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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 Etemaad Urdu Daily (The Confidence Urdu Daily), Hyderabad
Editorial, 5 June 2014, Thursday

1. Fatah-Hamas Coalition Government

The formation a unity government in Palestine has ended the seven year-long fight between Fatah and Hamas. The oath-of-office for the new government was telecasted live in both West bank and Gaza Strip and PA President Mahmoud Abbas said on the occasion that a dark page in history of Palestine is now over. The 2006 parliamentary elections had led to problems as Hamas has gained majority in Gaza. Thus, it formed government in the Gaza and expelled Fatah from the Strip. Later Fatah had taken control of West Bank. The new unity government has declared Gaza to be it headquarters.

The US and Israel are trying to see whether Hamas members are part of the government because they, along with many European countries, have declared it to be a terrorist organization. Rami Hamdallah has taken over as Prime Minister of the newly formed government while 17 cabinet ministers have taken the oath-of-office and all are technocrats.

Three members of the newly appointed cabinet could not participate in the oath ceremony because Israel has imposed travel restrictions between Gaza and West Bank. PA President Mahmoud Abbas has travelled to Gaza Strip for the first time since 2007. Abbas said that the infighting among Palestinians has led to immense loss to the cause of Palestine. The

formation of a new government can pave way for fresh elections, which might take place sometime in 2015.

The formation of a unity government which Abbas has termed historical cannot, however, bring any revolutionary change in the fate of people of Palestine. Palestinian statelessness will continue and their desperate situation that has aggravated with every passing generation will remain so. It may lead to fresh elections, and the West might think that a fresh election in 2015 after an eight-year gap will bring Fatah in place of the Islamist Hamas. The Arab Spring has failed in bringing much-needed change in the region, and while the Islamist have failed to make electoral gains the desperation among people with the ruling establishments remains constant. The people of Palestine have sacrificed their life for the cause of an independent state of Palestine and elections can bring good governance but will not bring a state. Thus, the unity government cannot be a solution for the issue of Palestine.

Both Fatah and Hamas had come up with the goal of formation of a Palestinian state. Yasser Arafat could not achieve this goal in his lifetime though he tried whatever he can to achieve statehood for Palestine. There is no doubt that Arafat's leadership was iconic and he can be credited with making Palestine into an international issue. The path that has been chosen by Hamas remains to be tested. There is no doubt that the principle target of the Palestinian cause is to recover the first Qibla but in this modern times of diplomacy, how far Islam will be able to be effective in achieving that goal is debatable. Emotions cannot bring a healthy resolution to the problem.

Source: <http://etemaaddaily.com/epapers/index.php?volid=5&issueid=451&date=2014-06-05&cat=General%20Pages&id=7829>



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad
Editorial, 6 June 2014, Friday

2. Assad's Election and the West

Bashar al-Assad has been elected Syrian president for third term gaining 88.7 percent of votes. The elections were important given the turmoil and violence that has gripped the country during the past three years. The raging civil war has taken more than a million lives while accusations of human rights violations, war crimes and use of chemical weapons have been levelled against both the government and opposition forces. The rebels have indulged in intense fighting to expand their influence and make territorial gains while the army too has used all means to fight and regain lost territories. The Assad regime has come under immense Western criticism due to its role in the unending violence while other countries such as Russia and China have supported the regime. The rebels have been provided with arms and financial support by the West that has further complicated the situation. In light of the current situation the elections were a mere formality, which is reflected in the results as well.

The West and its allies have rejected the election saying that there were large-scale rigging and that it was far from free and fair. The EU was critical of the elections while the US termed it as non-democratic. They also pointed out that the situation in Syria is such that a majority of the electorate has not been able to exercise its franchise. Britain too expressed

similar observation terming the election to be non-democratic. On the other hand some of the international observers who were present in Syria to monitor the elections have said that it was conducted in a free and fair manner. Western attitude is understandable because they want to remove Assad by any means. The rebels have also termed the election as farce.

