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UP Govt Plans to Take Control of Controversy-Hit Jauhar University



- Padma Awards and Muslims
- Biden Lifts Restrictions Imposed on Citizens from Islamic Countries
- Israel Prepares to Launch Attacks on Iran
- UAE Decides to Open Embassy in Israel

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Summary

The tableaux of the proposed Ram Mandir in Ayodhya and of the temples listed by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites were displayed at the Republic Day parade this year. However, some extremist Muslim organisations and newspapers did not like it and angrily criticised the move. Before this, when President Ram Nath Kovind donated Rs 5 lakh for the Ram Mandir, then also a number of Muslim organisations and self-declared secularists felt uneasy. The most interesting issue is that they find secularism and Constitution in danger whenever they see the symbols of Bharat's culture. However, when demands are made for a Common Civil Code, scrapping of triple talaq and modernisation of madrasas, they forget about secularism and Indian Constitution and take refuge in Shariah law, Quran and Hadith.

Construction of a complex comprising a masjid, hospital and a cultural research centre has started at the land allotted in lieu of Babri Masjid at Dhannipur village near Ayodhya, as per the directions of the Supreme Court. However, a section of Muslims is opposed to this. Their contention is that the proposed masjid is not valid as per Shariah.

The Mohammad Ali Jauhar University located in Rampur is once again in the midst of a controversy. The Uttar Pradesh government had launched an administrative inquiry into the allegations that the trust that runs this university had illegally encroached government land, custodian land and parts of Kosi river and made them a part of the university premises. Hence a court directed that the government should immediately retake its land illegally encroached by the trust that runs the university. However, one section is opposed to the decision and Muslims held demonstrations in several parts of the state.

Former secretary of Aligarh Muslim University Students Union and the Muslim face of Samajwadi Party, Mohammad Azam Khan had devised a plan to position himself as another Syed Ahmad Khan and establish a variant of Aligarh Muslim University. During the Samajwadi Party rule, he got the permission to start an Urdu University and got its foundation stone laid by Mulayam Singh Yadav. When the BSP came to power, this plan fell apart. However, later the Akhilesh Yadav government granted permission to run it as a private university.

Union minister for minority affairs, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, while addressing a meeting of the Central Waqf Council, claimed that ever since the Modi government came to power, welfare activities for minorities have been taking place on a war-footing. Till 2014, the welfare programmes for minorities were implemented only in 90 districts of the country, but in the past six years, these programmes are being implemented in 308 districts or in 870 blocks, he said. Due to these programmes, there is a huge improvement in the condition of minorities, he said.

Newly elected President of the United States, Joe Biden, has indicated a huge policy shift with regard to West Asia. For example, the Trump administration had signed an agreement to supply arms and ammunition to Saudi Arabia and UAE and the Biden administration has just junked this plan. This apart, the new administration has promised to review the plan to declare Houthi rebels in Yemen as terrorists. The new administration has also indicated that it would review the defence deals that US had signed with different Arab countries in the recent past. Due to this shift in US policy, there is a formidable challenge to Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.



UP govt plans to take control of controversy-hit Jauhar University



The Mohammad Ali Jauhar University, established by Samajwadi Party leader and former minister Azam Khan in Rampur, has been in controversy right from the beginning. The Uttar Pradesh government under Yogi Adityanath has started taking measures to bring the university under the administrative control of the government. Additional district judge, Rampur, Jagadamba Prasad has directed the government to take over 1,400 bigha land of the university. As per an agreement signed in 2005, the university was given permission to buy nearly 12.5 acres of land. Now, after the direction of the court, the government is all set to take back its land which was allegedly brought in its control by the Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar Trust in a fraudulent manner. Former minister Azam Khan is the chairman of the trust.

Inquilab (January 17) reports that additional district judge Jagadamba Prasad has directed that the 1,400 bigha land of the Jauhar University shall be taken over by the government. As per reports, there was

an agreement between the government and the trust as per which children from poor families were supposed to be given free education by the institution. However, this agreement has been violated. Coordinator for BJP in western Uttar Pradesh, Akash Saksena, had complained to the chief minister that the university had encroached on government land as well as the land of common people. The state administration had ordered an inquiry into the allegations and the allegations were found true. As case was registered soon after. Government pleader Ajay Tiwari told the court that the trust had violated the agreement that it had signed with the government. Hence, the land over and above 12 acres shall be taken under government control. The lawyer for the trust argued that chairman of the trust is Azam Khan. He is currently in jail and the court should send somebody to Sitapur jail to record his statement. However, the court has declined to accept this demand. The trust had approached the high court but the court too dismissed the petition.

Inquilab (January 18) reports that the Rampur district magistrate has sent a report to the state government which states that the Jauhar trust, starting from 2005, has so far bought 75 hectares of land. The Samajwadi Party government of Mulayam Singh had allowed the trust to purchase land on concessional rates. The inquiry conducted by the administration has revealed that government rules were violated in the purchase of over 70 hectares of land. As per the directive of the court, the government can take control of the university. The Jauhar University was the dream project of Azam Khan. Its foundation stone was laid on September 18, 2006. It was inaugurated on September 18, 2012.

Inquilab (January 19) reports that former chief minister and president of Samajwadi Party, Akhilesh Yadav, had alleged that all the cases registered against Azam Khan by the BJP government were fake and hence he stands by Azam Khan. He said that the BJP government was trying to change the name of the university which they would not allow.

Roznama Sahara (January 22) reports that a meeting of Samajwadi Party held in Nazibabad has demanded that the government should return the land it had taken from Jauhar University. In a memorandum sent to the President, it has also been alleged that the state government was trying to finish off the university as per the wishes of capitalists.

Roznama Sahara (January 23) reports that similar meetings were held in several towns of western Uttar Pradesh in which the state government was accused of deliberately trying to destroy the university.

Mumbai Urdu News (January 22) reports that Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan, his wife and son got relief from the Supreme Court in a case filed over fake birth certificate. The Supreme Court has dismissed a petition filed by the state

government seeking to cancel the bail granted to the three. The Allahabad High Court had accepted the bail plea of the three persons in the fake birth certificate case and had ordered their immediate release.

