



Modern Communication Technology and National Security In the Middle East

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Abstract: One of the characteristics of the modern international systems is the undeniable role the new communication technologies play in different sections of human societies. Modern communication technologies such as satellites and computers have challenged the national authority and sovereignty of West-fallian states. Although national states, specially, in the third world countries, extremely resist this threat, the fact is that this resistance cannot be successful. The Middle East is one of the subsystems of this whole which has witnessed great changes during the last two years, changes that are known as "Arab Spring", today. Arab Spring has brought about extensive changes in the political structure of the Middle East, and caused a shift of power in the area. This article aims to investigate and analyze the role and the effect of new communication technology on the political stability and national sovereignty of countries in the Middle East, especially, during the occurrence of changes in this area.

Keywords: New Communication Technology, National security, Political stability, The Middle East, Arab spring.

Introduction

Scholars and researchers in different scientific, technical and technological fields have their own images of the twenty- first century and the third millennium. The present century is, in fact, a century in which great developments and phenomena of human society are presented as determining factors. The dynamic phenomena of communication and information are among those which determine the principle characteristic of this century. Information technology is a combination of different technologies which are used to make relationship among individuals and are used to reproduce, distribute, store and retrieve information.

While the mentioned technologies are, today, the factors for production, competitiveness, economic growth and presence in the global market, by giving power to centrifugal forces, globalized ones, other numerous actors and activists, they have changed to the most important instruments to challenge the political centers, marginalize the government-state and undermine the national sovereignty (Sadooghi, 2001: 31).

Thanks to the communication technology, growth and the spread of mass media, different countries have come in to close contact with one another. Citizens of the developing countries and those of the South compare their own station with that of other people in the world and express new expectations from their countries. They, sometimes, get achievements and

sometimes meet their government's resistance. What is illuminating inside the process is the role of media in political destabilization and democratization process.

Middle East has not been an exception getting influenced by the developments and the effect of communication media on the public opinion and, at the end, challenging the political construct of the governments. Since political and civil freedom do not enjoy a pleasant condition in many of the Middle East countries and there is not an open political atmosphere, modern communication technologies and the media have played a prominent role.

Communication and Information Technologies

Communication and Information technologies, today, include a combination of machines like computers, telephones, data processors, working centers, robots, satellites, cable televisions and the like, which are activated by soft-wares.

Modern communication and Information technologies comprise of two sections of communication technologies (Neither old or new, like telephones, fax, broadcasting technologies, satellites, cable televisions, broad band optical cables, and the like) and Information technologies (including computers, soft-wares, and etc.). what made the use of term "modern or new" necessary to be used and emphasized here is the innovation through which an ever consolidated relation was made between these two technologies since late 1970's and is still continuing (Sadooghi, 2001: 104).

"The modern information-communication technologies" are applied to those used collecting, transferring, storing, processing, broadcasting, and representing information. These technologies are the integration points of electronics and processing of remote information (Sardarnia, 2007: 104).

The modern technologies have influenced different social, political, economic and cultural dimension of human life. The most important impact of them has been on political and social domains.

A. Weakening the Authority of National Governments

with the advent of communication revolution in the last quarter of the 20th century a type of informative and virtual society is formed whose contact nodes are formed by civil groups and institutions, international, non- governmental organizations, social and political movements, political activists, different governmental groups, and the states. These nodes are joined together by the information and news in the network. Some scholars prefer to talk of social sovereignty of different national and transnational political, cultural, and social groups rather than the political sovereignty of the governments.

Robert Lam states: The governance belongs to social and political groups, today, and not to the governments. Social and political groups and non- governmental organizations in the global communication network can challenge the sovereignty of the governments. Today, governments are under both top down pressures of forces, top globalized brokers like modern media, political activists and non- governmental organizations and from the bottom, the political forces and civil institutes which function from within. This situation is caused because of the growth and expansion of new communication technologies.

Some believe that the new communication media (satellite and especially internet) are the greatest threatening challenge for the national governments, and are the worst nightmare for dictators.

