

What Happened after 15 July?

News:

With regards to the struggle against the Gulen organization following coup attempt, President Erdogan stated "everything comes to light now, a lot more is to come. We have not put the full stop yet, this is a comma, we are continuing. We will keep on fighting in a determined way." <http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/haber/erdogan-bu-bir-virguldur>

Comment:

On 15th of July 2016, the Turkish Armed Forces attempted a coup where some generals and military personnel were involved. We call it an attempt, as the coup was not successful. The coup failed due to the people who flocked to the streets at the very beginning and to the places of armed clashes filled with the desire for martyrdom, and due to some commanders within the TAF who refused support.

The government said it was the known FETO (Fethullah Terror Organisation) nestled with in the TAF. There already existed a negative perception within the society, as a result of the governments three years ongoing struggle against this organisation. This situation made the government's work easier. At the moment; almost every section within society, from the right to the left, accords that the FETO was behind the coup.

Whereas this Army has always protected the Republic's secular-Kemalist structure since its proclamation. Also, this army staged four coups in the past, of which two failed. And it was this clique again who staged this coup. In other words, it was these Kemalist seculars who believe to be the best to protect secularism.

Of course Gülen made attempts to infiltrate the army. This is a fact also known by the government. However; it is not correct to claim that 119 arrested generals, out of a total 356 generals within the TAF, have FETO links. This is clearly understood from both the given statements and the obtained evidences. Of course those with links to FETO have also been used during this coup attempt. However, the brain of this coup attempt is not FETO.

The government detained 25,917 persons. 13,419 people have been arrested. 62,000 public employees were suspended. 74,562 person's passports have been invalidated.

The morning after the coup, President Erdogan declared to transform this event into good by saying, "there is a good in every bad". Meaning that he would clean the state and in particular the TAF from FETO. In fact this was something he already wanted before, but there was no fitting legal cover. The coup attempt opened him the doors to all of this. On the one hand those linked to FETO are being disbanded, and on the other hand many secular members of the junta have been suspended. What poses a strange situation is that those allegedly involved in the coup, and arrested afterwards, have been released again through the General Staff Presidency's clearing statements.

Another issue is the changes regarding the military schools. It has been expressed that military high schools raised coup plotters and that every soldier had been graduated from these schools with the vein of staging a coup one day. At the same time, the government is implementing a restructuring in order to defuse power within the military. It took and is taking a number of steps towards this direction. This situation is being criticized especially by retired generals and nationalist fractions. They claim that this will weaken the army's status. And recently the news occurred that President Erdogan asked the General Staff to conduct work towards these steps.

But as long as the mentality remains the same, the coup tradition in this country will never come to an end. This is because the TAF was subsidiary to the internal affairs when the coup on May 27, 1960 took place. The coup was staged in spite of this and by lower-ranking officers. This is the reason why the government seeks to bring a solution in its own way by setting its hand on the military high-schools. Former Chief of General Staff, Ilker Başbuğ, reacts to the closure of the military high-school by saying, "even Abdulhamid didn't do that."

Another important issue is President Erdogan's and Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım's reconciliatory approach to the opposition parties. Even though the CHP made anti-coup statements on the first day, it did not call its base to the streets. Furthermore this situation was explained by one of the

Ergenekon lawyers, Celal Ülgen, by stating, "The CHP base cringes from Allah-u Akbar (calls)". However, after intense public pressure, the CHP organized a "secularism rally" on the 9th day after the coup. This was followed by plenty of rallies across various cities with emphasis on democracy and secularism.

Likewise the AKP transmuted the coup which was "stopped with Takbirat" into a mushy situation with plenty of democracy. "Democracy Acquisiton", "Democracy Watch", "Democracy Squares" and "Sovereignty belongs to the Nation" are plenty of concepts used to induce the people with democracy. The AKP ensured participation to the CHP rally by sending delegations. Both Erdogan and the Prime Minister called the CHP-leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu twice to join the rally which was to be attended by President Erdogan, Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım and MHP-chairman Devlet Bahçeli. Finally CHP-leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu accepted under certain conditions. In other words, the government makes a lot of effort to get through this process without creating tension in society and by creating the appearance of consensus with the opposition parties.

And media elaborated the subject in long discussion programs and news reports as the "victory of democracy". Democracy and secularism were pumped through abundantly. Especially from day one on, a thick line was drawn between any involvements of the Kemalist-seculars in the coup attempt. A program on HaberTürk TV channel was cancelled, after journalist and retired Major Metin Gürcan claimed that "hard-liner-Ataturkists" were part of the coup attempt's elements.

There existed consensus on two issues between the government, the opposition parties and media. These are:

1. FETO is behind the coup attempt.
2. This coup attempt is a "coup on democracy" and "the people protected democracy".

Also, President Erdogan and Prime Minister Yıldırım gave interviews on various international media explaining the coup attempt to the whole world. They also demanded America to extradite Fethullah Gülen, and sent boxes of evidences for this. Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavuşoğlu demanded Gülen's extradition by expressing that they themselves *"are annoyed by the spreading anti-American sentiments in Turkey"*. US Department of State stated that *"The Turkish authorities (made) several deliveries of documents"* and that they *"are in the process of going through those documents"* evaluating *"whether they constitute a formal extradition request."* After 25 days, the USA's statement is one of still trying to understand.

Finally, the UK's approach: Following the coup attempt, British Ambassador Richard Moore in an interview with Hürriyet, responds to the question: *"We read a lot of reports on foreign powers' role in the coup. Was the U.K. behind it?"* by saying, *"No, clearly we are not. Nor is the United States, by the way. That's also ridiculous."* Moore said, *"That's why our minister for Europe and the Americas, Sir Alan Duncan, came out on July 20-21. He had only been in office for three days. Why I did advise him to come? Because it was important to go beyond just statements and to perform a very symbolic act by coming to Turkey."* Also "post-coup measures and the Cyprus issue" where part of the discussions with Alan Duncan, Minister for Europe and the Americas.

Without doubt the UK is a state famous for its insidious politics. While the UK on the one hand presents itself as reconciliatory, or appears to stand by your side; on the other hand it is a state provoking events towards the direction it desires. And it will want to gain the maximum of benefit after this coup.

This bloody coup attempt where 239 people died and 2,196 people were injured, has shown one thing:

The descendants of yesterday's coup plotters have tried to tie the rope around the Muslim's necks. However this time, the plotter's knots are neither strong as the prior ones, nor is the awareness of the Muslims as low as in the past. The ones who fool the Muslims will face this reality sooner or later.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir

Osman Yıldız