Mumbai Urdu News (January 24) has carried an article written by Masoom Moradabadi titled as 'Dark clouds over Jauhar University.' The article claims that the allotment of 173 acres of land has been cancelled. It claims that the decision has been taken in a unilateral manner. The trust was not given an opportunity in the court to argue its side. The government had granted it the status of a private university in 2006. The university has been a target of controversies right from the beginning. The first controversy was over making its founder Mohammad Azam Khan a lifetime chancellor and the row came in the way of getting it recognition. Later, a special bill was brought in Uttar Pradesh Assembly to get over this hitch. Even after this, allegations were raised that people's land were encroached in the name of the university. Now after the government taking over the land of the university, those who were planning to establish a new university in place of Jauhar university are dissatisfied. For the past one year, Azam Khan and his son Abdullah Azam Khan are behind the bars in Sitapur jail. Azam Khan's wife and MLA from Rampur town Tazeen Fatima had got bail recently and though the state government approached the Supreme Court to get her bail cancelled, it failed to get a favourable order. There are more than 100 cases against Azam Khan and his family pending before the courts.

Azam Khan was an MLA from Rampur for many years. When once he got defeated in the assembly elections, Mulayam Singh sent him to Rajya Sabha. In the last Lok Sabha elections, Azam Khan got elected from Rampur

constituency with a huge margin. However, later Azam Khan, his wife and son were sent to jail on various cases. One of the cases is that the birth certificate of his son Abdullah Azam Khan is a fake one. As far as Azam Khan is concerned, he studied law in Aligarh Muslim University where he was also the secretary of its student union. He was arrested during the Emergency in 1975 and remained in jail for one-and-a-half years. Following the lifting of Emergency, he jumped into politics. He came to be known as a firebrand leader and this helped him become a popular leader for a section of Muslims. It is also said that he used to harass his opponents a lot when he was enjoying the fruits of power. The feeling is that the Yogi Adityanath government has set a trap to take control of Jauhar University. A section of Muslims in Uttar Pradesh are opposed to this. The writer wants the government to take a decision only after considering the future of the students studying in this university.

Background: In 2004, Azam Khan had demanded that a government Urdu university should be set up in Rampur in the name of Khilafat leader Mohammad Ali Jauhar. It was a Congress government in

power at the Centre and the then governor T R Rajeshwar did not give his nod to set up the university. His objection was over the decision to make Azam Khan a lifetime chancellor of the university. The controversy over the university continued for five years. In 2006, the then chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav laid the foundation stone of the university despite several objections. In 2007, the Samajwadi Party lost power and BSP came to the saddle. Hence the project got shelved. In 2009, Azam Khan played one more trick and declared that the university would be a private one and not under the government. He operated an engineering college from the premises of this university for three years. In 2012, when the Samajwadi Party returned to power, it granted permission to the students to enrol in this university. Mulayam Singh Yadav also inaugurated this university. Praising Azam Khan, Mulayam Singh Yadav said that the former started this institution for the uplift of his community and the society. When the Yogi Adityanath government came to power in Uttar Pradesh, the university once again fell into bad times. ■

Padma awards and Muslims



Among the Padma awards announced by the Modi government this year, the second highest award, Padma Vibhushan, has been

awarded to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. The Padma Bhushan has been awarded to Shia scholar Maulana Kalbe Sadiq. This

apart, 11 other Muslims have been awarded with Padma Shri.

The interesting thing is that majority of the Urdu newspapers chose to ignore this aspect of Padma awards and not a single Urdu newspaper has written an editorial on these Islamic scholars being decorated with Padma awards. There are more than 250 Urdu newspapers in the country out of which just a dozen newspapers carried a report on the front page about these scholars being given Padma awards.

Siasat (January 28) in its editorial expressed the opinion that this year Modi government announced Padma awards to different celebrities and it is aimed at reaping political benefits. Majority of those who were awarded belong to states like Tamil Nadu, Assam, West Bengal and Kerala. Assembly elections are set to take place in these states very soon. Those who have been given Padma awards include 11 from Tamil Nadu, 9 from Assam, 7 from West Bengal and 6 from Kerala. For example, to keep the politically alert Ahom community in Assam in good humour, a number of people from this community have been given Padma awards. The reason is that out of the 126 assembly seats in Assam, the members of this community have a crucial role in determining the winner in at least 66 seats. The members of this community are traditional Congress supporters right from the beginning. However, in the 2016 elections, they have given their votes to BJP. Now the Central government feels that due to the Citizenship Amendment Bill of 2019, these votes would drift from their hands. That is the reason why even the former Congress chief minister of Assam, Tarun Gogoi, has also been given a posthumous Padma award. The same way, some intellectuals in West Bengal have also been given Padma awards. Its aim is to secure votes for BJP in the forthcoming assembly elections.

Avadhnama (January 28) reports that Qazi Maulana Rashid Firangi Mahali of Lucknow has welcomed the decision to award Padma Bhushan to Shia leader late Dr Kalbe Sadiq. Leader of Babri Masjid Action Committee Zafaryab Jilani said that the late Kalbe Sadiq used to be a bridge between different sects of Muslims. Though he was a Shia scholar, he had huge admiration among the followers of Sunni sect. He was a strong proponent of Hindu-Muslim unity. He played a major role in the education of Muslims. He had established Tauheedul Muslimeen Trust with the purpose of educating the poor and downtrodden children of the society. The trust has been running various educational institutions.

Etemaad (January 26) reports that son of Dr Kalbe Sadiq, Kalbe Sibtain Noori telephoned defence minister Rajnath Singh and expressed his gratitude for giving the award to his father.

Roznama Sahara (January 29) reports that the Deoband followers have welcomed the decision to give Padma awards to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and Dr Kalbe Sadiq and stated that the Modi government has set a glorious example by giving the awards to those who really deserve it.