Peter Ferdinand believes: "internet is, apparently, a long- term strategic threat for authoritarian regimes. This threat deactivates these regimes and disables them to effectively stand

against it. Global news is transferred to the people under the authority of the regimes and knocks up the distorted news broadcasted by the governments. This process weakens the credibility of such governments and encourages unrest and oppression. Information about the violation of human rights and other instruments and shapes of suppression is spread in the world through the internet, and helps mobilization of external and internal political forces (Sardarnia, 2007: 106).

Castles says: "Politics is placed in the Language of electronic media today when we are living in the time of network and information. Transnational and local political activists are present in the game of power through media, and since information is, generally, transferred through world web and satellites and, of course, journalists, they, seriously, challenge the power of the governments (Cast ells, 2001: 551).

Richard Davis from among researchers in the field of communication, in 1999, showed that the modern communication technologies of the 20th century (like radio and television) could not change the picture and perspective of political institutes and the process arising from them and could not improve public and social cooperation of citizens on the way of determining their own future.

B. Communication Technologies and Civic Participations

Communication and information technologies increase political and social awareness of groups and individuals, on the one side, and engage individuals and groups in political and civic issues, on the other side. Pippa Norris proposes some hypotheses regarding the effects of these technologies on civic involvements, as follows:

1. Internet helps awareness, organization, mobilization and civil involvement of marginalized individuals and groups, younger ones, and political minorities.

Internet can be effective in mobilization and civil involvements by providing political opportunities, like making access to information about political parties and groups, access to video conferences, virtual political groups, chat rooms, two way relations with government authorities and political activists.

2. Internet also as a platform for protesting political groups and parties, and minorities to help expansion of democracy and weakening the authoritative governments. Political groups and activists show political and economic corruptions, discriminations, political suppressions, and governments' inefficiencies by the help of these technologies, and make new challenges for them.
3. Internet can be, also, effective in distributing democratic political values like cooperation, freedom of speech, tolerance, justice and the like. Vignold is on the idea that at the time of information technology a public environment has been revived. In this environment interaction and discourse among citizens in the virtual societies, in addition to the exchange of information have been made possible. As he contends, public electronic network is the manifestation of a new type of electronic democracy (Norris, 2001).

C. Communication information Technologies and Expansion of Political Information

Being informative is one of the most important characteristics and functions of new communication technology. One of the dimensions of new political informing is introducing the political parties. These parties attempt to introduce their ideologies, and background of their activities, using new media.

The other dimension of the function of satellites and internet is to introduce governments and political institutes. The governmental institutes and departments are present in the online atmosphere and they can introduce themselves through the internet and get peoples' feedback. Modern communication media are very important channels and instruments for political recognition, awareness, understanding, directing citizens and political forces, and political and social groups (Sardarnia, 2007: 110).

Internet is the host of independent newspapers, magazines, radios, and, generally, broadcasting media. Pippa Norris says that until June 1993 there were about 20 online newspapers. This figure increased to 100 newspapers in 1996, and today yahoo is the host of 6600 newspapers, 2500 magazines, 8500 radio stations, and 538 television channels (Norris, 2001: 5).

Satellites and internet have high instructive potentials. These media teach people about parties, civic organizations, political events, rights, and civil responsibilities. The modern bi-directional media hold gatherings and political and social discussions on the internet or through satellites, electronically. In this way, they make citizens aware of the depth of social and political issues. Students have shown that civic training has profound effects on the political information, and civil and communicative capabilities of the citizens. Audiences get awareness by observing television and internet discussions and political and social exchanges. Studies have shown that civil trainings increase the political information and civil and communicative capabilities of the citizens, considerably (Sardarnia, 2007: 112).

National Security

Security is a multi-faceted concept and because of that there is no agreement upon its meaning. Bozan, however, believes: "National security is weak, conceptually, vague in definition, and powerful, politically: This unidentified concept of

national security has made it possible for political and military authorities to present different power-based strategies for its preservation."

