

Is the Syrian War About to End?

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Larijani: Trump's anti-Iran accusations 'ridiculous'



Only country now supporting Kurdish referendum is Israel: Mehran Kamrava



Mehdi Taremi banned for four months by FIFA



Pictorial record of Arbaeen ritual published in Tehran



Dividing Iraq into mini-states make situation worse: Limbert

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ARTICLE
Hossein Yohya
political analyst

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Reaching a consensus is unquestionably a positive progress for the long-established conflict in Syria and is considered as a unity against the radical groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Creating the fourth de-escalation zone is particularly important in the eyes of the affiliated countries due to various factors. First of all, Idlib has a border with Turkey and is close to the city of Hama. Since armed radical groups are dominant in Idlib, including the ones transferred from Aleppo, Turkey was concerned there would be a wave of influx of these groups in case there was an escalation of conflict there. However, as a result of the negotiations in Astana, the armed radical groups are to be retreated in a region in the midway of Idlib, which would prevent them to advance to the Turkish border.

Sanders: U.S. backs anti-democratic S. Arabia but 'puts down' Iran

By staff and agency

Senator Bernie Sanders has criticized Washington's support for "incredibly anti-democratic" Saudi Arabia while pursuing a de-constructive policy toward Iran which just held elections in May.

Sanders also defended Barack Obama's key foreign affairs legacy in an interview with The Intercept published on Friday.

The senator who competed with Hillary Clinton in the Democratic Party presidential primaries in 2016, said that the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and the 5+1 group must be protected.

"I think that one of the areas that we have got to rethink, in terms of American foreign policy, is our position vis-a-vis Iran and Saudi Arabia," he said.

He said, "For whatever reason — and I think we know some of the reasons having to do with a three-letter word called oil — the United States has kind of looked aside at the fact that Saudi Arabia is an incredibly anti-democratic country and has played a very bad role internationally, but we have sided with them time and time and time again, and yet Iran, which just held elections, we are continuing to put them down."

In his speech at the UN General Assembly on Tuesday, U.S. President Donald Trump said that the 2015 nuclear deal signed by Iran, the European Union, Germany and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council was an "embarrassment" and hinted that he may not recently the agreement when it comes up for a mid-October deadline.

In response Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote a tweet saying, "Trump's ignorant hate speech belongs in medieval times—not the 21st Century UN — Fake empathy for Iranians fools no one."

Elsewhere, Sanders said that the U.S. should rethink its foreign policy.

China imposes limits on oil supply to North Korea

China accounts for about 90 percent of North Korea's trade, making its cooperation critical to any efforts to derail Pyongyang's development of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles.

Chinese leaders were long North Korea's diplomatic protectors but express increasing frustration with the government of Kim Jong-un.

They supported the latest rounds of UN Security Council sanctions but are reluctant to push Pyongyang too hard for fear the government might collapse.

They also argue against doing anything that might hurt ordinary North Koreans.

On Friday, the United States President Donald Trump praised China for increasing financial restrictions, and has been pushing Beijing to apply more pressure to North Korea over its nuclear program.

His comments came a day after he signed an executive order directing Washington to ramp up sanctions against North Korea over its nuclear missile program.

Trump said the measure would allow sanctions against "individuals and companies that finance and facilitate trade with Pyongyang."

Also on Friday, North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho said his country "will consider a hydrogen bomb test on an unprecedented scale on the Pacific Ocean as a threat, Japan labelled as "totally unacceptable".

(Source: agencies)

Rouhani rings back-to-school bell

SOCIETY TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani officially marked the beginning of 2017-18 school year by ringing the bell of a school in Tehran on Saturday.

Annually and prior to the opening of schools, which falls on the first day of the 7th Iranian calendar month of Mehr (September 23), the president raises a question dubbed "The Mehr Question" and asks students nationwide for sending replies to him.

Here is this year's Mehr Question: How can we turn schools into places for tolerating other people's opinions and respecting them and how to practice to prevail morality, politeness and patience? Rouhani said.

Iran tests new 2000km-range missile

POLITICS TEHRAN — On Friday night Iran released footage of the successful test-launch of its new ballistic missile, called Khorramshahr with a range of 2,000 kilometers.

The footage was released a few hours after Khorramshahr was unveiled during a military parade in the capital city of Tehran.

Khorramshahr is the name of a city in southern Iran which was occupied by the invading Saddam Hussein Army in the autumn of 1980.

Senior Ali Haghdadi, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Aerospace Force, said the missile can carry multiple warheads.

Trump's UN speech sign of 'weakness', 'frustration': top cleric

POLITICS TEHRAN — Chairman of Iran's Expediency Council, Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi said on Saturday that President Donald Trump's speech at the UN General Assembly originated from his "weakness, frustration and anger."

He made the remarks in an address to the Meeting of the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the Member Countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Turkey on Friday. IRNA reported.

Self-referred to oil and gas, petrochemicals, mining, transportation, urbanism, industrial production, agriculture and information technology as among the fields of interest for Iran to attract investments within the next 20 years.

PERSPECTIVE
Iran Times Journalist

What do you want to be in the future?

In a general sense education is what prepares people for their future jobs. But does it?

The 12-year compulsory schooling followed by the optional academic education is believed to prepare the future generation to build a civilized society.

More than 14 million students attend schools nationwide in Iran for the 2017-18 school year, but is education the only means for a better future for these 14 million? The answer is absolutely a big no.

