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Dispute over Rampur Nawab's Properties Worth Rs 26 Billion to End Soon



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Editorial Advisor
Dr. Kuldeep Ratnoo

Editor
Manmohan Sharma

Translation from Hindi Edition

K.S. Kumar

Editorial Assistance
Shiv Kumar Singh

Office
**D-51, First Floor,
Hauz Khas,
New Delhi- 110016
Tel : 011-26524018**

E-mail:
**info@ipf.org.in
indiapolicy@gmail.com**

Website:
www.ipf.org.in

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Summary


Uttar Pradesh government has taken a major step to deal with incidents of Love Jihad in the state. It issued an ordinance which prescribes rigorous imprisonment to those who conceal their original names before marriage or force others to change their religion to get married. The ordinance came into effect immediately and the first case under the new law was registered soon after. However, Muslim organisations and Urdu newspapers have come out against the ordinance claiming it as against the basic tenets of the Constitution. President of Samajwadi Party and former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav announced that his party would oppose the ordinance in both the houses of the Assembly. Meanwhile, plans are afoot in five other states to bring a similar law.

The dispute over the division of properties of the erstwhile Nawab of Rampur, worth over Rs 26 billion, has been going on in different courts for the past 45 years and it has now reached the stage of settlement. Citing old royal tradition, the heir to the throne and his son had taken over the properties of Raza Ali Khan, the last Nawab of the erstwhile princely state of Rampur, forcing the other sons and daughters of Nawab to challenge it in court. According to the petitioners, since the royal family and the princely state had ceased to exist, the properties shall be divided as per Shia Personal Law. The dispute has been going on in different courts all these years. Finally, the Supreme Court had ordered that the division of the properties shall be done as per Shia Personal Law. The apex court had also directed that the division of properties shall be done by December 31, 2020.

In a first in the recently held Bihar assembly elections, the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen emerged victorious in Seemanchal region. The Majlis had fielded 20 candidates, out of which five won from their seats. The victory of Majlis candidates has put the secular parties, especially the Congress, in a quandary. They fear that the Majlis will emerge as a party for Muslims at the national level in the country. Majlis already has representatives in the assemblies in Maharashtra and Telangana. Owaisi has also announced his decision to field candidates in the next assembly elections in Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

The killing of the top nuclear scientist of Iran has created ripples in Islamic world. The scientist, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, was the chief of Iran's nuclear programme. Iran alleged that his killing was orchestrated by Israel's intelligence agency, Mossad. The interesting thing is that it is for the first time that somebody was killed using a satellite-controlled weapon. Iran has vowed to eliminate his killers at any cost.

The secret journey of Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Saudi Arabia has become the talking point in the world. It is believed that his talks with Saudi Arabia will be a turning point in US efforts to divide the Muslim world and create a united front against Turkey.



Dispute over Rampur Nawab's Rs 26 billion property reaches settlement stage



Inquilab (November 22) reports that preparations have started to divide the property of Raza Ali Khan, the last Nawab of the princely state of Rampur, worth over Rs 2,600 crore, among his 18 heirs. The dispute over his property has been going on in different courts for the past 45 years. A few months ago, the Supreme Court had directed that the Nawab's properties shall be divided as per Shia Personal Law before December 31, 2020. The report on the survey of these properties, worth over Rs 2,600 crore, has been submitted at the court of the district judge by Advocate Commissioner Arun Saxena. The main dispute is over Khas Bagh Mahal, which, as per records, is spread over 400 acres. However, the Advocate Commissioner could find only 350 acres. Despite several searches, he could not find the rest 50 acres of land. Hence he filed the report on only 350 acres of land which itself is worth over Rs 408.55 crore as per government circle rates. The building of Khas Bagh Mahal

has been valued at Rs 27.32 crore. The annual income from the cultivated crops of its land has been estimated at Rs 1.14 crore. The annual yield from the fruit-bearing trees is estimated at Rs 46.5 lakh. The timber from the property is valued approximately at Rs 20 lakh. As per the report of the Advocate Commissioner, the movable properties have been valued at Rs 64.5 crore while the immovable properties, which include Palace Sahbad's Lakh Bagh, has been estimated at Rs 721 crore, Palace Benazir Bagh has been valued at Rs 300 crore, the private railway station of the Nawab has been valued at Rs 113 crore and the valuables on the property is worth Rs 19.21 crore.

When the princely state of Rampur joined the Indian Union, Nawab Raza Ali Khan retained five of his properties and handed over the rest to Indian government. After receiving the survey report, the district judge had asked all 18 heirs of the Nawab to file their objections, if any, by

November 23. After the passing away of Nawab Raza Ali Khan, his Crown Prince Nawab Murtaza Ali had taken away all his properties. After the passing away of Murtaza Ali, his widow Nawab Aftab Jamani and her son Nawab Mohammad Ali Khan are currently holding the property. It is claimed that after the filing of cases, a number of properties have 'vanished'.

Inquilab (November 26) reports that when the Late Nawab Raza Ali Khan's grandson Nawab Mohammad Ali Khan filed objections to the division of the property, it created a huge ruckus. In his objections, Nawab Mohammad Ali Khan wrote that the map of Khas Bagh Mahal that was submitted in the court includes the buildings of collectorate, the district court, VIP House, Housing Development Colony and Noor Mahal. However, these buildings are not included in the survey report. Hence the survey report is incomplete. He said that the report was not legally tenable and hence it should be declared as null and void. The properties were evaluated on the basis of stamp duty while it should have been done as per market rates. He also raised an objection that the report nowhere mentions the construction area of the building. The agriculture land was also not mentioned. The report also does not mention the name of any village. Hence the report should be cancelled. Another grandson of the Nawab, Kazim Ali Khan, in his objections, said that 0.1 acre land has been mentioned as personal property which is wrong. This apart, he also complained that the properties were not evaluated properly. In the beginning, there were 18 heirs to the property, out of which two have died. The properties will now be divided among the rest 16 claimants.