Concerning the above mentioned definition it can be stated that:

1. Security is a value, one to help achieve other values.
2. Security is always changing and exists at different degrees.
3. Security is not only anxieties about preservation of the gained values in the past, but also relates to the expectations of values to be gained in future.
4. Security is a means for minimizing the risks or threats, the threats which are not only of the traditional and military types, but of non-military new threats targeting national welfare (EidiPour, 2008: 16).

In a macro classification, it is possible to account for two negative and positive discourses about studies and equations on national security.

- Negative Discourse

Negative discourse as an understanding of security is built upon the fundamental and pivotal role assigned to "threat". A secure condition for an actor is the one in which there is no threat from outside. Inside this concept it is possible to separate two patterns on security buildings:

1. Traditional pattern in which increase in the power of the system stands for the mechanism of increasing the security coefficient for the actors.
2. Ultra-traditional pattern appeared to compensate for the serious deficiency among traditionalists. It criticizes the one way emphasis traditionalists put on the military factor and do not consider it realistic. Although, for them security is not defined as the absence of threat, considering threat as just a military action is not realistic. In fact, in practice, however, we might observe a variety of numer-

ous threats which are not, necessarily, or in totality, military, from this perspective. Security considerations can be looked for in economic, cultural, scientific, technological, environmental, and the like dimensions.

- Positive Discourse

This perspective can be observed in the viewpoint of people like Johan Galtung and Mark Summer under the title of "Assuring security". In this viewpoint the center for security equations is inside the political unit rather than outside it and it is evaluated and computed more by separation of citizens' requests from the government's efficiency rather than by the criterion of threat. In other words, security is evaluated as a condition in which the political unit is able to gain public satisfaction when securing and supporting the political system by making balance between citizen's needs and efficiency of the government. Using a positive view, it can be said that the role and place of people is principle and the main factor of dealing with external threats (Eftekhari, 2007: 134).

Modern Communication Technology and National Security

Modern communicative technology and media, today, play undeniable role in national security. This role can be studied from two perspectives: Positive or negative, from positive view, its direct or indirect effect empowers security. Viewed from this perspective it helps increase national and ethnic integrity, peoples' trust to the system and political leaders, and helps increase political cooperation and their presentation in the scene to defend national interests. These are cases through which media can be positive in preservation of national security. On the other hand, by negative view point, its immediate or long-term effect might weaken national security. Negative

effects can be traced in making anxiety in people's mind, developing distrust to the system and/ or political leaders, and disclosing the classified military secrets (Eidipour, 2008: 32).

Media in the Middle East

Global media journal in an interesting discussion represents characteristics of media:

1. New developments in information and communication technologies have caused integration of cultures and economics, and improvements in both of them.
2. Media, in the Middle East, have always been recognized as western phenomena, and have been, instrumentally, used to promote Islamic nationality and Islamic globalization. Almost all of the media avoid reporting critical local or international issues, freely, except a few of them which are very brave.
3. Because of the widespread illiteracy in the Middle East, visual and audio media are more effective and supported. Radio and television are used more than other media, there. These are instruments to empower social norms, cultural awareness and identities, under the supervision of governments. There are government officials present, as well.
4. Satellite networks were developing in 1980's without involvement of governments. These networks carry over different and important responsibilities like presentation of different ideas and viewpoints, acceleration of cognition and increasing the understanding of people, and the most importantly, promotion of peace.
5. In satellite networks, contrary to the Middle East National networks, news reported are not formal and ordered by the governments, there is no direct prop-

aganda in them. Movies are not cut and pasted and titled. Information in these media is highly visual, and enjoys relatively more objectivity. They are free and full of information.

