



SADDAM HUSSEIN AS LEADER OF AGGRESSOR NATION

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The Gulf War of 1991 was a fully grown Banyan tree spreading its roots deep down in the Eastern Question, nourished by World War I and II and culminating into the hands of Saddam Hussein.

After the Second World War, the Middle East secured an eminent position in the international affairs because of the discovery of valuable oil in the region and this sowed the seeds of the present Gulf War, Everything remained boiling within till Saddam Hussein, an over ambitious ruler of Baghdad emerged on the horizon. He dreamt of becoming the unchallenged ruler of the Arab World. This passion for supremacy made him increase his military strength to enable him to dominate the Arab World.

Before embarking on his policy of conquest. Saddam tried to test the power of other Arab Countries. With this idea in view, he invaded Iran. It was done for two reasons; firstly. it would enable him to purchase advanced military technology from the West and secondly, to make Iraq a financially sound nation.

Iraq emerged stronger after the 8 year War with Iran. The War was brought to an end by U.N. mediation. After the end of hostilities with Iran Saddam Hussein focussed his attention on the annexation of Kuwait.

He moved on his path surreptitiously to keep the Arab World in delima regarding his motives of annexing Kuwait. He raised the issue of border settlement with Kuwait and the issue of the liberation of Palestine and to make Jerusalem as Capital of the new state of Palestine.

Saddam put up the question of Palestinian independence with an eye on his future programme of the annexation of Kuwait. He knew that at the time of his annexation of Kuwait, her Western allies specially U.S.A. would come to her escort as the Americans were deeply concerned with Kuwait and Israel. Saddam Hussein, therefore, gave a call to the Arabs to liberate Jerusalem which was under the domination of Israel.

He also tried to befriend Iran by offering her a part of the disputed territory. After his intimacy with Iran, Saddam began to work out his policy. He started accusing Kuwait on fabricated grounds such as the settlement of Iraq-Kuwait border issue, occupation of the Oil-fields of Rumaila and Kuwait's refusal of giving financial aid to Iraq. He gave an ultimatum that if the issues were not settled peacefully, he would be compelled to use force and accordingly he starting amassing troops on the Kuwaiti Border. An emergency session of Kuwaiti Parliament was held and it was concluded that the Iraqi



threat was a bluff and Saddam was amassing troops on their border in order to fleece more money from Kuwait.

On July 21, 1990, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt undertook a trip to Baghdad to settle the dispute between Iraq and Kuwait. Saddam told him that he had no intention to invade Kuwait. But all the Arab Countries including U.S.A. and Kuwait knew that Saddam was deceiving them. The invasion came at 2 a.m. on August 2, 1990. Kuwait could not put up a front against Iraqi onslaught and Iraq captured the entire city of Kuwait.

The whole world was stunned by this atrocious action of Iraq. An emergency session of U.N. Assembly Was held in which the unlawful capturing of Kuwait by Iraq was strongly condemned and the President of Iraq was ordered to take out his forces from Kuwait, otherwise the U.N. Member states would use military force to secure the objective. But Saddam Hussein refused to comply with these directives, consequently, he was completely isolated and he had to face the opposition of, 30-nation coalition force, backed morally and financially by a dozen more nations arrayed against the “aggressor nation”.

Saddam Hussein had deliberately invaded Iran in 1980 in order to make Iraqi army the strongest in the region. France was the first nation to supply weapons to Iraq and China followed suit. In this way Saddam provided Iraq with :

“5500 tanks, about 3700 pieces of artillery and rocket launch batteries; 36 Soviet Scud-B Missiles, 800 Fighter Planes, Five Frigates, Four Corvettes, Eight Missile-launching Petrol Ships, Six Torpedo Ships.

Besides this he equipped Iraq with 72 tanks and 2000 Scud Missiles, Exocet Antitank and Anti-Air Craft Missiles and Puma attack Helicopters.

