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Iran's Nuclear development: Rationale and consequences

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Abstract

The paper Iran's Nuclear development: rationale and consequence deals with the history of development of Iranian Nuclear program its role and assistance it got from America. Iranian Nuclear program actually got started by the "atoms of peace" in 1957 which was gifted by Eisenhower the U.S President to create balance of power. It was a long time ambition of Shah of Iran but after Iranian revolution the program got halted. The religious supreme leader Khomeini came to power and Shah was ousted however Khomeini had not appreciated the Nuclear technology advancement and had called it antireligious and evil. But the reason which has forced Iran to go for Nuclear technology are Iran – Iraq war, regional supremacy, Israel's continuous expansion and development of its military and attack on Iraq's Nuclear site at Osirak in 1981 had raised alarm for Iran to go for its defence. The secret program of Iran was revealed in 2002 at Natanz and Arak. The Nuclear sites were under military supervision. The program was look after by Islamic revolutionary guards corps. Iran's major Nuclear sites are – Arak, Bushehr, Natanz, Isfahan, Gchin, Qom and Parchin.

Keywords: Iran's Nuclear, Nuclear Development

The Iranian nuclear issue is one of the most complicated, controversial and debatable conflict in International relations. Being an important key player in the middle eastern politics there was the urgent need of diplomatic resolution of Iranian nuclear issue by which is expected to increase cooperation between the west and Iran along with other gulf countries for regional security. The current condition of Middle East the ongoing war in Syria, yemen, the Unending list of terrorist groups, the power vacuum, weak heads in many Middle Eastern countries and the most heated issue of Arab Israel are the great hurdles of regional security and peace but Iran's nuclear aspiration had played the role of fuel in Middle Eastern political upheavals. As one the worlds most complex region Middle East is fighting internally with non- state actors and religious groups and external interference, the foreign countries like Russia and United states as well as regional countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran are fighting proxy war in Middle East in countries like Syria and yemen. Which are converted into battle ground.

Iran had seen revolution (Islamic revolution 1979) earlier the coup which had reinstalled Mohammad Reza Shah pahlvi to the throne in 1953. Iran was the key ally of west in Middle east to counter the influence of soviet union and to maintain the interest of west in the region. Iran was the first member of "twin pillar policy" of president Nixon's doctrine in which Saudi Arabia was the second player. West too had provided all assistance to the only shiaa state of the region including the nuclear one which west considers as a big mistake of the foreign policy. The foreign power extended its friendship to occupy the space that Britain had vacated in Persian Gulf in 1971.

Going back to history, the Iran's nuclear program got a start from united states gift in 1957 by U.S. President Eisenhower's "atoms for peace" which was suppose to be the display of courtesy in order to Create balance of power and to stop nuclear armament among the developing countries and the amount of Uranium given was promised by the receiving countries to be used for peaceful purposes. In short we can say that west (America) is Paying cost of its gift. Iranian scientist had got training by united states along with needed technical assistance. West Germany and france had also assisted Iran in Training and building facility for Uranium enrichment in Iran. With the passage of time the nuclear program become the one of the priority of the Iranian regime and by the 1970s Iran targeted to generate around 20,000 MW(e) of Nuclear power from 1974 to 1994 which was also called as "20 year vision plan". But by 1979 Iran went through major political turmoil one of the most turning point of Iranian History "the Iranian revolution", In which shah was over thrown and Iran got the new supreme leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as the effect of this political upheaval the nuclear program got halted and Germany had dropped its contract and left bushehr nuclear project.

Guided by religion the supreme leader of Iran had denounce the nuclear development program.

From his exile in Iraq and France in the late 1970s, Khomeini orchestrated his takeover of the anti – shah revolutionary movement in Iran. After coming to power Khomeini Viewed the shah's nuclear program as remnant of evil and of western influence his regime had cancelled all contracts



given to Germany and France due to which the speedy work of Nuclear advancement at Bushehr and Ahwaz plant got stopped but actually his regime has ever turn back from its nuclear technology advancement despite his acceptance of disliking western technologies or destructive technologies which are according to him against shariah. Other reason which were responsible for the halt of nuclear program are Iran – Iraq War, German's withdrawal as its company Kraftwerk refused to work on two Iranian reactors at Bushehr. Iran got Help and assistance from foreign nations along with the Black Market with which its nuclear development programme got unexpected progress despite of U.S. sanctions and monitoring.