Inquilab (January 28) has published an article by Masoom Moradabadi which states that it was the first time the government has chosen Islamic scholars for Padma awards. Wahiduddin Khan and Dr Kalbe Sadiq had tried to create goodwill in society and harmony between different religions. At the age of 96, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is still busy in writing religious books. However, a section of Muslims does not agree with his ideology. Maulana Kalbe Sadiq did commendable work in the field of education and social reform. Chairman of Islamic Centre and editor of monthly magazine Al-Risala, Maulana Wahidudhin Khan, has been

awarded Padma Vibhushan this year, which is second only to Bharat Ratna. The ideology of Maulana was deeply influenced by Gandhian principles and he is considered as an advocate of religious unity. He has written a commentary on Quran and translated it into English apart from writing hundreds of other books which are guidelines for the society.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was born in Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh in 1925. During 1967-74, he was also the editor for 'Saptahik Al Jamiat' published by Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind. He is a scholar of Urdu, Arabic, Persian and English languages. His books have been translated to English, Turkish, Arabic and Persian. He is considered as a flagbearer of peace. Many Islamic scholars do not agree with his ideology. In 1989, the Pakistan government had given him an international award for his book 'Paigambar-e-Inquilab.' Earlier, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government had honoured him with Padma Bhushan in 2000. The Maulana was also named in the list of the 'World's 500 most influential Muslims.' He is the most famous 'Aalim-e-Din' of Hindustan and Pakistan. The head of Soviet Union had also given him an international award. This apart, he was also honoured with 'Rajiv Gandhi Rashtriya

Sadbhavana Puraskar. The Abu Dhabi government had honoured him with Sayyidina Imam Al Hassan Ibn Ali Peace Award.' He had translated Quran into modern and simple English and had also written a commentary on Quran. He also delivers discourses on TV channels. When the Muslims in the country were agitated over the Babri Masjid issue, he had supported the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya and had appealed to the Muslims to maintain peace and religious harmony. The Maulana is a Gandhian and a propagator of Hindu-Muslim unity. Several extremist Islamic scholars maintain their differences with him over his ideology.

As far as Maulana Kalbe Sadiq was concerned, he was considered as a moderate Islamic scholar. He was the vice-president of All India Muslim Personal Law Board for a long time. He tried his best to bring Shia-Sunni unity. There are many colleges in Lucknow established by him. The statement that he had given on Babri Masjid remained at the centre of a controversy among Muslims for a long time. Maulana Kalbe Sadiq obtained his MA, PhD degrees from Aligarh Muslim University. He did excellent work in organising Shia-Sunni joint namaz. ■

Huge increase in minority welfare schemes under Modi government

Sahafat (January 24) reports that Union minister for minority affairs, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, while addressing a meeting of the office-bearers of different state Waqf boards organised by the Central Waqf Council, said that for the first time after Independence, the Modi government has formulated a strategy to retrieve the entire Waqf properties in the country from the clutches of mafia and use the income from them for the social, financial and

educational uplift of Muslim community. In the past six years, under Pradhan Mantri Awami Vikas Yojana, several schools, colleges, IIT kendras, girls hostels, residential schools, skill development centres and sadbhavana mandaps have been set upon a largescale in many minority dominated areas. The entire expenses of these were borne by the Modi government at the Centre. When the Modi government came to power, the minority welfare



programmes were limited to 90 districts. Now it has been extended to 308 districts, 870 blocks, 331 towns and thousands of villages.

The benefits of these schemes are reaching all classes of minority communities. He said that there are a total of 6.64 lakh registered Waqf properties in the country. The digitisation programme of Waqf boards in all states has been completed. Waqf boards in all states have been provided with video conferencing facility. A Waqf board has been established

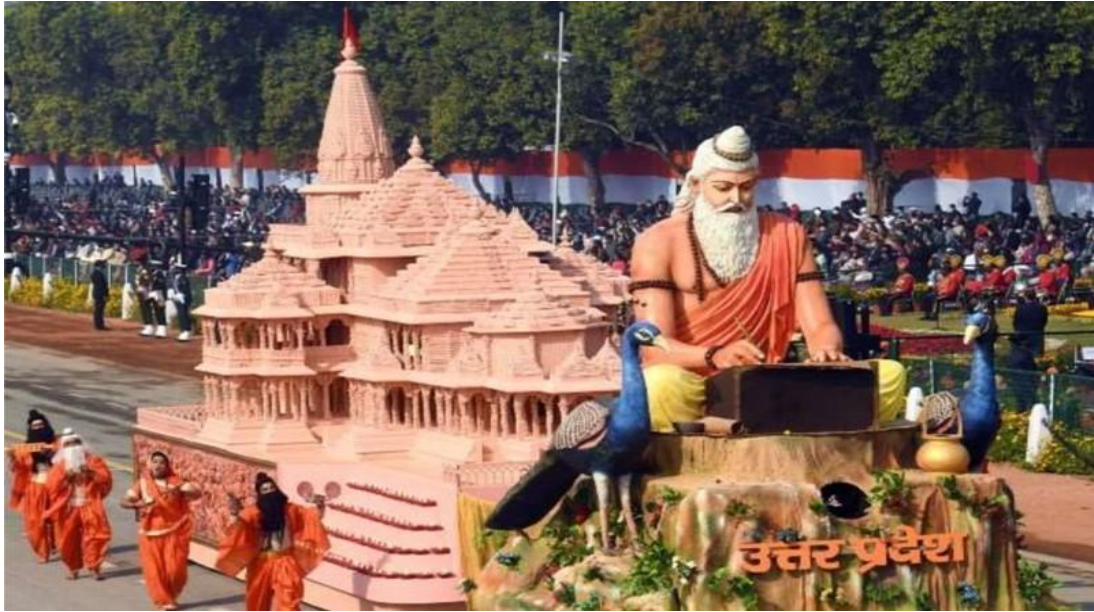
in Jammu and Kashmir, Leh and Kargil so that the benefits from the Waqf properties could be utilised for the uplift of Muslims there. He urged all office-bearers of Waqf boards that they should take effective steps to protect Waqf properties. He said that complaints have been received from some states over corruption and illegal occupation of Waqf properties. Hence the Central government has directed all states to remove illegal encroachment from Waqf properties so that the benefits from them should be used for the welfare of Muslims.

Extremists annoyed over tableaux of temples in Republic Day parade

In this year's Republic Day parade, tableaux of the proposed Ram Mandir in Ayodhya and a few other ancient temples were displayed as part of Uttar Pradesh's cultural heritage. However, it did not go down well with some members of the Muslim community and they launched a verbal assault over it.

