

FROM THE URDU PRESS

No. 34

1-15 November 2011

5-19 Zilhijja 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]

*



Inquilab (The Revolution), Mumbai

Editorial, 2 November 2011, Wednesday

1. An Important Diplomatic Achievement for Palestine

It finally seems that Palestine will gain partial success towards having a state after suffering in the hands of Israel and the US since the past six decades. The granting of member state status to Palestine by UNESCO has raised hope for the people of Palestine. 107 votes were casted in favour of Palestine in this international organization which is a good sign. Among the 194 members 52 preferred to remain absent while 14 including the US, Israel, Germany, Netherland and Sweden voted against Palestine. This is a major achievement for Palestine and can be expected to pave the way for full Palestinian membership in the UN.

As far as the next step goes, that is, the matter of Palestinian membership to the UN, the PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas has undoubtedly done a remarkable job as representative of the people of Palestine. It has been said in these columns that if aggressor and attacking states who are the worst violators of human rights can be as UN members, then why not Palestine, which has been defending its rights for decades. Palestine has never attacked any other country. Neither has it ever illegally occupied or annexed another's land. It never violated another's right but rather has been a victim of violation of its own rights for the past six decades. Nonetheless, the

leadership of a number of countries does not want the granting of membership to Palestine by any international organization where it can bring its case to.

The US support for Israel was indicated when it announced that it would stop its aid contribution to UNESCO for having granted Palestine membership status. The aid, which UNESCO receives from the US, is crucial. It comprises 22 percent of its budget for its educational, cultural and scientific activities. UNESCO had earlier suspended Israeli membership in 1974 when, at the time, Tel Aviv was found to be digging the holy places. Even though its membership suspension was revoked in 1977, the US had still threatened to stop aids at that time. Nonetheless, UNESCO went ahead with its decision. Neither did UNESCO take the American threats and stopping of aid into account when the Organization passed a resolution terming Zionism as racism.

This is the second big achievement for the Palestinian people within a short span of time. Earlier it had achieved the release of thousands of Palestinians jailed in Israel in exchange for one IDF soldier. It seems that the Palestinians will achieve some or the other important success in the UN and the US will show its true colours again as seen in the instance of stopping its aid contribution to UNESCO.

Source: <http://epaper.inquilab.com/epaperhome.aspx?issue=02112011&edd=Mumbai>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi
Editorial, 2 November 2011, Wednesday

2. A Good Step by UNESCO

Despite opposition by the US and some of its allies, the granting of membership status to Palestine by UNESCO is an important and historical event. While the people of Palestine should be congratulated for this achievement, the UNESCO should also be lauded for its decision despite American threats which has indeed enhanced its respect.

UNESCO is the United Nation's cultural, scientific and educational organization which had Palestine only as an observer state till now. The PA President Mahmoud Abbas, on the 23rd of September had presented a request for full membership status to be granted to Palestine at the UN. The US had in advance opposed this and both the US and Israel had threatened dire consequences for any such eventuality. In fact, the US had already announced that it will stop the aid to UNESCO if it grants membership to Palestine. The US contributes 22 percent of UNESCO's budget, so the stoppage of US aid will certainly affect the working of UNESCO. This is why it must be praised for not having given into the American threats and thereby voting Palestine to membership with a massive majority. 107 of 173 members voted in favour of Palestine granting Palestine the membership status while 14 countries including the US voted against and 52 members abstained.

Such a huge support for Palestine shows that the international community wants a resolution of this Middle Eastern conflict and do not agree with the US policies for resolution of this problem. It is fact that it is the US who has not allowed the resolution of the Palestinian problem by patronizing Israel. It is also due to American conspiracies that the UN could never take a tough stand against Israel which has harmed the credibility of the UN itself. In such a scenario, the current move by UNESCO has enhanced its status. It is very clear that the stopping of US aid will affect the working of UNESCO but this US pressure did not deter the Organization. The request for full membership to Palestine is still under consideration in the UNSC where it may come for voting on 11 November. However, the situation here would be different because the US can veto the resolution. Nonetheless, this step by UNESCO has certainly built some (moral) pressure on the UNSC to grant membership to Palestine. On the other hand, the countries which support the Palestinian cause should take responsibility to compensate the UNESCO.