The reasons which has forced Iran and boosted its determination to possess nuclear weapon are – Iran Iraq war, regional supremacy Israel's continuous expansion and development of its military and attack on Iraq's Nuclear site at Osirak in 1981 that had raised alarm for Iran to go for nuclear expansion.

In recent time the Iran's nuclear development came into existence in 2002 by the disclosure of Natanz and Arak sites and to keep them secret and accelerate it with out any hurdle to avoid delay. The nuclear sites were under military supervision and nuclear experts were transferred to these organizations. The program was look after by Islamic revolutionary guards corps, The ministry of defence and joint chief of staff IRGC after the end of Iran Iraq war in 1988 Iran had started the secret nuclear program under AEOI which was given the code name of "Great plan" with the budget of 200 million dollars which was till 1992 extended upto 800 million dollars, the projects were so secret that its special budget was allocated by the supreme leader without informing the majlis budget committee.

Iran was working on two sites secretly at Natanz and Arak along with the legitimate one at Bushehr under the supervision of IAEA and the only known to the world.

The major sites known to the world according to BBS are

1. **Arak:** it was discovered that Arak contains heavy water facility and the spent fuel contains enough plutonium suitable to produce nuclear bomb. After the deal of 2005 the international community had pressurized Iran to dismantle the site and send all spent fuel to another country in order to avoid proliferation but Iran agreed to redesign the reactor which

cannot produce plutonium for weapon development.

2. **Bushehr:** This nuclear site was the first of Iran which was built in 1974 with the plan of building two nuclear reactors with the assistance of Germany. Though with political upheavals the work stopped but later Russia helped Iran and in 2013 during inspection IAEA discovered that is operating properly and is also linked to Iran's national power grid and is major source of Iran's electricity production.
3. **Natanz:** Here there is major fuel enrichment plant which is Iran's largest gas centrifuge for Uranium enrichment facility and is capable of holding up to 50,000 centrifuges needed for fissionable reaction with Uranium hexafluoride gas filled in it. After the agreement of 2015 Iran agreed for not installing above 5,060 centrifuges for more than 10 years and Uranium enrichment research and development activities will take place only at Natanz and limited for 8 years only.
4. **Isfahan:** This site is for the Uranium conversion to convert yellow cake in Hexafluoride gas, uranium oxide and metal which are used for enrichment process, as fuel reactors and metal is used for making cores of nuclear bombs.
5. **Gachin:** This is the Uranium mine near port of Bandar Abbas earlier the Yellow cake was imported from south Africa but Gachin had made the path easier for Iran by producing uranium ore concentrate or yellow cake though in less amount. Later two more sites were discovered at Saghand and Ardakan.
6. **Qom:** It is also the uranium enrichment plant which is heavily fortified underground Fordo facility, near the city of Qom. Iran claimed that the enriched uranium would be used as fuel for the Tehran research reactor. In the JCPOA of 2015 it was stated that Iran will not enrich uranium for 15 years at Fordo and this site will be developed into nuclear, physics and technology centre.
7. **Parchin:** It is the Military site for the research and development for the production of ammunition, rockets and explosives there were reports of hydrodynamic experiments were conducted there which indicates the possible weapon development.



Iran's nuclear policy has increased diplomatic tension, though the comprehensive package of incentive were presented to Iran by European union in which Iran was suppose to be given nuclear rights for peaceful purposes and was provided with light water nuclear reactor and partition in world trade organization but Iran was stick to its nuclear ambition due to which the sanctions were imposed and all concerned countries were bound to freeze all assets owned by Iran. Iran gave all possible reasons for its uncompromising attitudes.

1. **Iran's legitimate and sovereign right for having and persuing nuclear technology experiments and research.**

Iran claims its right to carry Nuclear weapon program as it is the member of non – proliferation treaty since 1968. Iran's claims that it is legal right of Iran it can make and use nuclear teclmology and to be assisted by IAEA and it is in national Interest of Iran and had condemned and rejected that Iran's nuclear ambiton is violations of (NPT) non – Proliferating treaty.

