

The Uprising in Palestine

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Palestine, "the land of prophet" is sacred for three great monotheistic religions of Judaism, christianity and Islam. The first Qibla of Muslims, that is usually known as "Bait al Maqdas" is situated here.

More than 75 years ago, European Jews, calling themselves zionists, launched a movement aimed at creating a zionist State in Palestine. During the First World War, when Turkish forces withdrew from Palestine and British forces occupied the Holy Land, the British foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour declared British support for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. In 1920, the League of nations, which was dominated by Great Britain and its Allies, endorsed the notorious Balfour Declaration and mandated the British Administration in Palestine to allow the immigration of Jews, while protecting the rights of the native Palestinians. Within a couple of years, the massive inflow of Jewish immigrants, both legal and illegal, created severe social tensions and law and order problems. The British Administration, which was supposed to maintain law and order and protect the lives and property of the people of Palestine, showed criminal negligence in carying out its duties, thereby encouraging the Jewish immigrants to use whatever means and methods they deemed necessary to uproot the Palestinian Muslims and establish an embryonic Jewish State in Palestine. To speed up the process of formation of their own government, the Jews formed an underground army called "haganah", which launched a series of terrorist attacks not only against Palestinians but also against British targets.

On May 14, 1948, Jews declared themselves independent, proclaiming the establishment of the Zionist State of Israel. Soon after the declaration of independence of Jews and the departure of British forces from Palestine, hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Muslims were forced to leave their homes and land and migrate to Jordan or Lebanon. A deep resentment against these flagrant acts of volume, aggression and terrorism against innocent Palestinians flared up in the neighboring countries. Egypt, Syria, and Jordan responded by a counter attack on Israel. However, the Arab armies being disorganized, ill-equipped, and lacking proper coordination, suffered a defeat, leaving Israel in control of three fourths of Palestinian land. Although Arab countries agreed to a cease-fire, they refused to accept a UN plan requiring the division of Palestine into two parts, one of Palestinians and one for immigrant Jews, with the city of Jerusalem under direct UN administration.

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Soviet Russia, which had always coveted the hot waters to capture the oil resources of Middle East, started interference in Afghanistan and eventually launched its troops in Afghanistan allegedly on the plea that Afghan communists had called them to their help. This action on the part of Soviet Russia sounded a death knell to its already staggering economy and it crumbled like a house of cards. Afghan Mujahideen with their undaunted courage put Russia into ignominious retreat and it had to lick the dust by calling back its troops from Afghanistan. "Glostnost" and "Perestroika" reforms were introduced to bolster the teetering economy but to no avail. The philosophy of communism based on the incubator-like treatment of human beings could not last for more than 73 years despite all oppressions, aggressions and pretensions. The orthodox communists made the last time effort to save communism by staging a coup d' etat on August 19, 1991, but they could not turn the public tide against this unnatural system. The once powerful Soviet Russia disintegrated and the Muslim states of central Asia declared their independence from the shibboleth of Communist Russia in September 1991.

Islam is envisioning its second resurgence in Central Asia. Central Asian man has rediscovered himself. He is in the same mental situation in which the Muslim of Sub-continent found himself in 1947. Islam appears to him as a force of moral regeneration, spiritual amelioration and a prop to national growth. The return journey has started: the old mosques and madrassahs are being repaired and new ones are being constructed; hijab and shalwar are replacing skirts; the co-hostels (introduced by Russians) are being voluntarily segregated; the Uzbekism, Kazakhism and Turkism are giving way to Islamism; the local languages are being revived and the arabic script is re-emerging (the Uzbek parliament framed a legislation in April 1990, in this regard).

Yet, there is a long way to go and all these developments are within the Soviet system. Central Asian states have yet to look to Moscow for their defence and for their rouble-oriented economic structure. It is God's bliss that the Central Asian states are affluent in wheat, cotton, cheese and other milk products, cattle, minerals (including gold, oil and other metals used in industries) and the Kazakhstan's coal (30,000 tonnes of which are burnt daily to keep the Russian factories running). Russian rouble, which has fallen 21 times during the last 2 years, is picking up by sucking the economic sap of the Central Asian states and they want to feel their independence in the form of liberty from the shackles of Russian rouble. What they desperately need at the time is their own economic structures or a common economic structure so as to secure emancipation from the old stagnant communist institutions. They are looking to their neighbouring Muslim countries for economic cooperation. Now it is the religious duty of the Muslim Ummah to assume its responsibility and seize the opportunity before it is too late and the Russians or any other imperialist enmeshes them in his economic web. There is a lot of potential awaiting the Ummah in this land of Imam Bukhari, Imam Trimizi, Al-Khwarzmi, Ibne Seena, Farabi, Jami and Hazrat Baha-ud-Naqshbandi.

and Farghana. Meanwhile, Anwar Pasha, the former War Minister of Turkey, announced that he intended to establish a Muslim empire in Central Asia. In October 1921 he reached Bukhara, raised an army of 16,000 and occupied a vast territory of Bukhara Peoples' Soviet Republic, in 1922. The communist rulers of Moscow were very much perturbed at it and despatched heavy contingents of national Red Army to reinforce the local Red Army against Anwar Pasha. Anwar Pasha was martyred in 1922. Later, the Basmachi troops were also defeated in Khwarizm and Farghana but Jeend Khan in Khwarizm and Ibraheem Beg in Bukhara continued resistance against communist forces till 1924 and 1926 respectively.

