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## Bloodbath of Shias in Baluchistan by Sunnis



- Controversy over Renaming of Aurangabad
- Improvement in Ties of Qatar and Saudi Arabia
- Chinese Hand in Attack of Afghan Troops
- Way Cleared for Repatriation of Foreign Immigrants

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## Summary

With the municipal elections round the corner, the politics of renaming cities has started in Maharashtra. The Shiv Sena is trying to implement its promise of renaming Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar. This has been openly opposed by the Congress which is part of the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi in Maharashtra. The reason for this is the Congress belief that the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb is very popular amongst a section of Muslims and if the Congress does not oppose the renaming of the city that was named after him, it might lose the Muslim vote bank. Perhaps, this Muslim vote bank is also the reason why the Samajwadi Party, which supports the present government, has opposed the renaming of Aurangabad. The controversy has increased the possibility of creating a crisis for the Maharashtra government.

Recently, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's Sarsanghchalak Shri Mohan Bhagwat had released a book on Mahatma Gandhi saying that patriotism was in the DNA of Hindus. No Hindu can be a traitor. His statement was not liked by the Muslim leaders. Abdul Hameed Nomani, the General Secretary of the Wahhabi organization Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, has strongly opposed it and termed it as against Gandhi's ideals. Similarly, Asaduddin Owaisi also did not desist from targeting Bhagwat ji. The problem is that in Islam, there are no concepts of 'homeland' and 'nationalism'. According to Quran and Hadith, the whole world is the homeland of Muslims and every Muslim is their compatriot. Islam believes only in the principles of '*ummah*' and '*millat*'.

The US has succeeded in dividing the Muslim countries of West Asia. Israel's influence in these Muslim countries is growing rapidly due to American efforts. So far, six Muslim countries have recognized Israel. The target of US is Iran. The United States has succeeded in alienating Qatar from Iran. Four years ago, Saudi Arabia and its allies imposed a blockade and boycotted Qatar. But now, it has been lifted under the pressure of Kuwait and USA. Iran has become isolated after this development in the Muslim world.

Persecution of Shias continues in Pakistan. Recently, 11 innocent Shia people were massacred by Islamic State jihadists in Baluchistan. This was followed by a series of Shia protests and demonstrations all over Pakistan. The Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan at first tried to suppress the matter but when the protests started taking a violent turn, he had to go to the spot and accept all the seven demands placed by the relatives of the deceased. Rising violence among various Muslim sects in Pakistan has increased the possibility of disintegration of Pakistan.

Asaduddin Owaisi, President of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen has started increasing his footprints in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. His goal is to take part in the upcoming assembly elections of these states. Muslim voters, which comprise thirty percent of total voters in West Bengal, are the backbone of the Trinamool Congress. Now with a goal to attract these votes, Owaisi is seen visiting darghas and tombs of Muslim saints. Both Mamata Banerjee and the Congress-Left combine are upset by his moves.

## Controversy over renaming of Aurangabad



With the local body elections nearing in Maharashtra, the controversy over changing the names of cities is getting intensified.

According to the **Mumbai Urdu News (January 1)**, sharp differences have arisen in the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (Maharashtra Development Front) over the renaming of Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar. The President of Maharashtra Congress and Cabinet Minister Balasaheb Thorat has said that the Congress party does not believe in changing the names of cities and went on to state that the party will oppose any action that is taken to change the name. He added that such a step will be against the Constitution. Thorat had gone to Aurangabad to oversee the preparations for local body elections and to meet party workers. He said that Congress will oppose any proposal to change the name of Aurangabad. He added that changing the name of a city does not result in development and common people are not benefitted by the move. It is the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that does this kind of politics and Congress does not believe in it. He added that three parties are in power in

Maharashtra and changing the name of Aurangabad is not part of their program.

The same newspaper on January 5 had published an article which suggested that Shiv Sena should rename Pune to Sambhaji Nagar instead of renaming Aurangabad. It noted that the renaming of Aurangabad was first opposed by the Congress in the Maha Vikas Aghadi. On this, the BJP has targeted Shiv Sena and demanded that it clarifies its position on the issue of renaming Aurangabad. In response, Shiv Sena chief and state chief minister Uddhav Thackeray created a sensation by saying that the state of Maharashtra should be named after Shivaji Maharaj. The nationalist Congress party also opposed the renaming of Aurangabad and targeted BJP in this regard. It stated that the BJP has put forth the suggestion to change the name of several cities to garner votes in the election. Abu Asim Azmi, president of Maharashtra branch of Samajwadi Party, which supports Maha Vikas Aghadi government, also opposed the renaming of cities and said that such a step will not fill anyone's stomach. He added that if the goal is to name cities, then

new cities will have to be developed. There is history associated with the cities of Ahmednagar and Aurganabad and it will be categorically wrong to forcibly change their names.

**Mumbai Urdu News** on **January 9** has published on its main page that politics has taken a new turn on the issue of renaming Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar. Shiv Sena chief and state chief minister Uddhav Thackeray said that Aurangzeb was not secular. He said that there is no mention of the word secular in the agenda of the three parties constituting the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi and the question of renaming Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar was decided years ago. He said that when there was a secular government in the state, Aurangabad was written as Sambhaji Nagar on every paper issued from the Chief Minister's Office. Taking cue from this statement, Congress President Balasaheb Thorat said that Sambhaji Maharaj is like a God for the Congress but the party is still opposed to the change of name. He added that the party will talk to the Chief Minister in this regard and it will be the effort of the party to keep the name of Aurangabad intact and see to it that no changes are made.

According to **Inquilab (January 8)**, the controversy over changing the name has reached the country's capital, Delhi. Some people had tried to change the name of Aurangzeb Lane to Guru Teg Bahadur Lane, but the police did not let the miscreants succeed and has arrested eleven people in this regard. According to the police, eleven people were gathered under the leadership of a person named Anurag Bhargava and they tried to stick the name Guru Teg Bahadur on the board where Aurangzeb Lane was written. When the Tughlaq Road police station received information about this, police reached the spot and arrested all eleven people including Anurag Bhargava. During

interrogation, it came to light that Anurag Bhargava was a lawyer residing in Karnal, Haryana and there were earlier attempts too that were made to change the name of Aurangzeb Lane. Prior to this, controversy arose when Aurangzeb Road was renamed as A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Road.

According to **Mumbai Urdu News (January 2)**, BJP MP from Bengaluru, Tejashwi Surya has asked for changing the names of streets in some Muslim majority areas. He has written a letter to Bengaluru Commissioner N Manjunath Prasad questioning why certain streets were named after Muslims only. He said such a perspective encourages two-nation theory and is dangerous for both Hindus and Muslims. He said that roads should be named after non-Muslim nationalists too. This controversy started when the Municipal Corporation decided that the name of the 100-foot long road in Indira Nagar will be named after folklorist Dr S.K. Karim Khan. Whereas BJP had put forth the demand that it will be named after Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The Municipal Corporation had decided to name the road after folklorist Dr S.K. Karim Khan when a Kannada organisation had placed such a demand.