Incidents and historical experiences, international intervention in Middle East to have assess to its oil, Iran – Iran war, Iraq's attack on Iran's nuclear site at Bushehr for almost 7 times between 1984 – 1988, Iraq's chemical attack on Iran, Israel's attack at Osirak-the Iraq's nuclear site had given reason and even raised the alarm for Iran to empower itself against external attacks. After Islamic revolution or Iranian revolution Iran was suppose to stand on the principles of Independence, self reliance, equality as written in Iranian constitution. The constitution after Iranian revolution calls for self-reliance in the fields of the politics, economics and technology and equal Treatment, non – discrimination and respect from international community for which nuclear capability is must for Iran.

Double standard of west

Before Iranian revolution western countries had backed and assisted Iran to build nuclear power plants later west turned its back. Iran had signed CTBT and NPT but countries like India, Israel and Pakistan had not signed any treaty and their nuclear programs are even not under IAEA monitoring that hurts Iran's dignity.

Provoking statements from western countries specially united states had also compelled Iran to go for nuclear option as united states had listed Iran among countries like north Korea and Iraq where there is no democracy but Iran has quasi-democracy. United States had called Iran as “Axis of evil” which also includes north Korea and Saddam's Iraq. These verbal attacks had led Iran to go for nuclear option as for its defense, National security and dignity. The strong hostility and enmosity with united states and incidents like hostage crises, U.S. support to Israel, sanctions, continuous intervention in Gulf region of which Iran wants to get supremacy, supporting its region's foe Saudi Arabia calling it ‘rouge state” and terrorist state by united states and hard attitude lowacds Iran had made its quest stronger to be a nuclear state.

Regional conflict and international Backing

The Arab – Israel conflict in which Iran has sympathy towards Palestine and had even aided proxy non- state groups like Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic jihad had raised tension for Israel. To stop Iran from being nuclear state United States had pressurised Iran through all channels as Israel's security is also one of the concern for US, So, threat from Israel is also an area of concern for Iran.

Regional supremacy: Iran and Saudi Arabia both claim to be the superior in the region due to ideological differences they share, bitter relations. Saudi Arabia maintains good relations with United States and United States provides security and military assistance to Saudi Arabia in order to gain regional supremacy Iran wants nuclear advancement.

Disputes with neighbouring states and regional rivalry

Iran at one time is struggling with many issues like the region of west asia is in prime focus for global war on terrorism campaign. As the region having countries like Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Syria, lebnon, Palestine and even extended to Pakistan these countries are on check list of United States for sponsorship of terrorism. Security issues for United States become the reason for the bases of its forces in the region. Its forces are stationed in almost every country of Middle East to have assess to air space, water and territory of asian sub – continent, Isolation of Iran by Western countries by imposing sanctions, restricting other countries to have trade. The countries of the region like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan have not big issues with Iran but the sectarian violence,



issues of Khurds and Shia-Sunni conflict in Pakistan is non – ignorable for Iran. The Arab country like Saudi Arabia is sharing difficult relations with Iran where Saudi Arabia is having advance military system with the help of America and other Arab countries are supporting Saudi Arabia on ideological basis. The internal conflict of Syria and Yemen which had been converted into proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia and even had involved superpowers like united states and Russia all these are big challenges for Iran these are certain reasons which Iran considers itself and claims to have right of having Nuclear program.

Though the U. S and Iran Share relationship back to world war period but the true involvement was seen by intervention of CIA in the coup of 1953 to remove the prime minister of Iran Mohammed Massadegh but the Iranian revolution of 1979 had turned the relation bitter which later converted in to deep enmosity that's still going on. Iran and united states were friends and allies for long period but interests and hegemony had compelled the two countries to call each other the “Axis of evil” and the “great satan”.

The period between 1945-79 was the honeymoon period of the two current enemies and U.S. was the supporting the ruling Mohammed Raza Shah Pahalvi who got the throne of Iran in 1941 and ruled for 4 decade both united states and Raza Shah were helping each other for interests of course. For America Iran was sharing the boarder with the old enemy the then soviet union (Russia) as it was an important region for strategic purposes to have control on persion Gulf. Oil in an essential factor for all movements in Middle East and Iran is the major oil supplier after Saudi Arabia.

From Iran's perspective United States was the protector from the other major powers of that time the United Kingdom and Russia United States was expected to help Iran to achieve its goal to be a powerfull state of the region president Nixon's twin pillar. Policy in which Iran and Saudi Arabia were the powers of the region where Iran was bigger partner of Unites State.

