

REVIEW OF URDU PRESS

October 16-31, 2020

Modi Govt Committed to the Welfare of Muslims



- Karbala University to come up in Delhi
- US to sign agreement with Taliban in Afghanistan
- Increasing influence of Israel in Arab world
- Iran-Iraq border closed

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Summary

The efforts of the Opposition parties to create rift between Narendra Modi-led BJP government and the minorities have collapsed. Some learned Muslims leaders have also started exposing the vilification campaign against Modi government under the guise of Citizenship Amendment Act and Article 370. Recently, the Urdu Journalist Association itself took an initiative in this direction. Newly nominated Rajya Sabha member of BJP, Syed Zafar Islam, during a speech at his reception, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah are empathetic to the cause of Muslims and that the two have been doing a lot to mitigate their problems. Minister for Minority Affairs, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, also said that post-Independence, no other government had done as much welfare for the minorities as the Narendra Modi government had done.

The National Commission for Minorities has directed the district magistrate of Prayagraj to file an FIR against the former chairman of Shia Waqf Board, Wasim Rizvi, over charges of corruption. In this case, a petition was filed before the commission by one Shaukat Bharati who alleged that when Wasim Rizvi was the chairman of the Shia Waqf Board in 2015, he, in connivance with the then minister for minority affairs, Azam Khan, demolished a 200-year-old Imambara in Prayagraj and built an illegal market comprising 64 commercial shops and thereby committed a scam worth several crores. Wasim Rizvi was a controversial person right from the beginning. He had openly demanded the construction of Ram Mandir and made himself an enemy of Muslims. Hence some members of Shia community had also boycotted him. When the Yogi government came to power in Uttar Pradesh, some people submitted a memorandum to the National Waqf Council in which Rizvi was accused of committing a scam worth Rs 70 crore. The National Waqf Council formed a team to investigate the allegations and examine the records of the Waqf Board and submit a report to the Waqf Council.

The US is trying to wriggle itself out of the Afghanistan cob web as US President Donald Trump understands it well that if his country is dragged into every conflict that takes place in different parts of the world, then he would end up paying a heavy price in the next US Presidential elections. That is why he started peace talks with Afghanistan's most active jihadi organisation, Al Qaida. Meanwhile, Afghanistan's chief negotiator, Abdullah Abdullah, has assured government of India that if they reach an understanding with Taliban, it would not adversely affect India's security concerns. However, it is difficult to predict the effectiveness of this assurance as of now.



'Modi govt committed to the welfare of Muslims'



The animosity created among Muslims against Modi government has come down

Roznama Sahara (October 11) reports that following the election of BJP leader Syed Zafar Islam as a member of Rajya Sabha, a felicitation ceremony was organised for him at the India Islamic Cultural Centre (IICC) which was presided over by chairman of IICC, Sirajuddin Qureshi. The convenor of the meeting was journalist Shams al-Hindi. Speaking on the occasion, the new Rajya Sabha MP, Zafar Islam, said both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah are committed to the welfare of Muslims more than our expectations. He said it was possible that Muslims had some wrong perception about the present government but they should bring their issues to the government and collectively make efforts for the welfare of the Muslim community by putting aside personal ambitions. The Urdu Press can play a vital role in removing the

misunderstanding between the government and the Muslims. He urged Urdu journalists to maintain a positive outlook and find their own space in the development of the country.

Zafar Islam has background in the banking sector and he studied in Aligarh and other Islamic institutions. He has joined politics with the aim of bringing the issues of Muslims before the government.

According to Syed Zafar Islam, no community would face any discrimination under BJP regime. Whenever problems of Muslims were brought before the Prime Minister, his response was always positive. Home Minister Amit Shah has also assured to make every effort to find solutions to the issues being faced by Muslims. He said that some local leaders of BJP might have some problems with Muslims but they don't matter. The Modi government has always maintained an empathetic attitude towards Muslims. When bombs exploded in a church in Sri Lanka, the

government decided to convene a press conference in Delhi but when it realised that it would send a wrong message to the Muslim community, the then minister Arun Jaitley called off the press conference. Modi government has resolved complaints related to triple talaq, Article 370 and other issues related to Muslims, but never taken political advantages out of it. There is a clear direction from Prime Minister Narendra Modi that issues that could create a hostile atmosphere against Muslims should not be raised at all. He also said that it was absolutely wrong to believe that BJP was an anti-Muslim party. Such malicious campaigns are aimed at tarnishing the image of BJP before the Muslims. He said he would do his best to find solutions to the problems being faced by Urdu newspapers and expressed hope that the government would also make efforts for the same. "Muslims have a trust deficiency with the present government. A few political parties and some Muslims themselves are responsible for this. I would make efforts to bridge the gap between Muslims and the government so that various welfare schemes initiated by the government are properly utilised by Muslims. One major problem being faced by Muslims is that they have no proper leadership at the top who can talk to the government," he said.

On the occasion, Sirajuddin Qureshi said that by promoting ground-level leaders like Syed Zafar Islam, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has conveyed a clear message that the government is serious about the development of Muslim community. The meeting started with Tilawat-e-Quran by Maulana Hafiz-ur-Rahman.

Those who spoke on the occasion included former IRS officer Abrar Ahmed, senior journalist Sarfaraz Ahmad Aarzo, Group Editor of Roznama Sahara Ismail Zafar Khan and former minister of Karnataka Roshan Baig among others. They expressed hope that Modi government would play a major role in the uplift of Muslim community.

