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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 Etemaad Urdu Daily (The Confidence Urdu Daily), Hyderabad
Editorial, 3 December 2012, Monday

1. New Palestinian Standing

The enhanced 'Non-Member Observer Status' for Palestine in the UN is a historic event. It is indeed a matter of great joy for Palestinians and Muslims but the US and Israel have termed it a delusion; 138 countries voted in favour of the Palestinian bid while another 41 abstained. The new status gives Palestinian representatives better standing at international forums. During the debate, the differences among international powers on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict came to the fore.

The Israeli Prime Minister refused to accept it as a diplomatic defeat saying the new Palestinian status will not change anything. The American representative in the UN Susan E. Rice also said that it does not make any difference to the Palestinian status on the ground. Such attitude shows the impunity among the US and Israeli leaders towards the Palestinian cause. Israel, in retaliation, announced the construction of new settlements in the West Bank. Israel is trying to create as many settlements in the West Bank to thwart any possibility of an independent Palestinian state. On the other hand, the Obama administration continues to support Israel despite issuing statements against new settlement construction.

The Palestinian problem is getting more and more complex. Unconditional American support to Israel has complicated the matters further. Israel in its recent attack on the Gaza Strip killed several hundreds of Palestinians including children and the elderly. Recent changes in the Middle East, however, have indicated that the US and Israel will not be able to continue with their domination. It is important, however, that Palestinian factions come together to fight against the external enemy and the agreement between Fatah and Hamas is a right step in this direction. In fact the two groups do not have much difference as far as their desire for the statehood for Palestine is concerned. In the current circumstances, it may take a long time to achieve statehood for Palestine, but recent developments are steps in the right direction.

Source: http://etemaaddaily.com/EtemaadArchive_files/Dec/03/editorial.html



Inquilab (The Revolution), Mumbai
Editorial, 2 December 2012, Tuesday

2. Israeli Activities

The Palestinian Authority has become bankrupt in the West Bank. It does not have resources for carrying out necessary activities which has created pressure from within. However, Mahmoud Abbas has achieved success in his determination to acquire Observer status at the UN.

The diplomatic success has rattled Israel that thinks of itself as an unassailable state. It takes pride in its military might and sophisticated weapons. But the recent Palestinian achievement has shattered its pride. A majority of countries in the UN supported the Palestinian bid and it is indeed a historic event. In retaliation, Israel has announced that it will stop handing over funds to the PA which it collects from the West Bank. It may take to more severe actions as Benjamin Netanyahu will be desperate to score brownie points for the approaching elections.

It may not, however, be easy for Israel to take severe action against Palestinians and get away with it without international condemnation as more and more countries now understand the situation on the ground. A number of European countries who have backed Israel throughout the conflict have voted in favour of the Palestinian bid. This may not be a big change of heart but shows the kind of reaction Israel should expect for violating all international norms. Though the international community has failed Palestine for a long time, it can still review its attitude and help the people of Palestine achieve an independent state.

Source:

<http://epaper.inquilab.com/showtext.aspx?boxid=65112134&parentid=218513&issuedate=04122012&edd123=Mumbai>



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi

Editorial, 4 December 2012, Tuesday

3. Independent State of Palestine

Palestine has been granted a non-member observer status in the UN. It was announced on 29 November that the Palestinian proposal had received 138 votes in favour as opposed to nine votes against, while 41 member states abstained. The US and Israel voted against the proposal. Some of the important European states that voted in favour of the proposal include Austria, France, Italy, Norway and Spain while Britain and Germany preferred to abstain. Though abstaining rather than voting against is also significant. Though Mahmoud Abbas was expecting support from 150 members, the support from 138 members is no less significant. Israel tried its best to cajole member states to at least not support the Palestinian bid but did not achieve much success. Mahmoud Abbas had been working to acquire support for this proposal for some time. During his speech in the UN General Assembly he said that the UN had passed the partition plan some 65 years ago, which helped the formation of Israel and it is now 65 years later that the proposal for a state of Palestine has come.

The event is under intense discussion the world over. People are deliberating upon the possible Israeli reaction. Many have termed it to be a historic event. American daily *The New York Times* has termed it a defeat for the US and Israel. It says that it will help Palestine's entry into international organizations and build pressure on Israel. However, people have various opinions on its consequences on peace talks. The US and Israel have termed it a black event for the future of peace talks. Israel said that it shows that the Palestinians are not interested in talks. It has also announced construction of new settlements in the West Bank. The reaction of Palestinian factions is also varied. Hamas has termed the non-member observer status as incomplete. Hamas leader Khalid Mashaal has said that Palestine has to be established on entire Palestinian land and does not envisage a Palestinian state in two parts.

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



Roznama Sahafat (Journalism Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 6 December 2012, Thursday

4. Israel Sees its Worth

The UN has demanded that Israel should disclose its nuclear arsenal and open its nuclear establishments for international scrutiny. It is a historic decision by the UN. Though the US opposed the resolution, it could not prevent it from being passed. A large majority of UN members supported the resolution. The resolution got 174 votes in favour while 6 members voted against it. The countries that voted against the resolution were the US, Canada, and four small island nations. Though the UN General Assembly also supported the proposed conference on nuclear non-proliferation in West Asia, the conference was cancelled due to American pressure. The European countries completely rejected the American stand and rallied behind the resolution. Moreover, the European countries have also backed the Palestinian observer status in the UN. Israel neither denies nor endorses the availability of nuclear weapons but it is largely believed that it has a large nuclear arsenal.

