

FROM THE URDU PRESS

No. 70

1-15 May 2013

19 Jamadiul Akhar-4 Rajab 1434 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 with their accuracy or views. Editor, MEI@ND]



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi
Editorial, 4 May 2013, Saturday

1. New Efforts at Resolving the Palestinian Problem

The US has again taken the lead in pushing towards resolving the Arab-Israel conflict. The new American Secretary of State John Kerry has been working overtime to bring the issue back to the negotiations table. But it is not a product of Kerry's personal agenda rather is part of a well-planned American strategy. The interesting aspect of these efforts, however, is that an important party to the conflict is being ignored. The problem is not just a Palestinian-Arab issue but is important to the entire Muslim community. Thus it is important to take into account their concerns and respect their sentiments. However, initially it was made into a regional issue, then was compressed into an issue of Arabs and now has been limited to be an issue between Israelis and Palestinians. Yet, other issues have not been completely sidelined, they are kept alive to be used as and when required. The tactics are again under play as now neither the Palestinian Authority nor other Palestinian groups including Hamas are being consulted. This time neighbouring Arab countries have also not been made a party to the consultations. The Arab League has been used to bring the Palestinians to the negotiation table and a delegation of the Arab League met the American Secretary of State John Kerry on 29 April 2013 to propose a plan for the resolution of the Palestinian crisis.

The plan proposes a concession to the borders of the State of Israel. The Arab League had earlier floated a proposal in 2002. Likewise, Saudi Arabia had also proposed its own Peace Plan. All of them have conceded on the point of the recognition of Israel, which means they have endorsed the two-state solution. The main issue, however, has been the boundaries for the two states. Till date, the majority had a consensus that the pre-1967 situation had to be restored, meaning that Israel had to withdraw from the territories it captured during the 1967 war. It also had to relinquish its claim on any piece of land belonging to neighbouring countries it had occupied during the war. Even the United Nations has held the same view. The 1967 occupation of Palestinian and Arab lands is considered illegal by the international community including the UN. That is why the UN and the entire international community hold the view that Israel should withdraw from the occupied areas, in addition to the view of the Muslim world. Earlier peace plans including those from the US and its Western allies have held on to this stand. The new proposal by the Arab League, however, provides for a concession on this issue. It amounts to relinquishing the claim on the occupied territories and as expected the proposal has been welcomed by the US and Israel.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=04-may-2013



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 6 May 2013, Monday

2. Israeli Attack on Syria

Amidst the clamour on the use of chemical weapons and intense fighting between the government forces and rebels, Israel has attacked a military research centre situated in the vicinity of Damascus, putting the Bashar al-Assad government into more trouble. Israel has perceived the alleged exchange of weapons between Syria and Hezbollah as a security threat. The Israeli attack on Syria will bolster the rebel groups. Israel has said that it cannot allow transfer of dangerous weapons into wrong hands. It recognizes the strengths of Hezbollah and it does not want the militant group to acquire more military capabilities as it can become a nemesis of Israel. The condition in Syria is vulnerable and Israeli adventurism in the country can cause real harm to the State of Israel as well as to the region. The attack builds pressure on the Bashar al-Assad regime and puts them in an uneasy situation, which is a threat to peace in the region. Thus, international organizations should take notice of the Israeli action. It is uncertain if these attacks will be helpful for the rebels but they put the Syrian population at greater risk. Israel fears the transfer of weapons to Hezbollah and the strike is purely an action in self-interest. Israel and Syria have not entered into any war since 1973. It was in fact Hezbollah that had put Israel into an awkward military situation in 2006. Israel by attacking Syria wants to achieve two goals: one, it wants to prevent Hezbollah from acquiring dangerous weapons and secondly, it wants to warn Iran to re-consider its patronization of Hezbollah. The problem is that Syria has descended into a bloody civil war, and all that the international organizations and Western countries are concerned with, is Israeli security. Syria does not pose a direct threat to Israel and if it indulges in unnecessary actions, it puts the entire region at risk. During the past two years of violence in Syria, more than 70,000 people have been killed. Israel is not at all concerned with the situation in Syria and wants to instigate its neighbours into starting a war in the region. If the international organizations fail to prevent further deterioration in Syria and

eruption of war in the region, then it would be a collective failure of the world powers. Israel has developed and installed dangerous weapons all over its borders but feels threatened when its neighbouring countries try to acquire similar weapons. Israel wants to further create trouble in Syria so that a war erupts and engulfs the entire region, thus helping Israeli expansionist desires.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr7-34>



