

Bolstering US Economy

Diplomacy means business. And American Banias know it better than anybody else. In the past two years President Barrack Obama has made every effort to improve the US economy including economic stimulus, health care reform and a new energy plan. Obama's much publicised 3-day mission to India was in the main a business trip aimed at bolstering the US middle class. But the efforts have yet to fully pay off as the US economy remains fragile and the middle class is increasingly becoming impatient. Their anxiety has been reflected in the recent poll reverses of Obama's party—Democratic Party. Obama's visit to India may open up a business deal worth US\$ 10 billion and create 50,000 jobs in the USA but it is no answer to the ever increasing US unemployment that hovers around 10 percent, resulting in a record approval rating of Obama. More than 8 million people have lost their jobs and at least 2 million lost their homes after they couldn't pay their mortgages. For all practical purposes the American middle class is shrinking.

No doubt Indian corporate lobby was happy that Obama paid special attention to their global reach. But the essence of Obama's swan song was more liberalisation and opening as he asked India in no uncertain terms to cut barriers to both trade and investment in different sectors including agriculture. The impact of liberalisation is being felt in every Indian home today. They have partially crippled India's traditional agriculture and whatever remains of sustainability is now on auction. Obama advocated minimal state intervention but he said nothing about why he would like to impose more tariff barriers to Indian exports. Protectionism has been the hallmark of American policy but they ask others to do away with it. As for US backing for India's membership in elite nuclear club—Nuclear Suppliers Group to be precise—it was quite logical after Indo-US nuclear pact which is again an area of big business.

In truth Obama didn't come to India to discuss politics with Indian leaders though the policymakers in the New Delhi administration derived comfort from the fact that he uttered a few 'mild' words about Pakistan-specific terrorism and a vague assurance to support India's endeavour to get into UN security council as permanent member. But nobody asked him whether it would be a veto-wielding seat or a non veto-power status. But the hawks in Pakistan too had to bite dust as Obama like his predecessor Bush made it clear that Washington won't impose any solution to the Kashmir dispute. In other words 'No' from US means 'No' from UN. Uncle Sam has been doing this balancing act for quite some time to please his old ally Pakistan and new friend India with a view to maintaining status quo in South Asian theatre because of Afghan imbroglio. In any case they are going to lose Afghan war. What they now want is a face-saving device to quit in grace while allowing Pakistan to play the dirty game on behalf of America. They need Pakistan more than ever before to make their presence felt in Aghanistan. As they want to get rid of Afghan quagmire where about 100,000 American troops are bogged down, it is next to impossible for them, even if the Manmohan Singhs open up the Indian economy completely, to declare Pakistan as a terrorist state. It is Pakistan, not India,

that still counts in American strategy to keep its hold on volatile Afghanistan, a victim of global power rivalry where people have forgotten to live in peace.

Meanwhile the leftists mocked at themselves by taking to the streets shouting anti-Obama or anti-American slogans, having, literally no impact on broad masses. Their exercise is so skin-deep and hypocritical that it doesn't touch even the fringe section of the enlightened society, not to speak of ordinary people who actually take the brunt to the beating. Surprisingly communists MPs didn't boycott the joint session of parliament which Obama addressed, hopefully to play with the gallery and he succeeded. The boycott drama was enacted by a few Forward Bloc and SUCI MPs.

The Left's anti-Americanism is simply ludicrous in the sense that they have no problem in courting American multinationals abandoning their ideology and people's interest. Also, communists are too eager to make a distinction between the democrat Obama and the Republican Bush though Obama in no way has deviated from Bush's charted path of American hegemonism.

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