It is right that the situation in Syria is bad and that war crimes and human rights violations have intensified. If part of the responsibility is on the government then partially the rebels are also responsible for it and thus, the western support to rebels cannot be justified by any means. It is the common Syrians who are suffering the most and until the fighting groups recognize this, there will be no solution to the problem. On the other hand, the global powers should also stop their intervention and not try to extend their interest due to turmoil in the region. It should be left on the people of Syria to decide their future.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/%D8%A8%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AF-%DA%A9%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%BA%D8%B1%D8%A8%DB%8C-%D9%85%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%DA%A9>



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi
Editorial, 7 June 2014, Saturday

3. United Palestinian Government

Despite all evil designs and actions of Zionist Israel and its protector crusader United State, two major Palestinian groups, Hamas and Fatah, have ended their seven year dispute to come together and form a unity government. It is indeed a historic moment. The US tried to thwart the effort for a unity government till the last moment and the Secretary of State John Kerry called of Abbas to express concerns on participation of Hamas in the government. On the other hand Israel which is a pioneer of state-sponsored terrorism and had already pulled of peace talks said that it will impose sanctions on the unity government as Hamas will use the new government as a front for its “terrorist” activities. In the light of this threat and given the history of Zionist Israel, one can guess that the terrorist activities of Israel will be intensified. Fatah had formed a separate government under pressure from the US and Europe in 2007. Abbas tried to get close to the West during the last seven years and find a solution to the conflict but while the US and Israel used him to divide Palestinians, no steps were taken to find a resolution. He has now understands the deceptive policy and come to recognize the realities. The agreement was signed in April and executed on 2 June with an oath-taking ceremony. Although this will complicate the matter with the aid agencies and will lead to escalation in tensions with Israel, it seems to be a well contemplated step. The US has announced that it would like to see the policies of the unity government. Abbas who is the leader of Fatah has announced that the cabinet would comprise of 17 neutral members who would work towards peace. Fatah has in the past seven years recognized Israel but Hamas continues to refuse to recognize the Zionist state. Abbas has also announced that Fatah and Hamas will forget their differences and work towards achieving their joint goal. The step has brought an end to the long-standing differences within

the Palestinian movement that has weakened the resistance. It has also opened the window towards the pending Palestinian elections which is now likely to take place in 2015. The last time elections had taken place in 2006, Hamas had emerged as the leading party but anti-Muslim forces worked to divide the Palestinian resistance manipulated Fatah and it formed a separate government in West Bank 2007 leading to divisions inside Palestine. Israel has always tried to divide and rule the Palestinians and used violence to destroy the Palestinian resistance. This time again it appealed to the world to stop the formation of a unity government blaming Hamas of being a terrorist organizations, even though Israel is the one that indulges in terror activities to destroy Palestine. The formation of the new unity government is indeed a historic moment, particularly the changing nature of the geopolitical climate.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=07-jun-2014



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi

Editorial, 10 June 2014, Tuesday

4. Syrian Elections Results

Syrian presidential election results have come as expected. The international community that has been critical of Bashar al-Assad regime for his authoritarian behaviour and suppression of popular protest was shown that its democratic credentials are backed by 88.7 percent of the population. These statistics are being presented for a country nearly one million of whose population are refugees in the neighbouring Lebanon, not to count of refugees in other countries such as Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. Moreover, elections could be held only in those areas which are under the government while many parts in the East and North did not participate in the voting. In this light, it was natural that questions would be raised about the credibility of the outcome. The EU's rejection of the elections by terming it non-democratic is part of this understanding. Likewise, US Secretary of State, John Kerry too termed the elections as a farce. Their point of views cannot be entirely rejected that a large section of the population did not participate in the elections. A similar trend was visible in the Egyptian presidential election that was held a few days back. The only difference was that a majority of the Egyptians had boycotted the elections and the claim of voting was highly exaggerated. The international community had rejected these results too. A similar situation had emerged in Bangladesh a few months back. A large proportion of the population had boycotted the elections but results were as expected and the figures that were presented to the public were highly exaggerated. Sheikh Hasina who was elected on the basis of these manipulated elections became prime minister but the international community that had earlier rejected the results is now doing business with her government. The Egyptian leadership too decided to drape democratic cloak and global powers seem to be comfortable in working with the new regime. However, in the case of Syria the attitude of the powers has not changed. The supporters of Assad regime including Iran, Russia and Venezuela have certified that the elections were free and fair and the results reflect the mood of Syrians. They blame international conspiracy for the situation in Syria. On the other hand, the US and its allies are interested in changing the strength of the forces on the ground. If Robert Ford has to be