Roznama Sahara (October 13) reports that at a meeting held at the BJP headquarters to felicitate the new president of BJP's Minority body, Jamal Siddiqui, Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said that no other government in the post-Independence period had done such work for the welfare and uplift of minorities as the Modi government had done. He said that efforts should be made to remove the misunderstandings between Muslims and Modi government. The Central government would ensure that India's quota for Haj reaches 2 lakh, he said. It is the biggest quota in the world for Umrah. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had realised that the number of Muslims in civil services like IAS and IPS was small and hence he took concrete steps to increase their representation. They were given free coaching on government expenses and scholarships were also released to Muslim students attempting competitive examinations at national level. This is the reason why there is a huge increase in the number of Muslims clearing all India examinations, he said.

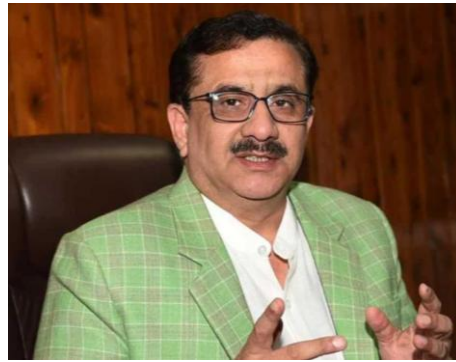
National spokesperson of BJP, Shahnawaz Hussain, said BJP is the biggest political party in the world and Modi is one of the strongest leaders of the world. Currently, more Muslims are

with BJP than with any other party. The biggest beneficiaries of the welfare programmes of Modi government are the Muslims. Before this, no other government had done justice to them. New president of Minority Morcha of

BJP, Jamal Siddiqui, said he would do his best to bring forth the issues being faced by Muslims before the government and expressed hope that he would succeed in resolving the issues.

Former chairman of Shia Waqf Board likely to be arrested

Inquilab (September 30) reports that the former chairman of Shia Waqf Board in Uttar Pradesh, Syed Wasim Rizvi, is likely to be arrested soon. The National Commission for Minorities had directed the Uttar



Pradesh government to arrest him in a case in which a 200-year-old Imambara was razed in Prayagraj. According to sources, an old Imambara, Mirza Ghulam Haider, located at Batasha Mandi in Prayagraj, was illegally demolished in 2015 and 64 shops were illegally constructed on the same spot. In a memorandum submitted to National Commission for Minorities, one Shaukat Bharati alleged that it was a scam worth crores of rupees. Samajwadi Party government headed by Akhilesh Yadav was in power when the Imambara was demolished and shops were illegally constructed on its land. That time Mohammad Azam Khan was the minister for Waqf and Wasim Rizvi was the chairman of the Shia Waqf Board. In 2016, Shaukat Bharati filed several complaints to different authorities right from the district administration to the

Prime Minister over the alleged scam, but no action was taken. Vice-chairperson of National Commission for Minorities, Manjit Singh Rai told the correspondent of **Inquilab** that after examining the whole

issue, the commission had directed the district administration to file an FIR and arrest the two accused, Wasim Rizvi and Waqar Rizvi. Though the commission had summoned the district magistrate and the Senior Superintendent of Police, they did not come. Instead, they sent their representatives, on which the commission expressed dissatisfaction. Surprisingly, though the Uttar Pradesh government had given its permission to file the case, no FIR has been filed yet, he said.

Shaukat Bharati alleged that the scam worth crores of rupees was committed at the instance of former minister for Waqf, Azam Khan. In 1991, the Union government had brought a Places of Worship (Special Powers) Act which freezes the status of places of worship like temples, masjids, gurdwaras, churches, imambaras etc as

their status was on August 15, 1947. In such a situation, on which basis was the Imambara in Prayagraj demolished? And how did an illegal market come up on the same spot? There should be an inquiry into the case and the guilty should be punished, he said.

Inquilab (October 8) says that a special team of Central Waqf Council had examined in detail the records of Shia Waqf Board. The inquiry team will submit its findings to the Union Ministry for Minority Affairs. Members of the inquiry team, Hanif Ali and Rahat Wasim Khan, said they came across some important documents in the course of the investigation but refused to give any details saying that they would mention these things in the inquiry report. He also said that the Central Waqf Council received several complaints over the scam at Shia Waqf Board following which this inquiry team was constituted. There are five members in the inquiry team. Rahat Wasim Khan told reporters that their aim is to recover Waqf properties from illegal hands after an inquiry. This is because Waqf property belongs to the entire community. Scandals cannot be allowed to take place in such places, he said.

Comment: Ever since Yogi government came to power in Uttar Pradesh, Wasim Rizvi is in the midst of controversies. In November last year he claimed that the Shia Waqf Board is in favour of construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya. Instead of the disputed structure at Ayodhya, if Muslims can get a plot of land to build a masjid in Hussainabad in Lucknow, they would be happy, he had said. Similarly, on the issue of triple talaq, when a majority of Muslims were against the new law

banning it, Rizvi openly supported it and called for a minimum punishment of 10 years in jail for those issuing triple talaq. One month earlier, he had said that if a statue of Bhagwan Ram comes up in Ayodhya, a silver arrow would be gifted for the statue on behalf of Shia Waqf Board. After watching his stand on these issues, the other Muslim leaders of Uttar Pradesh ganged up against him. Well known Shia leader Maulana Kalbe Jawad filed an FIR against Wasim Rizvi at Hazratganj police station. It was alleged in the FIR that he was trying to create hatred among various communities. Arif Qasmi of Imam Foundation too alleged in a press conference that Wasim Rizvi, in connivance with Azam Khan, had splurged money worth nearly Rs 70 crore of Waqf property. Hence the government should take action against him. Muslims leaders also opposed the contents of a letter sent to the Prime Minister by Wasim Rizvi in which he had alleged that children in Islamic Madrasas are taught the propaganda of ISIS. In Kashmir, Islamic Madrasas are openly advocating separatism, he had alleged. Refuting the allegations of Rizvi, former MLA from Delhi, Hussain Ahmad, said the allegations were totally baseless. The Madrasas had played a vital role in the freedom movement and Wasim Rizvi is making these kind of baseless allegations just to please his masters in power. When Wasim Rizvi extended support to Ram Temple in Ayodhya, Shias across the world had expressed their anger. Leader of Shia community in Iraq, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani had issued a fatwa against Rizvi, expelling him from the Shia community, he said.