Saddam Hussein was convinced that only non-living explosives would prove useless without skilled men to operate them. Hence, he gave extensive military training to over one million Iraqi citizens. The chemical weapons of terror were to be utilised and many countries intended to threaten their rivals with this deadly term.

“Only Iraq, the Soviet Union and the U.S. admit possessing them, although the World’s Intelligence Community believes the unofficial list is much longer¹ with some 20 countries¹ including France, China, Libya, Iran and Israel.²

The Gulf War began with the Bush—Saddam verbal conflict but it soon spread like an epidemic in the neighbouring region. The insignificant argument took the shape of a disastrous War. it was undeniably a high-tech war in which some of the weapons used were :

(a) F-15 : The F-15E is powered with two Pratt and Whitney turbofan

¹. Special Report on : The Gulf Array, Front Line : Sept., 1990, P : 119.

². Khanna O.P. : Disastrous War in Gulf : Ruins, Myths & Miscalculations, The Competition Master : March, 1991, P : 562.



engines of 25,000-lb static thrust.....The planes can carry upto 24,000 lb of bombs or rockets.

- (b) F-117A : The F-117A is a stealth fighter first used in Panama in December, 1990.
- (c) F-111F : The F-111F is a swing-wing supersonic, extremely agile fighter bomber capable of carrying either nuclear or conventional missiles and M—61 Guns and able to operate from low altitudes.
- (d) F-4G : The F-4G Wild Weasel Fighter Planes armed with anti-radar and air-to-ground missiles,
- (e) B-52 : The B-52s, based in Diego Garcia, are heavy bombers of Vietnam era, that can deliver a heavy payload that lighter air craft cannot.
- (f) Tomahawk Cruise Missiles : One of the first weapons to be launched in attach on Iraq were over 100 Tomahawk Cruise Missiles, equipped with sophisticated guided systems by which the unmanned missiles travelled deep inside Iraqi territory.
- (g) The Patriot : This powerful U.S. Weapon is about 5 m long and 0.3 in across, It weighs 1.6 tonnes and has a maximum speed of 5 Mach. It is highly maneuverable, very agile and destroys Scuds by delivering a killer punch like a boxer.³

Besides these, the Scuds supplied by the Soviet Union to Iraq were also used in the War by Iraq against Saudi Arabia. These did much damage in the War.

Another deadly weapon used in the Gulf War by Saddam Hussein was Oil. While retreating from Kuwait Saddam's agents pumped million barrels of oil into the Persian Gulf. As a result of the slick of Oil in the Gulf Water, a large number of sea birds and animals died.

During the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the, Indian Diplomats did not interfere and remained calm observers of the proceedings in the Gulf. This had an adverse effect later on. Mrs. Nazma Heptullah was sent to Saudi Arabia, as an all-party representative of India, but she was forced to wait in her hotel suite for three days before being admitted into the Palace to deliver the letter of the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar to the Saudi authorities.

The Indian external affairs minister remarked that the present Gulf condition should not distract the attention of the World from the IsraeliArab conflict. He further stated that Israelis should vacate the Arab lands He further stated that without the solution of Israeli-Arab territory dispute and the Palestinean question, the peace in the Gulf region could not be restored.

The Israelis had planned to settle the Soviet Jews in Gaza strip and West Jordan which was an open violation of International laws. Moreover, the

³. Khanna O.P. : Disastrous War in Gulf : Ruins, Myths & Miscalculations, The Competition Master : March, 1991, P : 562.



massacre of a large number of worshippers at A1-Haran, Al-Shareef in Jerusalem shocked the people and the Palestinians living in these territories felt insecure. The consequences of the Gulf War were disastrous.