According to **Etemaad (January 12)**, the demands to change the names of cities is condemnable and reflects narrow communal approach. The newspaper states that there has been a long-running conspiracy to change the names of roads and streets that are named after Muslim rulers of the country. It stated that though there may be differences between the BJP and the Shiv Sena when it comes to the issue of power, it needs to be noted that both the parties have similar ideologies. Both are based on Hindutva. That is the reason why both the parties have resorted to the politics of renaming a historical city like Aurangabad. Despite stiff opposition, all the papers sent from Chief Minister

Uddhav Thackeray's office refer to Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar. In fact, the Shiv Sena had been wanting to change the name of the city from the beginning and the matter had even reached the Supreme Court. If the background of renaming of Aurangabad is analysed, it becomes evident that the founder of Shiv Sena Bal Thackeray had long ago declared that Aurangabad should be renamed as Sambhaji Nagar. After this declaration, Shiv Sena had won 28 out of 80 seats in the Aurangabad Municipal Corporation elections that were held in 1988. The state government has also given its consent to rename Aurangabad but the issue was challenged in court. At that time, there were protests all over Maharashtra and the Supreme Court quashed the decision to rename Aurangabad. Whenever, there are elections, the issue of renaming of cities

gains momentum. Similarly, during the campaigning for local body elections in Hyderabad, BJP had promised to change the name of Hyderabad to Bhagyanagar.

The newspaper had opined that before the Lok Sabha elections, BJP had given the slogan of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas,' but it seems like the party had failed to gain the trust of people. The politics of renaming cities is dirty politics, the goal of which is to erase the identity of Muslims. It would have been better if BJP had taken the same interest that it shows in renaming cities in addressing the problems of the people. But for people with a communal mindset, this makes no difference. They are only interested in their political objectives using the fire of communalism. However, these forces must remember that history cannot be changed by changing the name.

## Owaisi active in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh



According to **Inquilab (January 5)**, the sudden visit of Asaduddin Owaisi, President of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen to West Bengal and from there, his visit to Hooghly to meet Pirzada Abbas Siddiqui and his brother

Pirzada Naushad Siddiqui of Furfura Sharif Dargah, both powerful leaders in the state, has caused a stir in the state's politics.

While on one hand, Muslims in the state are happy with the arrival of Owaisi, on the other hand, the Trinamool Congress

is upset with his involvement in the state politics. The BJP is also looking at the option of coming to power in West Bengal with the possibility of Muslim votes getting split. Owaisi with his associates visited another dargah, and visited the tomb of Hazrat Abu Bakr and prayed there. Along with this, Owaisi also held a secret meeting with the All India Muslim League West Bengal President Shahenshah Jahangir, in which various aspects of the upcoming state legislative assembly elections were discussed. After these meetings, Owaisi told the reporters that his party would take part in the assembly elections in West Bengal under the leadership of Pirzada Abbas Siddiqui. He also said that the Furfura Dargah has played an instrumental role in the development of West Bengal. Pir Sufi Sheikh Abu Bakr said that he will support decision of Abbas Siddiqui. It is Siddiqui's job to prepare a strategy for the elections in Bengal. However, Owaisi did not clarify whether Siddiqui would join his party.

The newspaper has opined that in recent years, Siddiqui has emerged as an effective leader for a large section of Muslims in West Bengal. Earlier he was in Trinamool Congress but now he has left the party. A few months ago, he was attacked by some people. At that time, his supporters had alleged that the attack was done at the behest of the Trinamool Congress. One of the leaders of Trinamool Congress, Shaukat Ali Mulla described Abbas Siddiqui as BJP's broker. He alleged that the BJP is buying and using people like Abbas Siddiqui to divide Muslim votes. The Majlis got encouraged after winning five seats in the Bihar elections. However, a large section of Muslims is of the view that the division of Muslim votes may lead to the BJP usurping power in West Bengal. The Muslim voters in West Bengal constitute around 30 per cent of total voters. There are 110 legislative assembly

seats in the state where Muslim voters hold the key to victory.

According to **Etemaad (January 4)**, Majlis West Bengal secretary Jamirul Hussain said that the visit of Owaisi was kept secret because they feared that the state government would not grant him permission to exit the airport. That is why he secretly went to meet Abbas Siddiqui. After this, he immediately left to Hyderabad. He said that earlier it was decided that Owaisi and Abbas Siddiqui would have discussions through video conferencing, but after that Owaisi suddenly cancelled the plan and reached Kolkata. Hussain said that the party will support Abbas Siddiqui as he is seen openly opposing Mamata Banerjee and made it clear that they will contest elections together. But it has not yet been decided whether they will join Majlis or form their own party. A lot of anxiety is seen in the Trinamool Congress due to Owaisi's activities. One of its senior leaders and parliamentarian had alleged that Majlis is a proxy party of BJP. He said that the Muslims of West Bengal are well aware of Owaisi's plan because of which they will not fall into his trap. This is the reason why he decided to trap Abbas Siddiqui in his web. He claimed that the Muslims of Bengal are with Mamata Banerjee. The role played by Muslims in ensuring Trinamool Congress's victory in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections was significant. But a lot of Muslim leaders in the state are of the view that the situation may change with the entry of Majlis into electoral politics. There, the Majlis will be able to spread its wings with ease because the population of Muslims is more than 30 per cent. Criticizing Mamata Banerjee, Owaisi said that instead of pointing fingers at the Majlis, she should look within her party and ask how did BJP manage to win 18 seats from West Bengal in the Lok Sabha elections? He denied the allegation that his party is BJP's B team.

He said that his is a separate political party and they will contest the elections. On a lighter vein, he said that he is the Laila of Indian politics and he has many Majnus. Everybody wants him. He said that till now it has not been decided whether his party will independently contest elections or will form an alliance. He also denied the allegation that the NDA has benefited in the Bihar elections due to his entry into Bihar politics.

According to **Avadhnama (January 6)**, all major parties have stepped up their activities in view of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections. This time Owaisi's party Majlis has also announced its participation in the Assembly elections. However, it has been alleged that the Majlis is fielded by BJP to divide the Muslim votes. Asaduddin Owaisi has decided to visit Purvanchal this month. There is a large population of Muslims in Purvanchal and Owaisi is trying to get their support. In this visit, he is paying special attention to the visit of mosques, madrasas and dargahs. His intention is to gain the support of religious leaders of Muslims. His activities have upset the Congress and the Samajwadi Party. Prior to this, he had also met Om Prakash Rajbhar of Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party. The question is whether the BSP will support Majlis in Uttar Pradesh like in Bihar? Majlis is already in an alliance with the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party.

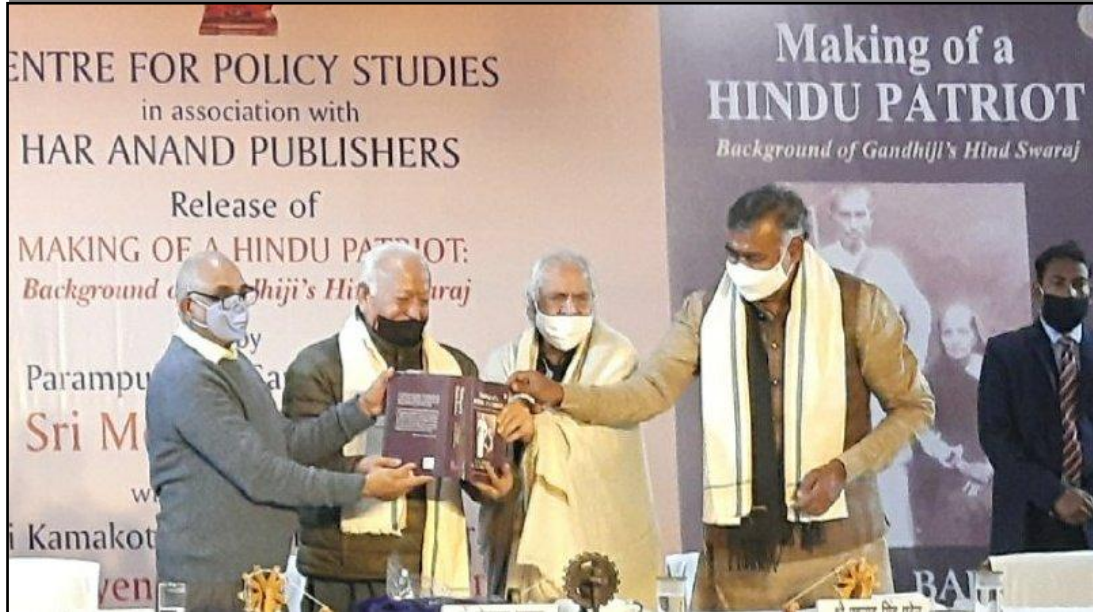
**Siasat (January 3)** has published an article by journalist Barkha Duttin which she has mentioned Amit Shah's claim that the BJP will win 200 seats in the upcoming elections in West Bengal. He said that for one year, BJP and Sangh workers have been actively working in the rural areas of West Bengal. This is the reason why for the