This decision by UNESCO has angered both the US and Israel. Israel has said that this will hamper the efforts for any peace agreement between the two parties even though Israel has itself and on several occasions, harmed the efforts for peace talks and agreement. In fact, the current suspension of talks was due to Israel's refusal to stop building new settlements on the occupied territories. The decision by UNESCO sends a message for urgent resolution of the Palestinian problem and gives a clear message to the US to stop its illegal and unnecessary support towards Israel.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=35856&boxid=149171>



Roznama Sahafat (Journalism Daily), Delhi
Editorial, 3 November 2011, Thursday

3. Angry US and Shocked Israel

The UNESCO has granted full membership status to Palestine which is an extraordinary decision. It can bring revolutionary changes as far as the Arab world is concerned. The people of Palestine have achieved success on a front where armed forces of the entire Arab world have failed. A more pleasing aspect of this achievement is the participation of women in the Palestinian movement, which Ahlam Tamimi symbolizes. She was arrested and jailed by Israelis and an Israeli court had prosecuted her for 16 life sentences for participating in terrorist activities. She is among the Palestinians released in exchange for just one IDF soldier. The Palestinian Christians have also been part of this movement and have participated in the freedom struggle of Palestine equally alongside the Arabs. There also have been some Jews who have always been supportive of the Palestinian cause and who have been at the receiving end of the Jews who have migrated from Europe and other parts of the world. Their role, howsoever little, cannot be undermined.

A total of 173 members participated in the voice vote that was held in the UNESCO headquarter situated in Paris, for granting membership to Palestine. Two-third that is 107 votes were required

for granting of membership to Palestine and it secured 114 votes in its favour. Only 14, with the obvious inclusion of the US and Israel, voted against the resolution. This is a good sign and reflects highly upon the Palestinian leadership. The US and Israel had not considered the Palestinian leadership going to the UNESCO before coming to the UNSC. The voting in UNESCO took place despite the fact that the US had specifically asked UNESCO not to allow voting on this matter.

It is amazing that 114 countries of the world rejected US threats. Israel had also threatened to break the Oslo Accords if UNESCO grants membership to Palestine, though its supposed respect till now has been much the farce. Only 14 countries supported Israel which indicates its loss of international support. The US has now announced that it will stop aid to UNESCO. In fact, the US had earlier stopped aid to the UNESCO during Regan's presidency and then continued it for twenty years. It was finally resumed during the presidency of George Bush and throughout the UNESCO never stopped working.

Israel is completely shocked with the Organization's decision and the only voice that seems to be heard now is that Israel shall attack Iran. Nobody can stop if one wants to commit suicide. This success of the people of Palestine shall be celebrated and the leadership of the Palestinian movement shall be congratulated for their achievement. "Sahafat" is the only newspaper in India that predicted the granting of Palestinian membership in UNESCO two weeks earlier.

Source: http://sahafat.info/delhi/Nov2011/03_11_2011/p-5-1.htm



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

Editorial, 14 November 2011, Monday

4. Iranian Nuclear Programme: A Puzzle

For the last two decades the Iranian Nuclear Programme has remained a puzzle. The US has troubled the entire world on this matter as though it has brought doomsday near. Iran has always said that its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes. It is still standing by what it has said but the US and its European allies are arguing that Iran is developing nuclear weapons. The recent reports of the IAEA do not discount now that Iran has developed nuclear weapons. The IAEA report has said, "it is possible that Iran is developing nuclear weapons". This report created ripples in the European world as the IAEA sanctioned an open warrant against Tehran.

