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"The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East"(42)

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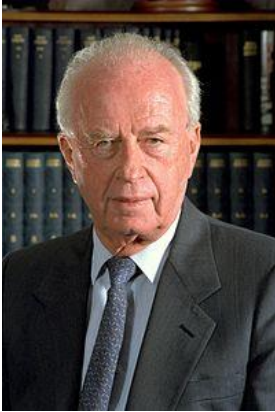
Chapter 5: Two calendars (Gregorian & Hijri)

5-6(42) Israeli prime ministers received Nobel Prize twice

There are several international prizes awarded to those who contributed to world peace, such as the United Nations Peace Medal and the Ramon Magsaysay Award of Philippine. But it is sure that the Nobel Peace Prize is the best one in view of the high degree of recognition or its long history. In November 1901, the first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded by Henri Dunant of Switzerland who founded the Red Cross, and since then the prize has continued over 116 years till International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) was awarded in 2017.

Israeli Prime Ministers had won twice in this honorable Nobel Peace Prize. Initially it was Menachem Begin in 1978. It was a joint award with President Anwar Sadat of Egypt. After the Ramadan War in 1973, the two politicians concluded the bilateral peace treaty regardless of opposition of all other Arab countries. The second one was Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres in 1994 when Rabin was Prime Minister and Peres was Foreign Minister (later he became Prime Minister). And Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization(PLO), co-won the prize with them. After the Gulf War, the momentum of dialogue between Israel and Palestine was born. By the mediation of Norway, the so-called "Oslo Accords" was concluded between them. It was the historical event that Israel and PLO approved each other. That was the reason why they received the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Nobel Peace Prize in the past was shared fifty-fifty by individuals and organizations. In case of individuals they were mostly civilians such as peace activists or philosophers. There were very few politicians, and they were not the top politicians of the state like president or prime minister. Furthermore, even if he or she was the top of the state, most of them were already retired from active service at the time of winning prize like the former Prime Minister Eisaku Sato of Japan. If counting the number of winners country by country, Presidents of the United States were awarded multiple times. They were Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, Woodrow Wilson in 1919, Jimmy Carter in 2002 and Barack Obama in 2009. But US is a very rare case.



Judging from these facts, it is surprising that the two Israeli prime ministers won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1978 and 1994. More surprisingly, the fate of the winners after awarding took a turn for the worse. President Sadat of Egypt co-awarded with Begin in 1978 was assassinated three years later. And Prime Minister Rabin, winner of 1994, was also assassinated two years later. Both were sniped as the current president or premier by his own soldiers or young opponents against the peace treaty.

Alfred Nobel, the founder of the Nobel laureate, told that the peace prize would be given to;

"The said interest shall be divided into five equal parts, which shall be apportioned as follows: /- - -/ one part to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses." (Excerpt from the will of Alfred Nobel)

And in hopes of reconciliation and peace between Sweden and Norway, Peace Prize is awarded in Norway. As a result, the Nobel Prize in five categories of physics, chemistry, physiology / medicine, literature and economics is awarded in Stockholm, Sweden, whereas only the Peace Prize is awarded in Oslo, Norway.

What is the meaning of the Nobel Peace Prize given to the Middle East peace talks? The reason of awards were the peace building efforts in the Middle East. There was no doubt that three Israeli politicians made a great effort for the peace with Palestine in spite of the strong domestic opposition. Nobody would object against the decision of the selection committee that Israeli politicians were deserved to the Nobel Peace Prize.

However, may the peace issue in the Middle East after the World War II be limited to the problem between Israel and Palestine? The post-war logic about the Middle East in the Western politics put on stress too much on the viewpoint of peace between Israel and Palestine. They gave retroactive consent to the fact that Israel won the war four times. The results of the construction of the Jewish home land in Palestine and independence of Israel that caused the conflict in the Middle East was replaced to the peace problem in the region. The intention of Western Europe was likely in the plot to wrap it in cachet with the Nobel Peace Prize. Norway's mediation brought Nobel Prize in 1994. It looked like self-praised by Norway.

It was true that the war between Israel and Arab countries was over after the Ramadan War in 1973 and the Nobel Peace Prizes in 1978 and 1994. But it could be hardly to say that the peace had come in the Middle East. The political situation in the Middle East has been deteriorating furthermore since the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

(To be continued ----)