6. Governments in the Middle East do not welcome pluralism in national media because they worry that any war in the Middle East would lead to polarization of society, conflict, misunderstanding, terror and insecurity of people which might result in peoples' dependency and irritability.
7. There are individuals who believe that transnational satellite networks are capable enough to organize social issues in the Middle East and can facilitate local understanding of the region's disputes, and also familiarize the region with cultures, values, traditions and religions of other parts of the world by giving an impartial perspective to their general audience, in this way empower the culture of supporting the peace.
8. Deficiencies in the national media have encouraged those who can afford accessing the satellite televisions, and has enabled them to be the representatives of decision makers and elites in different fields. In this way the power of the national media to be the sole propagandist is diminished.
9. The speed of the expansion of the mass media instruments in this part of the world has been tremendous in recent decades. This has been to the extent that some researchers talk of information revolution in the Middle East (webnewshteha.com).

Recently Middle East region has witnessed an ever increasing use of photocopy, fax, video, telephone, television, radio, and internet and satellite networks. Today, it is possible to send the

details of events in a blink of time to the farthest places in the world, by computers, and security tools are no longer able to prevent the spread of news and information about persecution of opponents, beyond their borders (Dorosti, 2001: 130).

Internet

Countries of the Middle East are all located on a spectrum, one side of which is occupied by Iraq and the other side by Yemen and Qatar. Iraq was not connected to the Internet up to the time of Saddam and prohibited the use of personal modems.

Kuwait, however, benefited from a well-developed communicative system and started providing Internet services since 1994. The Ministry of communication of Kuwait delivered LISP to GULF NET, at first, and later to another company. Gulf Net is, directly, linked to SPOINT of the US, through the Satellite. Kuwaiti students have access to the internet by no cost. Oman, also, gave priority to renovation of its communicative system to, relatively, compensate for its back standing from other Gulf countries. Within the framework of a national designing for the substructures and communicative services, GTO, the common communication organization, offered a plan for 2000 through which it was made possible for the government and the private sector to access to any type of information, at any place and in any form.

Qatar developed the most modern communicative network in the region and in which Q-tel provides communication means for the government officials, and have access only to ISP of the countries. Surveys, however, are being conducted on uncompetitive privatization. Qatar is the only country in the margin of the Persian Gulf that is proud to introduce itself as a country without censorship, in which there is no control over the content of Internet.

United Arab Emirates has delivered the cheapest and the most supervised internet services in the region. It possesses the highest rate of computers connected to the internet in proportion to its population. Government, trade section and universities all are supporters of internet and make the best use of it.

Saudi Arabia is the largest and the most conservative country in the region and the ruling family is very sensitive about immorality and activities of the exiled groups. Internet has not been developed much, yet. Only some of the governmental sections, medicine and universities use internet services by joining to the US by connecting to a satellite (Ashena, 2002: 209).

| Country \ Year | 2001 | 2003 | 2007 |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Egypt | 260,000 | 2,700,000 | 8,620,000 |
| Kuwait | 165,000 | 567,000 | 900,000 |
| Saudi Arabia | 570,000 | 1,500,000 | 6,200,000 |
| Syria | 32,000 | 220,000 | 3,470,000 |
| Turkey | 4,000,000 | 5,500,000 | 13,500,000 |
| Qatar | 75,000 | 126,000 | 351,000 |

www.umsi.Edu

Tunisia has been the first African Arab country which connected to the Internet since 1991, and now is the second country in the field of stable communication lines, the number of mobiles, and the rate of the personal computer use in Africa. Tunisia Internet organization was founded in 1996, and it started regulating it in 2001. This organization has totally given freedom to communications and by supporting privatization, has facilitated foreign investment in the country. Private operator of the communication network in Tunisia started developing the use of VOIP and ADSL and high speed lines since 2003.

Tunisia's different policies regarding the access of all citizens to ICTS with two trends of development in public networks and private personal computers in still followed (Noraee Nejad, 2008, 266).

Satellite Networks

Since the time television entered the Arab world in 1960's and 1970's it changed to a media under the supervision of the government, like all other programs. Jump in the quality of television programs started after the Gulf war, when CNN broadcasted every kind of news for the Arab audience (Ben Sahel, 2007, 198).