Prior to this, IAEA President Mohamed ElBaradei went on a tour to Iran for inspecting its nuclear capabilities. He laid emphasis on maintaining the status-quo but in spite of this, Tehran did not pay any heed. The IAEA got permission to inspect the nuclear capabilities of Iran. The year-by-year inspection report had to be presented by ElBaradei which indicated that there was

no proof that Iran possessed nuclear weapons. In 2005, he got the Noble Peace Prize for his efforts. Japan's Yukiya Amano, successor to ElBaradei in 2009, conducted the IAEA investigation. When he presented his report on Iran, the first response was from Israel stating that IAEA's report on the state of Iran's nuclear weapons programme was not new for them. Amano had not mentioned in his report that Iran possessed nuclear weapons. Egypt's ElBaradei had earlier said that "there was no such proof". Both reports are similar to the core but in spite of this, Israel has called ElBaradei "the Egyptian cynic" and declared him to be partial and supportive of the Iranian government. Such labelling by Israel speaks of the consequences of being an Arab Muslim and reflects the Israeli Jewish mentality against Muslims.

In spite of the desperation on the part of the Western world, it is not easy, if not difficult, to present proofs for the same. This is because the reports of the possession of nuclear weapons have themselves not been confirmed. The report of the IAEA is based on information only, which has been received by the investigating officers in Iran. And those reports complement each other. But the question that needs to be asked is whether the source of information is reliable or not?

In order to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, the US had been taking steps for the last two decades, but was unable to prevent them from achieving their ambition. Efforts had also been taken to isolate Iran in the region. Iran is well aware that the US could undertake military intervention as it did in Afghanistan and Iraq. If Iran does become successful in testing nuclear weapons, then the US policy of sanctions would also lapse. It is for this reason that the US wants to resolve the problem by pressurizing Iran. But Israel has different motivation; it wants to carry out a counter-force attack on the nuclear supplies of Iran.

If Iran has acquired this mentality, then it is the responsibility of those countries which are using their power to hegemonize the world. If Iran does become a nuclear weapon state, it would be difficult for states such as the US to maintain control in the East on the basis of military power alone. Under such circumstances, it is inevitable that Israel would face pressure to avoid showcasing its nuclear capabilities from both its neighbours as well as from the outside. Even if one state would violate the status-quo, there could be havoc. This is the biggest challenge for the US and its allies.

Source: http://www.etemaaddaily.com/EtemaadArchive_files/nov/14/editorial.html



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad
Editorial, 15 November 2011, Tuesday

5. Syria and the Arab League

The Arab League, in order to teach President Bashar al-Assad a lesson, has expelled Syria from the Arab League and by doing so has attempted to put a stop to a culture of repression, violence, and maladministration. But the fall out appears to be that the ruling

regime has made the situation in Syria worse. In the last two days, the embassies of the foreign states were attacked. Instead of expulsion, what was required of the Arab League was a proper discussion of the situation in Syria. If forces working for destabilizing the Middle East have crept into Syria then it is now Syria's turn to face the aftermath after Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.

By encouraging the opposition forces, the peace and happiness of the citizens have been disturbed. Al-Assad has been accused of repressing and inflicting violence by dictating crude policies over the Syrian people. In order to take control of the situation in Syria, the Arab League terminated its membership and has issued sanctions against Syria. Hence, it is imperative for the President of Syria to tackle the violence and war situation immediately.

If the Syrian President continues to take measures as suggested by the Arab peace initiatives, then the situation can be expected to improve. The opposition groups of Syria will be meeting in the next few days in Cairo. They want to come up with a unanimous suggestion that taking any substantial step against al-Assad and its consequences thereof should also be anticipated.

The Arab League's decision on Syria can even have an adverse impact on the common people of Syria. The tough stance of the Arab League indicates that it has given up its earlier soft attitude. This substantial step however, has encouraged the opposition and people are expected to support the opposition in large numbers. But the steps taken by the ruling regime and their own supporters could set back the opposition.

There is no doubt regarding the Arab League's efforts to resolve the situation in Syria. Four months earlier, the Arab League had told Syria to improve the situation but it continued to deteriorate. Instead of resolving the situation in Syria, President al-Assad tried to crush the opposition and used military power to repress the revolts. It was because of this that the Arab League lost patience.

As opposed to Libya, it is important for Syria to peacefully control the situation. If the Arab League has appealed to resolve the situation in Syria, then it should take steps within its framework to resolve its political problems.

