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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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**Hindustan Express (Daily Hindustan Express), New Delhi**  
Editorial, 18 August 2012, Saturday

### 1. The Mecca Conference: Syria, Myanmar and the Muslim Ummah

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has finally decided to suspend Syria from its membership during its Mecca summit. The decision is not surprising as the member countries were extremely unhappy with the way Syria has dealt with its rebels and wanted to send a clear and tough message. The significant point is that the summit was attended by Syrian supporter—Iran. The statement issued at the end of the conference said that the member states note with anguish the ongoing bloodshed in Syria, agree that violence should end immediately and therefore suspend the membership of Syria.

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the Secretary General of the OIC, said that it is a strong message for Syria that the Muslim world will not accept a regime which kills its own people and uses heavy weapons on its civilian population. The OIC is a representative body of the 1.5 billion strong Muslim population in the world. Earlier, the Arab League had also suspended Syria from its membership. Commentators have termed Syria's suspension from the OIC similar to

the suspension from the Arab League but nevertheless a strong measure in changed circumstances. Though the suspension will not directly affect Syria, it could go a long way in isolating the Syrian regime forcing it to stop killing its own people and pave the way for change.

Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Nizar Bin Obaid Madani said during the concluding session of the OIC summit that there was a near consensus on the suspension of the Syrian membership. However, the decision was opposed by the Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi, who termed it as unjust. Iran is a supporter of Syria, thus its opposition was natural, but Western observers have termed it as a decision based on the Shia-Sunni divide. This is an extremely biased observation because the OIC has also appealed to Muslims to refrain from sectarian divisions and work towards a peaceful world and defeat the forces spreading terror and violence.

Though there has been clear indication of sectarian division among Islamic countries, the humanitarian crisis in Syria should not be seen from sectarian lenses as it is being done by Western observers. The Western media is indulging in propaganda and is trying to fuel the fire in Syria. The American media houses have been spreading rumours that Iran has trained a Shia militia to provide security to the Syrian regime. The rumour mill has also spread the word that the Sunni Arab countries including Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey have been providing support to the Sunni rebels in Syria. The OIC took a decision on Syria without getting influenced by the Western propaganda. The participation of Iran in the OIC summit is clear proof that the decision was taken with due consideration to all kind of opinions within the Islamic world, putting an end to speculations about a Shia-Sunni division. The decision by the OIC may not have a direct effect on the situation in Syria but it is a strong message of unity among the Islamic nations. The OIC summit emphasized the need for unity among Islamic nations and strongly criticized the violence and killings of Muslims in Myanmar. The way Muslim nations spoke in a united voice at the OIC should go a long way in working towards securing an end to differences among Muslims all over the world.

Source:

[http://dailyhindustanexpress.com/gujashtah\\_shumare/august2012/18\\_08\\_2012/epaper/page\\_5\\_large.htm](http://dailyhindustanexpress.com/gujashtah_shumare/august2012/18_08_2012/epaper/page_5_large.htm)



**Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi**  
**Editorial, 18 August 2012, Saturday**

## **2. Dusk on the Assad Regime**

**T**he Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has suspended Syria from its membership. Though the OIC is not a very strong, effective and active organization, it still has a symbolic value of being a representative body of Islamic countries. The decision will further isolate an already besieged Bashar al-Assad regime and will give strength to the rebel groups. The irony is that Bashar al-Assad is an ophthalmologist by