Karbala University to come up in Delhi

Inquilab (October 10) has stated that on the occasion of martyrdom day of Imam Hussain, a meeting was organised at Dargah Shah-e-Mardanin Delhi in which Maulana Azhar Hussain Zaidi, Maulana Hasan Kamaili and Shia scholar Maulana Syed Kalbe Jawad Naqvi spoke. On the occasion, on behalf of Anjuman-e-Haideri, a tazia procession was taken out as per tradition and taken to the Karbala and buried there. However, this year, Delhi Police refused to give permission to take out tazia processions from different parts of the city citing the spread of Corona virus. Addressing the meeting, Maulana Syed Kalbe Jawad Naqvi said that an international level Karbala University would be established at Jorbagh Karbala in Delhi. He said that whatever promises had been made in the past, those would be fulfilled, irrespective of the cost. It is said that there are some differences among Shia leaders over the setting up of Karbala University. For the past few decades, land worth crores of rupees

belonging to Jorbagh Karbala is in the midst of a controversy. The 70-acre land is in the most expensive area of New Delhi. Hence everybody has an eye on it. The karbala is currently managed by Anjuman-e-Haideri.

In another news published in the same newspaper, it was stated that Delhi Police took stringent measures to control the crowd that came to attend a meeting organised at Dargah Shah-e-Mardan by Anjuman-e-Haideri on the occasion of the martyrdom day of Imam Hussain. Secretary of Anjuman-e-Haideri, Syed Bahadur Abbas, had described the restrictions as illegal. When the police stopped Shias from various parts of Delhi from reaching the dargah, they sat in front of the barricades and started the 'mourning'. The police and the office-bearers of Anjuman-e-Haideri had a heated argument over this. According to Bahadur Abbas, since the government had removed the lockdown, stopping of people from reaching the dargah was illegal. ■

Scam worth lakhs unearthed in Haryana Urdu Akademi

Inquilab (October 10) has reported that a scam worth Rs 15 lakh has been unearthed in Haryana Urdu Akademi. An FIR has been filed against the former director of the Akademi over the scam. It is alleged that huge amounts were siphoned off from emoluments meant for writers and the TA-DA of employees. Cheques were issued to drivers and staff on the basis of fake bills and the money

was taken away by the then director. Recently, an investigation conducted by the accounts officer of Information Directorate of Haryana revealed that the scam was worth nearly Rs 15 lakh and it took place in the Akademi in 2018. It was found during the inquiry that at least three fake bills were prepared in the name of different authors per day and the money was siphoned off at least

two times in the name of insurance amount for the government car. Fake bills were produced for travel allowances as well. The vigilance department had registered an FIR against the then director Dr Narendra Kumar and handed over the investigation to DSP Sharief Singh. According to the investigation officer, records indicate that on February 2, 2018, nearly Rs 25,000 was spent for serving food to the authors. Similarly, on July 16, another Rs 14,000 was again spent on food. Three days later, a bill of Rs 8,900 was generated in the name of food expense. The money was siphoned off from the cheques issued in the name of car driver Pramod Kumar. The driver told investigating officer that he did only what the director had instructed him to do. He was also asked to sign on some bills. A bill worth Rs 1.26 lakh was issued in the name of peon Kapoor Chand. This money was also taken away by the director. While Rs 1 lakh was



taken by creating fake bills in the name of travel allowance, on October 18, 2018, another Rs 4.92 lakh was transferred from the government account to a private account for which no clearance was obtained from anywhere. This private account was in the name of a relative of the director. Similarly, it was claimed that items worth Rs 96,000 were purchased from a shop for which a bill was also obtained, but investigations found that the bill was fraudulently generated. The shop owner clarified that no items were purchased from his shop at any time. ■

Triple talaq victims in UP to get allowance from Waqf Board

Inquilab (October 10) has reported that the Uttar Pradesh government has decided that the victims of triple talaq would get a monthly allowance from the Waqf



Board. In this respect, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has issued directions to the Minorities Welfare Department and the Shia-Sunni Waqf boards. Women

who file cases against triple talaq would be given Rs 5,000 per month till their cases are settled. Secretary of Minorities Welfare Department B L Meena had also

directed the department to formulate a state-wide policy for rehabilitation of triple talaq victims. The minorities department had also been asked to find

the number of victims of triple talaq in each district of the state. This apart, the Waqf department had also been asked to come up with a plan for rehabilitation of the victims and give a permanent maintenance allowance to the victims of triple talaq. The executive head of the Central Sunni Waqf Board, S M Shoaib, said those women who file cases against

triple talaq face lot of financial difficulties because there is no system to support their cause. The state government would give them an allowance till the court decides on the required allowance to sustain them. Later also, the state government would ensure that they continue to get a fixed allowance from the Waqf. ■

Waiting for Indian citizenship for 30 years

Inquilab (October 12) reports that SabaFarhat, a woman from Lahore, Pakistan, married a man from Meerut, FarhatMasood, nearly 30 years ago. After the wedding, Saba left Pakistan and started living in India, but she never got Indian citizenship despite repeated efforts. She told reporters that she had submitted all the required documents but the file got disappeared from the office of the district administration. She is living in India on a visitor's visa for the past 29 years but she had been detained at home several times. The Pakistanis too did not give her a visa to visit India. Saba said she got married as per tradition and with the consent of her relatives and she is staying in Meerut for the past 30 years with her husband and children. She became a daughter-in-law of India but never got its citizenship. Though she wanted to see Taj Mahal she could not do so because as per the rules of visitor



visa, she is not allowed to move out of Meerut. Similarly, when her daughter joined an educational institution in Noida and though she wanted to join her, she could not do so as she did not get permission to stay in Noida. She also could not go out of Meerut to visit any relatives. She believes that if her woes get published in newspapers, the government may provide her justice and she would get Indian citizenship.