Comment: The Nawab of the princely state of Rampur was a Shia and the kingdom was established in 1774

following a treaty with the Nawab of Oudh. The total area of the princely state was 945 square miles. As per historical accounts, when the war broke out between the Nawab of Oudh and the Marathas in 1772, the Rohilla Pathans were defeated and driven out from their former capital of Bareilly. Later, the Rohilla state of Rampur was established by Nawab Faizulla Khan in 1774 under British protection. The Rampur city and the fort was established by the Nawab in 1775. Initially it was known as Mustafabad but was later changed as Rampur. The Nawab of Rampur established the Rampur Raza Library which has thousands of manuscripts from Arabic, Parsi, Turkish, Urdu and Sanskrit languages. The Nawab stood with the British during the First War of Independence in 1857. Rampur Nawab was entitled to a 15 gun-salute in British India. Nawab Raza Ali Khan was the 12th Nawab of the princely state of Rampur. It was the only princely state in the country where the Nawab had his own railway station and whenever the Nawab wanted to go somewhere he used to travel in his own train.

The armoury of the Nawab has a collection of over 1,000 ancient weapons and arms. Following the death of Raza Ali Khan, a dispute has arisen over the division of his properties which has been going on for several years. Finally, the Supreme Court delivered its verdict on the issue and directed that the properties shall be divided as per the treaty entered by the Nawab and in accordance with the Shia Personal Law. The direction of the Supreme Court has set an example for other ex-royal families of the country as well. This is because as per the royal tradition, the eldest son of the Nawab used to be sole successor to all the properties of the Nawab. Hence, when the last Nawab of Rampur Raza Ali Khan

passed away in 1966, his entire properties were taken over by his eldest son Nawab Murtaza Ali Khan. Enraged over this, his brothers and sisters soon filed a case against him in the court. Their objection was that since the Nawab royalty had ceased to exist, how came the Crown Prince became the sole inheritor of property as per nawabi tradition. They demanded that the property shall be divided as per Muslim Shariat Law. This case has been going on for the past 45 years. Finally, the Supreme Court interfered and directed that a commissioner be appointed to evaluate the entire value of the property through a survey and submit a report in the court. The petitioners also alleged that the family that currently occupies the properties have destroyed them and hence they shall be paid a compensation of Rs 700 crore as well.

The Nawab family has five main properties in Rampur. The Khas Bagh Palace is the biggest among them. It was constructed 200 years ago as per European-Islamic architecture. It has more than 200 rooms. This is also the country's first air-conditioned palace. The Khas Bagh Palace

is situated on a 350 acre land. Another palace is Lakhi Bagh, which has more than one lakh trees on its compound. As per Shariat Law, former MP Begum Noor Bano has 2.5%, her son Nawab Kazim Ali Khan has 7%, Begum Noor Bano's daughter Saman Khan has 4% and her second daughter Saba Ahmed has also 4% claim on the properties. The husband of Saba was the Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court. Her father-in-law was former President of India Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. This apart, Talat Fatima Hasan gets 2%, Gisela Maria Ali Khan gets 5%, Nadim Ali Khan 5%, Sirajul Hasan 4%, Sayeda Birjees Laqa Begum 8%, Akhtar Laqa Begum 8%, Nahad Laqa Begum and Qamar Laqa Begum will also get 8% each. Also, Mehrunnisa Begum will get 7.25%, Mohammad Ali Khan 8% and his sister Nikhat Abadi will get 4%. Two other heirs—Qaisar Zumani Begum and Talat Zumani Begum have passed away. According to the lawyers, some claimants of the property have gone to other countries. Hence their shares come under Enemy Property Act and could be taken over by the government. ■

For the first time after Independence, no Muslim minister in Bihar

Mumbai Urdu News (November 20) claims that Bihar is one such state where there is a huge population of Muslims. Till recently, whenever a government was formed in the state, there was always a representative of the Muslim community in the state cabinet. Now, for the first time in the history of Bihar, neither a single Muslim has won on a ticket of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), nor a Muslim has been inducted as a minister in the cabinet. Not a single Muslim has been

elected as an MLA from the four parties of the National Democratic Alliance -- BJP, JD(U), Hindustan Awam Morcha and Vikassheel Insan Party. Among the four parties, only JD(U) has fielded Muslims in the polls. However, all of them lost the elections. There are eight Muslims among the 75 MLAs elected on RJD ticket. Four of the 19 MLAs elected on Congress ticket are also Muslims. There are five Muslim MLAs elected on Asaduddin Owaisi's Majlis party. There is one Muslim among



the 16 MLAs elected on the ticket of Left parties. BSP also has one Muslim MLA. The newspaper alleged that Nitish Kumar has damaged his image of being a samajwadisecular leader.

Siasat (November 12) claims that Congress had to pay heavily for ignoring Muslims. The Congress has totally failed to win the support of Muslims. The Congress has particularly been eliminated in Seemanchal region. One leader of the Congress in the state has complained that the Congress did not canvass properly in Muslim majority areas nor any effort was made to attract the vote of Muslims. “Don’t know on what basis Congress concluded that the Muslims would have no choice other than voting for the Mahagathbandan and hence ignored it,” he said. The result is that Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen has won from five seats. This has severely dented the prospects of Mahagathbandan. Former Union minister Shakeel Ahmed has alleged that the candidates of Mahagathbandan were deliberately defeated. In this respect, he cited the examples of two regions. However, another Muslim leader Shakeel-ur-Rahman Ansari has alleged that the

Congress did not take much interest in campaigning in Muslim majority areas. Hence Majlis took advantage of this. Only Imran Pratapgarhi took some half interest in campaigning in the elections. The Congress high command ignored the Muslim leaders and hence the party totally failed to get Muslim votes.

Comment: According to Islamic website twocircles.net, 19 Muslims have been elected as MLAs in the 2020 Bihar Assembly elections.

