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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]



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 2 September 2013, Monday

1. Necessary to Prevent another War

The Obama administration is hesitant to intervene in Syria without the Congressional approval. Meanwhile, the Assad regime has declared victory, which can be detrimental for Syria. The US is contemplating military intervention to ensure more chemical weapons are not used in Syria but it fails to understand that it will further complicate the situation. It will lead to more deaths and violence in Syria and provide fuel for international terrorism. Therefore, it is important that the West reviews its strategy in the Middle East. Syria is an important player in the region and cannot be isolated for long. Moreover, the struggle for power along sectarian-religious line inside Syria has left it bleeding and staring at deeper crisis. Syria has become a moral and ethical test for the US because Russia, China and Iran have taken an alternate stand on the crisis. Russian President Vladimir Putin has urged Obama that being a Nobel Peace Prize winner, he should be cautious about the innocent lives that will be lost due to an American attack on Syria. International intervention at a time when the government forces have gained an upper-hand over the rebels would be detrimental for Syria. The Americans have returned Obama to power as a vote against the wars waged by their former presidents in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Americans do not support such wasteful wars that triggered a financial crisis; they are more concerned about peace and security within the US. But unfortunately, Obama is also

trying to cross the red line by attacking Syria. The British Parliament's decision is an important lesson to Obama not to launch an intervention without a Congressional debate. At a time when the West is struggling to come to a decision, the responsibility of the Syrian regime has increased to taking measures for stopping an invasion. It is important to prevent further loss of life and bring all parties together to explore a negotiated settlement. The Syrian military lacks modern weapons and has recently been supplied some radar systems by China. Moreover, Syria is aware of American military capabilities. Any move that leads to further bloodshed should be avoided. Politics at the cost of human life has to be stopped. International politics should be used to pursue peace and not war. The war in Iraq, which led to the loss of millions of lives was based on manipulations committed by the US and Britain. The same mistakes should not be repeated in Syria. It is important that Syria takes the international community into confidence regarding its commitment for peace and security but the irony is President Bashar al-Assad has lost confidence among his own people as well as among fellow Arab countries. Any American intervention will be harmful for Syria as well as the neighboring countries including Israel. An escalation of the Syrian crisis will entangle the region and create havoc among the people in the Middle East.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr3-38>



The Etemaad Urdu Daily (The Confidence Urdu Daily), Hyderabad
Editorial, 4 September 2013, Wednesday

2. Coming End of American Hegemony

More than 1,400 Syrians were killed in a Sarin gas attack near Damascus on 21 August. The US has announced its plans for humanitarian intervention in Syria without waiting for investigations into the attack. It has already sent *USS Nimitz* naval warship to the Arabian Sea.

The world had witnessed American manipulation at the time of the attack on Iraq. Although no evidence of WMDs could be found in Iraq, it now lies in ruins. The same situation is being repeated in the case of Syria but Russia, China and many other countries have refused to buy the American arguments this time. The US, Britain and France are not ready to listen to others and want to attack Syria. Russian experts have said that it is still not clear if chemical weapons were used but the US is not ready to share the 'evidence' it has of the use of chemical weapons.

The world has now been divided into two camps over the external intervention in Syria. While the US, Britain, France, Saudi Arabia, Arab League and Turkey are in favor of international intervention, Russia, China, Iran along with the many people inside the US and

Britain are against the attack on Syria. The US wishes to maintain its hegemony in the region by attacking Syria. Indeed, the Syrian government should be punished if it has used chemical weapons. It is not unlikely because the Assad regime has used all possible tricks to suppress the rebellion against it. Another possibility is the role of external hands in using chemical weapons to create a strong ground for American intervention. However, it is unlikely that the rebels would have used chemical weapons because they are fighting for the people and would not use such weapons of mass destruction.

The US has no regard for the United Nations and has refused to accept laboratory results conducted by its inspectors. The UN has continued to lose its credibility due to its partisan role during many crises. The UN has continuously failed in its task of preventing violence and killings due to the hegemony of big powers and Iraq and Afghanistan are testimony to that.

It would be better if the international community tries to find a negotiated settlement for the Syrian crisis. The Geneva-II conference should try and build a consensus in the international approach towards the Syrian crisis. It is important that force is not used because it will further complicate the situation. More loss of life in Syria can be prevented only through imposing a ceasefire and exploring options for implementing the will of the people over the will of Bashar al-Assad who has lost all his legitimacy to govern.