Sometime back, former American President Jimmy Carter had disclosed the extent of nuclear arsenal possessed by various countries. Israel together with India, Pakistan and North Korea, has refused to sign the NPT. Though the General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding it helps in shaping the international public opinion.

A resolution was passed in 1995 to make West Asia free from the weapons of mass destruction but it could not be implemented. Israel had nearly 80 warheads in its nuclear arsenal at that time. The 189 members which participated in the 1995 conference had decided to convene another conference in 2012 to pass a resolution to declare West Asia free from nuclear weapons. The US however used its influence to dispel the possibility of any such conference. The US and Israel which make so much noise against the peaceful Iranian nuclear programme adopt silence when it comes to Israeli possession of nuclear weapons. Though Iran faces several international sanctions due to its nuclear programme, it has refused to scrap it and is resolved in its fight against imperialism and force.

Source: http://www.sahafat.org/delhi/Dec2012/06_12_2012/p-5-1.htm



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi
Editorial, 7 December 2012, Friday

5. The Issue of Palestine

Israeli announcement to build more settlements in the West Bank in response to the granting of observer status to Palestine in the UN has been met with strong criticism. The US has also expressed its concerns towards the step and has said that it will be a hurdle in the peace efforts. The US also opposed the Palestinian bid in the UN and voted against it. The 1967 illegal occupation of Jerusalem by Israel has been rejected by the entire world. The UN has also passed numerous resolutions condemning the occupation and has demanded that Israel withdraws from the occupied areas. Israel has refused to accept any international resolution and has declared that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. It has also devised policies to change the map and structure of Jerusalem according to its requirements. The city of Jerusalem is holy not only for Jews but also for Muslims and Christians. As far as Islam is concerned it respects the holy structures of Jews as well as Christians, though Jewish and Christian beliefs are otherwise.

The Palestinian stand that Israel has occupied their land since 1967 and should withdraw from it is principled. The international community also endorses this stand. Israeli occupation is illegal and it should withdraw from all the occupied areas. The international community wants a peaceful resolution to the conflict. A few pro-Israeli states have a similar stand in principle but they have always backed Israel to suppress the Palestinians. Israel however has decided not to respect any international resolution. Immediately after Palestine was accorded a non-member observer status, it announced that it would build new settlements in the West Bank. The Israeli cabinet also announced that it would not accept the General Assembly decision. Israeli actions are not conciliatory but take the conflict towards confrontation.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=07-dec-2012



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

Editorial, 10 December 2012, Monday

6. Political Challenge for Morsi

The Morsi government in Egypt is facing major political crisis. The society is divided between the pro-government Islamists and secularists. There seems to be a strong stalemate between the government and opposition. The parliament is dissolved and President Morsi is finding it difficult to negotiate his way through the current situation.

President Morsi cannot deny the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood had indicated that it would not impose its ideology on the entire nation and would rule with justice and democracy. Morsi however has made a mistake by declaring the presidential decree above the Supreme Court, thus giving the impression that he will turn authoritarian. The fear was boosted with his decision to impose Martial Law in Egypt.

These steps may not strengthen the nascent Egyptian democracy and give an impression that Morsi wants to impose the Muslim Brotherhood ideology on Egypt in entirety. This has led to the resurgence in protests. The Morsi government has not been able to handle the situation wisely and as a result the situation in Egypt has acquired the shape of a political crisis.

Morsi has got a historic opportunity to experiment with an Islamic democratic form of governance. Egypt is a plural society and the imposition of one ideology on the entire population will not help create a conducive situation for progress and advancement. It is important for the current Egyptian government to develop a form of government that is acceptable to all shades of opinion found in Egypt.

Source: http://etemaaddaily.com/EtemaadArchive_files/Dec/10/editorial.html



The Siasta Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 10 December 2012, Monday

7. An Appeal for Unity in Palestine

The Palestinians are talking about unity as Fatah leaders have responded positively to the appeal for unity by Hamas leader Khalid Mashaal. It is time for Palestinian leadership to speak in one voice and work towards the cause of Palestinians. Khalid Mashaal has come back to Palestine after long years of exile. The people of Palestine have welcomed his return. Hamas was formed 25 years ago to achieve freedom for Palestine. Mashaal who is a moderate leader criticized the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands and appealed for unity among Palestinians to fight against Israel. His return reminds one of Yasser Arafat who came back to Palestine after three decades of exile and took the leadership

of the Palestinian movement. It is heartening to see a Palestinian leader trying to bridge the division among various factions of Palestinian movement that can go a long way in achieving success. Hamas is making effort to create a political atmosphere for large scale resistance and political struggle against Israel rather than armed resistance that is a positive development. No one but Israel had benefitted from the divisions among Palestinians. It is important to note that Mahmoud Abbas has welcomed Mashaal's return and has responded positively to his call for unity. Israel obviously will try to create discord among these leaders but they need to be careful about Israeli game plans. Israel was created with the help of super powers. Britain helped in its establishment and it received help from the US since its establishment. However, now Israel refuses to listen to any of the powers or international organizations. The Palestinian leadership should understand that Israel would not accept any international resolutions and they will have to devise new plans to achieve a state for Palestine. Israel since its establishment has hated the Arabs and will do everything it can to thwart the formation of a state of Palestine.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr8-25>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 11 December 2012, Tuesday