Roznama Urdu Times (The Urdu Times Daily), Mumbai

Editorial, 8 May 2013, Wednesday

3. What is Iran waiting for?

What is Iran waiting for? If the Israeli attack on Syria in January 2013 was not enough, then are the new attacks in May still falling short of inciting Iran into action? The three attacks were made to stop Iranian help to Hezbollah. According to Barack Obama, Israel has the right to defend itself against threats from Hezbollah. Then, why do Iran, Syria and Hezbollah not have the same right to defence against Israeli threats? Obama, like his predecessors, is a victim of the 'delusion of grandeur'. Till a few days back, the entire administration was shouting their lungs out that the use of chemical weapons against the rebels in Syria is the 'red-line' the regime should not cross. But now, when it has come to light that it was actually the rebels who were suspected of the use of chemical weapons and Sarin Gas, they say that it is yet to be established. It is obvious that these chemical weapons have been provided by the US, UK and Israel but the problem is that they think that only Israel has a right to defend and secure its borders. It even has the right to act against potential threats but other 'Golems' don't even have the right to defend themselves against a real threat. This is a question for Iran. What did Iran mean when its Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salami said that use of chemical weapons would be regarded as the red-line? What has Iran done after the UN representative conceded that it is the rebels who are using the chemical weapons? Iran has not taken any retaliatory action against Israeli attacks inside Syria. Are they waiting for destruction of Hamas, Hezbollah and Syria before coming into action? Don't they perceive the attacks inside Syria as a threat to their security? Will it come out of its slumber only when Tehran and Mashhad will come under attack? Iran should not complain of the inaction and shamelessness of the other 55 Muslim countries as it has not taken any action as well. There is a Quran injunction making it mandatory for Muslims to fight against the aggressors. The Quran also says that the Bane Ismail (children of Israel or Jews) will not be able to harm the Muslims, and if they come to fight you, go to war against them. Thus, not retaliating when attacked is a violation of Islamic duty for the Muslims.

Source: <http://www.urdutimes.net/?edate=2013/05/08&epg=03>



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi

Editorial, 10 May 2013, Friday

4. Threats to Syrian Integrity

The Israeli attacks inside Syria have attracted condemnation from several quarters; even the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has expressed his concerns and appealed for patience. Russia has also condemned this unnecessary action. The Arab League has also expressed its concerns. China too has issued a strong condemnation of the Israeli action. But surprisingly, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrived in China immediately after the incident and soon after, the Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas reached China as well. The Israeli action threatens to expand the Syrian crisis into a regional war. Though Israel was actively involved inside Syria and its intelligence agencies were working over-time to further deteriorate the situation, it is now openly attacking targets inside Syria. The Israeli military has also been working with NATO near the Turkish borders because it is the last neighbour that is perceived as a threat by Israel. Iran and Syria are understood to be working in tandem against Israel. The Syrian influence in Lebanon has been one of the reasons for anti-Israel activities from the country. Another allegation against Syria is its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons and though Syria had plans for securing nuclear weapons for a long time, it has now started to work for it, which is a threat to Israel.

Israel has American consent; it has even alleged that Syria has developed chemical weapons which it is using against the rebels. These weapons can also be used against the enemy, that is, Israel. Thus, it is important to effect a regime change in Syria. The activities of the Syrian regime are being reported by the same people who are advocating action against the regime. As far as the rebels are concerned, there are many groups supported by anti-Syria forces and they are fighting against the government. Latest reports have speculated that even the rebel groups have acquired dangerous weapons including chemical and biological weapons. A UN team is investigating into the matter. What could be the justification to punish the people of Syria for the wrongs of the regime? How can one justify the regime change with external support? Do they really have people's support and are they interested in establishing a just system? Are the actions taken in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya and their outcomes not enough to show their real intentions? Are the Israeli actions not a threat to Syrian security? The UN too has expressed its concerns but the question is if it is a threat, then what should be done and is it enough to just express concern?

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=10-may-2013

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