As per the figures of Election Commission, 23 Muslims were elected as MLAs in 1952, 26 in 1957, 22 in 1962, 17 in 1967, 20 in 1969, 22 in 1972, 24 in 1977, 24 in 1980, 29 in 1985, 17 in 1999, 21 in 1995, 29 in 2000, 17 in 2005, 19 in 2010 and 25 in 2015 elections. Till now, a total of 4,593 people have been elected as MLAs in the Bihar Assembly. The total number of Muslims among them is 334. In this manner, the representation of Muslim MLAs remained at 7.27%. However, if one compares it to the increasing population of Muslims, a total of 633 Muslims should have been elected as MLAs till now. In 1952 and 1957, all the Muslim MLAs who

were elected, won on Congress tickets. After 1962, the hold of Congress over Muslim voters started waning. In 1977, 13 Muslims were elected on Janata Party ticket and 8 were elected on Congress ticket. In the 1980-85 period, the Congress managed to win back Muslim votes. For this reason, the maximum number of Muslims were elected in this period, and their number was 29. In the 1990 elections, Janata Dal managed to attract Muslim voters. In 2000, a separate Jharkhand state was formed and in the next Assembly elections held in Bihar in 2005, 16 Muslim MLAs emerged victorious. This number was the smallest after Independence.

In a by-election held in 2009 at Bakhtiyarpur Assembly seat, Congress candidate Mehboob Ali Kaiser got elected and the number of Muslim MLAs increased to 17. However, compared to the population of Muslims, 40 MLAs should have got elected. These 17 MLAs belonged to seven different political parties. In these elections, the RJD and Congress together put a total of 46 Muslim candidates. However, only nine of them got elected. Lok Janshakti Party had fielded 47 Muslim candidates but only one got elected. Janata Dal (United) fielded nine candidates out of which four got elected. Meanwhile, CPI (M-L) and Nationalist Congress Party had got two MLAs each elected. Some Independent Muslim candidates too got elected. The interesting fact is that in this election, some 42 Muslim candidates were defeated at a thin margin of votes. The reason could be people's anger against the RJD government in the state.

Muslim candidates were defeated in large numbers also due to the division of votes of Muslims. In the 2010 election, 19 Muslim candidates had won. The maximum number of victorious candidates from one party was seven, who won on

JD(U) ticket. While six won on RJD ticket, three won on Congress and two won on Lok Janshakti Party ticket. Two Muslim women also got elected in this election. Thirtysix Muslim candidates reached second position in the same polls. The Congress had fielded 46 Muslim candidates while RJD had fielded 26 Muslim candidates. JD (U) had fielded 14 Muslim candidates in the polls. LJP fielded 10 Muslim candidates and BJP gave ticket to one candidate. The Muslims supported Nitish Kumar because he re-opened the Bhagalpur riots case and took steps to ensure punishment to the guilty. This apart, Bihar remained riots-free under his rule. In 2015, due to the grand alliance of RJD, JD(U) and Congress, they achieved a huge victory and Nitish Kumar became the chief minister for the third time. In that year's election, 24 Muslim candidates were elected as MLAs. Out of them 12 were from RJD, 6 from Congress, 5 were from JD (U) and one was from CPI-ML. Sixteen Muslim candidates reached second position.

In this election, Muslims voted for the alliance of secular parties. However, the Muslims received a major setback when Nitish Kumar severed his ties with RJD and shook hands with BJP. Muslims have this complaint that most political parties are not giving them tickets in proportionate to their population. Congress and RJD are giving only 9 to 10% tickets to Muslims. CPI and CPM have given only 7% and 8% tickets respectively to Muslims. The Muslims have another complaint that in whichever seats they are in a majority, they are considered as safe seats and their support have been taken for granted. This has been mentioned in the Sachar Committee report submitted in 2006.

The Muslims also have a complaint that whichever parties they extend their

support to, they often hesitate to field Muslims in the elections and even if they give tickets to Muslim candidates, they are fielded in such places where the Muslim population is less. The Muslim majority places include Kishanganj, Purnia, Auraiya, Katihar, Madhubani, Sitamarhi,

Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, Siwan, Gopalganj and West Champaran. In such places, a number of Muslim candidates contest in a single seat resulting in the division of Muslim votes. Due to polarisation, such Muslim candidates get defeated compared to the candidates of majority community.

Majlis spreads its roots in Bihar



Etemaad (November 11) in its lead story on page 1 mentioned the victory of Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen in Bihar elections and titled its headline as “Majlis creates history in Bihar. MIM makes entry into a third Assembly after Telangana and Maharashtra. Majlis will contest Bengal and Uttar Pradesh elections.” The newspaper points out that Majlis had fielded 20 candidates in the Assembly elections in Bihar out of which five emerged victorious. Bihar has become the third state for Majlis in the country. The Majlis representative will be the voice of Muslims and backward classes in the Assembly. Earlier, Majlis had hoisted its flag in Telangana and Maharashtra.

The BJP and Congress unleashed a campaign against the Majlis and used their star campaigners in the elections. In Telangana Assembly, Majlis has seven

members in the lower house and two members in the upper house. In Maharashtra Assembly also they have two members. Majlis has emerged as a political party. Those who were elected on Majlis tickets in Bihar are Akhtarul Iman, Anzar Naeemi, Shahnawaz Alam, Syed Rukhnuddin Ahmad and Muhammed Izhar Asfi. Asaduddin Owaisi has said that his party had decided to contest the Assembly elections in Bengal and Uttar Pradesh as well.

Etemaad in its editorial published on November 23 has claimed that we had created a new history. The newspaper states that at a time when various organisations of BJP Parivar are strongly going ahead in capturing state after state through ground work, publicity, social media usage and with the help of bureaucracy, the votes of Muslims are

made ineffective by adopting an appeasement policy of the majority community. The 100-year-old Congress party is becoming helpless in giving a fight for BJP. In such circumstances, the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, which has emerged in the South, has managed to win five seats in the Assembly elections in Bihar and created history. The Indian Constitution allows any political party to field its candidates in any corner of the country.