8. Crisis in Egypt

The news about the imposition of Martial law in Egypt is disturbing. It would be a tragedy for Egypt and could put the entire Arab Spring into question. Though news has come that the imposition of martial law has been scrapped, he is still determined on a referendum for the draft constitution. The opposition wants the referendum to be deferred and deliberations on the draft and the process of its endorsement to be carried out. The Tahrir Square is again buzzing with protesters, this time against the Morsi government. It is important to note that the Muslim Brotherhood that came to power after the elections were held in Egypt now wants to impose its ideology on the entire population. Egypt has witnessed military rulers since it became a republic. These military rulers never allowed any political party to flourish and Muslim Brotherhood and its leaders always bore the brunt of the brutal crackdown from these rulers.

The Muslim Brotherhood remained banned for a long time but did not shun its activities and continued with underground activities building a network of activists and leaders who spread throughout the country. However, it cannot be said that the Brotherhood is endorsed and accepted by the entire population. When the elections took place after the fall of Mubarak, they were the only organized group, thus winning a majority in the parliament and having their candidate become president.

The Egyptian people are one of the most moderate people in the Arab world. Though they do not endorse the modernization that was popularized during the time of King Farouq, they also do not also endorse the hard-line stand of Salafists and the Brotherhood. The people of Egypt have largely opposed the call by Salafists to destroy the pyramids and Sphinx. The recent

presidential decrees however have once again enraged the people of Egypt because they do not want an authoritarian regime. Morsi will do well to respect the sentiments of the people and should not work to impose the agenda of one group but rather work towards an inclusive and pluralistic form of government that respects the people's will and works for their welfare.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=82950&boxid=34141265>



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi
Editorial, 13 December 2012, Thursday

9. Return of a Palestinian Leader

Khaled Mashaal is one of the most prominent leaders of Palestine. He is respected by the opposition and feared by the enemies. He has remained on the radar of the enemy power since long and has come out safe from numerous assassination bids. He has received a warm welcome after years of exile. Things are fast changing as far as the issue of Palestine is concerned. A lot of events have come together to show that the struggle of Palestine has now reached a historic moment. A lot of clouds over the fate of Palestine have also started to shed away. Hamas has emerged as a strong and resilient force that has gained strength despite all efforts to wipe it off.

The return of this leader has come at a time when the people of Palestine are talking about unity. The unity deal between Hamas and Fatah is an exemplary and historic moment. The return of their leader is indicative of the fact that the return of Palestinians to their home may not be far away. The coming back of Mashaal on the occasion of completion of 25 years of Hamas's existence has been welcomed even by the Fatah supporters. Israel now is more and more isolated. Even the US has found it difficult to back all its decisions and announcements. The European community is angry with Israeli behaviour and its long time friends have issued statements against its attitude. Israel is a very tough enemy which can go to any extent to create a conducive environment for itself. It may not learn from its mistakes and take to the path that is full of dangers and that can prove to be its undoing.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=13-dec-2012



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad
Editorial, 13 December 2012, Thursday

10. Indo-Palestinian Relations

Most of the international powers have not delivered on their promise to help the people of Palestine achieve freedom and independence. India has always expressed its support to Palestinians and their cause. Indo-Palestinian relations go back in history. India has always opposed Israeli excesses on the people of Palestine. Mahmoud

Abbas is on a visit of India at a time when India recently took part in the NAM summit in Tehran and expressed its support for democratic movements in the Arab world. India has also announced aid of US\$10 million for Palestine and it is reflective of India's commitment towards Palestine. India has supported Palestinian efforts at all international forums. However, India's growing ties with Israel has created doubts.

India's relations with Israel however, have not diluted India's commitment towards Palestine and it continues to support the people of Palestine. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has made it clear that Israel should immediately stop settlement construction on Palestinians lands and should stop the use of force against civilians. India also supports all efforts for peaceful resolution of the conflict. The US and the international community have however, failed to find a peaceful solution. Israel continues to occupy Palestinian lands and brutalize the people of Palestine. It has used extensive force against the civilian population.

Israeli behaviour has not found support among the people of India and has not been endorsed by the government. However, a strong stand against the use of force and Israeli excesses is also missing from the Indian side. Yet India has maintained that supporting the Palestinian cause is an important aspect of its foreign policy. Manmohan Singh has reiterated this stand and has said that India strongly supports Palestinian efforts for statehood. India should however try to emphasize upon the international powers that it is their responsibility to stop Israel from its use of force and help Palestine achieve a free and independent state.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr11-42>

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