Towards the end of 18th century, Tsars, occupied Azerbaijan but the local population (Muslims) resisted against the foreign domination. Iran protested against Russian occupation and a war ensued between the two countries (1804 - 1813). Russians came out victorious and Iran withdrew from Trans-Caucasia under Russo-Iran Peace Accord of October 13, 1813, but with the assistance of local population, tried to reoccupy it in 1925. After prolonged talks between Iran and Russia, Azerbaijan was severed into two parts with Arax River as the line of demarcation. In April 1918, the communist organisation of Baku tried to annex Azerbaijan to Soviet Russia but was ousted by the local Muslim organisation "Masawat". On April 28, 1920, the communist Red Army occupied Azerbaijan on the excuse that the people (communists) of Baku had asked for their help (the same lame excuse they later iterated in Afghanistan in 1979).

Ismail Gaspranski (1851 - 1914) united the Turks of Crimea and launched the pan-Turkism Movement (also pan-Islamism) for the liberation of several territories of Turkistan from Russian yoke.

At the time of 1917 Revolution, Central Asia consisted of three political divisions -- Russian Turkistan, the Khiva Khanate and the Bukhara Amirate. In order to efface the cultural unity that had existed through history under the age-old Islamic bond, Central Asia was divided into five ethno-national areas which through evolution resulted in the creation of the modern states in Central Asia under the name of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kirghistan and Turkmenistan. Every possible effort was made to russify the land: Russian language and culture were foisted; even the Arabic scripts of the local languages were replaced by the Cyrillic script.

Communists, after the occupation of these territories perpetrated untold atrocities upon the Muslims. Thousands were massacred and millions were sent to concentration camps in Siberia. Perdah observing was banned and Western nudity and obscenity was encouraged. Mosques were locked, religious teachings were declared against law and Muslims were brainwashed by the agitprop to the extent that their cultural and religious identity was confined only to domestic life.

When independence Movements in the Sub Continent were at their culmination, the communists tightened the "iron curtain" around the Muslim states of Central Asia, apprehending that, incited from "The Two Nation Theory", Central Asian Muslims could also demand freedom.

his subordinates Muhammad Raheem occupied Bukhara, defeating Astarkhanids. In this way the empire of Manghat dynasty was founded which lasted till its merger into the Bolshevik Russia in 1920. In 18th century (1785 A.D.) a ruler of Manghat dynasty, Amir Masoom occupied a vast territory in the south of Bukhara. He destroyed Marood, invaded Khorasan and occupied the territory upto Khiva. In this way the Kingrat dynasty came into existence, which lasted till its merger in Bolshevik Russia in 1920 A.D., though this domain was just a satellite of Russia.

Towards the end of 18th century, Russian imperialists had hatched the plan to annex Central Asian territories that were affluent in the production of cotton, wheat, silk, hides and fruits. Like other imperialist countries England -- Holland, Portugal and France, -- Russia was also in search of colonies under the garb of trade to capture the markets for its products. Russia, for the exploitation of the resources of Central Asia and to strengthen the hold on the occupied territories, started settlement of landless Russian farmers into these areas and speedily established a railway system, after 1868, with the two pronged objective of the transportation of raw material for Russian exports and to facilitate the logistics. Therefore, besides a large number of Russian settler-farmers a considerable number of Russians working in the railway systems settled there.

After the Russian occupation of Central Asia mining and cotton cultivation got impetus and within 28 years (1888 - 1915) cotton production increased by 18 times. The cotton produce of these areas was much more than that of the whole of Russia and in due course of time the entire trade came into the hands of Russian merchants. Moreover, the 80 per cent of Russian exports of fruits, silk, meat and dairy products was produced in these areas. Muslims offered resistance to Russian expansionism in various areas: for example, in Caucasia, Russian expansionism was delayed by 25 years due to Imam Shamil's resistance. Shamil was an adherent of Ghazi Muhammad's spiritual school " Muridia ". Ghazi Muhammad had launched Jihad against Russian occupation in 1813 and was martyred in combat against Russians in 1832. Ghamza Beg was made the Imam of "Muridia" school but was clandestinely assassinated in 1834. Shamil, who succeeded him, raised an army and waged a prolonged guerrilla war against Russians which earned him widespread fame as a brave national hero and Mujahid. Therefore, in 1858 Russians invaded Shamil's posts with a huge army and annihilated several villages of Shamil's supporters. In April 1859, apprehending his inability to prolong strife, he decided to call off the resistance and had to face deportation to St. Peter Bergh (Leningrad), under an agreement.

Similarily, during 1917 - 1926 nationalists, ulama, landlords and a large part of population continued resistance under Basmachi Movement on the ideological basis of pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism. Basmachi Movement, with its base at Farghana, launched a guerrilla war in 1917 and tried to disrupt the means of communication by damaging the railway system. The commander of Turkistan Muslim Guard, Madamin Bek entered into an agreement with the Kalak military commanders and occupied Jalalabad and Osh in 1919. Communists had to bear a great loss by the invasions of Basmachi leader, Kurshimat. In 1920, large number of Basmachi troops dispersed into Bukhara, Khiva