The newspaper states that sixty years have passed since Majlis was formed. After the forceful takeover of the princely state of Hyderabad, the Muslims of that region remained politically orphaned. Hence in order to provide them an identity, Abdul Wahed Owaisi founded the Majlis party. His son Salahuddin Owaisi strengthened the organisation. However, the enemies did not leave any opportunity to bring a bad name to the Majlis by making false allegations. Murderous assaults were launched against the leaders of Majlis. Now the minorities and backward classes are seeing a silver lining in the leadership of Asaduddin Owaisi. Even though there are dozens of Muslim organisations in the country no leader is visible other than Owaisi who takes up the issues of Muslims before the media without any fear and is capable of challenging the ruling party. The newspaper predicts that Majlis will emerge as a strong force in the political horizon of the country.

Etemaad in its editorial on November 11 alleged that the National Democratic Alliance managed to win the Bihar Assembly elections due to the lack of political vision of Mahagathbandhan. One major reason for this is the disappointing performance of Congress, a member of the Mahagathbandhan. In the 2015 elections, the Congress formed a grand alliance with

RJD and JD(U) and fielded candidates in 41 seats and managed to win 27 out of them. Political observers say that TejaswiYadav made the mistake of giving 70 seats to Congress, resulting in loss of power. In the case of Majlis, it is rising as a strong political party and in future would show its muscle in the elections in Uttar Pradesh and Bengal.

Mumbai Urdu News (November 22) has published an article which states that the one who is most worried over Owaisi's success is Congress party. The secularists have lost their sleep after the victory of five Majlis candidates in Seemanchal. The 2014 general elections were fought on the basis of religion. The voice of secularists remained suppressed. The Congress did not feel ashamed in entering a tie-up with Shiv Sena. The Congress party's biggest problem is that it has no vote bank of its own. Till now they firmly believed that the votes of Muslims would not go to BJP and would remain with Congress. But after Majlis arrived on the scene, the Muslim vote of Congress started moving out of its hands. This is the reason why the Congress is getting defeated in every election in the country. Whether somebody agrees or disagrees, the fact is that currently elections are fought in the country on the basis of religion. The BJP has Hindu votes. BSP has Dalit votes. Shiv Sena and NCP have Maratha votes. Samajwadi Party and RJD have Yadav votes. If somebody has Jat votes, then another has Rajput votes. Each and every political party has its own vote bank in the country. However, Congress doesn't understand this situation.

After the elections in Bihar, TejaswiYadav said that not much damage was caused to Mahagathbandhan due to Owaisi. Congress doesn't want Owaisi to emerge as a political leader of Muslims.

They do not want Owaisi to raise his voice for Muslims and instead want Muslims to remain on the mercy of Congress. But this is not going to happen. Ever since Owaisi announced his decision to contest the polls in Bengal, Congress has become the most worried party. This apart, Mamata Banerjee too fears that if the Muslim votes go to Majlis, then she would lose power. If Owaisi's party plunges into the fray in Bengal then there will be polarisation which will be damaging to Congress and all secular parties.

Hamara Samaj (November 12), commenting on the elections in Bihar, said

that people voted for Nitish Kumar due to his good governance and the style of functioning. Though Tejaswi made some tall claims, people did not find much weight in his claims. Hence they voted for NDA. BJP has won due to its successful election strategy and dedication. Hence it emerged as the second biggest party. Whereas JD(U) has been relegated to the third position. The newspaper expressed hope that Nitish Kumar would fulfil the promises he made to the people before the elections. ■

Ordinance against Love Jihad

Mumbai Urdu News (November 25) reports that Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel has given her nod to the ordinance passed by the state cabinet to curb Love Jihad. The ordinance has been issued to stop forcible conversion for marriage. Uttar Pradesh minister Sidharth Nath Singh said the state cabinet had discussed the issue following which it was decided to issue the ordinance. He said that in cases involving forced conversion, the accused would get imprisonment ranging from one year to five years apart from a fine of Rs 15,000. Whereas in the case of minors and women from Dalit community, the punishment would range from three years imprisonment to ten years. They have to also pay a fine of Rs 25,000.

He said that if anybody wants to change the religion and get married then it is mandatory for the person to take permission from the district magistrate two months in advance. And if anybody conceals his real name to get married then he would get a punishment of ten years in jail apart from a fine of Rs 50,000. He said

that the ordinance has been issued with the aim of providing justice to women. He said that at least 100 cases have taken place in the state in which women were forced to convert after marriage. This is because the husband concealed his real name before the marriage.

During a recent public hearing, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had announced that the state government would take stringent action to stop Love Jihad and would bring a law to curb the practice. He issued a warning to those who conceal their real identity and play truant with sisters and daughters and said that if they don't mend their ways, they would face stringent action. As per the ordinance, the new law has come into force in entire Uttar Pradesh with immediate effect and a notification was also issued by the home ministry on this respect. The notification also carries the format of the application that shall be submitted to the district magistrate by those who want to get married to people from other religions.

As per the ordinance, its violations are non-bailable and it is the responsibility of the person who challenges the law to establish his stand. The cases filed on the basis of the new law will be heard in the court of a first class magistrate and the marriage of those who converted their religion to get married in violation of the law would be declared null and void. If any organisation is found involved in largescale conversions, then the registration of such organisations would be cancelled. The chief of Samajwadi Party and former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav said that his party would oppose the controversial law in both the houses of the Assembly. This is because it is against the basic tenets of the Constitution. He also said that the law is against public sentiment and it has been brought only to harass people. Commenting on the issue, the chief of Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, Asaduddin Owaisi said that the law is against the provisions of Section 14 and 21 of Special Marriage Act. He said that the ordinance ignores the basic tenets of the Constitution and it would spread hate in the society. He alleged that the law has been brought to scare away the youths complaining of unemployment. Taking a swipe at BJP leaders, Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Bhupesh Bagel said many BJP leaders had married women from other religions. Whether these marriages would also come under the definition of Love Jihad? He said that BJP is spreading hate in the society.

