

FROM THE URDU PRESS

No. 20

1-15 April 2011

27 Rabi AL-Akhar-11 Jamadi Al-Awwal 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]

*



Roznama Sahafat (Journalism Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 6 April 2011, Wednesday

1. Arab Rulers Best Friends of Israel

Entangled in the worst political crisis but refusing to go, the young President of Syria, Bashar al-Assad has issued a statement that the ongoing public movement against his rule is the result of a conspiracy by the US and Israel. Perhaps, Bashar al-Assad thinks that the moment the US and Israel will come into picture, he will be seen as a victim and at least he will gain the sympathies of Muslim countries and Muslim population all over the world. But he is wrong. This is just a damage control tactics. The ongoing movement in Syria is completely local and is a movement against the autocratic and dictatorial government of Bashar al-Assad, which is going since the rule of his father Hafez al-Assad. Bashar al-Assad has inherited dictatorship from his father. The way Shia majority has been kept out of power in Bahrain and Iraq, Sunni majority has faced same

fate in Syria. Incidentally, Bashar al-Assad and his late father, Hafez al-Assad both belong to the same Alawi sect, which attributes Godly characteristics to Ali and is a very small minority. Majority of population in Syria are Sunni Muslims, but like was in Iraq, the Ba'ath Party is in power. The party comprises mainly of close aids of Bashar al-Assad. That apart the ground realities indicate something else. Hafez al-Assad may have participated in the 1967 war against Israel, but the situation completely changed after Israel captured the Golan Heights. After initial military operations failed in regaining the Golan Heights, Hafez al-Assad tried all kind of peace deals with Israel. These efforts were never made public to avoid public anger but it was well known among intellectual community that what was going on behind the curtain. As far as the US is concerned, it is a well known fact that Bashar al-Assad has tried his best to bring American investments into Syria. This may look very absurd and surprising, but the fact is that Israel does not count Bashar al-Assad as an enemy. Even though Syria was termed as a member of 'axis of evil' during the Bush Presidency, the Israeli media has never been as staunch critic of Bashar al-Assad as it has been of Iran and Ahmadinejad. In fact, Israel has never opposed any Arab dictator. The dictators of Arab world guarantee the existence of Israel. This can be understood in another way; so long as there are dictators in Arab countries around, Israel would get the opportunity to sell the argument that it is the only democracy in the region. It has influenced the world opinion for Israel as they see this propaganda as truth. This is the reason why Israel always contends the establishment of a democracy in Iran. That is why the Israeli and American media have not left any stone unturned to propagate that the Iranian democracy is just eyewash. But it is also true that the world did not buy this argument only because it is a wrong propaganda. Israel also did not like the revolution in Egypt; not just because it ousted its friend Hosni Mubarak, but also because this has given birth to a democracy in its immediate neighbourhood. This had falsified its claim that it is the only democracy in the region. In such a situation, if not in Saudi Arabia then in Bahrain, Yemen and Syria the coming of democracy is being looked by Israel as a long term loss. But in the light of prevailing situation it can be said that one after another the public movements cannot be suppressed in the Arab countries and the Arab rulers will have to change their method of governance. The news has come that Bashar al-Assad has removed his Prime Minister; this is just a first step in the direction of his own removal.

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



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 6 April 2011, Wednesday

2. The Condition in Yemen

If the US supports the ruler of a country, nobody can dislodge him from power and if it opposes a ruler then the only way that remains is the way out. If the definition of democracy and future of rulers depend on the major powers then the responsibility of vanishing world peace should be put on them. The US had till now supported the Yemeni President Al Abdullah Saleh and had also avoided any direct criticism of his detractors. Friendship with rulers on the one hand and trying to hide the fear from public movements on the other hand, the US has now advised the Yemeni President to relinquish power. In the light of the prevailing world economic scenario, the only reason for trying to affect the stable Arab economies in the Middle East can be that the people of Western world do not know the kind of crisis facing the world imperialistic system. The economic recession of 2008 and 2009 has weakened the world economy including the developed world. This economic crisis has created a new situation in the world which has helped develop revolutionary trend all over the world. Middle East has also been affected with this revolutionary trend, however in other parts of world it did not come to the fore, but in the Middle East this revolutionary trend has come in the support of Western powers. It has affected Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and now Syria and Oman. The West is trying its best to keep its population ignorant of the economic crisis. But till when will they be able to hide this, one day they will also face the punishment of disturbing the peace in other countries. The western media is correctly assessing the situation in the Arab world; Hosni Mubarak was ruling Egypt for 30 years, the long rule of Col. Qaddafi continuing for past 41 years is no more acceptable to the people of Libya. But they would not accept the reality that the people of the world and particularly the West are completely rattled with the imposed imperialistic economic system. People's revolution is waiting to occur in these countries; for example, the people came onto the streets in large numbers against a proposed education policy in Britain. The revolutionary sparks are kindling in Europe and West. Even after gaining hold of all the inventions in human history, rather than providing comfort and peace to the people, it has become a headache for the rulers in the developed world. Large parts of their income are spent for paying taxes. No doubt that the West enjoys all the benefits of development and progress, but the gap between poor and rich is found there as well. The governments face the daunting challenge of international debts after the economic recession and these governments want to hide their problems by intervening in the matter of other rulers. France is eyeing the Libyan oil resources. The other powers are looking at the good economy of Yemen. If a strong ally like Saudi Arabia has supported the American line advising President Ali Abdullah Saleh to relinquish power, then it is an effort to bring an end to the prevailing situation in Yemen. The Gulf Co-operation Council has also agreed to have negotiations with both government and opposition in Yemen so as to control the situation. If Ali