Egypt was more successful, in this activity, than other countries and could operate several satellite projects like (NILESAT) and the third generation of (ARABSAT). Generally, the Middle East has witnessed an explosion of satellite televisions. Satellite stations which are programmed by Arabs cover to almost 20 to 30 percent of the inhabitants of the region. Along the expansion of private channels, administrators and holders enjoy more freedom concerning the content and quality of programs. From among the most important Arab private channels MBC located in Lebanon, can be mentioned (Dorosti, 2001: 134). The first one attending this country was MBC broadcasting center which started its activities in 1991 in London. This center is sponsored by Sheikh Vali Ibrahim, the brother in law of Malek Fahd.

After five years, Aljazeera experienced MBC at a different level. By getting located in Qatar and under the sponsorship of a new Emir, Aljazeera started its activities, and by empowered and coordinated broadcasting, it has shown that it is a place for hot discourse in the Arab world. Aljazeera by liberating itself from the political limitations posed by Saudis on most of the media attempts to present programs in which seculars are placed in front of Islamists, Feminists in front of traditionalists, and even Israel in front of Arabs (Ben Sahel, 2007: 200).

This channel which started broadcasting its programs since late 1996, now has over 50 million viewers in the world and competes with BBC in this regard. At the beginning, Aljazeera

tried to increase the number of its viewers by presenting opposing ideologies against governments in the Persian Gulf region, like Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and also by making relations with Syria, Lebanon and the Judiciary of Egypt. Documentary programs showing every moment of the civil war of Lebanon in 2001- 2002 caused a jump in the rate of the network viewers. In response to Aljazeera, a group of Saudi investors initiated Al- Arabia in 2003. Moreover, some other important private channels in Arabic can be mentioned, like ANN (Arab News Network), Arabic Radio Television (ARTV) and two Lebanese networks of NTV and Future TV (Dorosti, 2001: 200).

Telephones

Communication has developed, tremendously, during years in the region. The number of stable and mobile cables has had an ascending rate.

| Country \ Year | Early 1990's | 2003 | 2007 |
|----------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Egypt | 2.2million | 8,535,700 | 11,299,000 |
| Saudi Arabia | 1.46million | 3,317,500 | 3,996,000 |
| Oman | 150,000 | 277,000 | 100,268 |
| Qatar | 160,000 | 176,500 | 237,400 |
| UAE | 677,793 | 1,093,700 | 1,385,000 |

www.umsi.Edu

| Country \ Year | 2002 | 2004 | 2007 |
|----------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Iraq | 200,000 | 14,045,134 | 14,021,000 |
| Israel | 6,334,000 | 7,222,000 | 8,902,000 |
| Kuwait | 1,227,000 | 2,000,000 | 2,774,000 |
| Turkey | 2,337,440 | 3,470,750 | 6,976,000 |
| Syria | 400,000 | 2,345,000 | 6,700,000 |
| ? | 267,000 | 490,300 | 1,264,000 |

www.usmi.Edu

SMS

SMS or short message system is one of the special services offered by mobiles and is used as a modern communication means with a wide-spread function in different economic political, social, and cultural fields. Today, this system has

attracted the attention of a large group of people, especially the youth and the political activists, as a new procedure to, seriously, accelerate daily affairs.

Iran

According to the census of the mobile communication center of Iran in the year 1385 (Solar calendar) or (2006) about 40 million SMSs are exchanged, every day. Information has indicated that since 29 of Esfand 1383 (solar calendar) or (2004) to Farvardin 13th 1384 (solar calendar) or (2005) totally about 59 million and 700 thousand SMSs were sent. One of the important functions of SMS in Iran is in politics; SMS had its first experimental functions during the fifth parliamentary elections in Iran (www.itna.ir).

Lebanon

In March 2005, Lebanese citizens arranged a magnificent parade in Beirut by using E-mails and SMSs. They were successful in gathering one million people who required the Syrian army to be exiled and their government which supported Syria to resign. After about one month they could, by the help of the United Nations, put an end to the 29 years of the presence of the Syrian army in their country, and force the 14 thousand army staff to leave Lebanon.