“Each country, whether rich or poor faced a heavy expenditure. U.S.A.’s Air-attack alone cost them 500 million dollars per day. Apart from this :

“Each Tomahawk missile fired cost about \$13 million. The one Patriot missile that intercepted an Iraqi Scud headed for Dhahran, Saudi Arabia cost \$ 1.1 million.⁴

Egypt invasion on Kuwait cost her nearly 22 billion dollars. While Saddam Hussein had four to five thousand tonnes of chemical weapons which could be used during the War, Mr. Bush declared that nuclear energy would not be utilised on any ground in the Gulf War. By the end of War, the Multi—national forces had succeeded in destroying 1003 out of 5500 tanks, besides 800 personal armoured carriers out of 2870 and 1100 out of 3100 artillery Iraq had deployed in Kuwait.

Due to Iraqi refusal of pulling out its forces from Kuwait, the only field left open for multi-national forces was to start the ground offensive against Iraq and push her out of Kuwait. The Iraqis were least interested in fighting back. During the first land-offensive against the Iraqi forces, 5500 Iraqi prisoners of War were taken alive and within a period of 24 hours their number reached to 14,000. Thus, Iraq was being hit-hard.

When the War picked up momentum, Saddam Hussein planned a dramatic move. He personally went on the air and announced his decision of withdrawing from Kuwait, implementing all the U.S. resolutions. He told his countrymen that Kuwait was no longer a part of Iraq and he had abandoned it under special conditions.

“Saddam Hussein declared that Kuwait - which he had earlier made Iraq’s 19th province — was no longer a part of Iraq.⁵

Since all the escape routes were sealed by the Allied Forces, the Iraqis did not know how to escape. The British, the French and the U. S. butchered the Iraqi troops. The ground offensive stopped at 8 a.m. on February 27, 1991. Soon after the Iraqi acceptance of 12 UN resolutions declared by the Security Council. During the short period of 23 to 27 Feb. President Bush addressed his nation thrice on television. President Bush declared Kuwait a liberated nation and the defeat of Iraq in War. This declaration was made exactly 100 hrs after the ground operation.

The UN Security Council placed forth the following resolution as a basis for cease fire :

(a) Iraq must release all prisoners of War and other captives of other

⁴ Khanna O.P. : Disastrous War in Gulf : Ruins, Myths & Miscalculations, The Competition Master : March, 1991, P : 565.

⁵ Khergamvala, F.J. : Peace Shot Down : Quick Ground War Frontline : March, 1991, P : 8.



countries.

- (b) Iraq should release all Kuwaitie who were prisoners of war and it should inform Kuwaiti authorities about the development and nature of all land and sea mines.
- (c) Iraq should comply with all the UN resolutions and pay War indemnity to Kuwait.
- (d) The Allied forces asked the Iraqi authorities to arrange the meeting of Military Commanders within 48 hrs. to arrange for the cease fire.

Saddam Hussein was still in a defiant mood. He declared that it cease fire Was not honoured by other countries, Iraq would again pick up arms in self-defence, He added the grim warning,

“They will continue their aggression even after our withdrawl from Kuwait. So our readiness to fight must be at the highest level. You have faced the whole world, great Iraqis.⁶

The War Was followed by a peace resolution from which India china and Yemen kept aloof and Cuba opposed it.

“The resolution stipulated eight conditions on which a Pause in Hostilities could be made effective :

- (a) Rescinding of Kuwait’s annexation;
- (b) Acceptance of repanations liability; -
- (c) Release of foreign nationals;
- (d) Return of Kuwaiti property;
- (e) Release of Prisoners of War;
- (f) Identification of minefields and booby traps;
- (g) Ending of provocative actions by Iraq; and
- (h) Meeting of Commanders of both the armies to arrange ceasefire modalities.⁷

The resolution lifted the sanctions imposed by the Council earlier against Kuwait but kept them in place for Iraq. But the resolution did not assign any role in implementation of ‘Pause in Hostilities’ to the United Nations.

