

Erdoğan wins the Presidency

May 30, 2023

May 30, 2023: **Istanbul**: In the run-off of this Sunday, 28th May in Turkey, **Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**, 69, won the Presidency of Turkey for by getting 52.14% of vote against 47.86% of vote, obtained by **Kemal Kilicdaroglu**. This would be his third 5-year-term, as President of Turkey. Erdogan has ruled over Turkey since 2003, when he was elected as the Prime Minister, for the first time, as a candidate of Justice and Development Party (AK Parti), a party, which wanted to make Turkey more Islamic and less secular.

In the first round of voting, on 14th May 2023, no candidate could get more than 50%. Therefore, a run-off election between two candidates, with the highest number of votes, was organized on 28th May 2023. The turnout seemed to be less than that in the first round, which saw a high turnout of nearly 89%. The reduction was due to a loss of morale of the opposition, when in the 1st round, the vote of **Kemal Kilicdaroglu** turned out to be less than that obtained by **Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**, though the opinion polls had predicted otherwise.

The vision for Turkey of the two candidates – **Erdoğan** and **Kilicdaroglu** – is quite different. The opposition wants to revive the Kemal Ataturk's vision of a secular parliamentary democracy, instead of the executive presidency it became after Erdogan won a constitutional referendum in 2017.



Turkey's Lira had lost 90% of its value over the past decade of Erdogan's rule. It slumped further after Erdogan's victory was announced. It seems that Erdogan may

not be able to attract foreign investment, the Turkish stocks did not fall and the local stock index showed a small increase.

Kemal Kilicdaroglu lost the election because deterioration of relations with USA and the west in general, the falling value of Lira, 80% inflation in 2022 and a less than satisfactory management of the severe **earthquake in Southeast Turkey** of February 2023 were insufficient to balance against the nationalistic appeal of Erdogan, particularly in the conservative Islamic society in smaller towns and villages.

RELATIONS WITH INDIA: Erdogan has developed Turkey's relations with Pakistan and has not invested in building a relationship with India.

In its quest of becoming a Leader of the Muslim world, Turkey went along with Pakistan and did not participate in the meeting of G-20 Tourist Working Group at Srinagar, Kashmir, India on 22-24 May 2023.

Turkey has helped Pakistan with defense equipment, to strengthen Pakistan's armed forces against India. Thus, Turkey helped upgrade the F-16 fighter fleet of Pakistan. It has provided Bayraktar Akinci drones, and MILGEM-class corvette ships for the Navy to Pakistan.

Erdogan's efforts are to become a Leader of the Sunni Islamic world. Turkey does not see that relationship with India can help Turkey achieve the objective. Hence, the relationship between India and Turkey is likely to remain in deep freeze, even though India did provide humanitarian help to Turkey, after the February earthquake and even though the Ambassador of Turkey to India, **Firat Sunel** had praised Government of India's help and said "Dost is a widely used term in Hindi and Turkish... 'Dost kara günde belli olur' (A friend in need is a friend indeed) is a Turkish proverb. I appreciate it very much," he wrote on Twitter.

Note: Please read "Turkey: Presidential Elections: May 14" at <https://diginews360.com/turkey-presidential-elections-may-14/>

Please read about "Turkey & Syria: Earthquake Relief" of February 12, 2023 at <https://diginews360.com/turkey-syria-earthquake-relief/>
