

Answer to Question on Iran

Question: On 12th June, 2009 presidential elections were held in Iran wherein the incumbent Mahmoud Ahmedi Nijad won with 62.60% votes against his opponent Meer Hussain Musawi's 33.70% as per the official announcement in Iran. The other two candidates could only muster a very small fraction of votes. Musawi and his supporters have been suspicious about the election results and his supporters organized rallies and protest demonstrations without official permission on 16th June, 2009. When the Iranian security forces attempted to break up the demonstrations, riots erupted and 7 persons were killed in the resulting violence while another 29 persons were injured according to the announcements...

Do these events indicate international conflict in Tehran or is it simply a local dispute between various centers of power for position? Further, how far are the US and Europe involved in these events?

Answer:

1. The events after the election results were announced in Iran are visible and widespread and the reality of the political system in Iran and the nature of its apparatus along with enormous and wide ranging powers of the 'supreme leader' in contrast to the limited powers of the President, all of these factors make such events worth observing.

2. Statements issued by official agencies indicate that the regime had gauged the intensity of the events, which in itself is unusual. Even the Guardian Council appeared to prepare to make certain concessions to pacify the protestors. So on 16th June, 2009, the Guardian Council studied the allegations about the elections submitted to it by the opponents of Ahmedi Nijad which included the demand to nullify the elections and hold fresh ones. Abbas Ali, the official spokesman of the council said in a statement that under the law it was not possible to cancel the elections and hold new elections again, however, if the situation demanded, some controversial ballot papers would be sorted. [al-Jazeera: 16.06.09]. The severity of the protests can be gauged from the fact that Ahmedi Nijad himself held rallies of his supporters to demonstrate popular support for himself and criticized the rioting and violence that marred the protests organized by Musawi's supporters a day earlier.

3. The announcements by the defeated candidates led by Musawi alleged that there were serious violations in the elections including counterfeit voting and that he does not recognize the election results. According to the announcements, this sparked street protests and protests were organized which disturbed by rioting and violence were carried out by elements to discredit them and they tried to take seize security points in order to take control of the arms and weapons....

4. But more important is that the Europeans exploitation of the situation, the French President Nicholas Sarkozy said in his statement: "the extent of fraud was proportional to violent reactions." While British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said that the Iranian leadership was required to control the violence and address genuine grievances in the aftermath of the elections." [al-Jazeera: 16.06.09]. The French Foreign Minister Bernard Kochner said: "The events in Iran are deeper movement and very important and point to a situation bordering on revolt and it was not possible for France to simply bury its head over this. " [al-Hayat: 18.06.09]. However he repeatedly sidelined the question whether France will recognize the legitimacy of Ahmedi Nijad though the query was posed to him three times. Germany, Italy and others Europeans joined

these countries on the issue of the protests and the nature of results of the elections in Iran. Even the print, radio and television media condemned the election results and the resulting violence and called for not recognizing the election of Ahmedi Nijad. The British Times reported this categorical demand on 16th June, 2009 and portrayed Ahmedi Nijad in bad light saying that the president is a clumsy and brutish rural landlord who lives with his head in the paradise and his legs muddled in corruption. Iran lodged a protest against this statement with Britain and France and there were protest demonstrations in front of the embassies of these countries in Teheran. The Iranian embassy in Paris also complained in a statement and said: "These statements are reckless and irresponsible and smack of French officials' intervention in Iranian affairs. [American Radio Sawa: 16.06.09].

5. All of the above indicate clearly that the Europeans found an opportunity to exploit in the aftermath of the protests by Musawi and his supporters and they mobilized their agents and instigated some students and people to 'participate' in the protests and create chaos as well as indulge in rioting and violence to force the Iranian security forces to open fire and thus create a situation against the Iranian regime. The Europeans have tried to blow the affair out of proportion and create a perception as if some kind of rebellion or revolution was in the making. Some protest demonstrations were held without the approval of Musawi despite his call to cancel all demonstrations which were held from 16.06.09 onwards. Mohammad al-Bahrani. The correspondent of al-Jazeera reported on 17th June, 2009 that matters have become out of Musawi's control that does not have a party structure as such. This indicates that there are other powerful 'elements' carrying out such actions. In fact the Iranian sources had mentioned that there were some unscrupulous elements among the protestors who carried out the rioting and indulged in violence. [World Iranian Webpage: 16.06.09].