believed the Syrian opposition does not need American soldiers rather they need supporters who are ready to fight the regime as well as al-Qaeda. Both groups are targeting one set of people; while one calls it outsiders, the other calls it al-Qaeda. It is the Islamists who are on target from both sides and Syria has become a battle ground for the past three years. When the target is Islamists none seems to be caring about the loss of lives even if it comes because of the use of chemical and biological weapons or other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=10-jun-2014



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 11 June 2014, Wednesday

5. Iraqi City of Mosul

The level of violence gripping the Iraqi city of Mosul has exposed the security under US watch. While the terrorist took over the city, it was baffling to see the police and security force surrender and run away. The local population too was forced to evict Mosul for fear of life. The city is largely inhabited by Sunni tribes and was a stronghold of former President Saddam Hussein. More importantly, Saddam's military was largely drawn from the city and many in deployed as his personal guards were from these tribes. In the aftermath of 2003 attack, the city came under the US security forces and was controlled from Baghdad. Mosul remained destabilized under new administration installed by the US.

Previously in 2004, militias had taken over the city but American soldiers were able to swiftly alter the situation then. However, this time the government security and police were chased away. The city on the banks of Tigris lies close to Kurdish autonomous region and local population took refuge in Kurdish area. The Islamic State of Iraq and Sham, which is allegedly a branch of al-Qaeda, has taken over the city forcing even the local governor to flee. In fact, local reports suggest that these forces had taken informal control of the city sometime back and the security forces failed to take effective action. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has declared emergency in Mosul but it still poses danger to other areas in Iraq. The US through its military action facilitated the strengthening of Islamist fundamentalist and now it has become a threat for Iraq. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon has suggested taking help from Kurdish security forces. Iraq is in a desperate situation as Mosul has completely fell to the ISIS that has taken over government buildings, burnt down police stations and declared the city free from Western control.

The Iraqi security forces have melted without much resistance. The ISIS can now take over the city of Tikrit, another Sunni majority city in Iraq. The group can further expedite its activities to take over Baghdad. Iraq is a country which has large number of Shia and Sunni population and the continued fighting will be disastrous for the country. The situation in Iraq can spell doom for the country and the world powers are responsible for the current situation as it is the fallout of their intervention in 2003. Those who were claiming to have completely crushed al-Qaeda in Iraq are now wondering that the organization has taken over one of the major cities and threatens to take control of entire country. The ISIS wishes to take control of Iraq and Syria. Before Mosul, another city in western Iraq Fallujah had already fallen under their control. Indeed it is a major challenge for the Maliki government and the discontent

among the people against his regime together with mounting pressure from ISIS can spell doom over his presidency and destabilize Iraq beyond recovery.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%DA%A9%D8%A7-%D8%B4%DB%81%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B5%D9%84>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi
Editorial, 15 June 2014, Sunday

