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[Note: Using editorials as an indicator, this series presents views, understanding and attitude of the Urdu periodicals in India towards various developments concerning the Middle East. The selection of an item does not mean the endorsement or concurrence with their accuracy or views. Editor, MEI@ND]



Dawat Online (Invitation), New Delhi
Editorial, 22 November 2013, Friday

1. The Syrian Tragedy

The crisis is yet to be resolved but global powers are not focusing on Syria any more. The agreement between the United States and Russia on the destruction of chemical weapons has changed the scenario. Israel has also become less concerned. The US has almost given up on its plan to attack Syria. Whatever may be the reasons, it is now trying to convince the Syrian opposition to come to the negotiations table and find a political solution. A negotiated solution by the US indicates that the removal of Assad is no more on its agenda. This means that Assad would now be a party to a solution and will get some sort of space in the future. In fact, the US and other powers were completely uncertain about Syria. They were not able to take any decision. They were completely against a situation where nationalist and good elements gain some political ground. The problem is that until now they have not been able to find a situation that is suitable to their interests.

Numerous investigation teams have been sent to Syria to uncover the ground realities. The most important concern for them is the position of Jihadi actors involved in Syria. Various reports show conflicting numbers of these groups who have come to Syria with a determination to wage Jihad and are not members of the local population. The US is not sure about how to deal and engage with these elements. Even if it comes forward to support them, it would be to neutralize their influence, which was evident from Barack Obama's address to

the UN General Assembly. The concern is to find a solution that does not harm American and Israeli interests. More importantly, it does not want Assad to completely lose power because Assad's presence can benefit them. Therefore, any formula that may be negotiated would keep Assad as a party to the solution.

Source: http://dawatonline.com/Archive_Editorial.aspx?sDate=22-nov-2013



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 24 November 2013, Sunday

2. Iran Nuclear Deal

An interim deal was reached between Iran and world powers over the controversial Iranian nuclear programme. The negotiations were going on for the past few days. There was an impression that the differences between the two sides were so huge that it would be impossible to reach a point of agreement. On the contrary, a deal was signed between the two parties with Iran agreeing to nearly stop enrichment of nuclear fuel while the US and the Western countries agreed to provide it relief of US\$7 billion against economic sanctions. The relief would not be based on pre-existing sanctions but no new sanctions would be imposed for the next six months. Iran has agreed to abide by the conditions laid down by the deal and will cooperate with the IAEA in inspections of its nuclear facilities. Both the US and Iran have welcomed the deal. President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry have welcomed the deal saying this is an important move forward in ending the controversy as well as a guarantee for Israeli security. The Iranian Supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei has congratulated the Iranian negotiators for their success while President Hassan Rouhani said that the deal will help to end the economic sanctions against Iran. The interesting aspect is that both sides have claimed success in achieving their aims. The US has said that the deal will help ensure security in the region and the Iranian nuclear programme will come to a halt. On the other hand, Rouhani is saying that the deal accepts the Iranian right to enrich uranium on its soil. Western powers have expressed satisfaction that Iran has agreed to limit uranium enrichment to five percent, which is to the extent required to fulfil its energy requirements. Iran has said that it can enrich uranium to the extent it needs for peaceful purposes and that it would not develop nuclear weapon capabilities. Since both sides agree on basic points it is unlikely that further differences could crop up. Both sides have been able to find time for further planning. The Russian statement underlines the mood that the deal has something for all the parties. If the deal succeeds in resolving the conflict, Israel will try to derail the process. Moreover, it is important to recognize that the US would not compromise with the security concerns of Israel but it would be equally important for the US and other world powers to soften their stand on economic sanctions on Iran that will help realize the ultimate goal of peace and security in the region.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr25-41>



The Etemaad Urdu Daily (The Confidence Urdu Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 26 November 2013, Tuesday

3. Agreement between Iran and the West

On 24 November, an interim deal on its nuclear programme was reached between Iran and the Western powers after continuous efforts for the last 10 years. This will help ease off the economic sanctions on Iran and partially lift the ban on sales of Iranian oil. It can lead to the revival of Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline.

The deal comes at an appropriate time as the world has secured relief from the tension that had been built up due to Israeli threats of attacking Iran. Israel has been one of the main elements that created problems in countries such as Iraq, Libya, Syria and Iran. The US and Israel have conspired to keep all the countries in the region away from economic, industrial, military and educational progress. Therefore, the region is always kept unstable. Iraq was instigated to attack Iran after the 1979 Islamic revolution. Kuwait crisis was produced in 1990 leading to continuous bloodshed in the region. While it affected the region, its economic impact was felt the world over. American and European economies have also faltered. The lack of capital in the Gulf and other parts of the world created a situation whereby developing economies found it difficult to market their products. As a result, unemployment started to grow and many countries such as Greece became completely bankrupt.

Of late, the US has taken a right decision. The deal however, has come in for criticism from Israel and Saudi Arabia. Israel will never stop criticizing any move that will benefit other countries in the region because it does not want any other regional country to become strong and challenge its domination. Israel can create problems inside Iran to deviate it from finding a solution to the crisis. It can even indulge in terrorist activities in Europe and put the blame in Iran. The Israeli leaders including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman and Finance Minister Yair Lapid have criticized the interim deal.