last four years BJP can be seen increasing its footprints in the rural areas. Though the Trinamool Congress is upset with their activities, it still claims that the BJP cannot oust it from the state politics. It cannot be denied that this time in West Bengal, there will be a close contest between the two parties. The entire emphasis of BJP is to divide the Muslim electorate which is the backbone of the Trinamool Congress and polarise the Hindu electorate. There are 184 legislative assembly seats in the nine districts of West Bengal where Trinamool Congress is strong. These include Purba Bardhaman, East Midnapore, West Midnapore, North 24 Pargana, Nadia, Hooghly, Murshidabad, Howrah etc. But if the BJP is able to polarise the Hindus in West Bengal in the name of religion, Mamata may face problems. Again, the Trinamool Congress is implementing the programs of the government at full speed. As of now, there doesn't seem any obstructions in Mamata Banerjee's way. To limit the BJP's influence, Mamata Banerjee has recently announced payment of honorarium from the state exchequer to priests of all temples, like what is given to the Imams.

According to **Inquilab (January 13)**, Asaduddin Owaisi made a lightning tour of the entire state of Uttar Pradesh. During this tour, Owaisi did not address his party workers anywhere, though he had promised that he would address the party workers in Jaunpur. Owaisi was also accompanied by Omprakash Rajbhar. According to another news, Owaisi made a quick visit to Sarai Mir, Azamgarh and Phulpur and had a long interaction with the Uttar Pradesh president of Majlis, Shaukat Ali.



## Muslim leaders target RSS chief



Maulana Abdul Hameed Nomani, General Secretary of the Muslim organisation Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, has criticised Shri Mohan Bhagwat, the chief of RSS in an article published in **Inquilab (January 8)**. On January 1, during the release of the book, 'Making of a Hindu Patriot' authored by Dr. Jitendra Kumar Bajaj and co-authored by Prof M D Srinivas, Shri Bhagwat had said that whomsoever is a Hindu will definitely be a patriot as it is there in their DNA. He added that it is possible that they may be asleep at present but there is a need for them to be awakened. He said that it is not possible for any Hindu to hate Hindustan. If someone is a Hindu, he will definitely be a patriot. That is his basic nature.

Nomani writes that such a definition of nationalism is against the beliefs of Gandhi, Nehru and other patriotic Indians as well as freedom fighters and is in line with the negative nationalism of the Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha. Commenting on Dr Bhagwat's statement in a tweet, Majlis President Asaduddin Owaisi questioned what does Bhagwat have to say about Godse, the killer of Gandhiji? What does

Bhagwat have to say about the Nellie massacre, anti-Sikh riots and the massacres in Gujarat? The fact that Godse was brought into this debate of nationalism means that Mr Owaisi had not understood the real problem. Had this debate been about whether Hindus were rioters or murderers or, then it would have been a different issue. Raising issues of the Nellie massacre, the Gujarat riots and the anti-Sikh riots along with Gandhi's assassination would have been more appropriate. Owaisi has deliberately raised issues that are not linked. In the letter written by Syama Prasad Mukherjee and the second Sarsanghchhalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Guru Golwalkar to the then Home Minister Sardar Patel, it was stated that Godse had no connection with the Sangh at the time of the assassination. In fact, he was a member of the Hindu Mahasabha. Because of this, the RSS cannot be accused of playing a part in Gandhi's assassination. This is the reason why Sarsanghchhalak Shri Golwalkar was acquitted by the court. Considering this scenario, it was meaningless for such a question to have been raised by Owaisi.

Perhaps the reason why it had happened is because there was a failure in collecting facts. However, in this context, Owaisi, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal and others could have done the necessary research.

Nomani opined that there is truth in Dr Bhagwat's comment that nobody can interpret great personalities from their individual points of view. Every aspect of Gandhi's life and its history have been revealed to the world. Therefore, nobody will be able to forge ahead by saying anything in relation to him. Those who know are aware of what Gandhiji's ideas and thoughts were in terms of communal harmony, non-violence and nationalism. They certainly do not match the ideology and philosophy of the Sangh. The founder of Sangh Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar has chosen a separate path from that of Congress and Gandhi due to the views he had on Hindu-Muslim unity and nationalism. Dr Bhagwat in his speech said that he had discussed at length about Dr Hedgewar's life and ideology in one of his books. The concept of nationalism that Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha believes in is completely unique and different from the ideas of the leaders who stand for Hindu Muslim unity. Their ideology leads to destruction of Indian traditions and the philosophy of unity in diversity. The Sangh does not accept the existence of various civilisations in India and is opposed to it. Whereas, in the eyes of the architect of India's Constitution, Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar and many other national leaders, there exists various civilisations in this country and they welcome this idea and consider it to be part of Indian traditions and specialities. Dr Bhagwat has intelligently introduced the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sangh's concepts of nationalism and patriotism based on Hindu religion.

Nomani has written that according to Sangh's ideology only those who are

Hindus are the real citizens of this country and whereas people belonging to other religions despite being citizens of this country will not be considered nationalist citizens due to the Sangh's definition of nationalism. According to the Sangh, Hindu is the nation and the nation is Hindu. This broadly implies that only Hindus are nationalists in India. Such a perspective is very narrow and regressive and is based on communalism which is different from the Indian nationalism that is based on secular belief. Nomani said that he has written a detailed book in this regard in which he has analysed the issue and asked Dr Bhagwat why he and the earlier Sarsanghchalaks do not consider those who believe in different religions and ways of lives as Hindus or Hindustanis and why is that they call only Hindus as nationalists? While Mahatma Gandhi has written in his famous book Hind Swaraj that if Hindus think that only Hindus should remain in India, then they are living in a dream world. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians who have made India their country are also equal citizens of this country. Considering the current situation of the country, it is necessary to rethink on this issue keeping in view the perspectives of Gandhiji, Maulana Madni and Maulana Azad.

**Comment:** Because our readers are not aware of the organization called Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, it is necessary to throw light on the background of Maulana Nomani and his organization. This organisation has links with the Deobandi branch of the Wahhabi sect. It was founded in 1920 during the Khilafat movement. The Wahhabi sect has a long and controversial history in this country. A religious and jihadi leader belonging to this sect, Shah Waliullah had invited Ahmed Shah Abdali to attack India. The largest organisation of this community is Darul Uloom Deoband. Many people following this organisation's

ideology have been caught by police after their involvement in jihadi terrorist activities came to light.