6. Iraq on the Verge of another Civil War

Colonial powers leave their stamp even after their decline. For example, the British colonial system ended towards mid-twentieth century but left complicated problems in the colonies that remain unresolved until now. Two most startling examples are Kashmir and Palestine. The US imperial design is following on the British model. Defeats have continued to trouble the US administration. Take for example Afghanistan where it unleashed Taliban extremists to fight against the occupying Russian forces and later they were declared as terrorists. What is clear is that once the American forces leave it will lead to death and destruction in the country as in Iraq. In comparison to Afghanistan, Iraq is full of oil-resources and a defeat in Iraq will further irritate the US. Iraq is a Shia majority country and the Saddam Hussein regime had sidelined them from power structures. The reason was not that Saddam was an extremist Sunni leader; in fact, he was a leader of secular Baath party. Saddam turned authoritarian after taking over the government in Iraq. Saddam's tyranny did not spare even Sunni ulema opposed to his methods of governance and executed those who dissented including his sons-in-law. The US used Saddam to destabilize the 1979 revolution in Iran; he was instigated to attack Iran in 1980 leading to a war that ended only in 1988. The war led to deaths of hundreds of Iraqis and Iranians. The situation, however, changed in the next decade and Saddam was declared a supporter of al-Qaeda and Osama. Iraq was attacked in 2003; he was deposed and executed by the US-installed government. What followed next was unprecedented death and bloodshed in Iraq. The US had thought that when it will attack Iraq, it will be supported by the Shias but they took arms and resisted American intervention. The US knows that oil-rich areas are inhabited by Shia majority and not Sunni minority. Saddam's hometown Tikrit is resource scarce area and only the city of Mosul has an oil-refinery. Mosul lies in the foothills and in neighbourhood of Kurdish areas. The US had calculated that the situation will turn Iraqi Shias and Sunnis against each other after deposition of Saddam. Sunnis were sure that the Shias will not share oil-resources with them and they will be completely sidelined. This seemed to be turning right during the Maliki regime. The current situation in Iraq is such that the Sunni extremists have taken over Fallujah and Tikrit and will soon take over Mosul. They are further planning to attack Baghdad and take over the whole of Iraq. There are two astonishing facts that have come to the fore in the whole scenario: one that Iraqi security forces have surrendered and ran away in many places and two that Sunni extremists have large cache of modern weapons. From where did these extremists procure these weapons and aircrafts? Has part of the Iraqi security forces rebelled and joined the extremists? The situation is turning worse and only the two fighting

groups can find a solution. Moreover, if the situation leads to Iranian intervention it will be an invitation for the destabilization of the entire region.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=97841&boxid=3941515>



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 15 June 2014, Sunday

7. The Situation in Iraq

Iraqi situation is getting worse and the security forces are finding it difficult to contain the situation, even though, they have been able to recover some of the areas with the help of civilians. Many cities and towns remain under the control of extremist organization that is planning to attack other areas including Shia holy cities and capital Baghdad. The security forces are also preparing for counter-attacks and holding the extremists and recover other parts. The situation can create trouble for Iraq and its people but also can unleash doom for the entire Islamic world. The activities of these extremist groups can benefit them but cannot serve any purpose of Islam. Iraq has remained unstable for a long time and at a time when the situation has started to look normal; the situation has again turned problematic with the extremist groups declaring war. The situation has turned worse with their successes in many areas with villages, towns and cities falling to these forces and their plans to attack other areas. Kurdish forces have also become active and taken military operations to expand their area of influence. Though initially Iraqi security forces looked clueless, they now have started to make their presence felt and thwart the advances of the extremists. The way Iraq is under attack, Jewish Zionist conspiracy cannot be ruled out. Enemies of Islam have instigated the two groups against each other, which has led to the current situation. The US that had withdrawn its forces from Iraq has again started to think of intervention and has ordered its largest aircraft carrier to be deployed in the Persian Gulf. It is planning aerial attacks on extremist held areas. This will lead to further loss of life of people of Iraq. It is time to prevent further escalation in Iraq as the enemies of Islam will try to take advantage of the situation. Thus, efforts should be made to de-escalate the situation in Iraq. However, at this stage the situation seems to be deteriorating and the enemy forces seem to be succeeding in their designs. The way war has been started in the name of Islamic state is not acceptable. It is important that both sides soften their instances and work for an amicable solution. They should know that the only beneficiary of the situation will be Zionist Israel. The presence of Israel in the region is a danger and recognizing this it is important to bring back peace and normalcy in Iraq. It is important that sectarian issues of Iraq are resolved amicably and a united front is built against Israel; otherwise it will succeed in its designs to divide Iraq and other Muslim countries.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%DA%A9%DB%8C-%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%84>

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