The US, Britain, Russia, China, France and Germany are part of this deal and it is incumbent upon them to try and clarify their position to other countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE who have raised their doubts about the deal. President Obama has said that the deal is a first step but it seems that it has been a big step. According to the deal, Iran will immediately stop enriching uranium for its nuclear programme. It is for the first time in the past 10 years that Iran has agreed to stop uranium enrichment. Iran will limit uranium enrichment to five percent in the next six months and will destroy 20 percent of its enriched uranium. Moreover, it will not enhance its low quality nuclear fuel. It will also allow the IAEA to monitor its nuclear plants. It shows that Iran has completely given up on any plan to acquire nuclear weapon capabilities. Thus, Israeli concerns on Iran are unfounded. What Israel demands from Iran are derogatory for the nation and Iran, unlike Libya, will never agree to that.

The deal is a matter of pride for the people of Iran, which had been isolated from the world for the past 30 years. It will now have an opportunity to come back to its past glory. The Iranian economy should also recover. The people will also be spared from the international

sanctions that had curtailed their life for the past 10 years. The financial and economic situation in Iran had become precarious and the interim deal provides an opportunity to find a solution to these problems. The most important thing is that the deal has to be carried through and not become a victim of Israeli designs.

Source: <http://etemaaddaily.com/epapers/?date=2013-11-26>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi
Editorial, 26 November 2013, Tuesday

4. Iranian Nuclear Deal

The ten-year long controversy over the Iranian nuclear programme witnessed a refreshing turn when five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany signed an interim deal with Iran after four-days of negotiations. It is indeed a historical moment. Almost all important world countries have welcomed the deal except Israel. Media reports suggest that according to the deal, Iran will facilitate inspection of its nuclear plants and limit uranium enrichment to five percent. More importantly, it will also halt part of its nuclear programme. Likewise, no sanctions would be imposed on Iran for the next six months and the sanctions on imports of gold and minerals would be softened that will help Iran earn nearly US\$7 billion.

President Obama has termed the deal as a major step forward in preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, which is an achievement for his administration. Simultaneously, he warned that if Iran does not fulfil its promises, harsher sanctions would be imposed on the country. Whatever may be the intention of the warning, it is unlikely that Iran will make any mistake at this stage. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei has endorsed the deal while the current leadership of Iran has expressed relief over the loosening of economic sanctions. The Iranian President has said that the credit for the deal goes to the people of Iran who elected the moderate group to run the government.

It is indeed a welcome move on the part of Iran to move to the negotiations table to resolve the controversy. India that has always insisted on a diplomatic solution to the problem has welcomed the interim deal. It has maintained its position against the use of force to resolve international problems. The deal however, will not benefit India that will still import less petroleum from Iran. Oil imports from Iran have considerably come down during the past two years. It would be in India's favour if the Iranian nuclear controversy comes to an end and sanctions imposed on Iran are lifted so that trade relations with Iran may reach its past levels. The Iranian leadership has expressed their commitment towards fulfilling all the clauses of the deal.

The Israeli stand however, is beyond any reason; while the world has termed the deal as a historic step forward, Israel has termed it as a historic mistake. Perhaps it wishes that all Iranian nuclear facilities be destroyed without exploring diplomatic means. Although many Israeli security experts have admitted that an attack on Iran may prove disastrous for Israel, it

seems that the Israeli leadership does not listen to their rationale. In fact, the US is responsible for this situation given its clamour against the nuclear programme which Iran had continuously maintained is for peaceful purposes. The same was not done against Israel that has a huge cache of nuclear arms. Saudi ambassador to Britain Prince Muhammad bin Nawwaf's statement that Israel should also prove the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme is appropriate at this moment. He said that the world powers should put pressure on Israel to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. That can be the only way to ensure security in the Middle East.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=71889&boxid=14345171>



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad
Editorial, 28 November 2013, Thursday

5. Violence in Iraq

The intensity and frequency of violence and bombings have increased over the past few weeks in Iraq leading to huge loss of life. Suicide bombings have mainly targeted religious congregations, which show the sectarian intentions behind the violence. The elements behind this escalation in violence do not want the people of Iraq to live in peace and the decade-long conflict to end. These forces wish that Iraq remain in perpetual conflict so that they can benefit from the chaotic situation. The attacks have been carried out at sensitive places and times which show the impunity of the perpetrators of violence. Many groups have cropped up, claiming their relations to a variety of ideologies who have indulged in violence to achieve their so called goals. Every group is up in arms against the other and the government has failed to control the situation; in fact, it has become just another party to the conflict. Taliban and Al-Qaeda have gained ground in Iraq but there are many groups who have broken away from them due to internal disputes. The number of casualties is increasing while many have become homeless. The situation has gone from bad to worse and it is the women and children who are suffering the most and are caught in this cycle of violence.

External forces are benefitting from the situation. These elements are inciting one group to fight the other and in turn use them to pursue their interests. They are responsible for the sectarian violence in Iraq. The local people are now divided on sectarian and ethnic lines and are attacking each other. The idea is that till the local populace remains entangled in the web of violence, the external forces will keep on benefitting. Peace will evade Iraq until these elements are chalked out of the country. Iraqis have paid the price for the mistakes of a few of their people. While some are forced to act in defence, others have been fooled into violent activities. It would be important that these people understand the designs of external forces. The situation will not improve until they abandon their violent means. It is the nation of Iraq that is losing due to these activities. The nation rebuilding process has not yet taken off in Iraq. It is important that efforts are made to bring the fighting groups on one table and emphasize the need for progress and development. Minor sectarian interests will harm the nation. This is the responsibility of all Iraqis and that is the only way to bring peace in the country.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr29-36>

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