US-IRAN CONFLICT:
Impact on Indian Economy and Defence Budget

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We endeavour to sound ALERTS and create AWARENESS about the myriad dimensions and manifestations of DEFENCE and SECURITY in India and around the world.

The power of a King lies in his mighty arms...

Security of the citizens at peace time is very important because State is the only saviour of the men and women who get affected only because of the negligence of the State.

- Chanakya
Some political leaders are known to seek diversions from their daily concerns, headaches, or even a looming crisis. This has been a trait known to humankind since the days of life in caves, and today is prevalent in democracies and dictatorships alike. So, it didn’t come as a surprise that murmurs about ongoing impeachment proceedings began as soon as news broke that the United States had assassinated an Iranian general in a drone strike. After all, President Donald Trump was in the midst of impeachment proceedings and announced the assassination as a major gain in the campaign against terror.

It couldn’t be further from the truth, for Maj Gen Qasem Soleimani, Commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Republic Guard Corps, was rarely accused of being involved in the deaths of US soldiers or civilians. By no means, a saint, Maj Gen Soleimani, was involved in the spread of Iran’s activities from the anti-Taliban alliance to shoring up the beleaguered Syrian regime. And, anything in between that involved the interests of the minority Shi’a sect, be it Lebanon, Iraq or even Yemen. Most of all in the brutal campaign against the dreaded and short-lived ‘caliphate’ of the Islamic State. But being involved in the taking of American lives was not something he had been accused of. In fact information came out after his killing to suggest he had quietly helped American sailors who had strayed into Iranian waters.

Were it the case of avenging American lives, and preventing future casualties; Hafeez Saeed, the chief patron of Lashkar-e Tayyaba, is undoubtedly more guilty. For the 2008 Mumbai attacks for which his group was held undeniably guilty claimed more American lives than could be placed at the door of Maj Gen Soleimani. But such is the nature of international politics, especially in West Asia, where many decisions don’t make sense, in the short or long terms. And that is same with the assassination of Maj Gen Soleimani. Especially its impact on Indian interests, security and economic.

India and Iran cooperated closely in maintaining the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan when the country was being brutalised by the Taliban regime. Those were dark days indeed and the Northern Alliance could deliver in October 2001 only because India and Iran had kept it alive. Such security interests don’t change with time since they’re determined by geography and sociology, both of which are unchangeable too. So, India’s tepid response to the assassination was strange, to say the least. In simple terms, it was not in Indian interests.

Just as tensions in West Asia are not in Indian interests, whether they’re created by a trigger happy US President or even a local potentate. For there are far too many Indians living and working in the region and anything that put their lives and livelihoods at risk is a disaster for the country. Then India has significant economic interests in the region, from hydrocarbon imports to infrastructure projects, chief amongst which is the Chabahar Port in Iran. Disruptions of any kind is bad for India, therefore its policies should be made with its own interests in mind, not at the pleasure of anyone faraway.

Manvendra Singh
Once again the world is witness to the irresponsible and adventurist policies of the United States in already troubled Middle East. Having failed to execute a regime change in Syria, President Donald Trump has turned his full attention to toppling the Shia regime in Iran. He began by abrogating the nuclear deal and imposing sanctions on Tehran. He set the Gulf Cooperation Council against Qatar and stoked the violent conflict in Yemen. The continuing conflict in Libya after the overthrow of Colonel Gaddafi underscores that there is a certain method in the madness that is on display.

To keep the cauldron on the boil, Donald Trump ordered the assassination of one of the most beloved of Iranians Qassem Suleimani of the Iranian Republican Guards on the unconformable plea that he was planning to attack American installations; that it was a “pre-emptive strike”. The shooting down of a Ukranian passenger aircraft by mistake is a measure of the hair-trigger nature of the tensions in the region as a whole.

Willy-nilly, India too is being sucked into the conflict. American sanctions on Iran have affected oil and gas supplies from Iran to India and have threatened to disrupt the Chabahar Port and ancilliary infrastructure project that was planned to be the economic gateway to landlocked Afghanistan and the former Central Asian Republics of the Soviet Union. India has been maintaining a very cordial relationship with Iran for the past few decades and in the recent times, our Prime Minister Modi has balanced very well with Iran. Iran has been the major supplier of crude oil to India in the past few decades. The Chhbahar Port has been a unique project for India, Iran and Afghanistan programme. This one project shows the solidarity between India and Iran but it is so unfortunate that due to the conflict between US and Iran, it is directly affecting the interest of India. More foreign exchange will be spent for the import of the oil from other sources and thus, it is going to affect the procurement process for the defence forces. Most of the defence procurements are being imported from various countries. Hence this will hamper the process of modernisation of our defence and security forces in the long term.

The conflict between these two nations has become a challenge to India in a way where we are trying to balance our relationships with US as well as Iran at the same time and we do not want to spoil our relations with anyone.

This particular edition is focused on the conflict between US and Iran and how it is going to affect India. Our esteemed experts have given clarity on these subjects. I am sure that you will become aware of many complications of the conflict between the US and Iran.

Jai Hind
INTERVIEW OF
SH S S DESWAL, DG ITBP
WITH DEFENCE AND SECURITY ALERT
TEAM DSA

TOO MUCH OF THE
OLD PERSISTS
LT GEN KAMAL DAVAR
PVSM, AVSM (RETD)

SECURITY COMPLEXITIES
FOR INDIA
AIR MSHL ANIL CHOPRA
PVSM, AVSM, VM, VSM (RETD)

INDIA CAN BE MEDIATOR
LT GEN DALIP BHARDWAJ
PVSM, VSM (RETD)

USA V IRAN IN IRAQ:
IMPACT ON INDIA
AIR MARSHAL DHIRAJ KUKREJA
PVSM, AVSM, VSM (RETD)

US-IRAN CONFLICT-
IMPACT ON INDIA
AMB ASHOK SAJJANHAR

US-IRAN TENSIONS:
IMPLICATIONS ON INDIA’S BUDGET
ANU SHARMA

TEHRAN-WASHINGTON: NEW AXIS
EVA J. KOULOURIOTIS

THE EXPANSE OF INDIAN OEUVRÉ
ROSS MACKAY

FLUCTUATING POWER
J.M. PHELPS
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INDIAN ECONOMY AND THE
DEFENCE BUDGET
AMIT COWSHISH