Etemaad in its editorial on January 27 writes that like every year, there were several tableaux at the Republic Day parade that took place recently. Surprisingly, it is for the first time that tableaux of several other temples apart

from the Ram temple have been sighted at the Republic Day parade. The tableaux of Surya Mandir at Modhera in Gujarat was also part of the parade. The tableaux of Ladakh was also something similar. Republic Day is a democratic festival of the people of the country. Hence, several kinds of doubt arise when the models of different temples are displayed as tableaux at the parade. For those who believe in secularism, these tableaux are raising doubts about the government's intentions on Hindu Rashtra. Is it right to display only



the temples in the name of culture and heritage of the country?

In Republic Day parade, tableaux of different states and Union Territories are displayed. They often highlight the latest development activity or some important achievements of these states. However, for the first time, temples have been displayed in this event this year. The model of Ram temple was also spotted at the parade. The way several tableaux of temples been displayed at the parade, it gives strength to the fear that the effort to create a Hindu Rashtra has been given an open display at a government function. The tableaux of Ram mandir being displayed at the Republic Day parade has been discussed for some time now. However, the avowed secular parties of this country have not opened their mouth on this issue. It has to be assumed that in order to appease the vote bank politics of the majority community, they have to keep their mouth shut on the issue. We are not against any tableaux that represents the nation's cultural heritage being displayed at the Republic Day parade. But by presenting a culture based on temples what kind of message is the ruling party intends to give? The aim behind it is clearly visible. The BJP has

been playing the politics of Ram Mandir on every issue. Whether it is for elections or for construction of Ram Mandir, the BJP has been taking maximum benefit out of it.

Some people might be thinking that after the favourable Supreme Court verdict on Ram Mandir, the BJP would stop the politics over temple. However, this has been proved an illusion. The Prime Minister took part in the foundation laying ceremony of Ram temple and it was criticised by some people. However, the government chose to ignore the criticism. Later, a fund collection campaign was started for the construction of the temple. By starting a nationwide fund collection drive for the Ram temple, the BJP is trying to deliver a message to the people of the country that the construction of Ram temple is possible only through the BJP. After this, the ruling party by including the tableaux of temples at the Republic Day parade, is trying to convey the message that it has become invincible and hence will do things in an arbitrary manner. The display of tableaux based on the party's agenda at people's national festival is an open proof of this. The government should remember that Hindu Rashtra might be the dream of RSS-VHP but it is not the wish of the



people. Hence the display of these kinds of tableaux at the Republic Day parade is an expression of their intentions and it is also giving this message that vested political interests have taken control of secularism.

Mumbai Urdu News (January 17) in its editorial has criticised President Ram Nath Kovind's donation for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya. The newspaper states that a fund collection drive has been launched for the construction of Ram temple in place of Babri masjid after the judicial verdict in the case. Don't know why this campaign has started now, but because of the rallies being taken out for the fund collection, Hindu-Muslim riots have occurred in at least three towns in Madhya Pradesh. On this occasion, Hanuman Chalisa is deliberately recited in front of masjids and the provocative action of hoisting saffron flags atop the tombs of the masjids are also attempted. In some places, there were reports of Muslims pelting stones after which chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced the decision to bring a law against pelting of stones in order to teach them a lesson. Amid this, there were

also reports of heartrending stories of houses of Muslims' being destroyed or set on fire. Now, where this is going as President Ram Nath Kovind is the first to donate for the construction of Ram temple. The President has given Rs 5 lakh for the construction of Ram mandir and it is being said that by doing so he set an auspicious beginning for the cause. For NDTV, Priyadarshan in his telecast has raised this question as how much justifiable is the donation by the first citizen of the country towards construction of a temple? Priyadarshan says that President is not any another man, but the first citizen of this country. Should such public display of allegiance to religion be done? Even if it is admitted that the President has reverence to his religion, he could have made a secret donation in such circumstances. In this way he could have maintained his faith and saved the reputation of his post. But this can happen when he wants only Ram to know about his donation. But he may want the entire country to know that he has donated Rs 5 lakh for the construction of Ram temple. It can be said that it was Ram who made him eligible to occupy the

President's post. Hence he is expressing gratitude to Ram. However, he also has the democratic and constitutional responsibility of the country. Had this democracy and Constitution not been there, forget about him becoming the President, he would not have even been permitted to enter the temple by the upper castes and his donation would also have become untouchable. Years ago, the first President Dr Rajendra Prasad had washed the feet of 500 Brahmins in Banaras. Then socialist leader Dr Ram Manohar Lohia had openly criticised the move. He had said that it was an embarrassing scene that the President of the country was washing the feet of some just because they were Brahmins. It would give a boost to caste, religious divide.

Priyadarshan further said that whatever President Ram Nath Kovind had done was a boost to communalism and taking the country towards darkness. He said that the President had deceived the Constitutional tradition of the country which gives every citizen the right to live and live with equality. This is the ideological aspects of the President's decisions. However, the reality is far worse. The enthusiasm of those who collected Rs 5 lakh donation from the President might have increased and the concern is that in the name of collecting funds there could be use of force. There could be tension in the society. The danger lies in the house to house campaign and collection of funds. A clear directive should be given to institutions involved in construction of Ram Temple that they should not visit anybody's house to collect funds. Instead, those who are interested in donating the money shall do so by visiting a centre set up for the purpose in the town. The mandir is a result of the rathyatra taken out in the 90s, where the chariot wheels had also left behind blood stains on its

path. It is also the result of a 'big crime' that took place on December 6, 1992 in which a 400-year-old masjid was razed to the ground.

Etemaad in its January 19 edition has published an editorial which complains that in the name of fund collection for Ram temple there is an effort to disturb peace in society. Going by the past experience, it would not be wrong to say that whenever a yatra was taken out, it had affected the communal harmony and violence had broken out. In the next few months, there will be elections in several states and hence the ruling party has once again launched a political campaign in the name of Ram mandir. This time BJP is approaching people in the name of funds for Ram mandir and it has decided to visit five lakh villages in the country for the purpose. In the name of fund collection campaign, the aim is to kill multiple birds with one stone. Through this campaign, the ruling party is sending this message to the majority community that it has fulfilled its commitment for the construction of Ram temple and it is taking this as an opportunity to reach out to people once again through the campaign. It is understood that the temple is being built at a cost of Rs 1,100 crore and is likely to be completed by 2024. That year, there will be general elections in the country and the BJP is making all efforts to garner the votes.