Recently, another Pakistani woman, Fakhra Naureen, who was staying in Bulandshahr for the past 30 years, got Indian citizenship after a long struggle. The daughter of Saba Farhat, who stays at Nadir Ali building in Meerut, is a social activist and lawyer. Her name is Aman Farhat. She said that her mother had submitted all necessary documents for citizenship at the Meerut office but did not know why her file still remains buried in the office. ■

US to sign agreement with Taliban in Afghanistan



Etemaad (October 10) quotes US President Donald Trump as saying that all its military personnel abroad need to return to the country by Christmas this year. Last February, the US entered into an agreement with Taliban in which it was decided that Taliban will stop all its violent operations in Afghanistan and that the US armed forces will withdraw from the country by May 2021. The Taliban also assured to stop its war and join the ruling alliance in Afghanistan. The Security Advisor to the US President said his country would reduce the number of its soldiers in Afghanistan to 2,500 by the end of this year. However, now Trump says that he would withdraw all American soldiers from Afghanistan by the end of this year itself. Interestingly, there is heavy deployment of US soldiers in Iraq and Syria.

Etemaad (October 11) has said that the chief peace negotiator of Afghanistan, Abdullah Abdullah had recently visited India and he had made it clear that his country's agreement with Taliban would not be against Indian interests. He said that it was up to India to decide whether it wanted to hold any talks with Taliban or not. He said that there was no reason to believe that the Taliban in Afghanistan would make India as their next target of attacks. The importance of peace talks with Taliban is that if an agreement is reached with them, it would help end all military operations in Afghanistan's mountains and other regions, he said. "India is a friend of Afghanistan. Hence we will not take any decision that will adversely affect India's interests," Abdullah said. He also held talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Foreign Affairs Minister

S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval in New Delhi.

Siasat (October 12) reports that Abdullah Abdullah had told India that it would take an assurance from Taliban that it would not interfere in any issues related to India. India has extended maximum help for development of Afghanistan and so far it has given 30 lakh dollars as monetary help. He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has extended his support for the forthcoming peace treaty in Afghanistan. This is because peace in Afghanistan is in India's interest too. Before arriving in India, Abdullah Abdullah had visited Pakistan and held talks with Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, Foreign Affairs Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Army chief General Qamar Jawed Bajwa about the forthcoming treaty with Taliban.

Etemaad (October 10) quotes the chief negotiator of Afghanistan government, Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai, as saying that the peace talks being held with Taliban Islamic Movement in Qatar capital Doha is based on Quran and Sunna. Hence he was sure that Taliban would abide by Quran. "We want peace to prevail and an escape from the bloodshed in Afghanistan," he said. However, he accepted that though peace talks are held in Doha, the war is still on in some regions of Afghanistan. Recently, the Taliban launched an attack on a police station in which seven policemen were killed while four others went missing. Similarly, several people were killed in a bomb explosion on a bus in Herat province recently. The bus was on its way to Herat from Kabul. The explosion took place when a landmine exploded as

the bus reached Kandahar. The police has blamed Taliban for the explosion. The Taliban, however, did not comment on the incident.

Mumbai Urdu News (October 8) has stated that the former President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, had expressed doubts over the success of the peace talks being held in Doha. He said that the talks have reached a negotiation deadlock. He demanded that Taliban should accept a ceasefire for the sake of Islam. However, he accepted that it is difficult to end the war in 20 days which was going on for the past 20 years. Several complex issues are yet to be resolved. For example, there are no talks yet on the future mode of governance in Afghanistan. Taliban is not willing to hold talks with the present government in Afghanistan. According to foreign affairs minister of Afghanistan, Mohammad Hanif Atmar, there are many more obstacles on the path before signing the peace treaty. The solution for many controversial issues are yet to be found. Hence there is no point in expecting a major outcome from current peace talks.

Hamara Samaj (October 10) has stated that the Afghan Taliban had welcomed the statement of the US President that all the American soldiers in Afghanistan would be withdrawn by Christmas this year. However, analysts say that if it happens, then the existence of the current regime in Afghanistan would be at stake and the power would slip into the hands of Taliban. The Afghanistan government has not responded to the statement of the US President on troop withdrawal. However, the defence minister of Afghanistan recently clarified that all the

military operations carried out against the Taliban in the past six months were done by the Afghanistan army alone. The US troops had no role in these operations, he said. Pakistani analyst Zahid Hussain said that if US troops are withdrawn from Afghanistan, there is a likelihood of civil war breaking out which will result in turmoil in the entire region. The US President is more concerned about the people of his country than Afghanistan and that is the reason why he is repeatedly making statements on the withdrawal of US forces, he said. The US is already tired of

the lengthy war in Afghanistan. The decades-long war has ravaged Afghanistan as well. When the Soviet Union withdrew its troops from Afghanistan, a civil war broke out in the country and the US tried to extend its influence on the country by piggy riding on Taliban. It was the US which created Taliban, said Zahid Hussain. It is another story that US has lost its control over Taliban. According to Zahid Hussain, US President Donald Trump has made an election promise that he would extricate US from costly overseas wars.