training and can treat problems in the eyes, yet is unable to see the writing on the wall. He has witnessed the end of a strong leader like Qaddafi in Libya, Hosni Mubarak who had to leave despite being supported by the military, but still refuses to see his coming end. It seems as if he has completely lost his power to think and understand. A comparison between Syria and Libya is questionable; Libya is an Afro-Arab country, divided between tribal loyalties and oil wealth while Syria has been the cultural and civilization abode of the Arab world. However, the common thread between the two is the behaviour of its rulers. Qaddafi was a charismatic leader who did a lot for the nation but became authoritarian and ended up strangulating the common people. Qaddafi forgot that it is impossible to keep people isolated from developments in different parts of the world which affects individuals and nations alike. He had to sacrifice his life for his ignorance or lack of vision. The Syrian case is a bit different. Syria has bore the brunt of international conspiracies for long. It was never liked by the US and Israel, not just because Syria fought two wars against Israel but also because Syria has been a Russian ally since the times of General Hafiz al-Assad. Syria is the only Russian ally among the Arab countries after Egypt decided to change sides. Most of the Arab countries are under American influence. Whatever is happening in Syria, an American hand cannot be completely ruled out; but the fact remains that Bashar al-Assad has distanced himself from the Syrian people. The situation now is that his military officials are running away to other countries, while a former Prime Minister has escaped to Jordan. Many administrative officials, artists, television personalities and intellectuals even from the Alawite community have distanced themselves from the regime. The bloodshed in Syria has completely isolated Bashar at the international level. Syria did not have a lot of friends but now even its sympathizers are finding it difficult to defend the government. It would be very difficult to effect a Libya like intervention in Syria but that should not comfort Bashar al-Assad. The bottom line is the question: are the people happy with their government? Qaddafi and Mubarak were both victims of such a judgment and the same thing happened in Tunisia, Yemen and Mauritius. It seems the same story will be repeated in Syria. When Bashar al-Assad took on the mantle in Syria, people attached a lot of hope with him. Since he was a civilian unlike his father, people hoped that he would create a democratic regime which he had promised. The hope emanated from the fact that a small group of elite Baathist military officials had monopolized power in Syria like in Iraq. The people had hoped that the ensuing of democracy will lead to representation from all sections and groups of society but Bashar shunned his democracy programme after some initial measures. This had been attributed to the influence of the old guards and at times his wife. Whatever may be the case, the dusk on Bashar's regime seems to be approaching.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=68894&boxid=15734593>



**Roznama Sahafat (Journalism Daily), Delhi**  
**Editorial, 22 August 2012, Wednesday**

### **3. War Obsessed Israeli Leaders**

**A**ccording to a source in Israel, a former Minister of Home Front Defence has said that Israel is now ready to wage and sustain a month-long war against Iran. The former Minister who has now been appointed ambassador to China has said that if Israel

decides to go for war, then it would be fought on various fronts. But the Government of Israel will have to comprehensively analyze the entire situation and will have to coordinate with the US and take it into confidence.

The important point is that the Israeli leaders want the US to wage war against Iran but the precarious condition of the American economy has made it impossible. The financial crisis has made it impossible for the US to wage a new war though if George W. Bush would have been the President, he would have overlooked domestic problems to attack Iran. Yet the Israeli leaders have been continuously pestering the US to attack Iran. However, according to observers, Obama unlike Bush would not make this mistake. He knows that if Iran is attacked, the US and Israel will also have to bear the brunt at many fronts. Iran unlike Iraq, would be difficult to reign in and Israel could face an existential crisis if it attacked Iran. In fact, Israel would not be able to sustain the war for even a month but this is difficult to understand for people living in a fool's paradise. They always realize the inevitable very late.

Another piece of news from Tel Aviv should be mentioned here; a large number of academicians belonging to the Tel Aviv University have sent a signed memorandum addressed to Israeli military officials asking them not to execute the orders for attacking Iran because it could bring disastrous results for the Israeli people. The letter says that it is very difficult for soldiers to overrule an order but it has become necessary because it is related to the very existence of Israel. It emphasizes that if Israel attacks Iran it would threaten Israeli existence. The letter has been formulated by professors from the University's Department of Law. It shows that there are voices against war mongering inside Israel. The intellectual community of Israel understands the problem and has raised their voice against war, but soon it will become the voice of common people in Israel.

It would be important to watch the reaction of war-hungry Israeli leaders; yet it could simply lead to the demonization of these intellectuals because the Israeli leaders are just not ready to read the writing on the wall.

Source: [http://www.sahafat.org/delhi/Aug2012/22\\_08\\_2012/p-5-1.htm](http://www.sahafat.org/delhi/Aug2012/22_08_2012/p-5-1.htm)

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