Mumbai Urdu News (November 30) states that the first case based on the ordinance issued to curb Love Jihad in Uttar Pradesh has been filed in Bareilly district. The victim has alleged in the FIR that a youth named Idris has been forcing his daughter to marry him and putting pressure on her to change her religion. The youth also threatened her that if she doesn't

marry him, he would kill his family members. According to the newspaper, the police has filed an FIR on the basis of the complaint filed by the father of the student and started an investigation. The newspaper states that the daughter of Tikaram of Sharif Nagar village under Devraniya police station in Bareilly district in Uttar Pradesh was known to Owais Ahmad of the same village. The two were classmates in an inter-college. According to the girl, she completed the course and moved to another college for higher studies. She alleged that for the past one year Owais Ahmad was exerting pressure on her to convert to Islam and marry her. Initially she used to put off with such requests, because she was scared of slander. Later when she started opposing his demands, he started threatening to kidnap her. In order to escape from the trouble, the father of the girl, Tikaram, married her off to a person at a different place. After this, Owais Ahmad started harassing the family. Fed up with the harassment, Tikaram reached the police station and filed a complaint. Superintendent of Police, Bareilly Rural, Sansar Singh said that based on the complaint of the father of the student, a case has been registered under Uttar Pradesh Anti-Conversion Law and also under sections 504 and 506 of Indian Penal Code. This is the first case of forcible conversion where the police registered an FIR and started an inquiry immediately after receiving a complaint.

Siasat (November 25) in its editorial has strongly criticised the new law. The editorial asks whether the BJP government is really afraid of Muslims. They are more interested in dividing the society on religious lines than on governance. The law that has been brought against Love Jihad is an attempt to meddle with the Constitution. BJP governments are in power in many

states, starting from Uttar Pradesh. Legal experts have questioned the decisions taken by these governments. They say that Love Jihad has no meaning from the legal or constitutional point of view. Article 21 of the Constitution allows every citizen to adopt whichever religion he or she wants and also allows one to marry at his or her own will.

The law that has been brought by the Uttar Pradesh government is a joke. The Allahabad High Court had also ruled that as per the Constitution, anyone can marry as per his or her wish and adopt whichever religion one wants. This ruling was given in Salamat Ansari versus Priyanka Kharwar case. Salamat Ansari had married Priyanka Kharwar on August 19, 2019. When both of them started getting threats, they knocked at the doors of the court. The Allahabad High Court had made it clear that the court has no right to intervene in the personal life of citizens. However, if the government creates laws as per its own will, then the opposition to it will be quite natural.

Whether it is the Yogi government in Uttar Pradesh or the Karnataka, Assam, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh governments, they have started issuing threats on creating new laws due to their anti-Muslim attitude. The chief minister of Uttar Pradesh has gone as far as issuing a threat that whoever tries to play with the honour of our sisters and daughters would be finished. As per Article 25 of the Constitution that deals with freedom of expression, any adult can choose the woman he likes to get married. The BJP and other communal elements fear that if Hindu girls marry Muslim men after getting converted to Islam, then the population of Muslims will increase. The BJP governments at Uttar Pradesh and the Centre might have won on huge majority, but that doesn't mean that they can start tampering with the Constitution. Love has no religion but the government has mixed it with religion and thereby exposed its communal mindset. This is against the Constitution of the country. Hence such laws should be withdrawn. ■

Islamic scholar Maulana Kalbe Sadiq passes away

Inquilab (November 25) reports that world renowned Islamic scholar Maulana Kalbe Sadiq passed away at the age of 81. He was admitted to the medical college hospital some time back. The Maulana was the Vice-Chairman of All India Muslim Personal Law Board. He was a huge supporter of Shia-Sunni unity and was a man of simplicity. He had visited various countries in the world to learn Islam. The representative of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei in India, Maulana Mahdi Mahdavi pour, led his final prayers, Namaz-e-Janaza. Another Namaz-e-Janazawas held in front of Ghanta Ghar, led by Sunni scholar and the Imam of TeeleWali Masjid, Maulana Syed Fazlul

Mannan Rahmani. He was buried at Imambara Gufran Ma'ab. Those who paid tributes to him include the Deputy Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Dr Dinesh Sharma, state Congress president Ajay Kumar Lallu and Maulana Khalid Rashid Firangi Mahali among others. For the editor of Inquilab, Shakil Shasmi, Maulana Sadiq was his uncle.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, paying tributes to Maulana Sadiq, said: "The passing away of Maulana Kalbe Sadiq is very saddening. He made remarkable efforts for social harmony and brotherhood. My condolences to his family and loved ones."

Concern in Europe over Islamophobia



Etemaad (November 12) reports that Pakistan and Iran have expressed concern over increasing sentiments in European countries against Islam and said that any insult to Islam under the guise of freedom of expression will not be tolerated at any cost. According to the spokesperson of Pakistan's foreign ministry, the External Affairs Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi held talks with Iran's Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Javad Zarif. The two countries also discussed issues like forging a common policy to contain the spread of Corona pandemic, tightening security on their border and providing better facilities for travellers. Qureshi expressed concern over the number of deaths in Iran due to Corona and said that his country is willing to extend all kinds of

help to Iran in these difficult times. The two sides also decided to improve trade relations and increase investments and discussed issues related to security. Qureshi expressed hope that peace will come back to Afghanistan soon.

Pakistan has alleged that India is harassing the residents of Jammu and Kashmir and violating human rights. He thanked Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei for supporting the people of Kashmir. The foreign minister of Iran held talks with Pakistan's Army chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa and the two countries vowed to cooperate on various issues related to security. The two foreign ministers also agreed to adopt a common policy to defeat the campaign unleashed in European countries against Islam. ■

Notorious terrorist Hafiz Saeed gets 10 years in jail

Inquilab (November 20) reports that notorious terrorist Hafiz Saeed, accused of masterminding the Mumbai terror attacks,

and currently lodged in Lahore jail for financing terror activities, has been awarded ten years punishment. This

punishment has been awarded by Pakistan's anti-terrorism court. The punishment was awarded in connection with two cases in which he was accused of providing money for terror activities. Zafar Iqbal, Yahya Mujahid and Abdul Rahman are the others convicted along with Saeed. Hafiz Saeed was arrested in July 2019.

Till now, chargesheet has been filed in four cases in which Saeed is an accused. The anti-terrorism wing has filed 41 cases against the leaders of Jama'at-ud-Dawah in which verdict has come in 24 cases. The other cases are under trial. Saeed has been accused of providing financial help to terrorists, misuse of funds and illegal occupation of property.