Attack on Rohingya camps in Bangladesh



Siasat (October 11) has reported that armed Bangladeshis had attacked a few Rohingya refugee camps in southern Bangladesh in which at least eight persons were killed and thousands of others had to flee to save their lives. The administration has filed several cases for firing and kidnapping and so far 12 people have been arrested. According to government sources, between 6 lakh and 7 lakh Rohingya refugees are staying in two dozen refugee camps in Bangladesh.

The local residents are not willing to accept them. Hence clashes have become a regular affair between Rohingyas and Bangladeshis. The biggest Rohingya refugee camp is in Cox's Bazar where more than 1 lakh refugees stay. According to police captain Rafeeq Al Islam, armed clashes are going on in the area for the past one week. The hands of drug mafia involved in smuggling drugs from Myanmar are visible in these clashes, he said. There are many gangs involved in smuggling and most of them also fight against each other. The refugee camp is situated near Myanmar border, he said. The Cox Bazar is only 40 kilometres from the city. The refugee camp is spread over 6,000 acres. It is difficult to maintain peace in the region due to its terrain and inaccessibility, the police officer said.

Case against Nawaz Sharif for sedition



Hamara Samaj (October 12) reports that a political storm is brewing in Pakistan after a sedition case has been filed against former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, 'Prime Minister' of Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, Raja Farooq Haider Khan, and 40 other senior leaders of Opposition. The Lahore police, soon after registering the case, constituted a special investigation team to probe the case. Those who have been booked include the daughter of Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz, former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and three former generals of the army. Farooq Haider said he had always stood against India on the issue of Kashmir. The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, must be rejoicing after hearing that he had been booked in a sedition case, he claimed. He expressed shock that in the eyes of Imran Khan government, all opposition party leaders in Pakistan are agents of India. He has no idea on what will happen in future, he said. This case was registered on the basis of a complaint filed by Badar Rasheed of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf who claimed

that the leaders of Muslim League are traitors of the country. They sit in foreign shores and play into the hands of enemies of Pakistan. When the speech of Nawaz Sharif, who was sitting in London, was live broadcast in Pakistan, the 'Prime Minister' of Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir, Farooq Haider was also in London. Hence he has equal responsibility in trying to destabilise the present government. Inspector General of Police, Lahore range, Inam Ghani, said the investigation team has five members headed by police captain Asim Ifthekhar. The other members are Inspector Mohammad Gyas, Inspector Tariq, Inspector Ilyas Kiyani and Sub Inspector Shabbir Agawan. He said that the investigation team has started its work. The other prominent accused in the case include Raja Zafarullah, HasanIqbal, Khurram Dastigar and Khwaja Asif among others. In another case, the high court was informed that the son of Nawaz Sharif had refused to accept the summons issued to him in London. Nawaz Sharif is in London in the past few days.

Jihadis accused of killing American citizens



Hamara Samaj (October 9) has reported that a US court had held two British terrorists belonging to ISIS guilty of killing two US citizens. These two terrorists were handed over to US by Britain in August. According to US officials, Britain had handed over these two jihadis to US on condition that if they were found guilty, then they should not be given capital punishment. Before handing over the two to US, a British court had sought a detailed report on their activities from the American government and the court took a close examination of the report. Meanwhile, the British government cancelled their citizenship for their association with the terror organisation. According to police, British-born El Shafee Elsheikh (32) and Alexandra Kotey (36) were part of a cell of ISIS. The two used to circulate videos showing foreign citizens being

kidnapped and their heads cut off. One of the four-member gang of these jihadis were killed while another was caught in 2015. The other two were nabbed by US army when they were trying to flee from Syria to Turkey in 2018. US Attorney General William Barr said the two terrorists would be given appropriate punishment for killing US citizens. "We would not be able to bring back those Americans who died at the hands of these terrorists. Even then we would like to assure their families that they would be given justice," he said. Those who were killed at the hands of this group include American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff. It is being said that the ISIS cell had beheaded British and Japanese citizens apart from US nationals to create fear about ISIS. The group has been accused of kidnapping more than two dozen people in Syria.

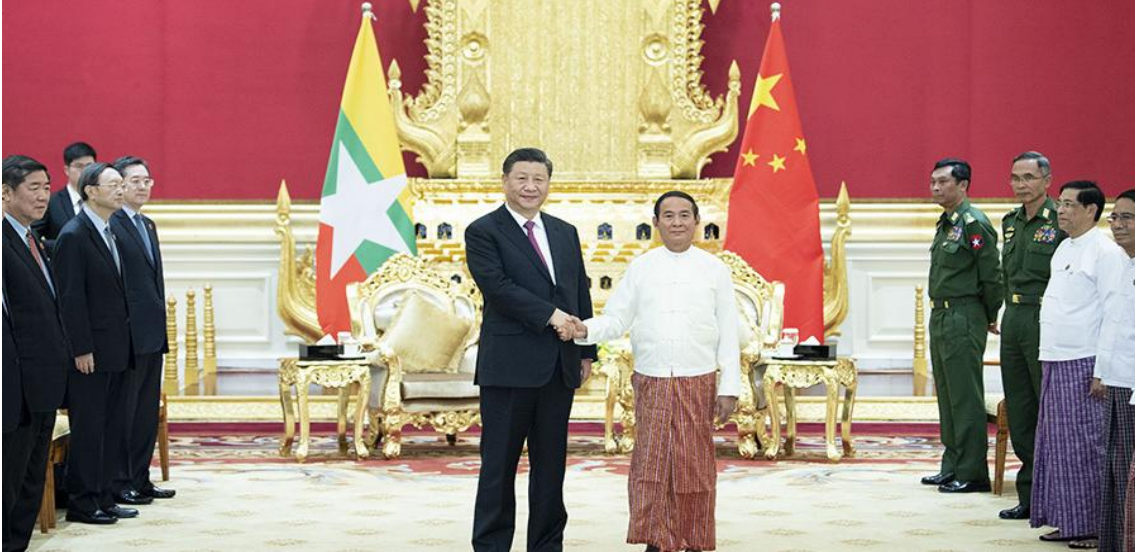
Pakistan govt, Sindh province on collision course over two islands