Source: <http://etemaaddaily.com/epapers/?date=2013-09-04>



Inquilab (The Revolution), Mumbai

Editorial, 4 September 2013, Wednesday

3. When will the Syrian Crisis End?

The situation in Syria has worsened with every passing day. Though Obama has announced his intention to seek the opinion of Congress before proceeding with an attack on Syria, it does not mean that he will drop his plans of war and engage in peace making. He is trying to take the Congress on board because an attack on Syria will incur huge bills and he does not wish to be held responsible alone. It is because of the financial situation and experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq that the US is hesitant to attack Syria. The British Parliament has voted against an attack on Syria, which has clipped the wings of Prime Minister Gordon Brown (sic) who was keen on undertaking a military expedition to Syria. Meanwhile, France is ready to act against Bashar al-Assad despite the momentary refusal of the US and Britain to attack Syria. French concerns in Syria emanate from its engagements in Lebanon that has large French investments as well as a sizable French population engaged in business. Moreover, the UN peacekeeping forces have a large contingent of French soldiers. France is desperately concerned about the spill-over of the Syrian crisis into Lebanon which is evident from the leaked French intelligence report over Syria. France is not concerned about the loss of Syrian life or the desperate situation of the

people of Syria. It is rather, worried about its interests in the region. The problem is that the so-called big powers are bent on further bloodshed in a country that is suffering from civil war.

The West always keeps its interests on top while dealing with other countries and what it is doing in Syria is part of their moral fabric. If they would really have humanitarian concern about the loss of life in Syria and about the refugees who have been forced out of homes to live in extremely harsh conditions, then they would refrain from talking about attacks. The UN has a responsibility to bring an end to the civil war and prevent external attack but it has failed so far. If expressing concern is what the UN is supposed to do, then there is an urgent need to review the foundations of the international organization.

Source: <http://epaper.inquilab.com/epaperhome.aspx?issue=04092013&edd=Mumbai>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 4 September 2013, Wednesday

4. Attack on Syria: Obama Hesitant

At a time when the US is hesitant to attack Syria, the world is against any attack on Syria and the opposition to war is growing. The American argument in favor of humanitarian intervention in Syria has failed to impress the world. Despite the fact that everyone has condemned the Syrian regime for the use of brute force against its own people, most countries have seen through the blatant lies which are being given as evidence for an attack on Syria. The moral duty to attack Syria is a veil for Israel's proxy war, which the US has continued to fight. Any Muslim country with economic stability and a robust security apparatus is being destroyed because Israel sees it as a threat to its survival. It does not want to fight its own war and uses the US to indulge in proxy war. This is what happened in Iraq. The destruction of Iraq at the hands of the US has neutralized any threat to Israel for a long time. The same strategy is being pursued in the case of Syria. However, the US needs to be careful of the consequences of another war as it is still dealing with the effects of previous ones. One can argue that Israel is capable of fighting for itself and it has decisively defeated the Arab countries earlier, but the situation has greatly changed over time. Israeli troubles in the war of 1973 and the Israeli defeat in 2006 at the hands of Hezbollah has exposed its vulnerabilities. It, however, does not need to go to war because the US is more than happy to wage war on behalf of Israel. The US has several reasons for being hesitant this time. First, it is not clear who has used chemical weapons in Syria. While the US is insistent that the Syrian government forces used chemical weapons, Syria has accused the rebels of the crime. The international community, most importantly Russia, has refused to buy American arguments and evidence, and has said that it is most likely that the rebels used these chemical weapons

to indict the regime. A UN inspection team has now been sent to Damascus to investigate the source of chemical weapons use. One cannot however, forget that a similar UN team had investigated and reported that there was no evidence of amassing of WMDs in Iraq but the US still attacked and destroyed Iraq. Most international experts agree that the consequences of war in Syria would be costlier for the US in comparison to Iraq and Afghanistan. It is argued that starting a war is easy but keeping it limited and ending it is difficult. Secondly, Syria has support from its ally Iran and it would be difficult for the US to deal with it if it decides to act on behalf of Syria. Israel would be happy to see a US-Iran war but it seems impossible at this stage. Iran may not sit idly if Syria would be attacked by the US. Moreover, Hezbollah in Lebanon has already declared that if the US attacks Syria, then it will target Israel through its missiles. Israel knows it may be an ordinary threat but it cannot be ignored. Israel has not forgotten the bad experience it had in 2006. The US may not attack Syria immediately because it will also affect the stability of the neighboring Arab countries. In the given circumstances, it is unlikely that the US will launch a war in Syria.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=61607&boxid=2221593>