Etemaad (January 22) reports that TRS MLA Vidyasagar Rao has targeted BJP for the fund collection drive and urged people not to give money for the construction of Ram temple. Instead, they should construct Ram temple at their own places. He said that we all are Ram bhakts and not just who have tilaks on their foreheads. The BJP has strongly criticised his statement and burned his effigy.

Construction for new mosque begins at the land given in lieu of Babri Masjid



Inquilab (February 28) states that after the defeat in the Babri Masjid case, while construction of Ram mandir has started, simultaneously construction of the masjid and other buildings has begun at the five-acre land given by the court in lieu of the Babri Masjid. On Republic Day, the construction of the masjid started at Dhannipur village in Ayodhya district. The Indo-Islamic Cultural Centre hoisted flag and planted trees particularly for the Dhannipur project. Trust chairman Jafar Farooqui said that Shariah doesn't mention about the provisions for laying the foundation stone for a masjid and hence the project has started as a simple ceremony. Trust secretary Athar Hussain said that the project is for humanity. A 200-bed hospital will be constructed as part of the project and its beneficiaries will be the local residents. Nearly 2,000 poor women and children will be given free food daily. He said that Allah will help them in completing the project. We will not go house-to-house to collect funds. The trust will not also take money collected from the town. The trust will accept money remitted only through bank accounts for the construction of the masjid and the hospital. The account has already

been opened for the purpose. Apart from the hospital, an Indo-Islamic cultural museum, library and a community kitchen would be established on the premises. It will take two-and-a-half years to complete the project.

Avadhnama (January 19) reports that the site map for the masjid has been approved. The map has been created by an expert on VastuShastra, S M Akhtar. Various plant species from different parts of the world will be planted here. On the occasion, the imam of the ancient Teele Wali masjid in Lucknow, Syed Wajid Hussain was also present.

Inquilab (January 30) reports that it would be difficult to complete the Dhannipur masjid project on time. This is because not enough fund has been arranged till now. The project is estimated to cost Rs 110 crore. Till now, the trust has been able to collect only Rs 3 lakh. This money has been deposited by the contributors directly to the bank account. Secretary of the trust Athar Hussain has admitted that the attitude of the authorities is of dilly dallying and till we get various documents from the tax department, we would not be able to submit our application for tax concession. To receive money from

abroad, FCRA clearance is mandatory. He said that those who had promised to donate money are now hesitant to make the contribution. They all want a tax concession. He said that two bank accounts have already been opened and a website iicfindia.com was also launched. Those who want to donate can do so through the website. Dhannipur is 30 kilometres away from Ayodhya. In the Babri Masjid case, the Supreme Court had directed the government to provide 5 acres of land to Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Board after which the government had handed over the land in Dhannipur. The cultural research centre has been named after Ahmed Shah. The trust had decided that the masjid being constructed here would not be named after any Mughal ruler or any Muslim king.

The Dhannipur mosque project is in controversy right from the beginning.

Siasat (December 25), writing about the project, said that the Supreme Court verdict in the Ayodhya case has paved the way for the construction of Ram mandir. However, the court has kept the controversy alive by providing an alternative land for Babri Masjid. The members of All India Muslim Personal Law Board had said that construction of masjid on the alternative land allotted in Ayodhya would be against Shariat and Waqf Act. If the masjid coming up on the alternative land in Ayodhya on the basis of last year's Supreme Court verdict is against the Waqf Act, then the Muslim Personal Law board should have appealed against the same by now. The secretary of the trust that is constructing the masjid in Dhannipur has stated that everybody is interpreting the Shariah as per his will. If the land is allotted as per the direction of the Supreme Court, then how can it be illegal or against the Shariah?

The newspaper states that under pressure from the government, even big institutions are doing things which are against the Constitution, politics and social values of the country. The Babri Masjid issue was very important for Muslims and had hurt the

sentiments of the community. Muslims had protested for a long time after the razing of Babri Masjid and the various governments had promised to protect the masjid and after demolition, promised to rebuild the masjid. However, even after 27 years, the verdict in the Babri masjid case was a rude jolt for the Muslims. The construction of Ram temple in place of Babri Masjid has started and the statements of the leaders of Muslim Personal Law Board do not help in the reconstruction of Babri Masjid. Hence it is necessary to knock again at the doors of the Supreme Court on the issue. However, the Muslim Personal Law Board has given a new twist to the row over the masjid being built at the land allotted in a village in Ayodhya by describing it as illegal and against Shariat. According to Muslim Personal Law Board, no land can be accepted in exchange for the land of a masjid. As per Islam, it is sheer illegality to sell or accept an alternative land in exchange for Waqf property and if anybody offers namaz there, it would not be accepted. If it is wrong to accept an alternative land in exchange for Babri Masjid, how come the Muslims accepted the land. How come the Muslims became members of the trust formed by the government? Currently, the ruling party at the Centre and the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that their policies against Muslims are implemented. Until there is unity among Muslims and Muslim organisations, the government would be successful in implementing its designs to meet its nefarious goal. When the Muslim Personal Law Board had declined to accept the land in lieu of Babri Masjid, other Muslim organisations should not have accepted the land. Muslims are getting weaker in Hindustan due to lack of unity among themselves. What is needed is there should be unity between Muslim organisations and then only we can take on the nefarious designs of the government.

Biden lifts restrictions imposed on citizens of Muslim countries



Siasat (January 22) reports that the newly elected President of United States Joe Biden has signed an order lifting the order of his predecessor Donald Trump who had imposed restrictions on the citizens of more than two dozen countries from entering United States. Majority of these countries are Muslim nations including Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen. This apart, North Korea, Venezuela and a number of African countries were also included. After the lifting of the restrictions, nearly one crore people from these countries have got an opportunity to enter US. These restrictions were imposed by former President Donald Trump in January 2017. Later, the restrictions imposed on the citizens of Sudan and Iraq were removed. However, citizens from Chad, North Korea and Venezuela were banned from entry. The spokesperson of White House had clarified that these restrictions have nothing to do with Muslims. But the website of the US President mentioned that these restrictions were aimed at preventing

Muslims from entering the US. When people objected, this was removed. The restrictions were questioned in the courts in US. However, the US Supreme Court had allowed the restrictions to remain in force.

