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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 with their accuracy or views. Editor, MEI@ND]

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The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad
Editorial, 2 July 2012, Monday

1. More Sanctions against Iran

The European Union has imposed fresh sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran over its nuclear programme. This has followed earlier economic sanctions imposed by the US and the UN on Iran despite opposition from some world powers. According to the US, the EU and the UN imposing sanctions on Iran is the only way to isolate Iran over its nuclear programme and thereby forcing it to comply with the international stand. Other measures against Iran have failed but the economic sanctions have certainly affected the Iranian economy though failing to change the Iranian stand. It is not ready to stall its nuclear programme which though it maintains is for peaceful purposes, the Western countries continue to accuse Iran of trying to make nuclear arsenals. In fact, the Western countries are dancing on Israeli beats which does not want Iran to acquire nuclear weapons. Though Israel itself has a large nuclear arsenal, it still perceives Iran to be a threat. These sanctions have been imposed with the UN approval but Iran has constantly rejected the sanctions imposed on it.

Iran maintains that it has taken steps to nullify the effects of these sanctions. It has stockpiled foreign goods and has developed a strategy to maintain a robust domestic economy and so these sanctions will prove to be ineffective. Whatever may be the earlier sanctions and Iranian strategies, the latest moves by the EU are completely irrational and have been taken

under pressure from the US and will have a negative effect on the lives of the common Iranian people. This is actually a part of Western strategy, to destabilise the Iranian economy in order to affect the people to force the government to stall the nuclear programme. But the US will not succeed in its ambitions in Iran because the people of Iran know the importance of the nuclear programme for their nation. The US pressure on the EU is extremely disturbing and unacceptable. The US and Israel both have a huge stockpile of nuclear weapons. These countries are not ready to destroy their weapons but want Iran to do away with its nuclear ambitions.

Economic sanctions are imposed with some conditions and under some regulations. They should not be imposed by a minority of nations. The humanitarian crisis it can create has to be taken under consideration as well. The US, the EU and the UN are not ready to assess the humanitarian problem these sanctions can create in Iran. These countries imposed a war on Iraq on the pretext of 'weapons of mass destruction' but finally no WMD could be traced in Iraq. The same strategy is being used to nail Iran on the pretext of its nuclear programme. The international community should try to prevail upon the US, the EU and the UN for peace and justice.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr2-27>



Hindustan Express (Daily Hindustan Express), New Delhi
Editorial, 3 July 2012, Tuesday

2. The Syrian Crisis

The world powers agreed upon the formation of an interim government in Syria but the plan failed due to their vague strategy. Kofi Annan had proposed the plan which was earlier agreed upon by the five permanent members of the Security Council and Turkey, Kuwait, Qatar as a strategy for peaceful transition. The US was of the opinion not to allow anyone from the current regime to be part of the interim government. However, differences cropped up among the world powers as Russia opposed some of the clauses in the draft agenda for talks over Syria. The Syrian authorities have not yet reacted to the international plan but the rebels have rejected the proposed peace deal. They have said that the plan is vague. The Syrian National Council has also expressed its dissatisfaction towards the plan and has said that some of the important clauses in the plan are not clear. The spokesperson of the SNC in Ankara said that though they have rejected the plan, they do agree on its principle argument, which is that the Assad clan has lost its legitimacy to govern Syria. The bottom line is that the two sides have rejected the plan proposed by international powers and that there is hardly any chance of peace in the near future. As far as the bloodshed is concerned, it is very clear that both sides are not ready to be restrained in their actions. Though the UN peace envoy led by Kofi Annan earnestly tried to propose a solution after meeting all the parties and came up with the interim government plan, Bashar al-Assad

is still not ready to relinquish his power and keeps on iterating that Syria does not want any external intervention.

The actual problem is that Assad does not want to relinquish the power he inherited from his father. It would be like a fish without water for him. On the other hand, support from Russia, Iran and other powers have also emboldened him to continue. These countries are supplying weapons to the Syrian government confirmed in a report by the UN. The situation has taken on a dangerous turn with government soldiers using unrestrained force on civilian population. Likewise, the opposition rebel groups are too receiving huge weapon supplies from other powers. It would be difficult for Syria to achieve any resolution in such a scenario.