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi
Editorial, 10 September 2013, Tuesday

5. The System is Ineffective

The Syrian crisis has once again brought the issue of international efforts for peace and co-existence that have been undertaken collectively at the international level and questions are being raised regarding the structural and institutional aspects as well as the effectiveness of the UN in achieving its goals. Chances of wars and risk to peace are always possible. Problems and troubles occur and there should always be a mechanism to deal with these problems. The League of Nations was instituted for this purpose but the experiment failed because of the very agents who were instrumental in its inception. The United Nations was built on the ruins of the League with the stated goal of maintaining peace. Any system cannot remain foolproof, and there is always a possibility of some lacunae and weakness but the system can work reasonably well if these weaknesses are addressed with a faith in and respect for the system. More importantly, everyone has to be treated equally by the system and nobody should be allowed to use the system to their advantage. The system has to work without differentiating between big and small, and rules and regulations are equally imposed on all.

Seen from this angle, the system itself is problematic. It was conceived on unequal foundations. A few strong countries were allowed to appropriate power. They have special status and can use it to nullify any decision that may harm their interest or even sound harmful by using special powers (veto). This special status is available only to five countries

and the system has continued for more than five decades. Resultantly, the system has lost its effectiveness and respect among its constituents. It is not a matter of the continuation of the Syrian regime but the discrimination and use of the international system to pursue self-interests. The idea of accountability should be equally imposed on every country. If Syria, Egypt and Turkey are accountable for their deeds and actions, then everyone else including the US, China, Russia, France and Britain should also be accountable and held responsible for their mistakes. If small and weak countries can be punished for their misdeeds, why no action is taken against the big and strong countries? If making and amassing weapons of mass destruction is a crime, then why not indict the US, Britain, Russia, France and China? However, there is no scope for any such action in the present system. Therefore, the system itself is problematic.

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



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

Editorial, 12 September 2013, Thursday

6. Threat of American Attack on Syria Diminishes

The threat of American attack on Syria has temporarily ended, but the situation in Syria has far from improved. Nearly two thousand people, mostly children, were killed by chemical weapons last month. The chemical weapons attacks were carried out at a time when the UN inspection team was visiting Syria to investigate the allegations regarding storage of WMDs inside Syria. The Syrian regime has rejected the allegation that the chemical weapons were used by Syrian government forces saying that they were used by rebels. UN inspectors have yet to submit their report. The Russian position on the Syrian crisis has made it difficult for any breakthrough among the world powers. Russia has backed the Syrian regime. During the G-20 summit in St. Petersburg, the American Secretary of State John Kerry said that if Syria agrees to destroy its stockpiles of chemical weapons, then the US would not attack Syria. Vladimir Putin and Barack Obama discussed the issue of Syria during the summit. Syria has also agreed to the American demands to destroy its chemical weapons. Interestingly, Syria had until recently vehemently denied having chemical weapons. There is another important question that comes to the fore; if the regime had chemical weapons, what is the reason to believe that it would not have used them? By agreeing to destroy these chemical weapons, the Syrian regime has indirectly accepted its role in the killing of the innocent people. Nevertheless, the US administration has agreed to halt any plans to attack Syria after the deal brokered by Russia.

It is indeed surprising that Syria did not use these weapons against its arch enemy Israel that has occupied Syrian land since the 1967 war. An important question regarding the American

role arises. The US claimed that Iraq has WMDs and attacked and destroyed Iraq; it could never find any evidence of chemical weapons in Iraq. Syria had chemical weapon stockpiles but it did not do anything. This is indeed surprising and an evidence of American double standards. The situation in Syria is a humanitarian crisis and should be seen as one. While hundreds of children have lost their lives, Iran and Hezbollah have extended unconditional support to the Syrian regime which is indicative of their dubious role in the crisis. Although the threats of war have ended, the civil war continues to rage. The casualties have touched one million and 90 percent are civilians. The number of refugees has swelled over the three years. Most of the constituents of the OIC and the Arab League are against the Assad regime but it would have further diminished its standing in the Arab-Muslim world if it would have attacked Syria. For now, it seems that the US has used the situation to its advantage by getting rid of Syrian chemical weapons as well as avoiding a war. It may, however, be a temporary relief for the Assad regime because the way it has massacred its own people, it will have to pay the price, if not immediately then in future.