Hamara Samaj (October 12) has reported that the Imran Khan government and the government of Sindh province in Pakistan are on a collision course over the ownership of two islands located in the sea near Karachi. According to Sindh government, the ordinance issued by the federal government over Bundal and Budoo islands is illegal. The Sindh government had opposed the move in National Assembly. On the other hand, the Pakistan government accused the Sindh government of playing politics over the issue. While the Tehreek-e-Insaf party led by Imran Khan is in power at the federal level, the Sindh government is under Pakistan People's Party of Bilawal Bhutto. This apart, the Sindh government had also filed a petition in the Sindh high court against giving control of the two islands to the federal government. The court had issued a notice to the Pakistan government asking it to clarify its stand on the issue.

Last month, the President of Pakistan, Arif Alvi, had issued an ordinance stating that the two islands would be controlled by the Imran Khan government and its management would be handed over to Pakistan Island Development Authority. The Authority would be headquartered in Karachi and its offices would be located in other places. The constitution of the authority cannot be questioned in any court of law. The authority will be the owner of all assets and will have the power to collect various taxes, fees and transfer charges. The chief of the authority will be a Lieutenant General rank officer of the army and will

hold the office for four years. His tenure can be extended if the government desires so. Minister in charge of maritime affairs, Ali Zaidi has claimed that the Sindh government had assured the federal government that it would hand over both the islands to the Imran Khan government and hence there was no illegality in bringing out the ordinance. He alleged that the Pakistan People's Party is deliberately creating controversies. Earlier, the erstwhile Sindh government had written a letter to Imran Khan government in which it was stated that on the request of the federal government and in order to protect the interests of local people and fishermen, the Bundal island shall be to handed over to the federal government. However, information minister of Sindh government, Nazir Hussain, said that Imran government is making a fool of people. If the two islands belong to them, then why did federal government seek an NOC from the state government, he asked. "Is it written anywhere that the islands belong to them? We just had given permission to the federal government to allow it some constructions for the benefit of local people." Later, the Sindh government had withdrawn the letter. The state government said that the Board of Revenue had opposed the issuance of this letter. As per the records of Board of Revenue, both the islands belong to the state government. The spokesperson of Sindh government alleged that by issuing these kind of ordinances, the Imran government is interfering with the powers of Sindh and Balochistan governments.

Increasing friendship between Myanmar and China



Hamara Samaj (October 12) reports that the diplomatic community in India is worried about the increasing friendship between Myanmar and China. In an interview to BBC, former Indian Ambassador to Myanmar, Rajiv Bhatia, said that it is due to the increasing influence of China that India's foreign secretary and the Army chief paid a visit to Myanmar recently. He said that as of now there are two power centres in Myanmar. There is also a possibility of struggle for power between the Army and the government. The army chief and former Prime Minister Aung San Suu Kyi have emerged as the two power centres. Hence the Indian government is trying to maintain a cordial relationship with both the sides. India's foreign ministry believes that Myanmar is key to country's security and if China's influence increases in the region then it

would adversely affect the security of the country. He said that China had recently constructed a 1700 km long road on the south western part of Myanmar which connects Myanmar with both China and Pakistan. This is also part of Pakistan-China economic corridor. This simply means that China can now easily reach up to the Bay of Bengal. China has constructed this road with the purpose of encircling India from all the sides. China had spent millions of dollars for the construction of this road. It wants to connect India and Bangladesh via the road and claims that it would help improve its trade relationship with both India and Bangladesh. However, India has not accepted this claim. This is because India believes that it would affect its security as China is slowly encircling it from all sides by building a "String of Pearls".

Increasing influence of Israel in Arab world

Hamara Samaj (October 10) reports that Islamic country Sudan is facing a crisis due to shortage of food and the threat of famine is looming large over the country. The Sudanese government led by President Omar al-Bashir had to resign after being in power for one-and-a-half years due to huge public protest. Making use of the opportunity, Israel has been strengthening its influence in Sudan. If Sudan recognises Israel, the US is likely to remove Sudan from the list of countries that back terrorism. This will help Sudan to come out of the present crisis. The reason why Israel wants to set its foot in Sudan is that terrorist organisations like Al Qaida are using Sudan as its base to target US and its allied countries' assets in places like Egypt, Arabia, Ethiopia and Uganda. After the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York in 2001, the US had imposed several sanctions on Sudan for allegedly supporting the terrorism. The US had forced Sudan to throw out the chief of Al Qaida Osama bin Laden and other terrorists from its land. Later, the US intelligence agency CIA had started increasing its foothold in Sudan. However, the US objectives soon failed as the Islamic government of Omar al-Bashir started cooperating with Iran-based terrorist organisations and Hamas. At least on two occasions, Israeli warplanes had bombed Sudanese convoys carrying arms and ammunition to Islamic terror organisation Hamas. The US had imposed economic sanctions



on Sudan so that neither World Bank nor International Monetary Fund could extend any economic assistance to Sudan. As per a report of United Nations, nearly 96 lakh people of Sudan are facing starvation.