Unfortunately, for many parents going to school is merely a means of getting admitted to the university and finally securing a job. Many parents are worried about their children's future and since the day they go to school they keep wondering, "they manage to get admission to a good university, but what's why many students are obliged to participate in extracurricular activities after school or even during summer and New Year holidays?"

On the other hand, for many students the start of the school year is the beginning of getting up early, doing long tedious homework, and memorizing long lessons they never figure out how they are going to prepare them for the future.

The long textbooks, especially the ones designed for high school, barely leaves any time for the teachers to come up with new ideas to make school a more appealing place for the learners.

And after 12 years, the 18-year-old teenagers must prepare themselves for passing an entrance exam they have been warned off since they started school. Some are fully ready for the exam and get the best result and their parents would be proud of them and some fail to get their ideal result and either decide to study for another year for the exam or get disappointed and try to find a job which proves to be the hardest part as they don't have any special skills or experience after 12 years of schooling.

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This decision proved to serve the purpose since hostilities diminished sharply in the first three agreed zones with the help of some of the associated states. The three guarantors decided to send 500 observers each to support the ceasefire and monitor the violations. The Foreign Minister made a written statement concerning the aim of forming this zone by saying that the observers' mission will be to prevent clashes between "the (Syrian) regime and the opposition forces, and any violations of the truce".

Reaching a consensus is unquestionably a positive progress for the long-established conflict in Syria and is considered as a unity against the radical groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Creating the fourth de-escalation zone is particularly important in the eyes of the affiliated countries due to various factors. First of all, Idlib has a border with Turkey and is close to the city of Hatay. Since armed radical groups are dominant in Idlib, including the ones transferred from Aleppo, Turkey was concerned there would be a wave of influx of these groups in case there was an escalation in conflict there. However, as a result of the negotiations in Astana, the armed radical groups are to be retreated in a region in the midway of Idlib, which would prevent them to advance to the Turkish border.

Idlib is also important for the YPG because it was their target province to proceed to reach the Mediterranean Sea. It's quite interesting that the terrorist group announced this following the agreement of the de-escalation zones signed in May in Astana. However, by this final decision, Afrin is surrounded on the three sides and hence the YPG forces are unable to move down to the South. Through the Operation Euphrates Shield, Turkey had halted YPG to join the cantons of Afrin and Kobane by taking control of the region in between. Taking Idlib under the authority of the Turkish, Russian and Iranian observers, is certainly a big blow for this terrorist group. The primary reason for the US to take Idlib seriously is that the region is Al-Qaeda's closest spot to the West. Moreover, the US does not consider Al-Qaeda's existence as a temporary but rather a long-term struggle. Besides, Idlib is home to some US-backed opposition groups that function along with them during clashes.

Given the significance for the involved parties, before the Astana agreement was finalized, there were rumors that some operations would take place in Idlib either by Turkey or the US or Russia. Even analysts from Turkey were contemplating it would meet Turkey's best interests if it initiated simultaneous operations on Idlib and Afrin. Yet, this latest improvement led to different steps to be taken. While the Russian military and Chechen leader Kadyrov's police forces will be deployed on the eastern part of Idlib, Turkish troops will be stationed on the western parts to sustain stability in the province. Since the contract instructs "rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian [access](#)", international humanitarian aid will continue to be delivered via the Turkish border of Cilvegözü to the estimated 2.5 million people who inhabit the four de-escalation zones. Additionally, within the same Memorandum, parties also came to a conclusion concerning the need to take confidence building measures such as the exchange of prisoners and corpses as well as identification of missing [people](#).

While this positive development takes place, a new project that would jeopardize the territorial integrity of Iraq is in effect. The Northern Iraq Regional Government insists on an independence poll to take place on September 25th despite strong rejections from the regional countries including Iran and Turkey. Given the current situation in the region, another national breakdown is the last thing anyone needs. Not pleased with this, the Iraqi Supreme Court declared the ruling concerning the preparations of the referendum to be halted after receiving several "requests to stop the [referendum](#)." This is definitely a sound decision for the well-being of the region because such fragmentations will generate new conflicts since the ultimate plan for the PKK and its affiliates is to form a communist state consisting of Kurdish minorities located in Turkey, Iran and Syria.

Only the regional players can provide the security in the Middle East. Powers participating from the outside give priority to their own interests. Therefore, it is essential for the three guarantors to be in consensus and harmony as much as possible. Stability can also be obtained via our own power, and sustaining the unitary structure of the states is of utmost importance. Therefore, the final memorandum of Astana beginning with the guarantors' determination to protect "the sovereignty,

independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syrian Arab Republic" is noteworthy. The PKK is playing with fire by trying to create an "autonomous Kurdish state" in Northern Syria alongside the Turkish border. Nevertheless, Turkey, Iran and Russia will never allow the region to be fragmented whatsoever similar to defeating the plots formulated inside Syria and succeeding by taking solid steps on the way to attain peace.

Adnan Oktar's piece in Tehran Times & Jefferson Corner (USA):

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/417055/Is-the-Syrian-war-about-to-end>

<http://www.jeffersoncorner.com/is-the-syrian-war-about-to-end/>

Jefferson Corner
America's Speaker's Corner



HOME THE MORNING COFFEE JOIN THE DISCUSSION ABOUT CONTACT

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18
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by Harun Yahya

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<https://www.harunyahya.info/en/articles/is-the-syrian-war-about-to-end>