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In the Name of the Most High
Viewpoint

Will Imran Khan Succeed In His Endeavours?

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan, after taking oath as the 22nd Prime Minister of Pakistan, in his inaugural address on Sunday, called on the rich to start paying taxes and said Pakistan will begin an austerity drive to reduce debt, a campaign he will start by selling the fleet of bulletproof cars of his new office.

He also spoke about revamping the judiciary, reforming the educational and healthcare sectors, campaigning against corruption, devolution of power, providing jobs to youths and building dams to end the water crisis.

His election and his speeches have been keenly followed by the Pakistan's immediate neighbours, that is, Afghanistan, India, China, and the Islamic Republic of Iran – all four of whom share long boundaries with Pakistan.

To Pakistan's east is India, which has a 2,912 km border. To its west is Iran, which has a 909 km border with Pakistan. And to its northwest lies Afghanistan, with a shared border of 2,430 km. China is towards the northeast has a 523 km border with Pakistan.

The four said countries, along with other world nations, have congratulated Khan and he in turn has responded by saying that Pakistan will work to have the "best relations" with all its neighbours and hold talks to normalise ties, since without proper interaction, peace is not possible in the region.

The question arises: How far his hand will be free to have peaceful relations with its neighbours in view of the fact that the security policy of Pakistan is largely determined by its powerful military, not by civilian governments.

President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Hassan Rouhani, has extended his sincere congratulations to Prime Minister Imran Khan, expressing Tehran's readiness to expand ties and cooperation with Islamabad so that the two countries would further improve bilateral relations.

At the centre of Pakistan-Iran relations is energy sector cooperation, particularly the Iran-Pakistan (IP) gas pipeline worth about \$7.5 billion that has remained stalled for years.

On March 11, 2013, the then presidents of Iran and Pakistan, Dr. Mahmood Ahmadinejad and Asif Ali Zardari respectively, had performed the groundbreaking of IP at the joint border point to deliver 750 million cubic feet of Iranian natural gas per day to Pakistan by January 2015. But later that year when the pro-Saudi Nawaz Sharif took power as prime minister, the project was put off the table due to what his government called fear of international sanctions.

On 25th of February 2014, Pakistan's Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Pakistan, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi claimed that if there were no international sanctions the project could be completed within three years.

But when in August 2017 after Sharif's dismissal by the Judiciary Abbasi became caretaker premier, he did nothing practical in this regard, despite the fact on 14 July 2015 Iran and the P5+1 group (China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US—plus Germany) concluded Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to effectively end the economic sanctions.

It is interesting to see what practical steps Imran Khan will take in this regard, since the pipeline will be of enormous benefits to energy-starved Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called for dialogue with Pakistan in a letter to his newly-elected counterpart as the "only way forward" for peace between the two traditional rivals of the Subcontinent.

Khan for his part has offered an olive branch to India after his election victory last month, proposing talks to resolve the chronic question of divided Kashmir.

China is firmly entrenched politically and economically in Pakistan, while the government of Afghanistan, a country which is under American occupation, ought to show greater independence in its decisions with Pakistan for solving the border and other outstanding problems including terrorism, since the countries will continue to be neighbours, long after the US retreats from the region.

Let us keep our fingers crossed in view of the winds of change blowing in Pakistan, and see whether Prime Minister Imran Khan succeeds or not in his endeavours, especially since the US is the villain of the piece and could be the main hurdle to regional peace and security.

FM Zarif: Unfortunately, I Was Wrong About U.S.



This photo by CNN shows Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif talking to the US television channel.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- The United States is addicted to applying sanctions on Iran, Iranian Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif has told CNN in an exclusive interview from Tehran.

"I believe there is a disease in the United States and that is the addiction to sanctions," he said, adding that, "Even during the Obama administration the United States put more emphasis on keeping the sanctions it had not lifted rather than implementing its obligation on the sanctions it lifted."

Zarif gave the interview on the 65th anniversary of a U.S.-backed coup that overthrew democratically elected Iranian Prime Minister Muhammad Mossadegh.

Zarif retained a clear belief during the hourlong interview in the foreign ministry that the nuclear deal could be revived regardless of the Trump administration denunciation of it.

In May, Trump withdrew from the deal, known as the JCPOA and intended to limit Iran's nuclear ambitions in exchange for sanctions relief, calling it a "horrible one-sided deal that should have never, ever been made."

The first wave of sanctions that were to "snap back" under the Trump move hit the import of car parts and precious metals on August 6.

Zarif expressed his dismay that the United States has not learned that sanctions are ineffective in changing the political climate in

Iran.

"We felt that the United States had learned that at least as far as Iran is concerned, sanctions do produce economic hardship but do not produce the political outcomes that they intended them to produce, and I thought that the Americans had learned that lesson. Unfortunately I was wrong," Zarif said.