According to **Inquilab (January 3)**, the statement made by RSS chief Shri Mohan Bhagwat regarding only Hindus being patriots has been severely criticised by Asaduddin Owaisi, head of Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen. Owaisi has asked if Bhagwat will have anything to say about Godse, the killer of Mahatma Gandhi? Who were the culprits of the Nellie massacre, the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and the 2002 Gujarat riots? It is known that Dr Mohan Bhagwat had said that if someone is a Hindu, he would definitely be a patriot. That would be his basic character and nature. The Sangh chief said this while citing Mahatma Gandhi's remarks in which he said that patriotism is rooted in his religion. Owaisi had asked in his tweet how can the followers of only a particular

religion be considered patriots? While others have to spend their entire lives trying to prove that they have the right to live here and call themselves Hindustani. While releasing the book 'Making of a Hindu Patriot: Background of Gandhiji Swaraj' written by J.K. Bajaj and M.D. Srinivas, Shri Mohan Bhagwat said that the name of the book and its release by him is a proof of the efforts to present Gandhiji in the right light. He said that no one can define great personalities from their perspective. This book is based on extensive research and those who have differences of opinion can research and write their views. The RSS chief recollected Gandhiji's words where he said that his patriotism stems from his religion. Gandhiji had also said that he will understand his religion and becomes a good patriot and will also ask others to follow the same. ■

## Loot at Delhi cemeteries put to an end



According to **Inquilab (January 9)**, the Delhi Waqf Board has decided that in future the managing bodies of the cemeteries in the capital will not be able to collect arbitrary charges from

those who go to bury dead bodies of their relatives. The Board has decided that only the required amount needed for the excavation of grave etc. can be levied. As of now, the Board has

decided that Rs 3000 can be charged for the burial of a body. The chairman of Waqf Board Amanatullah Khan said that it is possible to bury a corpse for Rs 3000. And cemeteries which were collecting lakh of rupees to bury a body will no longer be tolerated. If any complaint is received in this context, not only legal action will be taken against the cemetery committee but it will also be dissolved. As per the records of the Delhi Waqf Board, there are around 500 cemeteries but they are there only on paper. This is because most of these cemeteries have been encroached upon and unauthorised colonies have come up there. Now, there are only 25 cemeteries in Delhi where bodies can be buried. Most of these cemeteries are under the control of Mafia gangs who extort money from people who come to bury dead bodies. The same cemetery has different arbitrary rates. If there is a tomb of a Muslim saint, then the grave near it has a different rate. The same way, prices near the gate and inside of the cemetery are different. The situation is such that lakhs of rupees are illegally collected for burying dead bodies in cemeteries. Some cemeteries are expensive like 5-star hotels that no common man can ever think of building his grave there.

**Comment:** Before the partition of the country, the population of Muslims in Delhi was around 5 lakhs, out of which about three lakhs migrated to Pakistan. At that time, the number of cemeteries in the capital was around 247. After independence, there was a significant increase in the population of

Muslims in Delhi. At present, the population of Muslims in Delhi is around 25-30 lakhs. As soon as the land prices increased in Delhi, the land mafia began the illegal occupation of cemeteries and started settling colonies there. In this way, the crisis of cemeteries was created for the growing Muslim population in Delhi. It cannot be denied that corrupt employees of the Waqf Board were also involved in the illegal seizure of burial sites on Waqf properties. They were hand in gloves with the land mafias and played a role in the disappearance of many of the documents related to Waqf properties and burial grounds. Due to this, in most of the cases, the Waqf Board is not in a position to file cases in courts against the illegal occupation. With the expansion of the city, the Muslim settlements also grew but the problem of burying their dead started getting more and more complicated. According to Islam, building a grave is considered to be un-Islamic. Despite this, all the cemeteries in Delhi are full of concrete tombs. In view of the demands of the Muslims of Delhi, the Kejriwal government had allotted land for 45 new cemeteries near the new settlements. Of these, the cemetery developed near Millennium Park is the largest. The land mafia took advantage of the increasing population of Muslims and decreasing land for burial grounds in the capital. After extorting lakhs of rupees, they had put in place a new system for the burial of bodies, which the Waqf Board has now tried to put an end to. ■

## Muslim comedian arrested for insulting Hindu religion

According to **Inquilab (January 3)**, a Mumbai-based comedian Munawar Faruqui was first beaten up by the workers of an organisation called Hind Rakshak and was later handed over to the police on charges of making derogatory comments with respect to Home Minister Amit Shah and Hindu deities at a show in Indore. Police arrested five persons including Faruqui in this regard. The show was organised in Indore. Munawar Faruqui was arrested on the complaint filed by Eklavya Singh Gaur, son of BJP MLA Malini Laxman Singh Gaur. Munawar Faruqui is originally from Gujarat. Eklavya Singh Gaur had gone to Faruqui's show as an audience. When Faruqui made indecent remarks on Hindu deities, it was objected to by Eklavya Singh which led to a huge commotion and the program getting stalled. Eklavya Singh also gave a video as proof of evidence to the police. He told the reporters that Faruqui has been making fun of Hindu deities in his earlier programs as well. So, when he came to know that Faruqui is performing at a café in Indore, he took tickets and reached there with some of his colleagues and when he saw that Faruqui was making abusive comments about karsevaks who died in the Godhra massacre, he opposed it.

According to **Inquilab (January 5)**, four days after Munawar Faruqui's arrest, a



female viewer of his show has claimed that Faruqui did not insult Hindu deities in his show. The article said that even the police didn't think that Faruqui had insulted Hindu Gods and Goddesses and the evidence

submitted by Eklavya Singh also does not point anything in that direction. Inspector Kamlesh Sharma of Tukoganj police station had admitted that the police is yet to find any evidence against Faruqui. According to this official, there is no evidence against Faruqui for disrespecting Hindu Gods and Goddesses and Home Minister Amit Shah. The two videos given by the complainants to the police are of another comedian, in which he is seen narrating a story about Ganesh to Munawar Faruqui.

**Mumbai Urdu News (January 5)** wrote that Munawar Faruqui did not insult any Hindu Gods or Goddesses in his program nor did he say anything derogatory in relation to the Godhra incident. The newspaper condemned the filing of FIR by the police and the arrest of five people due to pressure exerted by the local leaders of the BJP. The newspaper also referred to the report published in the Indian Express in this context. The newspaper has demanded that the government should abandon the communal approach and treat Muslims justly and that Faruqui should be released immediately.

## Bloodbath of Shias in Baluchistan by Sunnis



According to **Roznama Sahara (January 4)**, at least 11 mine workers from the Shia sect were kidnapped by a jihadi terrorist organization in Pakistan's Baluchistan and later shot dead. According to the local police, when these workers were on their way to work in the mines they were surrounded by armed militants and after identifying faith of each worker, they were blindfolded with their shirts. After this, their hands were tied behind. Those workers who were not Shias were let go by the terrorists without inflicting any harm on them. The militants took the Shia workers to a mountain and shot them one by one. Five of them died on the spot, while the rest died on the way to the hospital. Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has condemned the killings and termed it as an inhuman act of terrorism. The Prime Minister has directed the Frontier Corps to use all possible means to capture these terrorists and produce them in a court of law. He also announced that the government will provide all relief measures to the families of those who were killed.

Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Dr Geoffrey Shaw has also condemned the incident and described it as a ruthless action.

