar and multi-party democracy would be established in Syria. The President has also reiterated that the work on constitutional revision is in progress, which is hoped to be completed by March 2012.

Though what the President and Foreign Minister of Syria have said are worth appreciating, the matter is that whatever the Syrian leadership is saying or claiming, the situation in the country is against such claims and no change in attitude can be witnessed in the use of the military against the protesters. According to reports, the military operations in Syria against the civilians have continued. Almost 18 people have been killed in fresh attacks by the military which reiterates

that the Assad loyalists are using violence and force against the people. According to reports, the bodies of the dead were left under the open sky after heavy firing by the security forces. A mosque is also reported to have been damaged in the firing. The strange thing is that the government is denying the firing by security forces and has said that they have recalled military from Homs because their mission has been achieved. In fact, it has been reported that more than 200 people have been killed in the action by security forces. All this prove that the ruling regime is not ready to heed to the demands of the people and even if Syria has any plans on democratizing the system in light of the violence inflicted on the people by the military it would prove to be a facade only. That's why even Assad's confession that his regime has made some mistakes becomes meaningless because his confession does not seem to affect the army operations in Syria against the people.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=27680&boxid=133139781>

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