In January 2020, the Trump administration had announced its decision to extend the duration of the restrictions. According to American media, the order of the Trump administration had affected nearly 13 crore people. A majority of them are Muslim countries like Iran, Somalia, Yemen, Libya and Syria. Due to these restrictions, there was a huge decrease in the number of visas issued for immigration. For example, there is a 92% reduction in the number of visas issued to Iranian citizens. Nearly 86% applicants from Somalia, 83% from Yemen, 80% from Libya and 83% from Syria did not get the visa. However, there is a 40% increase in the number of visa issued to the applicants from North Korea. The immigration visa being issued to citizens of African country Eretria has been stopped completely.

In the same way, the citizens of Iran were clearly refused any visa except in the categories of F, M and J. The citizens of Kazakhstan were also restricted from giving entry into the US. In the same manner, the visa issued to citizens of Libya under majority of the categories was also stopped. The citizens of Myanmar were also denied the category of visa that enabled them to acquire permanent citizenship of US. The same restriction was also applied to citizens of Nigeria, Somalia and Syria. The citizens of Tanzania, Venezuela and Yemen were also denied visa under majority of the categories. As per the order, the officials of embassies located in these countries were given unlimited power in dealing with visa applications. Due to this policy, the citizens of these countries were unable to contact their relatives who were in America. Among those who applied for relaxation in norms, only 2% got the relaxations. The decision of Trump had evoked huge protests in Islamic world and he was termed as an anti-Muslim.

Despite pressure from Muslim countries, Trump refused to make any changes to the policy. According to him, restrictions had been put on the citizens from some countries from entering America because they could pose a threat to the unity, universality and integrity of United States. The interesting thing is that a number of Arab countries were kept out of this bracket as they were considered as allies of the Trump administration. In its final days, the Trump administration tried to divide the Muslim countries in the Arab world. Its policy was to improve the relationship between different Muslim countries and Israel and to isolate Iran. This strategy resulted in Qatar, UAE, Bahrain and Sudan recognising Israel and establishing trade and other relationships with the country. The travel restrictions imposed on Qatar by other Arab countries were also lifted due to the pressure by Americans. Due to this new policy of the US President Biden, the Muslim countries are ready to begin a new chapter in their relationship with the US.

Two Pakistani organisations in the list of terror organisations

Avadhnama (January 17) states that the US administration has put two Pakistani terrorist organisations—Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Lashkar-e-Taiba back on the list of foreign terrorist organisations. The other organisations included in the list are Islamic State, JayshRijal al-Tariqa al-Naqshbandia, Jamaatal-Ansar al-Muslimeen, Boko Haram, Al Nasir Front, Irish Republican Army, National Liberation Army etc.

As far as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi is concerned, it is a terrorist organisation based on the ideology of Sunni Deobandi tradition and is headquartered in a secret location in Afghanistan. The organisation is

active in Pakistan and Afghanistan. An anti-Shia wing of this organisation is called Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan and its founders are Riyaz Basra, Malik Ishaq, Akram Lahouri and Ghulam Rasool Shah. This organisation has been killing Shias in Pakistan for a long time now. In 2013, this organisation had massacred 200 Shias in Quetta province in Pakistan. It is also accused of committing the Mominpura massacre and the murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl. In 2009, this terror organisation had attacked the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore in which several innocent people died. The organisation is dominated by Punjabis. The chief of this



organisation, Riyaz Basra, was killed in an encounter with police in Pakistan in 2002. Later, Ghulam Rasool Shah took over the control of the organisation. The outfit is banned in Pakistan from 2001. Canada, Britain and US have declared it a terrorist organisation. In April 1999, the organisation murdered the nephew of Khalifa of Ahamadiyas Mirza Tahir Hussain. In April 2002, it had planted a bomb in a bus in which 15 people including 11 French people died. In March 2002, the organisation planted a bomb in a church in which five Christians died on the spot and 40 others were injured.

According to Pakistan government sources, this jihadi organisation was also involved in the assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto and 20 other personalities. The outfit had attacked a dargah in Mastung in Balochistan and had killed 26 Shia pilgrims who were on their way to Iran. According to former president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, L-e-J had killed 59 people in a Shia dargah near Kabul while they were holding a mourning ceremony at the Imambara in 2011. They had also attacked a Shia imambara in Quetta and killed 13 people including two women and a policeman. According to sources in Pakistan, in January 2013, this organisation had planted bombs in several

cities of Pakistan in which at least 125 innocent people were killed.

This organisation had attacked the Mohammad Ali Jinnah University and killed more a dozen students. In February 2013, they attacked a Shia procession in Quetta and killed 81 persons and injured more than 200 people. In August 2015, this organisation shot dead a Shia member of Pakistan's National Assembly, Shuja Khanzada. At present, the organisation is under the control of Yusuf Manzoor Khurasani. The organisation also has links with Taliban, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamat, Al Qaida and Jundallah.

As far as Lashkar-e-Taiba is concerned, its literal meaning is 'Army of the Pure'. This organisation was founded in Kunar province in Afghanistan in 1990. Its headquarter is currently located at Muridke town near Lahore and its chief is Hafiz Mohammad Sayeed. In 1993, terrorists of this organisation infiltrated Indian side from Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and established an Islamic terrorist organisation named Inquilab Mahaz. The organisation is banned in India. The United Nations has also banned this organisation. In Pakistan, this organisation has been banned from the time of Pervez Musharraf in January 2002. The aim of this organisation is to liberate

Kashmir from India. Its activities have recently spread to Chechnya and in many Central Asian countries. A few days ago, a court in Pakistan had sentenced the chief of this organisation, Hafiz Sayeed, to 12 years in jail. According to intelligence sources, the headquarters of this organisation is in a

200-acre land in Muridke. It receives huge funding from Arab countries. According to Indian government, it has links with Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI, Taliban and Al Qaida. According to former head of intelligence bureau M K Narayanan, this terrorist organisation is very active in India.

The ongoing bloodshed in Afghanistan

Roznama Sahara (January 18) reports that two women judges were shot dead after attacking their car in Afghanistan. Two other judges were injured. It is said that the terrorists attacked their car at a place called Kala-e-Fathahullah.