There is no doubt that in maintaining regional peace Syria has played an important role. But the unsuccessful attempts of the al-Assad government to control the ongoing violence in Syria have cast a shadow on the regional peace. The Arab League has, for the time being, a solution to the problem of Syria. If it has been expelled by the Arab League, then after Libya, there would be no delay in controlling Syria. Before the situation in Syria demands international intervention, it should consider what happened in Libya.

For maintaining peace, besides talking to the opposition, the Arab League would have to be unbiased in its proceedings. This is because on the question of expulsion of Syria the opposition itself is divided. If a demand is made for foreign intervention in Syria, then like Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, the Syrian people would have to bear its consequences. The true result of this meeting at the Arab League headquarters should be examined.

Instead of reaching an acceptable resolution, were the Arab League and the Syrian opposition to make the situation more complex, then the situation would not be under their effective control. The ruling regime of Syria should give a road map for political improvement and the educated people, with this aim might support the regime; only then can there be some hope for improvement of the tense situation.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr15-24>



Roznama Hamara Samaj (Daily Our Society), Delhi

Editorial, 15 November 2011, Tuesday

6. Syria's Expulsion from the Arab League

The states of the Arab League, in a joint vote, have expelled Syria from the League and imposed requisite sanctions on the same. All member states have been ordered to recall their ambassadors and officers from Syria. With this decision of the Arab League, the ongoing turmoil has received a severe jolt. This decision has widened the differences between the opposition and the supporters of the ruling regime. Syria has called this decision of the Arab League illegal and has encouraged the ruling regime. The supporters of the ruling Syrian government with the help of the military forces have attacked the embassies of Saudi Arabia and Qatar. During the processions more than nine opposition members have been killed. On the other hand, Arab League's President Nabil ElAraby has said that steps are being considered for the security of the citizens of Syria.

Appealing to the international community to come forward in the case of Syria, he said that the United Nations Security Council should consider steps to place restrictions on Syria because the UN is the only international organization which could do this effectively. Meanwhile, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon has welcomed the decision of the Arab League and has appealed to the international community to snap ties with Syria and slap political and economic sanctions against it. The Syrian representative at the UN has considered it as meaningless and has said that Syria had already taken steps to maintain peace. The Arab League is in support of this, therefore the appeal to snap ties with Syria in the United Nations implies US interference.

According to political groups in Egypt, the intention behind the expulsion of Syria from the Arab League and to issue sanctions on Syria is to isolate it from the rest of the region and leave it to witness the same fate as Libya. It was only after derecognizing Libya from the UN that the NATO forces attacked Libya, after which a "no fly zone" was declared over Libya and ultimately led to the end of the rule of Muammar Gaddafi. It was only after the death of Muammar Gaddafi that means were adopted to take control of the situation.

Now the western countries and the US only need a green signal from the Security Council which could be given at any time, as they had done in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. Among the western countries, Germany, France and Britain have already started their first moves under the leadership of the US. The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and French President Nicholas Sarkozy have already sounded warnings to Syria. Turkey and Egypt have recalled their ambassadors from Syria and the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has been told to stop his repression of the civilians and to begin talks with the opposition. Russia and Iran have objected to the decision of the Arab League. Both, supporting Syria, have asked the Chairman of the Arab League to reconsider their decision and have considered the international community's decision to carry out military attacks and delegitimize Syria as a proposition to be rejected. It should be remembered that NATO had earlier refused to attack Syria. NATO Chief has said that since the situation of Syria is different from Libya and the circumstances are also peculiar to Syria neither could a 'no fly zone' be declared over Syria nor could it be attacked militarily. Nonetheless, post the Arab League's decision, it is becoming evident that the next target of the European states is Bashar al-Assad. Now it remains to be seen as to what consequences the sanctions would bring on Syria!

Source: http://www.hamasamaj.com/delhi/15_11_2011/edarti_safha.htm

Translated and Compiled by Amna Sunbul

Amna Sunbul is a Research Student at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Email: amnasunbuldgr@gmail.com

As part of its editorial policy, the MEI@ND standardizes spelling and date formats 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**