6. America's reaction to the elections was positive, President Obama said: "It is up to Iranians to make decisions about which Iran's leaders will be. We respect Iranian sovereignty and want to avoid the United States being the issue inside of Iran which sometimes makes US into a political ball." [US Government Webpage: 16.06.09]. The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said: "The United States was monitoring the outcome of Iran's election and hoped the results reflected the will of the Iranian people. "[CNN: 16.06.09]. Robert Gibbs, the White House Press Secretary said in a statement: "Like the rest of the world, we were impressed by the vigorous debate and enthusiasm that this election generated, particularly among young Iranians." [CNN: 14.06.09]. The Washington Post had earlier stated that it had surveyed American experts on Iran which indicated that Ahmedi Nijad would defeat Musawi twice over. [Iran World Webpage: 16.06.09]. It said on 16.06.09 there is no conclusive evidence of rigging the elections which may justify criticism from Washington or other Western capitals. Ban Ki Moon, the UN Secretary General in a statement urged Iran's leaders to respect the will of their people." [al-Jazeera: 16.06.09]. From the statements and actions of US Officials, their media and newspapers and even the statements of the UN Secretary General, it is understood that the US is satisfied with the election of Ahmedi Nijad for a second term; even Obama mentioned that there were few political differences between Ahmedi Nijad and his rival Mir Hussain Musawi. [Reuters: 16.06.09].

7. It may be mentioned that during the entire period the first 4-year tenure of Ahmedi Nijad as president, Iran was in agreement with US on two most important issues, i.e. Iraq and Afghanistan, and it even went along the US by recognizing the leaders there. Ahmedi Nijad had stated in his interview with New York Times during his visit to New York for the UN meeting last year on 26.09.08: "Iran has extended its hand of cooperation to the United States on the issue of Afghanistan...and our country had given assistance to the US in restoring peace and stability in

Iraq.“ The Iranian President Ahmed Nijad had toured these two countries while these countries were under US destructive and oppressive occupation. This indicates Iran’s satisfaction and acknowledged his de facto recognition to the US appointed proxy agents in the two countries. In fact Iran has stated clearly that it supports Karzai and Maliki the US agents appointed there. Ahmed Nijad’s presence serves US interests more than the so-called reformists like Khatemi and Musawi because of his portrayal as a conservative Shia which makes the neighboring countries apprehensive of Iran, especially those countries inside and outside of the Gulf who are loyal to the British. Even Morocco had cut off diplomatic ties with Iran some months back alleging that Iran was supporting shiaism and trying to destabilize it and Jordan ruler Abdullah II had been speaking of Iran’s threats under what he called the shia crescent. All this serves the US well because it fans apprehensions about Iran’s shiaism and thus US gets a pretext to remain in those countries in order to ‘save them from Iran!’ At the same time America exploits these apprehensions and ignites divisions among Muslims by drumming up Iran’s shiaism and firing up religious and sectarian sloganeering.