In August, on the directions of an anti-terrorism court, Hafiz Saeed and his three accomplices were sent to jail. The court had also awarded a 16-year jail term

to Lahore based professor Mohammad Zafar Iqbal and Abdul Salam. Earlier, a close associate of Hafiz Saeed and spokesperson of Jama'at-ud-Dawah, Yahya Mujahid was also awarded 32 years in jail for extending financial help to terrorists.

It is well known that Hafiz Saeed is an accused in India in the Mumbai terror attacks that took place in May 2008. In this incident, 166 innocent people were brutally murdered by 10 terrorists. Earlier, in another case in February, an anti-terrorism court in Lahore had sentenced Saeed to 11 years in jail. United Nations and US had already declared Hafiz Saeed as one of world's most notorious terrorists. The cases against these terrorists were filed by Pakistan's anti-terrorism wing. As of now, four more cases against Hafiz Saeed are under trial. ■

New Zealand Police's gift to Muslim women

Mumbai Urdu News (December 9) reports that for the first time changes have been brought in the uniform of New Zealand Police to allow women to wear a hijab. A woman police officer, Zeena Ali, appeared for duty wearing a hijab along with the uniform for the first time. It is stated that the demand to allow hijab along with the uniform was made nearly two years ago and it has been accepted now.

Speaking to journalists, Zeena Ali said that she had decided to join New Zealand Police after the attacks against masjids in the country. She is currently very happy that the government has decided to allow hijab as part of uniform to respect the sentiments of Muslims. The police spokesperson said that the decision was taken with the aim of inspiring more Muslim women to join the force and it would also give a signal to people belonging to different cultures of New

Zealand society. They would get



relaxations as per their religious requirements, he said.

Before this, the Metropolitan police of London and the women personnel of Scotland Yard were allowed to wear hijab as part of their uniform. While the Metropolitan Police of London allowed women personnel to wear hijab along with uniform in 2006, the Scotland Yard

adopted the same policy in 2016. The Victoria Police in Australia had allowed hijab along with uniform in 2004 itself. In New Zealand, Zeena Ali has become the first woman to wear hijab as part of police uniform. However, she was born in Fiji. Later her family had migrated to New

Zealand. She said that she felt very happy to move around wearing the hijab along with the uniform and also enjoyed showing it to people. "I want more and more Muslim women to join the police so that the trust of Muslims in police increases," she said. ■

Two mosques sealed in Austria

Roznama Sahara (November 8) reports that the Austrian government has decided to deal with increasing cases of Islamic terrorism with an iron hand. As part of this, the government had recently sealed two important masjids – Millet Ibrahim and Tauheet Masjid – in the country. This step was taken by the police as per the report of intelligence organisations. Both the masjids were located at the Austrian capital of Vienna.

Citing the reasons for the closing down of the masjids, Minister for Integration Susanne Raab said that Islamic terrorists had shot and killed several people on November 3 following which police had killed a 20-year-old Arab Muslim terrorist in a counter operation. During the investigations, it was found that he used to visit these masjids regularly. The masjids

were used to promote terrorism. Following the attacks, 16 Islamic terrorists were taken into custody and after questioning them, six were released and the rest 10 are still in custody.

Muslims held a protest march in capital Vienna over sealing of the masjids and claimed that the government action was against the basic principles of secularism and it was deliberately targeting Muslims. The Muslim community claimed that these masjids were just imparting religious education and they had no connection with terrorism. The Governor of Vienna claimed that one terror suspect who was killed in police firing on November 3 came from Macedonia and he had visited Syria and got training to fight for an Islamic caliphate. ■

Withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, Iraq announced

Inquilab (November 19) reports that the US has decided to withdraw its 2,000 military personnel from Afghanistan and 500 others from Iraq by mid-January. A Pentagon spokesperson said that arrangements have been made for the return of these troops. US President Donald Trump had vowed to withdraw these many troops from the Afghanistan and Iraq and it is being implemented now. After the withdrawal of these troops, only 2,500 US soldiers will remain in each countries.

Last year, US had entered into a peace agreement with Taliban and the

troops are being withdrawn on the basis of this deal. Following the assassination of Iranian general Qasem Soleimani in a US attack in Baghdad, the US has decided to reduce the number of troops stationed in Iraq. The General Secretary of NATO, however, warned that the way the US has decided to withdraw troops from Afghanistan, there will be serious consequences and the war may erupt again. Hence the US should not take any decision in haste, he said. ■

Assassination of top nuclear scientist of Iran



Inqilab (November 28) reports that the top nuclear scientist of Iran, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, was assassinated in the country's capital Teheran. Initially an explosion was triggered in an attempt to kill him. He was subsequently killed in a gunfire. According to Iranian news agency, one vehicle was targeted and three to four persons were killed in the attack.

It is being claimed that the Israel government had announced in 2018 that the Mossad agents had tried to kill the top nuclear scientists of Iran but did not succeed in their attempt. Earlier also reports came that Mossad agents had tried to kill a nuclear scientist called Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, associated with Iran's atomic reactor. Foreign Affairs Minister of Iran, Javad Zarif said in a tweet that terrorists had killed a top Iranian scientist. The commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards said that they would take revenge on the assassination of the Iranian scientist. They would avenge the attack as had been done

in the past. He also said that Mossad was behind the assassination.

Hamara Samaj (November 30) reports that majority of Iranians hadn't even heard the name of nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh before June. They heard this name for the first time when Mossad killed him in the attack. However, those having information about the Iran's nuclear programme were in awe of the name. It is being claimed that he was also involved in the research to make a Covid testing kit. According to International Institute for Strategic Studies, the assassination would have an effect on Iran's nuclear development programme. When the attack took place on the scientist, he had a proper security ring around him. However, Mossad used satellite to target him. The bomb that exploded and the firing from the rifle that killed him were controlled from nearly 1,000 kilometres away using a satellite. Experts also claim that Iran-supported Houthi rebels in Yemen had attacked and destroyed the plant of a Saudi oil company called Aramco in Jeddah. Hence Mohsen was made the target in a revenge attack.