Earlier that day, he tweeted criticism of the U.S. State Department last week establishing the "Iran Action Group" to coordinate the U.S. and its allies pressure on Iran. He wrote: "Now an action group dreams of doing the same through pressure misinformation and demagoguery -- never again."

He told CNN that the same '50s thinking embodied the current US approach.

"I think the U.S. administration still believes that it is working with the government it installed in Iran after the 1953 coup," he said. "As they say, they have to wake up and smell the coffee."

For much of the interview, Zarif appeared to dismiss the possibility of future talks with the Trump administration, and maintain the hope the deal can be revived. He said pressure from the European allies could persuade Trump to change his mind and accused the United States of "bullying" the European signatories to the deal.

"We do not want to revisit that nuclear deal," he said. "We want the United States to implement that nuclear deal. Today the closest U.S.

allies are resisting those sanctions. The U.S. basically arm-twisting -- its attempt to put pressure. I don't want to use the term bullying ... but that's what it amounts to."

Asked whether Iranian President Hassan Rouhani could benefit from a one-on-one meeting with President Trump, Zarif said the previous nuclear deal had to be respected first.

"Not when the previous huge progress that we made was thrown out," he said of a one-on-one. "That (previous deal) was for us the litmus test of whether we can trust the United States or not."

Further sanctions are due to kick back in early November against the Iranian oil industry, which accounts for a fifth of Iran's GDP. Zarif said decades of pressure meant the Iranian people would be resistant to this pressure, yet it would have an impact.

"U.S. sanctions have always hurt," he said. "What it's hurting, though, is people who want to buy medicine. People who want to buy food."

Zarif said the recent economic problems, which have seen the local currency slide and fruit and vegetable prices sometimes double, were due to preparatory measures being taken.

"The economic upheaval that you see right now in Iran is because of the measures that needed to be taken to be prepared for those days, so we are prepared for the worst case scenario," he said.

Secure Borders With Iran Key to Iraq: Barham Salih

TEHRAN (IFP) -- Former Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih says his country's national interests hinge on secure borders with neighboring states especially the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He said the national interests of Iraqis as well as the people of the Kurdistan Regional Government would be met only if the country made its borders with neighboring states secure.

"We condemn the recent terrorist attacks carried out from northern Iraq against Iran and believe that the KRG along with Baghdad should take long strides in putting an end to such attacks," he said.

Speaking in an interview

with IRNA, the Iraqi Kurdish politician went on to say that the terrorist attacks threaten not only the security of Iraq's neighbors but also the security of Iraq and the KRG.

"The security of a region requires all involved sides to adopt joint measures against insecurity because terrorist attacks threaten our national interests and neighbors," he said.

Salih then referred to the political situation in Iraq and called on the conflicting sides to put aside their differences, saying by resolving its internal crisis and restoring its national stability, Iraq can contribute to regional peace and security.

He cited victory over Daesh in Iraq as a good example of cooperation among all involved sides in Iraq and said the terrorist group was defeated because all Iraqis from Shias to Sunnis and Kurds came to the conclusion that the group is threatening the country and the whole region.

The Iraqi Kurdish politician then warned about division inside Iraq and said the country is in a dire need of a strong central government which can meet public demands.

According to Barham, Iraq's next president should be picked up based on consensus among all Iraqi factions as well as all parliamentary factions.

The Holy Qur'an



How (can it be)! while if they prevail against you, they would not pay regard in your case to ties of relationship, nor those of covenant; they please you with their mouths while their hearts do not consent; and most of them are transgressors.
The Holy Qur'an (9.8)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	13:08
Evening (Maghreb)	20:06
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	04:57
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	06:28

MPs Launch Bid to Impeach Finance Minister

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iranian lawmakers have launched impeachment proceedings against the finance minister, ramping up pressure on the president who is already facing attacks over his handling of the economy in the face of new U.S. sanctions.

A group of 33 MPs signed a motion accusing the minister, Masoud Karbasian, of being unable to manage the economy or form and implement policies.

That was enough votes to force Karbasian to come to parliament to answer questions on his record in the next 10 days.

If lawmakers are unhappy with his answers, they can vote to impeach and sack him - a move they took two weeks ago against Iran's then minister of cooperatives, labor and social welfare, Ali Rabiei, after questioning his achievements.

President Hassan Rouhani is facing a growing domestic backlash since U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out in May from an international nuclear accord.

Washington imposed sanctions on the acquisition of U.S. dollars by Iran, and Tehran's trade in gold and precious metals this month. The United States has also said it will reimpose sanctions on Iran's oil exports and banking sector on November 4.

Rouhani did not immediately comment on the motion, but defended Karbasian at a cabinet meeting on Sunday, calling the minister's performance acceptable.

Parliament on August 1 summoned Rouhani himself to come and answer questions within the next month, though without the threat of an impeachment vote - the first time lawmakers have taken this measure against him.

In late July, Rouhani appointed a new central bank governor, and accepted the resignation of the government spokesman, in moves seen as concessions to critics.