According to **Sahafat (January 6)**, the spokesman of the Government of Afghanistan has said that whichever organisation is responsible for the killings of these innocent people is an enemy of Afghanistan and Pakistan. According to another news, ISIS has claimed responsibility for the killings. It is not yet clear which branch of ISIS has committed the gruesome act and whether it is headquartered in Pakistan or in Afghanistan. But it cannot be denied that many Islamic State bases are located in the border areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan, whose terrorists have been shedding the blood of innocents for long in these areas.

According to **Inquilab (January 10)**, the family members of the slain people belonging to the Shia Hazara sect refused to bury the bodies and sat on the road with the corpses as a sign of protest. Their demand was that Prime Minister Imran

Khan should come to the spot and get the culprits of this brutal act arrested immediately. The government of Pakistan and Baluchistan had been holding talks with the Hazara sect for the past several days. But the family members of those killed were not ready to end their protest and bury the dead bodies. But later, the efforts of Baluchistan's Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan and Pakistan's two Union Ministers Ali Zaidi and Zulfi Bukhari and Pakistan National Assembly Vice-President Qasim Suri, who had been camping in Quetta for a week, were successful and a week later the bodies were buried in the cemetery located in the Hazara Town, Quetta. Thousands of people were present on the occasion. These included a dozen ministers and legislators from Baluchistan including Pakistan minister Ali Zaidi, Zulfi Bukhari, Pakistan National Assembly Vice-president Kasim Suri and Baluchistan's Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langau. Qasim Suri said the talks were attended by the martyrs' family members and representatives of the Shaheed Committee and Shia organization Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM), formed by the Hazara fraternity. The Government of Pakistan has accepted all the demands of the families of the deceased and assured that soon after the bodies were buried, the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan would come to the scene and meet the families of the deceased. There was a deadlock in the conversation when Imran Khan wrote a tweet alleging that the family members were trying to blackmail the government by not burying the dead bodies. Imran Khan later expressed regret for the tweet and said that he was referring to the opposition parties and, in this context, had referred to the leaders of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan arrived in Quetta on the second day of the burial of the dead and conveyed condolences to the family

members and assured them that in future, the Shia Hazara fraternity would be given full protection by the Government of Pakistan so that such an incident does not happen again. He said that for the last 22 years, terrorists have been targeting this community, but till date the Government of Pakistan has failed to take any concrete measures to prevent such incidents. Talking to reporters after meeting the Pakistani Prime Minister, Shia Hazara fraternity leader Aga Raza said that the Prime Minister has assured immediate compensation of Rs 25 lakh to the families of the slain persons. Apart from this, special army check points are being set up to ensure security in this area. Newspapers have also indicated that Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa is constantly monitoring the situation and that he would soon visit the border areas of Baluchistan and Afghanistan. So that the security system in this area can be made more stringent.

**Avadhnama**, a newspaper published from Lucknow, has carried a news item on the front page in its **January 7** issue, which states that a series of protests have begun in Pakistan against the killing of 11 mine workers in the coastal area of Baluchistan. In Islamabad, the protest march was led by MWM chief Raja Nasir Abbas Jafari. Later, while addressing a press conference, he said that if their demands are not met, then the roads will be blocked all over Pakistan. He demanded Prime Minister Imran Khan to go to the place of crime and ensure justice. He expressed shock that after a year, terrorism in Pakistan has once again started to raise its head. He asked for how long will the people of Pakistan continue to die? He alleged that the America supported Islamic State has its roots in Afghanistan and Pakistan. He said he got to know that some people are trying to stop Imran Khan from going to Quetta. Such people are not loyal to Pakistan.

Pakistan is shared by all, the foundation of which rests on Islam. It is not the property of any one community. In Karachi also, protests were witnessed at 12 places. In the Faisalabad division, protests were staged at 19 places. Those who took part in the protests demanded the elimination of the Shia assassins.

The newspaper has said that the Shia organization has placed seven demands before the government which includes the launching of a nationwide military campaign to arrest the perpetrators of the incident and demolish the national network of terrorists and for tightening security arrangements throughout Pakistan. Apart from this, there is a demand that at least Rs 50 lakh compensation be given to the families of those who were killed. Calls were also made for a judicial commission to be set up to investigate this incident and to hand over the security of Baluchistan's educational institutions and markets to the Army. It has also been emphasised that because the Baluchistan government has failed in providing security to the Shias, the entire cabinet of Baluchistan should resign immediately. Pakistan's Home Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed admitted that it is confirmed that the Islamic State is behind the killings. He acknowledged that no person has been arrested so far in this regard. Prime Minister Imran Khan has instructed Baluchistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan to cancel his Dubai tour and reach Quetta immediately so that a state-wide operation can be launched by the Army against the terrorists.

### **The massacre of Shias**

Pakistan came into existence as an Islamic nation. Because of this, the Hindus were first targeted. At the time of Partition, the Hindu population in the country was 45 percent, which has now reduced to just one and a half percent. The persecution and forced conversion of the remaining Hindus

in Pakistan has become an everyday occurrence in the country. Hindu girls are openly kidnapped and forcibly married to Muslims. After Hindus, Christians were also targeted by fundamentalists and under Pakistan's infamous blasphemy law many Christians were sentenced to death on the basis of false witnesses given by the local Imams in the courts. Even the Ahmadiyyas and Shias who had participated extensively in the creation of Pakistan could not escape the oppression of Sunni militants. Two lakh Ahmadiyyas were massacred in the 1960s. Their fourth caliph had to flee to London to save his life and till now he is living in exile in London. The Pakistan National Assembly, under pressure from fundamentalist mullahs, had declared Ahmadiyyas non-Muslims during Bhutto's reign.

As far as the Shias are concerned, after Pakistan's dictator Zia-ul-Haq waged a campaign of Islamisation of the country, the life of Shias in Pakistan became difficult. The Wahhabi Muslims formed their own terrorist organization Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP). Later on, differences on the question of leadership cropped up and the group was divided with the formation of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LEJ). Another jihadi organization of Sunnis is Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat (ASWJ). These organizations are vigorously campaigning against Shias. More than 5000 Shias have been killed so far. Recently, the LEJ issued a fatwa against the Shia Hazara sect, calling them deserving of murder according to *Wajib-ul-Katl*. In response, the Shias were also forced to take up arms for their defence and formed their own militant organization Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM). Now, this jihadi organization has spread its foot in Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan, Gilgit and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. This organization raises cases of harassment of



Shia fraternity in Pakistan at international forums.

### Who is the Shia Hazara community?

As far as the Hazara sect is concerned, they are originally of Mongol race and believe in Shia ideology. Babur has mentioned them in 'Baburnama' and has given the name of Hazrat Shia clan. Earlier, Ibn-Batuta had also referred to this clan during the time of Tughlaq dynasty and described them as being part of the army of Sultan Mohammad Tughlaq. Their numbers are estimated to be between 15 and 20 lakhs. At the end of the 19th century, one of its chiefs, Abdul Khalik Hazara, killed Shah Nadir Shah of Afghanistan in 1933. After this incident, persecution of this clan started in Afghanistan and about two lakh Hazaras were killed by Afghan soldiers. After this massacre, five to seven lakh Hazaras fled Baluchistan and went to Pakistan, Iran and Dubai to save their lives. In 1983, at the behest of General Zia-ul-Haq, Sunni jihadist organizations launched a bloody jihad against Shias, causing thousands of Shias to be killed by Sunni terrorist organizations in Karachi, Hyderabad, Swat, Chitral and Gilgit. These Sunni terrorist organizations had the support of the Government of Pakistan. The following are the details of the major massacres of the Shias belonging to the Hazara clan:

- In 2003, Sunni organizations bombed a Shia mosque in Quetta, killing 47 people who were offering their Namaz.

