

GROUP OF SIX

President Bush can do away with international law and hold anyone indefinitely anywhere in the world. The American administration under his stewardship has been shredding the UN charter for years without being effectively challenged at any level, domestic or global. The UN Security Council seems to have already picked up its sixth 'permanent' member—Germany. In Berlin last month the five permanent Security Council members and Germany agreed on a new draft UN Resolution on Iran over its disputed nuclear programme. Meanwhile, Russia made it clear that the New Resolution won't call for any harsh sanctions, hopefully not to jeopardise its bilateral trade relations with Iran. But the very idea of new sanctions—old sanctions didn't work—speaks volumes about the intention of the 'Group of Six'. Maybe, Bush is in a hurry to complete his mideast misadventure before it is too late. Not quite unexpectedly Russia and China fell in line defined by Bush and his warriors. Iranian reaction to the UN move was also in the expected line as President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad lost no time to describe the UN plan as an exercise in futility. Iranians see in the behaviour of the 'Group of Six' illegality and such illegal behaviour, for all practical purposes, is going to be ineffective, against the will of the Iranian people.

The 'Group of Six' is ex-facie worried about the International Atomic Energy Agency's concerns. But they are not worried about the Indo-US nuclear deal in which IAEA safeguards may be relaxed for India because New Delhi is very much in America's regional security orbit.

No doubt crunch time is approaching for the India-US nuclear agreement, not withstanding Indian Left's opposition, for hawkish reasons, of course, to the deal. As they have a small window of opportunity to finalise the deal before the US Presidential election gets in the way, both India and America are trying their best ignoring domestic and international outcry, to clinch a safeguards agreement with IAEA and gain a special India-specific exemption from the guidelines of the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). As Bush's days in the White House are numbered, the deal is likely to get pushed through the IAEA and NSG as early as possible.

But Iran is a different proposition. It's not India. It's not Iraq either. Yet Bush's conspiracy against Iran seems to be heading towards a full-scale war. Before the Iraq war Bush and his men proceeded with a calculated design through the sanctions route. An identical scenario is unfolding bit by bit, much to the horror of peace marchers throughout the world.

An attack on Iran, unilateral or multilateral, will unleash a regional conflict of catastrophic proportions. The Bush administration has virtually twisted "Trotsky's concept of permanent revolution into a policy of permanent war with nefarious aims"—to liquidate all those classified as "terrorists" and "rogue states".

America's declining war economy demands another war but a war with Iran is doomed. Israel's massive air-strikes on Lebanon in 2006 succeeded in uniting most Lebanese behind Hezbollah without doing much harm to the Hezbollah establishment. The Israeli bombing failed to pacify 4 million Lebanese. Today

Iranians are politically so motivated against American aggressive policy that Iran with a landmass of three times the size of France and 65 million people, could really be turned into another Vietnam. Iraq, as bad as it looks now, is slowly but steadily becoming a death pit for US troops, notwithstanding Abu Gharaib and Guanta-namo. Already, American forces, finding it increasingly difficult to combat guerilla resistance in Iraq are 'praying in silence' how not to walk away in humiliation.

The impact of Bush's Iran war cannot be anything but devastating, very possibly, triggering a global depression and affecting the world economy beyond comprehension. The price of crude oil in international market is already a nightmare for the poor economies like India and, in the wake of another Mideast war the price could soar to somewhere around \$200 a barrel.

The religious divide in the islamic world will be of little help to the rescue of the Bushes if Iran faces destruction. A war with Iran may pave the way for mullahcracy, not democracy, in a number of countries in the Middle East. After all Pakistan is a nuclear weapons state and a radical change in that country won't be a happier situation for Americans. Indications are that they are losing the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan. With Britain secretly negotiating with the Taliban, Pakistan has no option but to face more of the same—religious extremism and chaos in the coming months. Whether the Taliban could be used against Iran the way they were used against the Soviets, is open to question. Bush launched an illegal war in Iraq based on fabricated evidence and plain lies. He seeks to do the same in Iran. The tragedy is that the extended Security Council this time also is obliging. A world-wide anti-war peace movement is all that is required at the moment to thwart another slaughter. □□□