Siasat (October 11) has reported that Saudi Arabia is slowly tilting towards Israel. Recently, Israel had set up diplomatic relationship with UAE and Bahrain. Before this, only two Arab countries had diplomatic relationship with Israel – Egypt and Jordan. Analysts in Arab world believe that US is working behind the screen to improve the relationship between Israel and Arab nations in an effort to corner Turkey. One reason for this is that Russia and Turkey are increasing their mutual friendship on a daily basis. Recently, Turkey got a huge cache of arms and ammunition from Russia. The Palestine leaders allege that US is trying to strengthen Israel by dividing Sunni Muslim nations into two groups. While one group is led by Turkey, the other is led by Saudi Arabia. ■

Civil war likely in Libya

Etemaad (October 10) has reported that Libya has put its armed forces on alert as there is a possibility of the ongoing civil war in the country becoming more serious. Rebels under the leadership of Libyan warlord KhalifaHaftar is planning to attack several cities located in western part of Libya. The spokesperson of Libyan government said that the brave soldiers of the country, on the instructions of the Defence Minister, are getting ready to repulse any kind of attack. The Libyan Defence Minister had recently visited Turkey and had just returned from there. It is being said that the intelligence

sources in Turkey had warned the minister that the rebels are planning to attack some cities in the country. The rebels have amassed their forces along the region. The civil war is going on for the past few months in Libya in which thousands of people have already died. This is one of the reasons why Turkey is sending more arms and ammunition to the federal government in Libya. The United Nations is making efforts to stop the civil war in Libya. Talks are currently been held with the federal government and the Libyan parliament over the issue, but no breakthrough has come as yet.

Visa refused to Indians for Umrah

Siasat (October 8) reports that Saudi government is unlikely to issue visa to people from India for Haj since it had already made it clear that it would not issue visa to people from those countries where there are a huge number of Corona patients. This apart, Saudi had also refused to issue visa to elderly people from across the world for Umrah. Before the spread of Corona, approximately 40 lakh people used to visit Saudi for Umrah every year. Due to the pandemic, the Saudi government had sealed its borders for foreigners and for the first time in the history of Islam, Mecca and Medina were closed for the Muslims. Recently, the Saudi Arabian government had announced permission for partial resumption of Umrah. Subsequently, the hopes of many Indians that they would be able to do

Umrah in the near future have dashed. Now, the Saudi government has refused to grant visa to those Indians who got Corona. The Indian government has also given direction to the travel agents that until the Saudi government starts issuing visa to people from India, they should not do any booking. If they do booking before it, cases would be registered against them for fraud.

Mumbai Urdu News (October 12) has stated that the Saudi Arabian government has started deploying robots to sanitise Ka'aba in Mecca and at Nabawi Masjid in Medina to contain Corona. The smart robot initiative was inaugurated by the imam of Ka'aba mosque Dr Abdul Rahman Al-Sudais. The robot will spray pesticides in closed enclosures. He expressed hope that the robots would help in containing the

pandemic. These robots were purchased in bulk from foreign countries. The robots operate on battery and they can continuously spray for eight hours. These robots can hold nearly 24 litres of spray at a time. They are capable of spraying two litres pesticides in one hour.

Siasat (October 9) has reported that hotel rates in Mecca have come down drastically for the first time in the history of Haj. In some places, the room rates have come down to less than 38 Riyals. The Corona pandemic has dealt a heavy blow to the hotel industry in Saudi Arabia and efforts are on to revive it. The holy city of Mecca has more than 1400 hotels, which is almost two-third of the total number of hotels in Saudi Arabia. The room rent in these hotels are approximately in the range of 250 to 700



Saudi Riyals. Chairman of the hotel committee of Mecca Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Abdullah Fali said that the hotel industry has received a huge setback due to the pandemic and there is hardly any money to pay wages to the employees as well as for maintenance. However, he accepted that the less flow of pilgrims is due to the restrictions imposed on Haj by the Saudi government. Hence they are opening a limited number of hotels as of now, he said.

Tired of the sanctions by US, Iran approaches China

Etemaad (October 12) reports that due to the continuing economic sanctions on Iran by the US, Iran has started building relations with China. Foreign affairs minister of Iran, Javad Zarif, has recently led a delegation to China. According to Zarif, Iran and China have agreed to strengthen political relationship and regional cooperation and also decided to jointly find a vaccine for Corona, among other decisions. He said that China has also agreed to support its nuclear deal. The relationship between Iran and US are worsening day by day. US has accused Iran of supporting terrorism and hence asked European Union member-countries to immediately stop the sale of arms and ammunition to that country.



They have also been asked to ensure that Iran does not undertake any Uranium enrichment programmes. Recently, the US has imposed fresh economic sanctions on Iran including operational restrictions on 18 Iranian banks in United States. However, it is being said that the European countries are opposed to this step of US as it would adversely affect their trade relationship with Iran.

Jews of Ethiopia to be resettled in Palestine



Etemaad (October 12) reports that Israel has announced that it would settle nearly 2,000 Jews from the African country of Ethiopia in Palestine area soon. According to Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Jews would be brought from Ethiopia and settled in Palestine. Israel will spend 37 crore Shekel for this project, he said. Netanyahu held talks with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed on the issue. Israel is trying to strengthen its occupation in Palestine after establishing diplomatic relationship between UAE and Bahrain. Recently, a clash erupted between Israel government and Palestinians in Gaza. Israeli soldiers did not permit Muslims to enter Al Aqsa mosque and offer namaz. The Jews, on the other hand, tried to enter Al Aqsa. The Palestinian Authority had urged all human rights organisations around the world to voice their protest against the aggressive actions of Israel in Palestine.