- In 2004, there was indiscriminate firing at a Shia procession, killing 42 Hazara Shias.

- In 2010, eight Hazara patients admitted in a hospital in Quetta were shot dead by terrorists.

- In 2012, when women and children of the Hazara clan were boarding a van on their way to Sibi to Pishin, they were surrounded and attacked with bullets in which seven women and five children died on the spot.

- In 2013, bombings broke out in several places in Baluchistan killing 52 Hazara Shias.

In 2018, Pakistan's Human Rights Commission published a report acknowledging that over 5000 Hazara Shias have been killed in violent incidents in the last 14 years. In October 2016, Sunni militants stopped a bus, singled out Shias and killed seven men and four women. In September 2017, terrorists entered a Shia mosque and killed four people who were offering their Namaz. In April 2019, a suicide bomber killed 21 persons at the weekly market of a Hazara Housing Society in Quetta. The Islamic State had claimed responsibility for this massacre.

## Mastermind of Bali bomb blast released

According to **Inquilab (January 9)**, Indonesia's radical Islamic cleric Abu Bakar Bashir has been released from prison. He was accused of 2002 bomb blasts in Bali. He is said to be the head of the Islamic terrorist organization Jemaah Islamiyah which has links with Al Qaeda. Abu Bakr, 82, is considered the most prominent extremist Islamic leader in Indonesia, the country with the world's

largest Muslim population. It is known that the plan behind the series of explosions in October 2002 were hatched in a hotel in Thailand. The secret meeting was attended by leaders of the jihadist organization Jemaah Islamiyah which is active in South Asia, where it was decided that night clubs, bars and foreign embassies should be targeted. One of the accused in the act had admitted that the decision to carry out the

bombings in Bali was taken because the majority of its population is Hindu and the place is also frequented by a number of non-Muslim tourists. According to another accused Ali Imron,



there was a secret meeting in Solo, Central Java, which was addressed by Imam Samudra. He said that his action is part of the global Islamic Jihad and its purpose is to save the Muslims of Afghanistan from the harassment of the Americans.

It is said that the head of this organization, Hambli alias Islamuddin, was in contact with Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden. Hambli is still in a US prison. The bomb blast in Bali was planned by a 43-year-old Madrassa teacher Ali Gufraan. It is reported that 202 people were killed in these blasts out of which 88 were foreign nationals. It was the most dangerous terrorist attack in the history of Indonesia. During the course of investigation, it was revealed that a person named Idris had procured bombs from Ali Imron and transported them to Bali. Another accused, Amroji, confessed that he had used chemicals to create the bombs that were used to blast the entire club. He had also named the persons whom adethese bombs. Amongst them were Abdul Ghani, Umar Patek etc. Ali Imron loaded the bombs in a van which was then driven to the club. Jimmy, the driver of this van, first blew himself up in this van with a bomb, after which all the bombs in this van exploded.

Similarly, another man named Iqbal, playing the role of suicide bomber, had bombed himself in another club. While two bombs exploded on the way before reaching the spot, killing three men carrying them. Four persons were

sentenced to death for this incident. While the other suspects were killed in an encounter with the police. These included Al Zahiri Hussain, who was considered a bomb-making expert in the Jemaah Islamiyah

organization. He was killed by police in an encounter in eastern Indonesia in 2005. While another bomb making expert Nuruddin Mohammed was killed in a blast in 2009 during a raid by the police. Another terrorist, Dulmatin, was shot dead by the police when he was trying to plant a bomb in an internet cafe in March 2010. The real force behind all these terrorist gangs was the 82-year-old Abu Bakr Al Bashir, who was sentenced to life by the court. But on appeal, the Supreme Court acquitted him. It was also alleged that he had given financial assistance to organise several secret training camps to train terrorists because of which he was still languishing in jail.

Commenting on the incident of the release of Abu Bakr Bashir from prison, a spokesman for the Indonesian government said that the jihadi was released so that he can create awareness amongst the Muslims of Indonesia against jihad. So that in future the Muslims of Indonesia stay away from jihadi violence. The spokesman admitted that Abu Bakr Bashir's lawyer had demanded that the Islamic religious leader be released from prison in view of the widespread Corona pandemic in Indonesia. The Indonesian government accepted this request and decided to release the 82-year-old jihadi.

According to newspapers, when Amroji, a terrorist, was sentenced to death by the court, he laughed out loud saying that he was proud of being martyred for Islam.

## Chinese hand in attack of Afghan troops



According to **Siasat (January 2)**, US sources have accused China of distributing funds to promote terrorism in Afghanistan. The Chinese government has denied this allegation and said that America's goal is to discredit China. China does not interfere in the internal affairs of any country. Because the US has so far failed to establish peace in Afghanistan, and the Taliban and the

Islamic State are shedding the blood of government troops and civilians, the US is blaming China and trying to hide its failures. A US spokesperson has claimed that China and some of its foreign supporters who do not want peace to be restored in Afghanistan are behind the sudden rise of violent incidents in the country.

## Bombings in Afghanistan kill 18 members of a family

According to **Inqilab (January 12)**, at least 18 people were killed when the Afghan Air Force bombed a house in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Those killed include 8 children, 7 women and three men. The villagers kept the bodies on the road and demanded that the government take action against the guilty pilots. Ghazni Regional Council member Mohammad Nasir has said that the people killed in the bombings were not terrorists but innocent citizens, therefore it is the duty of the government to ensure justice. On the other



hand, the government has claimed that a Taliban base had been bombed on the basis

of information from intelligence sources and Taliban militants were killed. It said that it may have been possible that some civilians were also hiding there. Though

negotiations are going on between the Taliban and the government, violent activities are continuing from both sides.

## Death penalty for sharing hate messages on social media



According to **Inquilab (January 9)**, an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan has sentenced three people to death for sharing content on social media that creates disharmony in various sections of society, while giving the fourth accused a ten-year sentence. Countrywide warrants have been issued for arrest of four accused who are absconding. According to The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) which is handling the case, Rana Noman Rafaqat and Abdul Wahid used to run the fake page and disseminate content on social media that created a sense of hatred and violence among various sections of Pakistan. Another person, Nasir Ahmed used to upload this content on YouTube. Pakistan's intelligence department is keeping a close watch on social media these days. They have been trying to find clues of this gang for quite some time. On April 19, 2020, Pakistan's FIA was successful in finding the whereabouts of this gang.

According to the FIR, many unknown people were broadcasting hate and violence propagating content among various sections through internet,

Facebook, Twitter, various websites etc. and objectionable content were posted about many holy personalities through comments, graphic designs, photos, drawings and video, intentionally hurting the religious sentiments and beliefs of various classes and inciting them to resort to violence. On the basis of the FIR, the fourth accused Prof. Anwar Ahmed has been sentenced to ten years imprisonment and a fine of one lakh rupees. The accused was a professor of Urdu in a college. He was arrested on charges of spreading offensive sentiments against Islam during a speech he delivered at the Islamabad Model College. These four were initially arrested under the Blasphemy Law. But on the basis of the evidence presented in the court, the court had imposed the 2017 cybercrime law on them. Now the court has given death penalty to three of them and life imprisonment to one along with a fine of one lakh rupees. Because they have been given this punishment by the Anti-Terrorism Court, they cannot appeal against it in any higher court.