According to government sources, the army has killed 30 Taliban militants at Shah WaliKot district in Kandahar province and destroyed their three hideouts where a huge cache of arms and ammunition were stored. The army had launched this operation in response to Taliban's attack on an army cantonment in Kandahar. Nearly a dozen soldiers were killed in this attack.

Commenting on this incident, **Siasat** in its editorial on January 19 states that though hectic talks were being held between Afghanistan government and Taliban for the past several days, the terrorists continue to operate with impunity in Afghanistan. It would be wrong to ignore the seriousness of the attack on the judges. The women judges were targeted

while they were on their way to the court in their government car. There are more than 200 women judges in Afghanistan. This is not the first time that the courts were targeted in Afghanistan. In February 2017, there was an attack on the Supreme Court in which at least 12 people were killed.

Roznama Sahara (January 19) reports that Taliban had attacked a check-post in which eight soldiers were killed, two injured and many soldiers went missing.

Inquilab (January 21) reports that there is a huge spike in the number of attacks by Taliban in different provinces of Afghanistan and more than 45 soldiers have been killed in these attacks. Taliban have also occupied several military outposts in the country.

Inquilab (January 20) reports that at least 100 Taliban militants have been killed in the bloody clashes with Afghan army while 38 soldiers were injured. However, non-government sources have quoted a higher death toll in these clashes.

Rethinking on Afghan peace deal

Avadhnama (January 26) claims that since Joe Biden has taken over as the new president of United States, there is a possibility of a rethinking on the peace deal struck with Taliban. According to observers, the new president of the US is of the opinion that there is no need to rush

through a deal with active terrorists in Afghanistan. The US government's National Security Advisor, who held talks with top defence officials in Afghanistan, opined that since there is a surge in terrorist attacks in Afghanistan, the peace deal struck with Taliban has become



meaningless. However, United States is keen that peace shall prevail in Afghanistan. But it is not keen to rush through a process to achieve this aim. Those in the know of the things claim that the new president is not happy with the deal struck with Taliban by the Trump administration. Hence he is planning to prepare a new policy to deal with Afghanistan. He said that the new administration is not keen to pull out troops in a hurry from Afghanistan. Till now, the new administration is also not in favour of removing ZalmayKhalilzad, the US negotiator who brokered the deal with Taliban.

Expert on Afghanistan, Sami Yousufzai, said that the kind of deal struck

by Trump administration with the Taliban would not stick with the new administration. Until the Taliban gives an undertaking for permanent peace in Afghanistan or an assurance that it would not attack the military, there cannot be any forward talks on a peace deal. Had Taliban wanted peace, it would have come forward for it much earlier. Knowledgeable sources say that the new president is likely to take strong actions against the Taliban. The new administration doesn't seem to be on the side of those arguing for withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan. It is not ready for one more peace deal and again tolerate attacks on the military.

Pakistan's plane seized in Malaysia

Avadhnama (January 16) reports that a Boeing 777 passenger plane of Pakistan International Airlines was seized by the authorities in Malaysia. The PIA plane had landed in Malaysia and when it was about to return, the local authorities told its pilot that the government is seizing the plane on the directions of court. The officials of PIA admitted that a case over non-payment for

the aircraft has been going on in a court in Britain and on the instructions of this court, the government in Malaysia seized the aircraft. Over 100 Pakistani passengers who boarded the aircraft have been sent home in another aircraft. According to sources in Pakistani government, the PIA had taken this aircraft on lease from a British company 12 years ago. However, a



row erupted between the Pakistan government and the firm over payment for the aircraft. The dispute is for over 1.4 crore million dollar. The case is under trial in a British court for the past six months. The Pakistan government claims that the British company has been charging a huge amount in the name of lease amount for the aircraft.

According to a spokesperson of Pakistan government, the officials of Pakistan embassy in Malaysia are trying to find a solution to this dispute. The opposition parties in Pakistan have already raised a hue and cry over the PIA aircraft being taken into custody by Malaysian government. Spokesperson of Muslim League (Nawaz) Mariyam Aurangzeb, commenting on the incident, said the reins

of the country are currently in the hands of some fools and thieves. Because of this, Pakistan has become a laughing stock in the world. The secretary of Pakistan People's Party said that due to the incident, the image of the country was badly affected throughout the world. The spokesperson of Pakistan government said the aircraft was taken on lease nearly 12 years ago. Due to corona pandemic, the aircraft remained stationed on the ground. Due to the pandemic, the leasing rates have come down throughout the world and hence the PIA was also negotiating with the leasing company for new rates. He said they were trying to save nation's money and hence sought some concession on the leasing rates.

Defence cooperation between Turkey and Pakistan

Etemaad (January 25) quotes Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as saying that both Pakistan and Turkey were facing similar challenges. It was reported that Turkey was manufacturing a warship for Pakistan navy. The president of Turkey made the above statement at the inauguration for the construction of the ship. He said that Pakistan is Turkey's

brother and the two countries are jointly working on several defence projects. He said that Turkey would continue to cooperate with Pakistan on defence issues. Recently, both the countries had signed on a strategic economic framework. Turkey is manufacturing several warships for Pakistan. These warships have the ability to evade attack submarines.

US likely to change its West Asia policy



US President Joe Biden has started a new policy on West Asia. Due to this, both Saudi Arabia and UAE are under tremendous stress.

Avadhnama (January 29) reports that the new president has started giving indications of a change in US' West Asia policy. He has stopped the supply of arms and ammunition to UAE and Saudi Arabia. Earlier, the Trump administration had agreed to supply arms and ammunition worth billions of dollars to both the countries. As per reports, both the countries were to get F-35 aircraft and missile systems apart from other modern weapons. The spokesperson of US foreign affairs ministry has indicated that there is a rethink on the sale of these weapon systems. It is said that the Biden administration is against the use of American weapons in Yemen.

The Trump administration had refused to accept the stand of US Congress and cited the increasing tensions with Iran to justify an emergency sale of arms and ammunition worth eight billion US dollar to Saudi Arabia and other countries. The US defence department sources have confirmed that for the time being, the new

administration has applied brakes on the defence deals that the country had entered with UAE and Saudi Arabia and the sale of latest Lockheed Martin F-35 fighter jets to UAE is also put on hold. This apart, there is a rethinking on the sale of missile defence system and other weapons to Saudi Arabia as well.