Iraq

In Iraq the content of SMSs was confined to, voices of those who laid suicide bombs, sectarianism, gas price, Saddam, and Bush, because of the dominant situation.

In Iraq, most of the restaurants, Cafés and cinemas were closed because of the security considerations. Therefore SMSs and different rings were instruments to entertain Iraqis. Iraqis used their mobiles to express political ideas and used ring tones with different themes like their national anthem or with patriotic contents. SMSs were

popular and became an effective instrument in their parliamentary campaigns (Maghsoodi, 2007: 175).

Political Atmosphere in the Middle East

Media and modern communication technology and their development have put important effects in the Middle East and have challenged the political stability of the countries in this region.

There are skepticisms and contradictions about political freedom. Many scholars of these countries know that they should prepare the suitable situation for more cooperation of people in the political domains, even if it is used as a political safety valve. Some, however, are worried that granting democracy and political freedom might diminish their power and pull down their throne, following the experience of Russia (Milton Edward, 2006: 163).

Concerning the political society in many of the Middle East countries, there have been pessimism and counter traditionalism about political parties during the contemporary history. Often, no political party had the permission to get activated. Sometimes, some parties were allowed to work and their close relation to the government was quite clear (Hafezian, 2006).

In some Arabian countries, the rulers passed laws to prevent their competitors from getting strengthened. For example, the Sheikh of Qatar whose country is considered as a democratic one in the region has recently passed a law to prevent establishment and activity of political parties. This situation is not confined to Qatar; rather in all countries of the region it is observed that no political party is operational in the construct of the country.

In these countries political parties are regarded as positions in which the supporters of the administrative system get together to admire the political system of the country instead of discussing on the important issues of the country and the government. Even if there is any oppos-

ing party, since its existence is depended on the ruling system, its role is not that effective, and it rather functions as supporters of the present condition (Emam Jome zadeh, 2009: 69).

Civil society has existed for decades in the Middle East, while political development has never appeared, there. This trend in the Middle East shows the reality that the countries have taken steps toward freedom, but this freedom has never meant democracy. Democratizing needs participation of different groups, especially competitive activities in the political life which arises from free will of the political groups.

"Civil society" is an analytic concept but it has shown its capacity to operate in political systems with cooperative and competitive patterns. It is taken that because of the recent developments and the growth of the global media, civil society has shown traces in the Middle East, but it is spending its primary stages in its activities (Firhi, 2000).

Freedom of speech is the other main component of the political development and the process of democratization in the Middle East. If freedom of speech is measured on the basis of the freedom of press, there can be seen different proportions of freedom of speech. During the 1990s, Egypt and Aljazeera witnessed suitable level of freedom of speech. During the same period it did not enjoy an acceptable level in Arabia, Libya, and Iraq.

People's freedom in holding gatherings is a good indicator of the legitimacy of the governors. During the 1990s in many Middle East countries limitations were applied on the freedom of gatherings: In Arabia for example, political organizations were considered unofficial and in Iraq and Libya these groups operate underground and unofficially.

Ratings of the Countries Based on the Freedom of Political Activities

| Country \ Year | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Egypt | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Aljazeera | 2 | - | 1 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Iraq | 3 | - | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Libya | 3 | - | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Saudi Arabia | 3 | - | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

The numbers in the table indicate the following:

1. Total freedom
2. Existence of opposing press along with the limited governmental control
3. Absence of press
4. Providing expenses by journalists to the expense of freedom of speech.
5. Sharp opposition of the government and opposing political groups with the freedom of speech.

Freedom of Holding Gatherings and Activities of Political Groups

| Country \ Year | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Egypt | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Aljazeera | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Iraq | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Libya | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Arabia | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

Numbers in the table indicate the following:

1. Lack of freedom of any sort for the gatherings
2. limited amount of restrictions
3. Serious restrictions
4. the government's sole right for gatherings
5. Lack of any political gatherings (Mertin, 2004: 13)

During Arabian revolutions, which are still prevalent, and undoubtedly needs time to reach the desirable point, communication technologies and media have shown their position and importance, increasingly. Facebook and twitter revolutions are names given by the media to the recent developments and revolutions in the Middle East.