The sour relations started majorly after the Iranian revolution of 1979 and diplomatic ties with Iran become almost broken and anti- America seed were sown in Iran. Later Iran's hatered towards Israel became the base of its foreign policy. Its backing to the organizations like Hezbollah is known. In other words United States and Iran are two parties contesting for the influence in Middle East. Iran considers itself as an important member and deciding factor of region in countries like Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan.

Irans nuclear program is one of the major challenge of 21st century as nuclear Iran will create more trouble for west and Israel and will complicate the geopolitical orientation of the Middle east which already is going through wars conflicts, political upheavels etc.

The Nuclear Iran is the major concern not only for west but its neighbors are much more under threat specially Arab GCC states and Israel, however Iran says that its nuclear program is for peaceful purpose. It is still a speculation and hypothetical that Iran has military target of the nuclear program but its aggressive behaviour and verbal war with west and continuous involvement in neighbouring regional countries had increased distrust and tension among regional states specially the west. For united states and regional countries Iran's constant support to non – state actors in Palestine, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon had Grated distrust and threat for proliferation which can have serious implications not only for region but for whole world in bigger way.

Iran's ambition to become a regional power had kicked its nuclear ambition too.

The major threat that regional as well as western power considers of Iran as a nuclear state are –

Security issues:- security dilemma in the region as well as to the world increases as the aggressive behavior of Iran and its tensions with Israel and Saudi Arabia along with other GCC states is open to all. Iran had clashes on ideological, ethnic and geopolitical reasons with Israel and united states, by nuclear Iran there will be either balance of power – which may led to peace as in cold war period between USSR and USA or, Imbalance which will accelerate more tension and worse consequences. Its aggressive posturing in the region, its ambition of dominance is a threat for other regional states too.

Threat of proliferation - the volatile leadership, regional instability and external interference all this makes situation more complex. Iran openly supports non –state actors and organizations like Hezbollah in Lebnon and Palestine which fights with Israel for Palestinian cause as well as involvement of Iran is traced out in Syria, yeman and Iran for supporting manually and financially the non – states actors on the ideological basis. So the threat of the proliferation increases specially the non – state actors and terrorists are very active in the region and had relations with Iran which can use nuclear weapons without looking for its consequences.



Iran's ambition to become regional power and decision maker – Iran shares relationship of distrust, misperceptions and geopolitical struggle with almost all countries of Arabian Peninsula. They have ideological sectarian and ethnic differences with Arab countries. The GCC countries along with Israel feels that Iran's nuclear ambitions will result into more aggressive behavior of Iran and will become dominant power of the region.

To counter Israel- many thinkers argue that nuclear ambition of Iran is based on not recognizing Israel and supporting attacks against it and to disturb all kind of peace processes. The only threat to Israel in the region of Iran.

To make Shia Crescent - Iranian on the ideological basis wants to become regional power. It too claims the shiaa dominant regions like Iraq, Bahrain and Levant. Iran has an age old ideological rivalry with Saudi Arabia and most of the GCC countries on ideological base. The rift between the two major states of middle east is completely on shia- sunni which has spread now in almost every state of region like Iraq, Syria, Yemen etc.

For sunni arab monarchies Nuclear Iran is a threat no doubt Saudis are doing same with Iran by providing financial and military support to Cross-border tribals who are anti – shia or Iran and are sunni Militia in Iraq.

Nuclear Iran will become more aggressive and may support its military proxies. These militia groups are more disastrous and dangerous to be under the umbrella of Iranian Nuclear weapon. The countries like UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Israel will be more under pressure of shiaa Nuclear aggressive Iran. There are disputes with UAE over Tums and Abu Musa Islands, shiaa majority Bahrain and Other countries of middle east will enter into arms race on the reason of security issues, the countries like Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey and United Arab Emirates are expected to enter in arms race. While Israel is suppose to have nuclear weapons which it had not declared. This will create more instability in the region where there is political unrest and active non – states actors.

Threat to western interference free flow of oil- With the nuclear Iran the constant western interference will be affected and Iran's easy target will be Israel. Many scholars argue that the balance of power between Iran and Israel will move towards peace but there is no space of communication, no hot line or negotiations, the involvement of hard line politicians and ideological

hatred may force any state to use nuclear weapons and responsibility lies on international community and institutions for controlling the disastrous weapon. Israel had reiterated several times that it will stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapon at any cost may be its an alarm of Israel that is can use nuclear weapon first Israel is much more smaller than Iran and Iran's one bomb is enough to destroy Israel and Israel may strike first to counter its threat as it was seen before in Iraq and Syria where Israel had bombed the nuclear facilities. Israel knows that it is a one bomb state. Iran may also attack the U.S military bases stationed at the other states of middle east.

