The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East (52)

(Japanese Version)
(Arabic Version)

Chapter 6: Genealogy of Islamic terrorism

6-9(52)   Deep chaos in the Middle East

During several decades after World War II, the Middle East was a world where Arab and Israel conflicted. It was easy to define who was enemy or who was ally. Israel was the only one enemy of Islamic countries which consisted of not only Arabs but also Iran and Turkey although the ethnicity, language and culture were different each other. They believed that they were unified ally against Israel. Most of the Middle Eastern countries considered the United States as the enemy because United States was a close ally of Israel. That is, the enemy 's ally is an enemy. However, the United States is geologically too far from the Middle East. Shah of Iran was US close ally, while Nasser of Egypt relied on the USSR.

Four Arab-Israeli wars in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973 and the Iranian Revolution in 1979 had entirely changed the meaning of enemy or ally in the Middle East. After the Arab-Israeli wars, new type of tension was intensified in the Middle East. It was the tension between secular military states and religious pretended monarchy states. When the Khomeini regime of Shiite sect was born in Iran in 1979, sectarian conflict took place between Shiite and Sunni. Shiite countries of Iran and Syria has antagonized against Sunni countries. Syria, Iraq and Bahrain made the problem more complicate in religious aspect. In Syria an autocratic government by Alawi sect of Shiite minority oppressed the Sunni and Kurdish people. In Iraq and Bahrain the minority Sunni ruled majority Shiite.

Not only the sectarian conflict of Shiite vs. Sunni but also the ethnic confrontation between Arabs and Iranians took place simultaneously in the Iran-Iraq war. It was odd that the Gulf monarchy countries supported secular Iraq. On the other hand, Iran of religious state supported secular Syria for the struggle in Lebanon where proxy war took place between Syria and Israel. Iran also shook out the Iraq and the Gulf states agitating Shiites living in these countries. The United States which disliked Khomeini of Iran supported dictatorship of Iraq leaving their democratic principles on one side.

In the Iran-Iraq war, Gulf monarchy countries supported Iraq against Iran. But Syria supported Iran due to the proxy war against Israel in Lebanon. Once Syria was the ally of Iraq and Gulf countries for Arab-Israel wars. However, Syria was enemy of Iraq and Gulf countries in the Iran-Iraq war. Enemy

(Iran)'s ally (Syria) was enemy. Middle East geopolitics brought new horizon where the ally and enemy were commingled. The simple confrontation of Jewish Israel vs. Islamic states including Arab and Iran in the past was changed into another phase. It was the new confrontation between Shiite vs Sunni. Simple binary confrontation in the past was changed into polynomial stage at present.

During the age of four Arab-Israeli wars, the confrontation was a binary one between Israel and Arab countries. But after wars the conflict in the Middle East had three or four axes of confrontation. The political environment had completely changed from binary confrontation to polynomial ones. Was the enemy's enemy ally or another enemy? Was the enemy's ally enemy or ally? There was nothing clear anymore. The conflict became multi-layers. The discrimination between enemy or ally was conventionally determined by country. So, it was still easy to understand for each country that who was the ally and who was the enemy.

However, when the conflict took place between the government and the anti-government entities inside the country, it was difficult for foreign countries to distinguish enemy or ally. The problem made more complicated when the anti-government entities was split into several factions and conflicted each other. In Syria the superpowers of U.S. and Russia and regional powers of Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia wandered which sect they should support as legitimate government or opposition sector(s). Islamic State (IS) declared unilaterally the establishment of the state ignoring the authorized borders. The problem becomes endless. Syria presented the complicated polynomial equation.

(To be continued ----)

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