## Improvement in ties of Qatar and Saudi Arabia ushers in a new beginning



According to **Etemaad (January 6)**, the reinstating of diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and its allies and Qatar has ushered in a new beginning for the politics of Arab world. The efforts that were going on behind the curtains resulted in Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani suddenly visiting Saudi Arabia to attend the Gulf Countries Council meet. As soon as he reached there, Saudi Arabia and its allied countries announced the end of stalemate with Qatar. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman welcomed Qatar's ruler Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

In 2017, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain had accused Qatar of promoting terrorism. Along with this, they had imposed a blockade on Qatar. But Qatar has always denied these allegations. The US and Kuwait are said to have played a major role in the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Addressing the summit, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia emphasised that for the development of the region it is

necessary to improve relations among the Gulf countries and it is also important to counter the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program. Two documents were also signed by the six heads of the Gulf countries. This new turn in the politics of Gulf countries has led to a huge boom in the stock market of Asia.

Gulf countries include Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan and Qatar. It is said that the US was concerned about Qatar's growing ties with Iran, so it took a special interest in getting the sanctions of Qatar removed.

According to **Inquilab (January 12)**, after four years, airline services have started between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Qatar Airways has announced that it will operate aircraft between Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam. The airline has stated that it seeks strong relationships with its business and associate partners in Saudi Arabia. According to another announcement, after Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain has also announced the

resumption of airline services and sea transport with Qatar after four years. In 2017, six Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, accused Qatar of instigating terrorism and broke diplomatic, trade and transport ties with the nation. Earlier this month, Saudi Arabia announced that it would re-establish its relations with Qatar while attending a session of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). It is claimed that America is behind this political move.

According to **Etemaad (January 7)**, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud announced that good relations have been established between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Egypt and all issues have been sorted. He also acknowledged that Kuwait played an important role in resolving these disputes. All these countries agreed to fight all kinds of terrorism in future. According to Al-Ula agreement, no country signing these agreements will carry out any acts of terrorism against each other. The countries will have to fully cooperate with each other to counter any threat.

**Siasat (January 7)**, in its editorial, welcomed the decision announced at the summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council and said that it would usher in a new beginning for the Arab world and pave the way to mutual unity, prosperity and renewed strength. The newspaper argued that the way Iran was mentioned in the Al-Ula Agreement may not be appropriate for

Muslim unity. It also said that the influence of Israel in these countries is increasing rapidly and the attitude of these countries has also become friendly towards Israel. It added that it is not possible to guess what will be the benefit of this change. The newspaper has indicated that be it America or Israel, national interest is paramount for them. America and Israel's policy regarding Iran is not hidden from anyone.

An article that appeared in **Siasat (January 12)**, expressed happiness over the improvement in ties between Qatar and Saudi Arabia and said that it is good news for the entire Islamic world. Muslim countries should pressurise Western countries to cooperate in building a separate autonomous state of Palestine. It is important to evacuate the areas that Israel has forcibly occupied.

**Akhbar-e-Mashriq (Kolkata)** has in its **January 13** editorial welcomed the agreement reached between Qatar and Saudi Arabia. However, the newspaper has criticised that the national media of India did not give the issue much importance. The newspaper has warned that the Muslims should not ignore the rising influence of the US in the Gulf countries. It expressed hope that Saudi Arabia and Qatar will together contribute to the economic development of the Gulf countries in a significant manner. It said that the Muslims of Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are looking at this change in the Gulf region with interest. ■

## Saudi Arabia permits music and theatre centres

According to **Inqilab (January 1)**, for the first time in history, licenses have been issued to two institutes for training in the subjects of music, acting, fashion, literature, etc. in Saudi Arabia, an important country in the Islamic world. Music, acting and performing arts were



completely banned in Saudi Arabia for the past several centuries. Five years ago, the Saudi government allowed for music, acting and fashion-related events to be held in public in the country. But there was a restriction that women and men could not jointly participate in any program. Recently women have also been allowed to work with men.

According to the official newspaper 'Saudi Gazette', the Arab Minister of Culture has confirmed that the Saudi

government has issued licenses to 'The International Music Training Centre' and 'Music House for Training of Performing Arts'. Minister of Cultural Department Prince Badr bin Abdullah has said that permission is granted to the persons who wish to participate in these training courses. These two institutions will have to start work within three months and both women and men will be allowed to receive training. ■

## US designates Houthi rebels as terrorist organisation

According to **Inqilab (January 12)**, the US has decided to declare the Houthi organization operating in Yemen as a terrorist organization. US President Trump wanted to fulfil his declared agenda in the Middle East in this way. Trump's efforts have allowed four Muslim countries to recognise Israel, and have also succeeded in reducing the influence of Iran in the region. With the effort of the US President,

Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries have succeeded in establishing relations with Qatar after three years. The US State Department has refused to make any comment in this regard. It is known that Houthis are campaigning against Yemen from Saudi Arabia. The Houthis are believed to have the full support of Iran with their weapons also being supplied by Iran. ■

## Iran to give compensation to plane crash victims

According to **Inqilab (January 1)**, the Government of Iran has announced one and a half lakh USD compensation to the families of the 176 passengers who died in Ukraine plane crash in January of last year. It is known that a missile that was accidentally fired from Iran's military base destroyed the aircraft. The Minister of Communications of Iran told the Iranian Communications Agency that reports related to the accident have been sent to all countries that were involved in the investigation.

It is known that the Iranian Army targeted the passenger plane with its missile on 9 January 2020 after the US killed Qasem Soleimani, Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. 167 passengers were killed. The government of Iran had admitted after it

was found that the crash happened due to the error of its army. After this incident, there was a lot of bitterness in relations between Iran and USA. It is said that when the Ukrainian aircraft was flying from Imam Khomeini Airport in Tehran, it became the target of the Iranian missile. The Ukraine Prime Minister had reported that 176 people died in the accident, including 167 passengers and the rest were the plane's crew including the pilot and the co-pilot. Among the dead were 82 Iranians, 63 Canadians, 4 Afghans, 2 Germans and 3 British nationals. While the number of Ukrainian citizens was 11.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has admitted that the accident occurred due to Iranian military's mistake. Therefore, Iran deeply regrets what happened. ■

## General Soleimani's first death anniversary

According to **Inqilab (January 4)**, on the occasion of the first death anniversary of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi, millions of Iraqi civilians paid tribute to the martyr and his comrades in Tahrir Square, Baghdad. Along with Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and other countries also observed the death anniversary of Soleimani. Protesters carried the flag of the Iraqi jihadi organization Popular Mobilisation Force (PMF) along with pictures of Soleimani and other martyrs. Demonstrators demanded the expulsion of US troops from Iraq and also called for retaliatory action against the assassins. While addressing the protesters

in Tehran, Iran's judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi and Commander-in-chief of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Major General Hossein Salami said that Iran is yet to avenge the death of Soleimani. They said the revenge will be taken and his killers will be taken out from their hiding places and killed. The protesters wore black clothes.

