

Israel Metaphorically Defeated in Gaza

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At a time when the beleaguered Gaza became haunted by Israeli bombs and the innocent women and children were brutally killed by Israelis, US President Barack Obama together with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made a journey to a number of South East Asian countries including Myanmar the land of pagodas and jungles, a poverty-stricken country which has recently witnessed a state-sponsored ethnic cleansing of the Muslim population in the Rakhine region.

Obama prided himself of being the first sitting American president to visit the country in the high hopes of consolidating the changes which have taken place in the country. With the promise of more financial assistance, Mr. Obama vowed to “support you every step of the way.”

Some international groups have viewed Obama’s visit to Myanmar with cynicism and criticism, believing that the trip is a premature reward for a country that still incarcerates political dissidents and persecutes Muslim minority.

Critics argue that Obama’s trip may be regarded as an endorsement of a despotic regime.

Myanmar refuses to recognize Rohingya Muslims as citizens and says the only solution to the crisis is to send the one-million-strong community to other countries.

The government has systematically persecuted the Rohingya Muslims for years, deprived them of their basic human rights and brutally killed them in throngs in recent months.

I for one entertained the hope that Obama would seriously bring up the plight of the benighted Muslims in Myanmar and the systematic persecution of this minority. However, much to everyone’s chagrin, Obama only made a perfunctory reference to the issue and instead extended a hand of friendship to Burmese President Thein Sein and made a personal pilgrimage to the home of the opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi whose efforts in the past for the liberation of the country were massively dwarfed by her abject ignorance of the carnage of Myanmar Muslims.

This apartheid attitude is not limited to the Burmese Muslims. It is more markedly discernible in dealing with blockaded Gaza which is considered the largest virtual prison in the world.

That Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi has thrown his full-throated support behind the Gazans and has slammed the Israeli strikes against the defenseless people there was certain to provoke ire from Washington which looked on Egypt as a peace-brokering agent between the two parties. Hence, US diplomats have urged him to refrain from taking sides and instead strive towards a Zionist-friendly truce. It seems that Morsi will not have the

luxury of supporting the Gazans and ignoring the demands of Washington. In fact, Egypt has to pay a heavy price for defending the Gazans i.e. risking “losing billions of dollars in US military and economic aid.”

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), a conservative voice of high caliber, [warned](#) Egypt on Sunday to “watch what you do and how you do it.... You’re teetering with the Congress on having your aid cut off if you keep inciting violence between the Israelis and the Palestinians.”

Israel has reportedly pounded Gaza over 1,500 times since Wednesday while Palestinian resistance fighters keep raining down their rockets and missiles on the southern Israeli cities of Nirim, Ein Hashlosa and Ashdod as well as the southern region of Eshkol. So far, over 130 Palestinians have been killed and more than 1,000 injured in the Israeli attacks.

The invasion of Gaza was a colossal mistake and it will definitely damn Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu though some may vainly believe that the whole situation will prove to be in the best interests of the bellicose premier. Further to that, the invasion of the defenseless city and the killing of the innocent Palestinian women and children will only open up a wound exacerbated by Israeli animosity towards the Muslims in the world.

Despite all this, in a commendable move, some 100 prominent Israeli intellectuals have signed a petition, calling for a long-term ceasefire with the Hamas government. Dubbed as “We have to talk”, the petition calls for a long-term ceasefire and for talks, either directly or through an international mediator, “because the residents of the South, like the people of Gaza, have the right to look up to the sky with hope and not with fear.”

In a colossally miscalculated act, Israel launched military strikes on the enclave because they thought that Hamas would soon run out of missiles and rockets supplies and that the city would soon fall prey to dereliction and destruction. However, they were disillusioned to see that things did not happen as they preferred and that even their impenetrable Iron Dome was not that advanced to intercept the torrential salvo of Iranian-made Palestinian missiles.

When Israel found the situation too precarious to handle, they pleaded with their powerful lobby on Capitol Hill to help craft a Zionist-friendly truce. To this end, Clinton travelled to Jerusalem, Ramallah and Cairo in an effort to hammer out an agreement between the two sides and resolve the conflict. An Israeli source said Hillary was expected to meet Netanyahu on Wednesday. A State Department official says:

“Her visits will build on American engagement with regional leaders over the past days - including intensive engagement by President Obama with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Morsi - to support de-escalation of violence and a durable outcome that ends the rocket attacks on Israeli cities and towns and restores a broader calm.”

Needless to say, the truce supported by Washington and some regional regimes such as Qatar, Turkey and Saudi Arabia will not ensure the rights of the Gazans and there is no guarantee that Israel will not re-tread its gory path of mayhem.

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