The Security Council Resolution was placed before the Iraqi National Assembly for its approval. They found it unjust yet accepted it to defeat the American-Zionist Plot’ against Iraq. The speaker observed, citing the Kuran, We must sometimes, for our own good, accept that which displeases S.N The Security Council President Communicated that the Wax was finally over and a permanent ceasefire was restored in the place. - But in fact, the War in a way was not over for the hostilities had net ended permanently. It was a practically an uneasy peace because U.S. had a secret agenda to carry out and Saddam was adamant and irrational, creating difficulties in the compliance of the terms of ceasefire. Despite permanent Ceasefire in the Gulf, peace in West Asia is still a distant dream, The Arab world is in the grip of uncertainty, insecurity

⁶. Khergamvala, F.J. : Peace Shot Down : Quick Ground War Frontline : March, 1991, P : 8.

⁷. Mittal N.S. : An Unfinished War : Saddam Under Siege Delhi : 1991, P.P. : 131-132.



and apprehension of another War. Saddam Hussein may invite upon the Arab Soil by retaining his iron grip over Iraq in the face of stiff opposition from his Arab neighbours and their Western allies. The war in the Persian Gulf broke out on Jan 17, 1991, with the carpet bombing of Iraq. Most of its military equipment was destroyed and the supply lines were cut-off, Saddam sued for peace on Jan 23, 1991 and proclaimed that Kuwait was no longer a part of Iraq. He accepted all the conditions of the Treaty imposed on him.

The war was brought to a formal end through a formal ceasefire agreement subject to fulfilment of its conditions Iraq-the nanguished nation. The Victors retained with them the option to resume the War incase the nanguished failed to meet this requirement to their satisfaction.

The defeat of Saddam gave a set-back to the Palestinean and their leader Yasser Arrafat approached the U.N. to settle their dispute with Israel. The Superpowers under the banner of U.N. called a meeting of the conflicting nations at Madrid, President Bush proposed to become a mediator in the bilateral - talks among Arabs, the Palestineans and the Israelis. At Medrid the situation was every tense. There was a deadlock between Israel and Palestine's delegation. The Israelits refused to any communication with Palestinean delegation, This created- a deadlock. The problem was solved when at the insistence of U.S.A., the Israelites agreed to have a joint delegation of Jordan and Palestine for peace talks. At the peace-conference, the atmosphere was not healthy and the parties just offered their physical appearance to fulfill the invitation.

“For all the inspiring talks, the gap between the two sides remained desperately large. But Madrid was not just a party-piece put only by reluctant guests to satisfy a demanding host simply by showing the leaders of Middle East who had broken with the patterns of the past and aroused expectations back home.⁸ The Conference of Madrid produced no results as Palestineans kept on stressing their demand for an independent state and their right of self-government. The Israelites were not ready to negotiate on these issues and so the talks of Madrid came to an abrupt halt. Israel demanded the postponement of the peace-talks.

The demand of Israel was met with the talks were postponed till October. The second round of talks was held in Washington in October. In this Conference Israel charged U.S. that

“it was invited rudely without consultation, to the wrong sort of meeting in the wrong sort of meeting in the wrong place and given too little time to prepare.⁹

In this meeting the triangle of Israel, America and Arabs was to discuss the problems of the Middle East without any alien interference. The agendasof

⁸. Special Correspondent : Special Report on Madrid : Words and Glanes in Madrid, The Economist : 1991 : New Your, P. 38.

⁹. Special Correspondent : Special Report on Madrid : Words and Glanes in Madrid, The Economist : 1991 : New Your, P. 42.



the meeting was chalked out by the Americans.

“Worst still, they had proposed specific topics for discussion, including the nation of Israeli withdrawal on both the Syrian and Lebanese fronts.¹⁰

This conference was a total failure as the Israelis refused to meet the demands of the Palestinians of self-Government. The stiff attitude of the Israelis led the conference to stagnation. The conference was postponed but the venue remained undecided and the trouble still persisted in the Middle East. Thus the U.N. Security Council, and President Bush failed to pave way out of the Gulf problem. A Big question mark still hangs on the Iraq—Kuwait and Gulf question which still lies like a volcano threatening to erupt, disturbing the Global Peace, consequently.

¹⁰. Ibid : Dec., 1991 : Washington : P .45.