Addressing the protesters at another location in Baghdad, Hadi al-Amiri, leader of the Fatah Alliance said, "We will always follow the path of the martyrs." The persecution of Muslims will be stopped at all costs and the slayer of Soleimani and his associates will be avenged. ■

## Iran becomes Al-Qaeda's new base

According to **Inqilab (January 14)**, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has alleged that Iran has become the new base of the international Islamic terrorist organization. However, he did not present any evidence proving this allegation. Iran has described this accusation of America as baseless and concocted. The US Secretary of State said that Al Qaeda has made Tehran as its base and is giving a new shape to its leadership. The Al-Qaeda chief's associates are there and they are trying to create a new Afghanistan there. This will worsen the situation. Because, till now the headquarters of Al Qaeda were in the hills of Afghanistan and they did not have the support of the Afghanistan government. But now the government of Iran is extending them support.

It is known that Mike Pompeo's tenure is now over. Because a new Secretary of State will take over as soon as the term of the old president comes to an end. Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif has

denied the charge, saying that they have been targeted by the Al Qaeda and the Islamic State and have been victims of their violence. He added that they have always put up a firm fight. Therefore, it is a dangerous lie that is being spread by America. Javad Zarif said that the US is levelling false allegations against Iran and the country has never had any links with the Al Qaeda. It is known that tensions between Iran and America are increasing every day. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said that even though the US President Trump had tried to paralyse Iran by imposing economic sanctions, those efforts have gone in vain.

He said that the country had eliminated a ruthless dictator like Shah Iran and now they will rest only after suppressing the American dictator. Iran is moving forward on the path of development despite the sanctions imposed by the US. ■



## Construction of Shiva temple inaugurated by a Muslim

According to **Inquilab (January 13)**, the construction work of the Prachin Shiva Mandir (ancient Shiv temple) on Rani Jhansi Road in Delhi was inaugurated by Gulfam Qureshi. Chief Pattern of Muslim Rashtriya Manch Dr Indresh Kumar also took part in this ceremony. Dr Kumar expressed happiness that the Muslims are also taking part in the construction work of the temple. He appealed to the Hindus to participate actively in the construction of mosques so that Hindu Muslim goodwill remains strong. He also urged Hindus to provide full protection to the places of worship of Muslims so that national unity, social harmony and humanity continue to exist. However, he noted that the prevailing situation is not good but can be improved.

He said, if people of different religions celebrate each other's festivals, then the distances created in the heart can be overcome.

On this occasion, Gulfam Qureshi said that he is participating in the construction of the temple because that is what Islam has taught him. Islam does not allow any religion to be termed evil and it teaches to respect all religions and provide protection to all places of worship. This is humanity. He said that India's civilisation is thousands of years old Ganga-Jamuna civilisation and it is the duty of all Indian to preserve it. Hafiz Mohammad Sabarin of the Muslim Rashtriya Manch, Dr. Imran Chaudhary, Siraj Qureshi, Khurshid Raja etc. also took part in the program. ■

## Former Turkish Generals imprisoned for life

According to **Iqilab (January 1)**, a Turkish court sentenced nearly a dozen former generals to life imprisonment for their role in an attempted coup in 2016. A total of 132 people having links with the Turkish Army have been given life imprisonment. The trial of this case began in 2017. Senior army officials have been

severely punished. They will never be released on parole and will have to spend their entire lives in prison. It is known that in 2016, the army attempted to overthrow President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, but they failed in their efforts. More than 500 people were killed in the attempted coup. ■

## US sells weapons to Arab countries

According to **Iqilab (January 1)**, the US Congress has allowed the US administration to sell weapons worth USD 4.8 billion to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The National Security Agency of the US has allowed the sale of the military hardware. These include fighter aircrafts,

helicopters, Patriot air defence systems and missiles. Permission has also been granted to sell special protective systems to Egypt for safeguarding the aircraft of the country's president. Sale of weapons will start within a month. ■

## Way cleared for repatriation of foreign immigrants

According to **Inquilab (January 14)**, hundreds of foreigners who had been arrested in the country for their links with Tablighi Jamaat during the Covid-19 pandemic, have now been cleared to return to their respective countries. It is known that the government has failed in proving the charges that were pressed against those foreigners who were arrested under the Epidemic Act for their connection with the Tablighi Jamaat. Because of this, the court has acquitted them. Supreme Court lawyer Fasal Ayubi said that the Tablighis were

acquitted by the court and were also allowed to return home, but section 437A of CrPC requires the accused to execute bail bond of six months validity to ensure his appearance before the appropriate court. This is why despite being acquitted by the court, the foreign nationals did not return home. The government had not given them NoC. Taking cognisance of this difficulty, the Supreme Court ordered that people of foreign origin can return home by filing an oath in the court. ■

## Pilot suspended for refusing to go to Israel

According to **Inquilab (January 14)**, a pilot of the Emirates Airlines refused to fly the aircraft to Israel, because of which he has been suspended. The pilot, Monem Sahib al-Taba, is from Tunisia. He has said in his Facebook post that he does not regret his decision and that Allah will take care of him. He said that he will appear before the

Disciplinary Committee which will take a call on his suspension. Tunisian newspapers have supported the pilot's decision and said that the step he took is justified and that he is proof that the problem of Palestine is alive in the heart of every Tunisian citizen. ■

## Kuwait's cabinet resigns

According to **Inquilab (January 14)**, Kuwait's Prime Minister Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah has submitted the resignation of his cabinet to the Emir of Kuwait. According to the newspapers, he had to resign due to controversy in the selection of ministers. It is known that a month ago tensions arose between the government and Parliament on this issue. This comes as a big challenge for the new Emir, Sheikh



Nawaf al-Ahmed, who took over as Emir just six months ago. Due to pressure from oil producing countries, Kuwait had to significantly cut its oil production, due to which the country is going through an economic crisis. The corona pandemic has also adversely impacted the country's economy. It is not yet clear whether the Emir will accept the resignation of the Cabinet. ■

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**REVIEW OF URDU PRESS**  
December 16-31, 2020


**Corona Vaccine is Halal or Haram?**



- Prime Minister Modi and Aligarh Muslim University
- Team Accused of Spreading Terrorism
- Children Kidnapped by Boko Haram Released
- Controversy over Cremation of Muslims in Sri Lanka

**REVIEW OF URDU PRESS**  
December 1-15, 2020


**Spectacular Show by BJP in Hyderabad Municipal Election**



- Small Arabis Express Supporters of Anti-India Protest
- Israel Launches Effort to Improve Relationships with Islamic Countries
- France Ready with New Law against Islamic Terrorism
- Effort to Spread Communalism in the Name of Masjid

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



- Maghls Expands its Influence in Bihar
- The Killing of Iran's Top Nuclear Scientist
- Debate over Killing Islamophobia in Europe
- Tribunal Paid to the Killer of Swand Shradhhamand

**REVIEW OF URDU PRESS**  
November 1-15, 2020

**Indian Muslims out on Streets in Support of Islamic Terrorism**



- Row over Restrictions on Madrasas
- Israel Establishes Diplomatic Tie-up with Bahrain
- Islamic Terrorism Spreads its Tentacles in Europe
- Scholarship for Minority Students Siphoned off in Jharkhand

**REVIEW OF URDU PRESS**  
October 16-31, 2020


**Modi Govt Committed to the Welfare of Muslims**



- Kurash University to cover up in Delhi
- Increasing Influence of Israel in Arab world
- US to sign agreement with Taliban in Afghanistan
- Iran-Iraq border closed

**REVIEW OF URDU PRESS**  
October 1-15, 2020

**Court Targeted over Babri Verdict**



- Efforts to Form Muslim Meecha Fail
- Saudi Arabia Announces Economic Boycott of Turkey
- Armenia and Azerbaijan Conflict
- Action against Amnesty International Criticized by PFI