The UN has sent a team of observers to Syria to look for a peaceful resolution of the crisis yet, while they are still in Syria, their presence has not changed anything on the ground. It would be important now to watch the strategy of the US. The differences between Russia and the US over Syria have delayed any concrete step towards a resolution of the crisis. A new formula will have to be chalked out now. However, it is not clear on what lines such a new plan would be based. More importantly, it is also completely uncertain if any such plan would help in resolving the crisis, looking at the way earlier plans have failed. The way Syria gunned down a Turkish fighter plane has sparked fear that it can lead to an invasion of Syria by NATO forces.

Source:

http://dailyhindustanexpress.com/gujashtah_shumare/july2012/03_07_2012/epaper/page_5_large.htm



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 3 July 2012, Tuesday

3. The World Divided over Iran

International opinion on American and Western policies and plans has witnessed division earlier as well. The American plan and international opinion were deeply divided on the issue of resolution of the Palestinian issue and the attacks on Iraq and Afghanistan. The world was not ready to buy into Bush's claims of WMD in Iraq. The world never agreed on American plans for Palestine, but the situation then and now is greatly different. The September 11 attacks had created a rush of sympathy towards the US which made it difficult to be critical of US moves. Though the international support on the attack on Iraq was weak, Saddam Hussein was also seen as a brutal dictator who had waged war on neighbours. In the case of Afghanistan, the Taliban had become infamous due to their tyrannical behaviour and attitude towards women.

The international opinion was against American aggression but was also not supportive of Saddam's and Taliban's authoritarianism. Moreover, many countries did not dare say anything due to the strong American economy. They needed American aid and were scared

of Bush's slogan that those 'who are not with us are against us'. Russia and China were also not in a position to take an anti-US stand on Iraq and Afghanistan but the world has changed since then. The adversity its military faced in Iraq and Afghanistan has undermined the American image as being unassailable. The strongest military in the world looks to be tasting defeat against meekly armed and poorly trained fighters. One can go back to the bashing their military had to take in Korea and Vietnam earlier, but erstwhile economic strength had cushioned such failures. The economic recession which the US faced since the beginning of the twenty-first century has very much affected the American image in the world. It is because of these weakened nerves that many countries can reject American policies over Iran. Many countries have not minced words in criticising the American and European sanctions on Iran. The Russian and Chinese opposition to the US cannot only be ideological because in such a scenario it would be difficult for them to support an Islamic republic. This means that they in principle oppose American policies. Moreover, it is amazing to find that Iran has got support from Latin American countries. Reportedly, Venezuela has agreed to help Iran in case of any Israeli attack on its nuclear installations. Many countries that were tactically silent have started to support Iran, including India which has lowered its import of Iranian oil under American pressure but has made its opposition known regarding any attack on Iran. A number of old allies of the US are also opposing any attack on Iran. Japan is not ready to stop buying oil from Iran. Further the world does not seem to be in agreement with the fact that Iran is a threat to the world. A large number of countries the world over that do possess nuclear weapons and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, are unable to believe that the Iranian nuclear programme would be a threat to the world.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=63163&boxid=15324312>



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 3 July 2012, Tuesday

4. Negotiations on Syria

The Syrian opposition and international powers have not only failed in their efforts to bring in an interim government in Syria but also in stopping the bloodshed. The Geneva conference failed in satisfying the expectations of the opposition. Major international powers wanted Syria to hold an election under an interim government, which would not be possible without Bashar al-Assad agreeing to it. The US and its allies are against the participation of elements from the current regime in the transitional government; these countries are looking at Syria from the perspective of the movement that started in Tunisia and spread to Egypt and Libya. The emergence of Islamists in Egypt has affected American interests and is also bad news for Israel. In the case of Syria, the West is facing trouble from Russia and China who are adamant against an external intervention. If the major powers remain undecided on Syria, it would be very difficult to control the situation and Kofi Annan himself stated during the Geneva conference, that a solution for Syria was running out of time. It is not easy to form an interim government in Syria without agreement of the current regime. The US wants to have its way like it did in Libya but has till now failed to achieve any success. Beijing and Moscow are clear about having an internal solution and they have accordingly used their veto in the Security Council against an external intervention.