It is known that in January US President Trump had ordered the killing of a top Army commander of Iran, Major General Qasem Soleimani, in a drone attack in Iraq. And those who keep a watch on Iran's nuclear programme know it well that Fakhrizadeh had the most important role in the programme. The Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has directed that the assailants of Fakhrizadeh shall be eliminated at any cost. The secretary of

Iran's security council Mohsen Razaee expressed dissatisfaction that the security and intelligence agencies of Iran had failed to provide any inputs regarding the assassination plans on Fakhrizadeh. Overlooking of such failures will be disastrous for the country, he said.

He also said that Iran should ensure that none of the assailants and foreign

conspirators should remain alive. According to sources, Iran has started an inquiry to unearth the entire conspiracy behind the assassination and has taken into custody more than 100 people. The experts in Iran are also trying to find out how the assassination was carried out from a distance of more than 1,000 kilometres away. ■

Traders worried over tension between Saudi Arabia and Turkey



Etemaad (November 20) reports that Saudi Arabia has started boycotting items manufactured in Turkey resulting in huge trouble for traders. In the past few years, the aggressive attitude of Turkey and its role in Libya and Syria has resulted in increasing tensions between the two countries. Following this, lot of restrictions were imposed on trade between the two countries and those countries aligned with Saudi started boycotting things manufactured in Turkey. Earlier, this was limited only to Saudi Arabia. Now the matter has been escalated to North Africa and to many countries in Middle-East.

Following the military coup in Egypt in 2013, blockade of Qatar in 2017, murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Saudi embassy in Istanbul and over giving recognition to Israel, tensions between Turkey and Gulf countries have peaked. On October 3, the Saudi Chamber of Commerce has announced a boycott of all items manufactured in Turkey. This has only helped to further increase the tension.

Recently, a fast food chain of Saudi Arabia, Herfy, had announced that instead of Turkey burgers it would sell Unani burgers from its stores. Turkish companies have been complaining that neither are they allowed to bring items to Saudi Arabia nor

are they getting permission for construction activities. World's largest container shipping company Maersk had told its consumers that they are finding it difficult to transport items from Turkey to Saudi Arabia. According to sources, the customs

department of Saudi Arabia has stopped permission to bring items which were manufactured in Turkey. Currently, goods worth seven crore dollars have been held up by the Customs. ■

Secret talks between Saudi Crown Prince and Israeli Prime Minister

Mumbai Urdu News (November 24) reports that Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammad bin Salman and US Foreign Secretary Mike Pompeo held secret talks in Saudi capital Riyadh. It is being said that US government was behind this talks. According to Times of Israel, it was the first time that a Prime Minister of Israel had visited Saudi Arabia.

The newspaper states that the three countries were so keen to keep the visit under wraps that Netanyahu used a private aircraft to travel to Saudi Arabia. The interesting thing is that even the Defence Minister of Israel had no information about the talks.

Last year also Netanyahu used a private jet to visit Jordan in a similar initiative. According to sources in Israel, the chief of Israel's intelligence wing also accompanied the Prime Minister of Israel to Saudi. Almost all Israeli newspapers carried the news about the talks on their front page. However, the Israeli government did not confirm the news. Both Israeli and Saudi Arabian governments neither confirmed, nor refuted the news. It is understood that Saudi Arabia will soon recognise Israel.



Earlier, two allies of Saudi Arabia—UAE and Bahrain—had recognised Israel. It is likely that many Arab countries will soon establish diplomatic relationship with Israel. However, till now sources in Saudi Arabia claim that until the issue of Palestine is settled, Saudi will not recognise Israel.

Sources claim that the visit of Israel Prime Minister to Saudi Arabia took place in the backdrop of US efforts to divide the Arab world and hence it assumes serious importance. Ever since Turkey brought the defence system of Russia, its relationship with US has turned bitter. Hence the US, while remaining behind the curtain, is trying to bring Arab and Muslim countries under the flag of Saudi Arabia against Turkey. The talks assumes significance in this respect. ■

Tension between UAE and Pakistan

Roznama Sahara

(November 19) reports that tension between UAE and Pakistan is increasing on a daily basis. Recently, a report was published in which it was claimed that Pakistan was behind the terror attack that took place in Kandahar in 2017. Five diplomats of UAE were killed in this attack. As per the report of UAE's intelligence agency, the attack was sponsored by the Haqqani network based in Pakistan.

Pakistan's relationship with Saudi Arabia is under strain for a long time now. Recently, Pakistan's Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa visited Saudi Arabia to improve the bilateral relations between the countries but nothing much has come out of it. Recently, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan had strongly criticised the



increasing friendship between UAE and Israel and described it as against the interests of Arabs and Islam. The chasm between the two countries is evident as UAE often keeps delaying issue of visa applications from Pakistan.

Pakistan is worried that if UAE expels Pakistanis working in that country and sends them to Saudi Arabia, then it will have serious consequences on the economy of Pakistan. Currently, more than seven lakh Pakistanis are working in UAE. Recently, UAE launched a major drive against Pakistanis staying illegally in the country, following which nearly 5,000 Pakistanis were rounded up and shifted to various jails. After this incident, UAE is very cautious in issuing visa to Pakistanis.



Saudi Arabia and Iraq open their border

Roznama Sahara (November 20) reports that Iraq and Saudi Arabia have decided to re-open their border after a gap of over 30 years. The reason is to improve the trade between the two countries. They have announced their decision to open the Arar border crossing. Earlier, a high-level delegation from Saudi had arrived in Baghdad and held talks with an Iraqi minister on the issue.

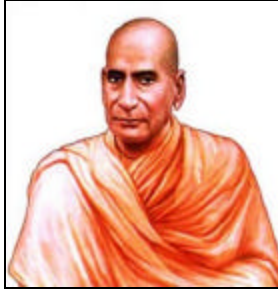
It is known that the border road between the two countries were closed in 1990. Former President of Iraq Saddam Hussain had invaded Kuwait following which Saudi Arabia had cut off all its

relationship with Iraq. Recently, when the new government came to power in Iraq, it decided to improve the relationship between the two countries. It is being said that the current Prime Minister of Iraq had personally spoke to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman on the issue. The Prime Minister of Iraq is likely to visit Saudi Arabia soon. Saudi is planning to cut off its trade relations with Iran and instead start a relationship with Iraq. Hence the border was opened. However, a strong protest march took place in Baghdad against this decision.