For Israel Iran's nuclear ambition is the biggest problem. In 1995 one Israeli military official had accepted that "when we look at the future and ask ourselves what is the biggest problem we will face in the decade, Iran's nuclear bomb is at the top of the list". Iran from the time of Shah wanted to go with modernization, westernization and nuclearisation. It was Akbar Etemad's scientific vision who was also the father of atomic energy agency of Iran (AEOI) who had assisted and encouraged shah's own technological and modern Iran's ambition.

If we go through current situation Iran is continuously denying of having disastrous nuclear bomb and it says its nuclear activity is for peaceful purposes however, Israel on the other hand is countering its statement and claims that Iran is working speedily in its secret Nuclear Bomb plants. The prime minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu said that "Iran lied about never having a nuclear bomb program and Israel have proof. Nuclear program of Iran is the dream if Iranian government and people and the fact is that since 1957, the United States has played a vital role in the evolution of Iran's nuclear program. It was President of United States Driest Eisenhower who offered "atoms for peace" to the friendly nations interested in technical advancement for the civilian purpose and Iran was one of the beneficiary later in 1974 president Nixon has further helped Iran by sending nuclear experts to Tehran for helping in building nuclear reactors even Iranian experts and students were trained in United States. It was all because of shah as Shah was close aid of United States and Britain but things went wrong when Ayatollah Khomeini came to power after 14 years in exile however for some time the nuclear program of shah was halted in the name of religion. Things became worse after student crises in November 1979 and all diplomatic relations came to an end from then till today. Iran and United States relations kept on deteriorating and in 2002



President George. W. Bush had alleged Iran of carrying secret nuclear program which was better proved by the exiled opposition national council of resistance of Iran which had claimed of uranium enrichment facility at Natanz and a heavy water plant at Arak. In 2005 after Ahmadinejad came to power who was also hardline leader become the president of Iran and IAEA reported that Iran had restarted uranium conversion at the Isfahan nuclear research facility. Iran too had started nuclear fuel research at the Natanz enrichment plant even after United Nations restrictions.

There were lot of sanctions imposed on Iran its assets were frozen. It is assumed that if Iran gets success in attaining weapons of mass destruction there is full chance of nuclear proliferation or distribution of weapons of mass destruction to disturbing and dangerous elements of region as all this is under (IRGC) Islamic revolutionary guard corps which comes under direct command of the supreme leader of Iran. It was in 2015 when Iran agreed a long term deal for its nuclear program with the P5+1 group of world powers these are the United States, Russia, Germany, France China and Britain. In this accord Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activities and will allow the foreign inspectors in its experimental areas and facilities and as a reward economic sanctions were lifted though Obama administration had managed to carry the deal but Trump who is popular for his racial and religious biasness in very stern and uncompromising towards deal and may be any time we can hear the news of withdraw or review of deal. Trump's closeness towards Israel is not hidden and Israel from day one is against the deal and calls it "biggest Mistake".

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Conclusion:-

Today's world politics revolves around Middle East. Many thinkers had even predicted that if world war will occur it will arise from here. There are unending challenges in this region like Arab – Israel conflict, terrorism, internal ethnic and racial conflicts, political instability etc. The two major power in region are Iran and other is Saudi Arabia and both claims for regional supremacy.

Iran had started its nuclear development program in 1957 under shah's rule with the help of United States. It was 'Atom's for peace' which had provided sufficient amount uranium to start nuclear program of Iran for peaceful purposes but things went adverse for united states as U.S. claims that Iran is speedily developing disastrous nuclear bomb.

Iran had claimed that its possession of nuclear bomb is legal on basis of security, being the signatory of non – proliferation treaty since 1968, provocation from west, regional disputes etc while united states and other western countries counter its claim on the basis of security issues, threat of proliferation, threat to Israel, the extension of west in the region, Iran's ambition of becoming regional power, to create Shia crescent by taking over Shia majority region and Iran's aggressive behavior towards west which is a big threat to the free flow of West Asian oil to them, later in 2015 president Obama had initiated the nuclear deal in which P5+1 members of security council were present and Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activity and in return its economic sanctions were lifted.

The current President Trump is against the deal and there is possibility of withdrawal or review.