

Ankarapology : what is to fuss about?

Friday 22 June 2007, by [Emre Uslu](#)

You are familiar with my Ankarapology analyses that deal with the issues of Ankara politics and security related tug of war. In one of the analyses, Ankarapology: A manual to understand what's going on in Ankara, which appeared on this column more than a year ago, on May 23, 2006, the developments that are happening in these days, were predicted in most accurate form.

Let me bring the year old analysis to your attention first, then move on make further clarifications and predictions for upcoming days.

"We've been seeing a great deal of tension on several issues. No matter where the tensions originate from, either from terrorism, an Islamic threat or corruption scandals, the major reasons behind all of these developments include attempts to prevent the Justice and Development (AK) Party from electing the next president and diminish its credibility in the eyes of the public in the run-up to the next general elections in 2007 or early elections."

"However it's not an easy task to convince the public not to vote for the AK Party. Because, despite its failure on some issues which might have disappointed its grassroots supporters, the general public considers the AK Party to have been successful when compared to its predecessors. Thus the only way to diminish the AK Party's credibility is to drag the country, hence the party, into a period of great tension." "One of the lessons the "social engineers" behind the Feb. 28, 1997 — post-modern — coup learned is that the Turkish public doesn't approve of political parties which increase tension. Remember: During that coup, both the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) and the AK Party's predecessor the Virtue Party (FP) lost a considerable number of supporters because of their attitude, which caused tension."

"Drawing a conclusion from the experience of the Feb. 28 coup," social engineers "in Ankara now are playing the tension card : according to their calculations, increased tension is likely to result in the AK Party's failure. Hence we're likely to see more tension in the coming days."

"Just like the recent attack at the Council of State, experts believe that security issues will again generate a great deal of tension. The AK Party leadership is afraid that in the event of raising security concerns, the government wouldn't be able to manage the security institutions to reduce tension. Some of the AK Party's leading figures are even going further and speculating that the attack on the Council of State was a plot against the AK Party government and that some of the perpetrators might have infiltrated security institutions."

"In addition, despite the fact that the AK Party government took risks over the anti-terror bill, and that the government had a positive attitude toward security institutions, after the top court incident, the AK Party leadership may feel that there are traitors among high-ranking bureaucrats. Seen from this perspective, the prime minister mentioning a conspiracy and referring the "sauna" operation, which revealed a connection between the mafia and some security personnel, could be interpreted as an important sign that the AK Party government may make radical, but frequently debated, decisions while appointing bureaucrats to crucial positions in some key institutions."

"The AK Party government will probably wait for a few months and observe further attempts to create tension. If they come to the conclusion that these attempts will continue unabated until the next elections, the AK Party government will try to secure the key posts in the security institutions by appointing unexpected bureaucrats to key positions, no matter how the media responds to those decisions." (AK Party government hesitated to take such step therefore, since April 2007, they have been facing the consequences of this failed policy)

“All in all, we think that several major games are being played in Ankara. There’s confrontation between two sides over the issues of who’s going to be the next president and what the results of the next elections are. From now on it’s going to be interesting to closely follow the Dogan media group, especially daily Hurriyet on the one hand and dailies Yeni Safak and Zaman on the other, to see how the AK Party government acts. Just one reminder : while following these dailies it’s not enough to know what and how they wrote ; it’s important to check what they didn’t write and why they didn’t. ... In short, in the coming days Turkey will see a great deal of tension. For those who’d like to follow developments correctly, keeping an eye on these papers is a good way to do so.”

And today...

When it comes to this year, I predict a military coup is looming. The signs of such coup appear in the media on daily bases.

Let me bring some of these signs to your attention :

First, the “occasional democrats” in the media start taking side of “anti-democratic camp.” In addition, Turkey’s most powerful non-governmental organization, the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association, TUSIAD, turned its back on the AKP government.

Second, it could be odd for many of you to make a prediction based on certain individuals’ actions ; however, one future of politics in Ankara is to follow key individuals. For that matter, I would suggest you to follow Sinan Aygun, the president of Ankara Chamber of Commerce (ATO), who has very close relationship with the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK). For instance, he stated that he wrote a letter to the TSK suggesting to postpone the summer vacation period for the thousands of military officers until the election day on July 22.

Indeed the TSK postponed the vacation time for its personals.

In addition, Mr. Aygun is a very good friend of Mehmet Agar, the leader of Democratic Party (DP). The DP nominated Mr Aygun for Parliament in Ankara’s first electoral district. When explaining why he pursues a career in politics, Mr. Aygun told reporters that the upcoming election would be a chance for Turkey to normalize the country. Along the same line, on June 8, Mr. Aygun was saying he fully is in the service of the Democratic Party, however, on June 9, he resigned from the DP. Given the fact that Mr. Aygun has always ambition to be in the politics, such resignation should be worth valuing for him. From this point of view, the main reason for Mr. Aygun to make such U-turn could be the second ultimatum of TSK which was posted on the midnight of June 8. When Mr. Aygun’s close relationship with the military elites is put in the consideration, one could argue that Mr. Aygun sensed the upcoming military coup. Who knows he may have a better political position under military rule.

Third, we have seen interesting developments on some court cases. As we all know that there is a strong belief among intellectual circles that Semdinli incident, the Sauna and Atabeyler gangs were paramilitary organizations, which were formed to create chaos to overthrow the government.

In addition, the murderer of Council of State judge, Alpaslan Aslan, when in police custody, threatened the police officers to end their careers in short time when the military overthrow the government. Police successfully arrested the gang members, most of whom were elite officers at the Special Forces of the TSK, at the planning stages of such chaos. In the original versions of prosecutorial indictments, the perpetrators were accused to be in plots to bring a military coup.

However, interestingly enough the prosecutors of the Semdinli, Atabeyler and Sauna cases, have changed their first indictments. The Semdinli case was transferred to a military court. A new prosecutor was appointed for the Atabeyler case who despite the obvious contradictions with his colleague, asked the judge to release the imprisoned members of the Atabeyler gang.

In addition, for the Sauna case, the prosecutor, while asking 75 years sentences for the gang members in

his first indictment made a U-turn asking judge to release the imprisoned gang members. One wonders what is this rush for ? Now I am wondering whether the prosecutor of Council of State case will change his accusation toward the perpetrators, Alpaslan Aslan and his friends as well.

Forth, do not expect me to say that I have seen the “to do lists” of the coup and “the lists of people,” which were prepared for post coup period to take action against these people. I hope especially the last point would be an eye-opener for some circles to take actions against the looming military coup. It seems that the embassies and western observers in Ankara are too busy to predict whether the TSK could conduct a cross-border operation. To me, it is a ridiculous question to ask ; look at the bigger picture.

Sources

Source : TNA, 12 June 2007