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Mass protests continue in Baghdad and Southern Iraq

Zaher Baher

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The protests in Baghdad and Southern Iraq still continue and have entered the 3rd week now. So far the protesters have been able to protect their own independency and none of the political parties or the regional governments have been able to tame or control them.

While some of the media outlets, particularly Al Jazeera tries to discredit the protesters and describe them as foreign-backed groups and agents of the United States of America (USA). However, the Iraqi government, to certain extent, acknowledged the legitimacy of the protesters' demands. The Iraqi Prime Minister, Hadier al-Abadi agreed to spend \$3 millions to meet some of the demands of the people.

In fact , there is no doubt that USA, Iran, and the other neighbouring states try to domesticate the protesters, as they want to intervene in Iraq, to control it to remain in a weak position for their own interest. However, they know that the collapse of the Iraqi government under the pressure of mass protests, demonstrations or uprising is not in their interest. The "Arab Spring" has given them a good lesson .

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It is absolutely certain that the demands of the people are legitimate. The people have been suffering for so long and now have no choice but to force the government, through their uprisings, to meet some of their demands.

The protests, which started on 08/ 07/2018 triggered when the Iranian authority switched off the electric power from Basra when the temperature was around 50 degrees. The protests are getting bigger and bigger and have extended to Baghdad and various other towns and cities in southern Iraq. See the link : <http://anarkismo.net/article/31071>

On Sunday the 22nd for the third time, thousands of protesters gathered in Al Tahrir Square in Baghdad and confronted by the heavily armed Iraqi police and security forces. According to the Human Rights Commission report until last Friday, the 20th of July, 14 protesters have been killed, 729 injured and another 757 have been detained .

Furthermore, on the same Sunday the protesters managed to occupy an oilfield in Nasiriyah . According to Almada Daily Political Newspaper, the protesters detained 75 of the workers and other staff members of the oilfield. The demands of the protesters were including clean water, increasing wages, and employing 270 more workers. Although, the authority claim that no one has been detained by the protesters, however, it confirmed that the oilfield has been occupied and negotiation between the authority and the protesters was going on.

In fact we do not know whether the protesters will be able to achieve all their demands or not , but we know for sure that they discredited the politicians, the political parties and the government. In my opinion the struggle of the people has progressed and left the sectarian war behind. They have begun to realise the fact that whoever rules them is, more or less, the same. Perhaps the only difference between the rulers is the different ways of exploitation, dictating and robbing the people.