Source: <http://etemaaddaily.com/epapers/?date=2013-09-12>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 12 September 2013, Thursday

7. Volatile Situation in Syria

S yrian President Bashar al-Assad did not repeat the mistakes committed by Saddam Hussein and Muammar Qaddafi. Bashar unconditionally agreed to the proposal by the Russian Foreign Minister to put its stock of chemical weapons for international scrutiny. The US was nearly prepared to launch a limited attack on Syria. There were pressures working both for and against the attack on Syria. The Obama administration was hesitant because it did not want to take full responsibility for any adverse consequences. The Congress had its own reservations. It was however contemplating an attack despite a negative international opinion. Syrian claims to counter American attacks and revenge were hardly able to evoke confidence among the Syrian public or the international community. Earlier, Saddam Hussein and Muammar Qaddafi had made similar remarks but everybody had seen their eventual ends.

Syria cannot stand any attack by the US. In fact, it cannot even counter an Israeli military assault. Moreover, it hardly has any ally in the region except Iran, which had committed its support in case of any external intervention. This however, was easier said than done as this would have complicated the situation and led to precarious consequences. It would have exposed the Islamic world to a sectarian war. Iraq, which was a Shia majority, was ruled by a Sunni ruler, even though there is no evidence to prove that the Iraqi Baath party was

sectarian. Similarly, Syria is a Sunni majority country ruled by a Shia ruler, but the Syrian Baath party is a secular party. However, due to constant discrimination there is anger among the majority community.

A sectarian war in the region would lead to dire consequences. Some of the neighboring countries have never liked the regime in Syria and in the event of an American attack, the end of Bashar al-Assad was certain. A large number of Syrian refugees are now in Turkey. This had started to affect the Turkish economy. Therefore, the Syrian agreement to allow the scrutiny and destruction of its chemical stockpiles has come as a relief for a number of countries. It is important to note that the Syrian chemical weapons were sourced from a European company. Israel is not very pleased with the American decision because it wanted an American attack on Syria. The Syrian stand is also important because eventually an external attack would have destroyed the country and its people. The Syrian regime should now bring all the stakeholders to the negotiations table and find a consensual resolution to the crisis.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=62615&boxid=14219359>



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 12 September 2013, Thursday

8. Syrian Crisis and Russian Proposal

It seems that the entire world is divided into two different blocks on the Syrian crisis. The US and its allies in Europe and the Arab World want to attack Syria while Russia together with its allies is opposing any external intervention. India and China have also opposed military options for resolution of internal political issues. India has declared that without the permission of the UN, no one should attack Syria. The American President Barack Obama was trying to target Syria and to attack it by seeking consent of the Congress. It seems now that the US Congress is also against the military option. In the light of growing international involvement, Russia has suggested that Syria hand over its stockpile of chemical weapons to the international agency. Syria has agreed to this suggestion to avoid external intervention. France, Germany, Britain and even Barack Obama have welcomed the move arguing that it is a step in the right direction. President Obama has said that the US will not attack Syria if it agrees to the Russian proposal. The Russian proposal gains significance because it will help prevent another war. However, the US and its allies have not given up on the military option. As Germany, France and even Britain have welcomed the proposal, it would be difficult for the US to take unilateral action. It can be termed as a diplomatic victory for Russia and Syria. The Russian proposal gives due importance to the international organizations especially the role of the UN in resolving critical problems facing the international community. American actions, on the other hand, undermine the role of the UN. For instance, the US had started to plan a military attack on Syria prior to the submission of

the report by the UN investigation team that has been sent to look into the allegations of use of chemical weapons. More importantly, it has been reported in some circles that the CIA has started providing weapons to Syrian rebels. This would have helped the American troops in the case of an attack. Nevertheless, it is now incumbent upon the UN to take care of the implementation of the Russian proposal and work towards preventing any attack on Syria before a report is submitted by the UN investigation team. It is important that the UN stands up to American hegemony because it is not good for the international order and neither in the interest of any individual country.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr13-48>

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