Tributes paid to the killer of Swami Shraddhanand

Famous Arya Samaj leader and a great freedom fighter, Swami Shraddhanand was stabbed to death by a fundamentalist Muslim, Ghazi Abdul Rashid, on December 23, 1926 in Delhi. Later he was hanged to death. Shockingly, every



year some people organise a memorial meeting and glorify his services and describe him as the one who raised the status of Islam.

Inquilab (November 17) reports that the 'martyrdom day' of Ghazi Abdul Rashid was organised at Masjid Bhuli Bhatiyari on Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg in Delhi. On this occasion, paying tributes to Ghazi Abdul Rashid, the chief imam of the

masjid Dr Umar Ilyasi described him as Aashiq-e-Rasool (admirer of the messenger) and that he sacrificed his life for the greatness of Islam. General Secretary of Anjuman Mohibbane Watan, Jamil Anjuman Dehlavi said that Ghazi Abdul Rashid had sacrificed his life for Islam. Mufti

Nizar Ahmad Kasmi presided over the function. Many Islamic preachers like Mufti Kafeel-ur-Rahman Kasmi, Maulana Raiz Ahmad Kasmi, Mufti Mohammad Yahya Kasmi, Maulana Abubacker Mujahiri, Haji Mohammad Idris, Kari Bilal, Hafiz Mohammad Irfan, Shakil Ahmad and Mohammad Kamran participated in the function. ■

Amanatullah Khan elected chairman of Delhi Waqf Board

Inquilab (November 20) reports that AamAdmi Party MLA Amanatullah Khan has been elected unopposed as the chairman of Delhi Waqf Board for the third time. Pervez Hashmi did not participate in the board meeting. Chaudhary Sharif Ahmad proposed the name of Amanatullah Khan for the chairman's post which was seconded by Razia Sultana. It is understood that a petition filed in a court against Amanatullah's name being proposed as chairman of Waqf Board has been quashed by the court. Soon after assuming the office of Waqf chairman, Amanatullah Khan said that the outstanding dues of the employees would be paid soon and thereafter the



pension of widows would also be given within a week. He said that three petitions were filed in the court against the board and all the three were rejected and the Delhi government had stood by the board. Hence the seven-month long impasse has ended. ■

Popular Front offices raided

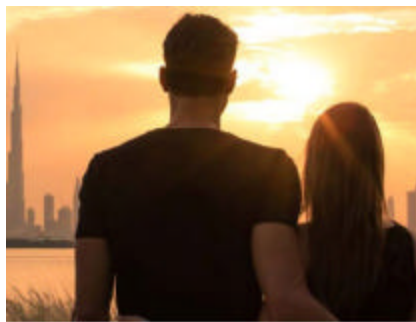


Roznama Sahara (November 19) reports that Karnataka Police with the help of National Investigation Agency has raided 43 places including the offices SDPI, the political front of Popular Front of India. A spokesman of the agency said that the hands of Popular Front and SDPI were visible in the violence that took place in

Bangalore in August. Many police personnel were injured in the violence and several police stations were set ablaze. The main aim of the violence was to spread fear and till now over 300 persons have been arrested. Several swords, knives and iron rods were seized during the searches conducted in the offices. ■

Permission for unmarried couples to stay together in UAE

Inquilab (November 9) reports that UAE has announced that couples can live together in the country without getting married. This apart, some concessions have been made on consumption of liquor. Al Jazeera reports



that as per the new law, if any man or woman is killed in the name of honour killing, it will be considered as murder and a case would be filed in the court.

Now permission has been granted to those above the age of 21 to consume and

sell liquor. Earlier, this was considered as an offence and stringent punishments were given. Earlier, citizens had to take licence from the government to purchase liquor and consume it at home.

Now, there is no restriction on Muslims to either consume or buy liquor. Hotels have also been given directions that unmarried couples shall be allotted rooms to stay together at night in hotels. ■

Chief of Al Qaida Ayman al-Zawahiri reportedly killed



Roznama Sahara (November 21) reports that the news about the death of the chief of Al Qaida, Ayman al-Zawahiri, is widely discussed for the past few days. Now sources in Afghanistan has confirmed this information from Arab News. A spokesperson said that he died in Afghanistan. The 69-year-old al-Zawahiri was seen last time in a video related to the 9/11 attack on United States. After that he has been staying in a secret place because United States has been trying to eliminate him as a revenge for the 9/11 attacks.

According to Arab News, at least four Pakistani and Afghan security officials have confirmed the death of Ayman al-Zawahiri. The newspaper states that after his death a fight could erupt among the top leadership of Al Qaida. US forces had earlier eliminated at least two of his possible successors. One of them was Hamza bin Laden, the son of Osama bin Laden while the other was Abu Mohammed al-Masri who was number two in Al Qaida. He was killed in Iran last year.

Sources close to Al Qaida said that al-Zawahiri died in an anonymous place in

Ghazni last week. Till now, it is not clear whether he died due to some illness or whether he was killed. However, sources close to Al Qaida in Afghanistan denied that their chief did not die a natural death. But he was killed. Intelligence sources have confirmed that he has been buried. According to a senior official of Pakistan's anti-terrorism wing, as per his information, he was killed nearly a month ago and it took place deep inside Afghanistan. US intelligence sources have also confirmed this information.

The chief of Afghanistan's security wing told Arab News that he had no information on the death of Al Qaida chief Ayman al-Zawahiri and he could not confirm such a news. According to the counter terrorism wing of United Nations, Al Qaida is active in the world and Saif al-Adel could succeed al-Zawahiri who is also the chief of the MajlisShura of Al Qaida. Saif al-Adel is among the most wanted list of FBI and the Foreign Affairs department of US had announced 10 million dollar for anyone who gives information on him. ■