Abdullah Saleh relinquishes power due to the American and GCC pressure then he would be the third Arab President to leave due to popular movement. Another important point is that the US and its allies do not care about the rightful demands of people in other countries; they try to impose their policies only on Arab and Muslim countries, they have not helped the long struggle of Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar against the military dictatorial regime. The world powers have not taken any step against the dictatorial government of Myanmar. Likewise, in North Korea as well a dictator is ruling for well over 40 years, but the US has not done anything about it. It has closed its eyes on the human rights violation occurring there. The efforts to bring an end to human rights violations, dictatorship and rulers sticking to power Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and other countries can be counterproductive in long run which can be dangerous as well.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr16-20>



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 12 April 2011, Tuesday

3. Middle East Crisis and India

The people in Middle East face violence on a day to day basis. The world powers that have closed their eyes on the Israeli aggression against Palestinian masses are devising plans to remove Muammar Qaddafi, while the law and order is being violated in Syria by supporting the protesters demanding political reforms and democracy. Even after end of Hosni Mubarak's rule, the world powers do want peace in Egypt and so the people are being instigated to come out to protest against the investigation into wealth accumulated by him. The people of Yemen and Bahrain have some hope in the rulers of neighbouring countries. The crisis in Middle East, on the one hand, poses threat to the development and stability in the region, while on the other hand it is becoming a problem for India. India has good diplomatic and trade relations with all countries in the Arab world. So it cannot afford to have one sided opinion about the problems in the region. For example, it has to balance its relations with Iran keeping in mind its long term relations with Saudi Arabia. In case of Bahrain, India needs to have a cautious approach towards both Saudi Arabia and Iran. Iran has accused neighbouring governments of deteriorating the situation by their intervention. It has also been said that the Saudi forces in Bahrain have helped the local military in suppressing the protests. But Iran's stand that the Muslim world should not give an ear to the Western propaganda

about Iranian trying to create problem in Shia majority Bahrain, also needs to be kept in mind. Bahrain is ruled by Sunni rulers. The people's movement like in Tunisia and Egypt has reached the streets and squares of Manama. In addition, after Yemen and Syria, the situation in Lebanon has forced the countries including India to think about the situation because India's friendly relations with Arab countries are an eyesore for the West. The West does not want the oil rich Arab countries to have strong relations with countries in South Asia, especially India. The West now has a chance to create ruptures in India's relation with countries in Middle East. India needs to be very cautious about the Western designs. It is the responsibility of the governments of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Bahrain to deal with the public movements in these countries. India does not need to intervene in the internal matters of any of these countries and also it should be cautious in issuing statements about the unfolding developments there. Other countries need not react about the Iranian statements regarding Saudi intervention in Bahrain. Iran is being accused of inciting the Shias in Bahrain, but in the hindsight it is not a sectarian dispute. This is part of the wave of protest movements by people and the people themselves should deal with the situation. Iran is trying to keep itself distanced from the crisis in Yemen. There is no doubt that Iran has been articulating the cause of people of Middle East, especially the Palestinians for the past 30 years. But the leaders in Middle East do not attach much importance to this Iranian support. However, some of these rulers and politicians do think that India can play a role in solving the problem due to its good and friendly relations with all monarchies in the region. There is no doubt that India has strong relations with the monarchies in the Middle East but this does not mean that India should intervene in the internal matters of these countries. But some diplomats from the region think that India can take some steps at diplomatic as well as country level to improve the situation. But in any case maintaining a neutral and balanced position is also important for any nation. India has strong relations with Arab countries and certainly India will not play any irresponsible role in Middle East. Contrary to the demands of cautious approach, it would not take any step whereby it can be accused of one-sided approach.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr12-20>

Translated and Compiled by Md. Muddassir Quamar

Md. Muddassir Quamar is a Doctoral Candidate at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Email: muddassir.2005@gmail.com

As part of the policy, the MEI@ND standardizes spellings and date format to make the text uniformly accessible and stylistically consistent. The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views/positions of the MEI@ND. Editor, MEI@ND P R Kumaraswamy