Syrian opposition groups are also not very happy with the international powers. These countries are worried that they will have to face a similar fate in Syria as in Egypt. The movement that was waged in Egypt was led by the middle classes who had been facing the brunt of corruption, unemployment and many more problems. It would be difficult to resolve the problem in Syria without bringing in an interim government yet there are major roadblocks. The international powers had agreed to disallow participation of the current regime in any interim government but the proposal cannot be implemented without Bashar al-Assad's resignation. The opposition in Syria has been protesting for sixteen months and thousands of people have been killed in this period; if the situation further worsens then in the opinion of Kofi Annan, Syria will turn into an international crisis.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr3-25>



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi
Editorial, 4 July 2012, Wednesday

5. First Civilian President in Egypt

Dr. Mohammed Morsi has taken over as the first elected civilian President of Egypt, thus completing one stage of the transition of power. He took the oath of office in the highest Court of Justice under military supervision. The current situation is that he will work under military supervision and judicial observation. The country does not have a permanent constitution as of now, the interim constitution having been prepared by the Military Council, which further was amended two days before the Presidential elections to give the military the status of final authority in Egypt. Accordingly, the President has to work under the military while the judiciary will also be observing the President. The Parliament that could have played a supportive role for the President was also dissolved by the judiciary. It would be difficult to say what will be the resolution; whether the Parliament will be restored or fresh elections be called. Morsi before taking the oath of office had addressed a huge gathering at Tahrir Square and said that the people's power was the real power and that no institution was above that. All should respect the people's wishes and aspirations. It was a clear indication that he was not happy with the current situation and that he was not ready to work as a mere rubber stamp. He further put light on his agenda during his address at Cairo University after taking over the Presidency where he also indicated that he wanted the Parliament to be reinstated. It is not an easy task and there are chances of clash for political power and clash of interests among the constitutional institutions.

The current disposition in Egypt has come on the single point agenda of ending of the military dictatorship. If the military's power is not tamed, then the sacrifices of the people would go to waste. From this perspective, the institutions comprising the people's representatives should be given the highest authority. The constitution should give a clear division of power. Morsi's contention that the military's primary work is defence and security should be fixed by the constitution. If the military is truly nationalist then it would avoid any confrontation. It is indeed a difficult phase for Egypt that is being faced by the new President

but without which it would be difficult to move ahead. The new President will have to work on keeping the social fabric of the country intact. Egyptian society is made up of heterogeneous ideological and religious groups, including various groups within the Islamists and Christian minorities. It would not be easy to create unity in such diversity. Moreover, the economic slide has to be controlled and it would be a task in itself to fulfil the aspirations of the people. Apart from the domestic front, the new President will have to reorganise the Egyptian foreign policy as it cannot afford to continue with the foreign policy choices of the previous authoritarian regime. Morsi has given some indications on this aspect; for example he wants to have better relations with Iran, likewise his understanding of the Palestinian problem is different from the previous government. He would certainly not like to deteriorate the country's relations with the Western countries but a realignment of such a relationship according to Egyptian interests would certainly be on his agenda. Egypt is one such country in the Islamic world which has diplomatic relations with Israel. Thus, it would need to realign its relations with the Muslim world.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=04-jul-2012



Inquilab (The Revolution), Mumbai
Editorial, 6 July 2012, Friday

6. Morsi, Media and the West

According to a report by *The Guardian*, since the announcement by the Egyptian President that his doors would always be open for the common people during his oath taking ceremony, people have been queuing up at his residence to meet the President. It was also reported in the newspaper that a protesting group was also given access to the President and was not prevented by security to enter the Presidential residence. The newspaper stated that this is the first such incident in the history of Egypt where there has always been heightened security in place for its Presidents. The report further said that most of these visitors to the President belonged to the lower classes of factory workers who came with lots of hope to meet the new President.

Another important news, which came to the fore, was the ruling by the Presidential office that traffic should not be held for VIP movement in Egypt. It has also been clarified that even the Presidential cavalcade will move with normal traffic. To what extent Mohammed Morsi's effort to keep himself grounded will succeed is a difficult question. But it is not expected that he will change his ways as his party has struggled for a long time to achieve power. The report by a Western newspaper is strange because largely the Western media has not done a positive story on Morsi. It is more interested in the question as to whether the Egyptian foreign policy will change, will it change its policy towards Israel and will the 1979 Camp David agreement stay valid? Or reports that Morsi does not like the US but two of his sons were born in the US and that he struggled for a long time to achieve his doctorate in the US.