8. As for America’s response to the elections process and the resulting protests and demonstrations marred by violence, Obama remarked: “ I have said before that I have deep concerns about the elections.” However he said:” "It's not productive, given the history of U.S.-Iranian relations, to be seen as meddling in Iranian elections." Further, he said:” and it is my hope the Iranian people will make the right steps in order for them to be able to express their voices.” [AFP: 16.06.09]. Though his vice president Joseph Biden commented:”There are an awful lot of questions about how this election was run, however, he added:”that it was too soon to render a more definitive judgment.” He also said that the US was prepared to start a dialogue with Iran [BBC: 16.06.09]. The tone of these statements is not accusatory towards Iran, rather it is soft. Some observers have even questioned the stance of the media, especially the large ones like CNN, Fox News etc., and charged them with a rather quiet or passive approach towards the events in Iran. These media are known to either cover up or underplay events if it serves the American policy. On the other hand, the West European media led by the BBC TV and radio and their internet versions are leading an intensive campaign and blowing up the Iranian events. The Iranian foreign ministry has accused the western media as being the spokespersons of the violent rioters, [al-Sharq al-Awsat: 18.06.09].

9. From these it can be said that signs of international conflict between America and Europe are evident in Iran and the European countries led by Britain and France are trying whatever they can to influence the protests in this period through their agents and using all political and media clout to agitate the situation in Iran and there is a weak attempt to bring down the present and replace it with their agents. Such attempts are currently not expected to succeed as the situation is controlled by those towing the US line whether they are the conservatives or the reformists. Also the Europeans do not have much leverage on the Iranian front, as is evident from the events; they and their agents have been looking for any opportunity.

This has been clear from the reactions of the Europeans as well as the Americans, the Europeans’lingering resentment over the events and its statements and actions clearly betray their resentment. As for the United States is passive towards the situation, if the events in Iran were turned against America’s wishes or if the Iranian regime going against the US line, or if US interests required a change in regime in Iran, the US would have mobilized the world and would not be sitting silently over the events, especially with Ahmed Nijad at the helm of affairs, or it would be adopting a provocative line like the Europeans and blowing up the events beyond their reality. It would have launched campaigns to fabricate lies for which its media is renowned on the

same lines as they against Saddam and eventually occupied and destroyed it or as they did with the Taliban in order to occupy, destroy and kills millions of people in these two Muslim lands.

10. Though there are clear signs of an international conflict, but the core of the power centers is evidently internal. What one understands is that in the aftermath of the election results, those who backed Musawi were people like Rafsanjani, Khatemi and Nateq Nouri who could not come to terms with their own defeats earlier; Rafsanjani for instance had been defeated by Ahmedi Nijad in the previous presidential elections. So they wanted to stir up trouble so that reelections were ordered. The conflict between the so-called reformists led by Rafsanjani, Khatemi, Musawi in this elections and people like them and the so-called conservatives led by Ahmedi Nijad who is supported by the country's Supreme leader Ali Khamenai and shia scholars, is basically a local conflict on the pretext of some internal reforms. This conflict has become so intense that Ahmedi Nijad referred to Rafsanjani and the previous interior minister Nateq Nouri's role as that of Talha and Zubair in the Battle of Camel (Harb al Jamal) against Imam 'Ali and called for their 'death' from the political arena. [al-Hayat al Nadaniyah: 16.06.09]. but at the same time, both these two agree on the external policy except in means like in addressing. This is why Obama remarked that there were no big differences between Ahmedi Nijad and Musawi except in some minor or inconsequential detail. The country's Supreme leader Ali Kamenai said in a statement on 16th June, 2009 that indicated his support for Ahimedi Nijad and congratulated him for the victory in the elections and asked the people to rally behind Ahmedi Nijad who will steer the country towards development and this will ensure national security and keep the nation vibrant and resilient. Khamenai than continued and said: "there was no doubt that this was Allah's choice which will ensure His blessings and mercy." [Iran International Webpage: 18.06.09]. Similarly 'Ali Larajani, the president of the Majlis Shura and Hashemi Shahroudi, the president of the judicial system of Iran have congratulated and blessed Ahmedi Nijad which gives him legitimacy to his election victory and strengthens his authority. It is expected that some of the ballot boxes may be recounted as a means of addressing the objections and protests, but that will not have any bearing on the results as such, however, the centers of power of the internal conflict has found a way and silence over it will not make it any easier to ignore...

25 th Jumadah al-Thania, 1430 A,H

18th June, 2009 C.E