The Prime Minister of Palestinian Authority Mohammad Shtayyeh has claimed that Israel is trying to destroy the Arabic school in eastern Ramallah so that Arab children do not learn Arabic language. The school has classes from Class 1 to VI. The Israel government has declared several Arabic medium schools as illegal and has issued notice to raze them. Imam of Al Aqsa mosque Sheikh Ekrima Sabri has warned Jews against any hawkish attempt to capture Al Aqsa mosque. They would face serious consequences if they dare to do so, he said. The Jews from all over the world want to construct Haikal-e-Sulemani (Solomon's temple) where Al Aqsa mosque stands now. The Islamic world should unitedly oppose this attempt. He alleged that for the past three weeks, the Israeli soldiers are not allowing Arabs to enter the mosque and are encircling the holy mosque from all four sides.

Border between Iran and Iraq closed



Inquilab (October 6) has reported that due to Corona pandemic, the border between Iran and Iraq has been closed for lakhs of people taking part in the annual Arbaeen pilgrimage.

As per Islamic tradition, on the 40th martyrdom day of Hazrat Imam Hussain, known as Chehlum, lakhs of people from Islamic countries reach Karbala grounds on foot and pay obeisance to the martyrs of Karbala. Nearly 40 lakh Shia community from across the world participate in this religious journey. The commander of

Iranian Border Guards, Brigadier Ahmad Goudarzi said that due to the pandemic, the border was closed as per the advice of Iraq. The Iraq government had already announced that there would not be any annual Arba'een Hasani march this year. However, a limited number of pilgrims have still started their journey from Basra, Nasiriyah and Samawa on foot towards Karbala. The Iraq army has been providing tight security to these pilgrims as the Iraq government has got information that some Sunni terrorists may attack these pilgrims.

Publication of Sir Syed's articles

Inquilab (October 8) reports that Aalami Urdu Trust has decided to publish the complete works of the founder of Aligarh University Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 25 volumes on the occasion of his birth anniversary. The collection of his writings was started by Sheikh Ismail Panipati in 1961 and Majlis-e-Taraqqi-e-Adab Urdu Lahore had published them



in 16 volumes. However, many more of his writings were recovered later. Hence, on the occasion of his second birth centenary in 2017, it was decided to publish his entire writings, which runs to over 17,000 pages. Chairman of Urdu Trust, A Rahman said that the entire 25 volumes will be available in the market within the next six months.

Vegetable prices shoot up

Siasat (October 9) reports that there is a double increase in the price of onion in the past two weeks in Hyderabad. The newspaper says that onion had been selling for Rs 40 per kilogram in the markets in Hyderabad nearly a week ago. Now it is being sold for Rs 80 per kilogram. The newspaper says that the onion crops got destroyed due to rain in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The newspaper has expressed concern that despite a huge increase in the prices of essential commodities, all political parties are silent. Due to



lockdown, the prices of edible oil, rice, dal, tamarind and onion have increased by 60% to 100% while vegetable prices increased by 40% to 100%.

Campaign for frugal weddings

Mumbai Urdu News (October 10) has stated that an organisation called Raahat Foundation had been set up which started a campaign against the need to cut



unnecessary expenditure for weddings among different sects of Muslims. The foundation has started the campaign in Maharashtra and Telangana where Muslims have been asked not to go for unnecessary expenditure during weddings. They have been asked to organise the weddings at mosques instead of at marriage halls and serve only two varieties of meat during the wedding feast. Zahid Khan, a social activist, told journalists that one of his

friends had told him that due to the lockdown he had managed to save at least Rs 25 lakh. This is because had there been no lockdown, he would have ended

up selling his house for his son's wedding. Now he managed everything with just 50 guests. Later, with the help of the general secretary of Raza Academy, Syed Noori, he started this campaign. His campaign might be limited to his Khadak community. The Khadaksamaj is also known as Qureshi or Kasai samaj. The cloth merchants have also decided to start the campaign for frugal weddings in Maharashtra, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Foundation day celebrations of Hyderabad

Siasat (October 11) states that the city of Hyderabad was established 429 years ago. The foundation stone for the city was laid on October 9, 1551. The need for a new city arose as the population of the then capital city of Golconda exceeded a certain limit. This apart, that time plague also broke out in the region, resulting in the death of thousands of people. Hence it was decided to establish the new city at a distance of 10 kilometres from the Golconda Fort. The foundation of the



new city was laid at a spot where the Charminar stands today. As per a historical book called Tuzk-i-Qutbshahi, Islamic scholars had directed that a tazia should be constructed to symbolise the foundation of the new city, which later came to be known as Charminar. The city was founded by Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah. At that time, Rs 9 lakh was spent for the construction of Charminar. Today, it gives a distinct identity to Hyderabad.

Demand for protection of minorities in Bangladesh

Etemaad (October 10) reports that due to the increasing attacks on Hindus, Christians and Buddhists in Bangladesh, a sense of insecurity has enveloped the minorities. Recently, a huge rally was held in Dhaka during which Hindus were warned to leave Bangladesh. Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of minorities council in Bangladesh, said in a statement that a well-planned campaign has been going on against the minorities in the country and an atmosphere of fear has been created so that they flee the country. He said that this campaign has the full support of ruling Awami League and Jamat-e-Islami. He urged the government and political parties to protect the minorities and provide guarantee to their life and property. He said that though the



government had assured that it would bring a law to protect the minorities, it has not been done as yet. Today, no temple, church or a Buddhist Mutt is safe in Bangladesh. The goons of ruling party openly attack the places of worship of minorities, loot their houses and kidnap their women, Dasgupta said.