What was remained controversial is the amount of the effectiveness of modern media in recent developments of the Middle East, but what is certain is that they had catalytic effect on the formation and continuity of these changes.

With the primary sparks of revolution in Tunisia, the role of media, and especially local satellite networks were showing the pictures and videos of people's opposition during the revolution and later establishment of security. (www.fararu.com)

Of the most effective communication technologies in the Middle East developments belongs to the social networks of Facebook and twitter. Since in the developing countries mostly media is monopolized by the governments and use them for establishment and consolidation of their own states, social media could, to a large extent, defeat this monopoly and changed it to an instrument to inform people and increase their political insights in these countries.

Increase in the rate of internet users in Africa and the Middle East has been tremendous during the recent developments. The first rate belongs to the North Africa with an unprecedented rate of 77.4 percent of users in 2011. The Middle East also had an increase of 39.8 percent in the world to get the forth place.

A glance at the number of internet users in restless countries like Egypt with 20 million and 136 thousand users and 7 million and 230 Facebook members which make 8.9 percent of the 82 million populations, of this country, shows the capacity of this instrument in the country. An increasing rate of twitter users was also observed among Egyptians during the time of the fall of Hosni Mubarak. At that time, almost 5.5 million viewers watched shared videos in the virtual networks. In other countries of Middle East, like Bahrain the internet users amount to 649 thousand and 300 which make 53.5 percent of the total population which is one million and 314

thousand. 53.5 percent of this population is the members of the face book. In Yemen, the number of internet users reached 2 million and 349 thousand which was 9.7 percent of the total 24 million population of this country in 2011. The members of Facebook in this country amounted to 329 thousand and 40 which was 1.4 percent of the population. This rate in Syria and Tunis reached to 19.8 percent in internet users and 33.9 percent in 2011. The number of Facebook members in Tunis was 2 million and 603 thousand which shows 24.5 percent growth (www.internetworldstats.com)

The faculty of governmental Administration in Dubai, in a research on the use of the social network in the Middle East and the North Africa, indicates that the number of face book users in these regions in 2010 was about 36 million. This figure has had an increase of about 68 percent to the end of 2011. This investigation has also shown that the most common expressions used by the users were Egypt, Libya, January 25th, February 14th, and seid Buzaid (a city in Tunisia) (www.mashreghnews.ir).

According to the investigation conducted by the Semocast Company, messages in twitter in the Arabic language reached to two millions in a day during the previous month from 99 thousand in a day in October 2010, and Arabic is the eight most used language in twitter. Research by the Semocast concludes that twitter has had an amazing growth in the Middle East because of the political developments in this region.

During the latest events in the Middle East, most of the political activists put their breaking news on the political situation of their countries in twitter. The speed of information exchange was very high, to the extent that many broadcasting companies, also, adhered to twitter to join the club. (www.Asreertebat.com)

Conclusion

Modern information and communication technologies and media had an incredible effect on the countries of the Middle East. In this region, governments have always tried to guarantee the power of this sovereignty by controlling the media. But, they haven't been successful in this regard, because this has made citizens to refer to the foreign media, and this has been unpleasant for the governments.

Modern communication technologies and media had an unprecedented effect on the political atmosphere and destabilizing the national sovereignty of the government of the region, in addition to the role they played in forming cultural and identity challenges inside the countries. These technologies have raised the level of expectations and requirements of citizens from their governments by giving consciousness to the people. They have dealt with the issues like civil rights, political rights, the role of fundamental freedom, and human rights, and these have, negatively, questioned the legitimacy of the governments.

In the recent revolutions of the Middle East with the name of Arab Spring, new communication technologies and media provided the bases for the formation of these revolutions and had a great effect on strengthening and developing the unrest. Of course internal problems had important roles in igniting the revolutions.

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