Such stories in the Western media shows the kind of prejudice these countries and their media organisations suffer from when it comes to Islam and Islamic groups. The West will certainly try to put roadblocks for Islamist groups taking over governance and Egypt should be ready to respond to such conspiracies.

Source: <http://epaper.inquilab.com/epaperhome.aspx?issue=06072012&edd=Mumbai>



Roznama Sahafat (Journalism Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 10 July 2012, Tuesday

7. Syria and the Western Powers

The Iranian President has rightly said that other countries should not impose their dictates on the people of Syria. He has also said in a statement posted at his website that the US is trying to dislodge the Syrian government because it wants to be the only power in the Middle East. Moreover, he said that the US is working for its own interest in the region and has nothing to do with the interest of the people. It is the right of the people of Syria to decide about their issues but the US and its allies are not ready to accept it. They want to create their hegemony in the region by all means. In fact, the US wants to be a hegemonic power all over the world. But the economic crisis has shaken the bases of the US. Nevertheless, the American leaders are not yet ready to open their eyes; they still think that they are the leaders of entire world and are above and beyond all authority. They think that they have conquered the whole world.

As far as Syria is concerned, its leadership has failed in dealing with the crisis as it should have. That is why the bloodshed in the country has continued and the Western powers are trying to benefit from the problem. They are trying to further deteriorate the situation in Syria so that they get an excuse to intervene but the international opinion is completely against external intervention. Two big powers, Russia and China are also against military intervention. The Russian Foreign Minister has said that any change in guard in Syria by force will lead to further violence. He has also said that the people who are talking about toppling the regime in Syria do not understand that it still enjoys support of the majority of the Syrians. Here, one can say that the Russian and Chinese stand on the Syrian crisis is much more practical.

Source: http://www.3mediad.com/sahafat.info/delhi/July2012/10_07_2012/p-5-1.htm



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 13 July 2012, Friday

8. Morsi should focus on Public Support

It is a democratic requirement to welcome the choice of the people and thus Morsi's election as Egyptian President should indeed be welcomed. If the people of Egypt have expressed their faith in Mohammed Morsi then the world should respect it and not doubt

Morsi's credentials to provide an inclusive political atmosphere in Egypt. Morsi by announcing that he wants to elect two Vice Presidents including a Christian Woman has indicated that he does not want to rule the country with religious fundamentalism for which it is known in the West. A democracy cannot be prejudiced or biased in favour of a community. It is also being said that the Muslim Brotherhood has mellowed down from its earlier days of extremism. Even though he was prohibited to enter the country during the Mubarak reign, he did not show extremist tendencies on his return from exile. Morsi is a highly educated person. Though the military and the Brotherhood do not share very smooth relations the latter supported the military after the abolition of monarchy but later differences cropped up and have now increased. The Brotherhood never tried to topple any government in Egypt and in fact never got the chance to do so.

The Brotherhood was banned in Egypt as a result of an assassination attempt on General (sic) Nasser. A famous Egyptian intellectual had written in detail about the issue. He had said that Gen. Nasser had become very popular after the Suez war not just among the Egyptians but in the whole world. The nationalisation of the Suez was a historic event as it was done by a Third World country against the wishes of a colonial power. It was on 26 October 1954, while Nasser was addressing a gathering in the city of Alexandria, when he was shot at by a gunman. The attack however did not harm Nasser as most of the bullets passed by his sides. It was also said that it could have been a planted attack by Nasser himself but Nasser was at the zenith of his popularity and did not need any such gimmick. Moreover, the attacker had been nabbed and was recognised as a Brotherhood activist named, Abdul Latif. The assassination bid created ruckus among the gathering and the Arab world was gripped under shock but Nasser did not lose his temper and nerve and continued with his speech whereby his words became a part of history. He said, "O' my people, my blood is to be used for you and Egypt, I can give my life for the respect of the people of Egypt and if they want to take my life, they can take it, I don't care about my life till I have the confidence of the people of Egypt. If Gamal Abdul Nasser dies, everyone from among you should become Gamal Abdul Nasser to die for the respect of the country." The gathering was stunned with Nasser's speech and since then the Muslim Brotherhood was made responsible for this assassination bid. However, by now things have changed a lot; the people of Egypt now have more confidence in their selves than in the military. It is good that the people are presently standing with Morsi and it should be his focus to strengthen his bond with the people.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=64424&boxid=12418125>

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