A spokesperson of US foreign affairs department has confirmed that a review is being done on the decisions taken by the Trump administration on its final days to sell arms and ammunition to Saudi Arabia and UAE. The matter includes sale of fighter jets worth 23 billion US dollar to UAE. In last year December end, the US government had agreed to sell 3,000 modern guided missiles worth 29 crore US dollar. Mentioning this in one of his election campaigns, Joe Biden had promised that the arms and ammunition being supplied to Saudi Arabia to be used against the rebels in Yemen would be stopped.

Etemaad (January 17) reports that the Trump administration had decided to include Israel in the area covered by the US' Central Command. This decision has

been taken in the backdrop of Bahrain, UAE, Sudan and Morocco recognising Israel and establishing diplomatic relationship with the Jewish nation. After this announcement, 21 countries now come under the purview of US Central Command and the aim is to bring better coordination between different countries in the region against Iran. The announcement was made by the chief of the central command, Mike Jones. A top official of Israel has claimed that the new president of United States has indicated that the new administration would follow the old policy to improve the relationship between Israel and Arab countries. The chief of Israel foreign affairs ministry's middle east division, Eliav Benjamin, has claimed that he doesn't feel that the new US administration would make any changes in its policy towards Israel. The US media claim that the new administration would review its policy that deals with UAE, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Etemaad in a news report published on its January 24 edition has claimed that the US administration is not willing to help Saudi Arabia on the issue of Yemen. The designated US Secretary of State has said

that the US would not support Saudi's interference in Yemen. "We are also likely to review the decision of Trump administration which had declared Houthi rebels as terrorist organisation. The US has decided that it would not provide logistic support to Saudi Arabia in future, neither would it supply arms and ammunition to that country." Yemen's human rights advocate and Nobel laureate Tawakkol Karman has been urging Biden for the past few days that the US should stop the supply of arms and ammunition that are used to target Yemen. She also said that nearly 2 lakh people have been killed and lakhs of people incapacitated in the war that is continuing in Yemen for the past six years. The entire economy is in shambles and nearly 2.5 crore people of Yemen are dependent on foreign help. The civil war started in Yemen in 2014 when the Houthi rebels captured its capital city Sanaa and overthrew the government of President Manzur Hadi. In March 2015, Saudi Arabia signed a military deal with the temporary government and it turned into an indirect conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran because Iran supports the Houthi Shias.

Scam worth 11.5 billion Riyal unearthed in Saudi Arabia

Sahafat (January 29) reports that the anti-corruption wing in Saudi Arabia has unearthed a racket involving a few officials of banks, police and other government servants who colluded to send a total of 11.5 billion Riyals to benami bank accounts abroad. According to a press release, the illegal money that was sent through these trading accounts was worth 12 billion Riyals. Five foreigners were arrested in the case and 97 lakh Riyals were seized from their possession which they were planning to send it abroad through fake accounts. So far 32 people have been taken into custody which included seven

traders, 12 bank officials, one police officer and a few foreigners. The first case was filed against a local trader who started fake companies in his own name and also in wife's and son's names and opened bank accounts in these names. Money was collected from different people and put in this account. In order to cover up the scam, a bribe of 3 lakh Riyal was given to a police officer. In the second case, five prominent traders were accused of creating fake companies and sending money illegally through them to foreign countries. In order to cover up the scam, a total of 40 lakh Riyals were paid as bribe. In the third

case, a bank manager was also accused of sending money abroad. The bank official had opened fake bank accounts in the name of foreigners and used to send money.

Siasat (January 21) reports that the anti-corruption wing has given a five-year punishment to a senior official of defence ministry over embezzlement of funds and the entire amount was seized from him and put in the community treasury. Three officials of housing ministry were sentenced to 2 years to 10 years in jail after

being convicted in corruption cases and their entire wealth has been seized. A number of doctors of health ministry were also nabbed on corruption charges and five doctors have been given a jail term of five years each. According to a government spokesperson, these actions were taken on the basis of the directions given by Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman. A Saudi woman was also arrested who took 12,000 Saudi Riyal as bribe and purchased poor quality injections.

Israel prepares to attack Iran

Sahafat (January 29) reports that the chief of Israel Army has claimed that the Israel has ordered its army to get ready for a military operation against Iran. He said that if the US lifts the sanctions



imposed on Iran in the wake of its nuclear enrichment programme, then it would be its biggest mistake. The importance of this warning could be guessed from the news items being reported in Israeli media in which it is claimed that the US is having a rethink on its relationship with Iran. This is the first time that an Israeli military official has given an open statement on US policies. Recently, France had urged the new President to review its strategy towards Iran.

On this occasion, in an article published in **Siasat** (January 19), it is stated that the defence minister of France has claimed that Iran has been constantly increasing its nuclear enrichment programme and whatever restrictions have been imposed by the US on it have been openly flouted. The foreign minister of France has claimed that the policy adopted by former US President Trump, who

imposed economic sanctions on Iran, was a right one and the new president should continue with it. Interestingly, Iran has claimed its uranium enrichment programme is aimed at making nuclear weapons.

In order to stop Iran from making nuclear weapons, six nations had entered into a treaty with Iran as per which restrictions have been imposed on going ahead with uranium enrichment programme. In between, a top nuclear scientist of Iran was allegedly assassinated by Israel and it is claimed that the murder was a rude jolt to Iran's nuclear development programme. The new president of United States has said that the US could soften its restrictions imposed on Iran. However, he needs guarantee that Iran would abide by the nuclear treaty that it had entered with five nations. However, Iran insists that the US should first lift the sanctions imposed on it before it offers any guarantee.

Inqilab (January 29) reports that a top official of Iran, commenting on the threat from Israel, said that Israel has no courage to target Iran. Iran is prepared to take on any kind of external threat, he said.

Explosions rock Saudi capital

Siasat (January 28) reports that a number of explosions took place in Saudi capital Riyadh. However, the Saudi administration has refused to make any comments on the explosions. Eyewitnesses said that two huge explosions took place in Riyadh. A video that is circulating on social media shows a missile being destroyed as well. According to news agency Reuters, two explosions were heard in the city and dark smoke could be seen billowing in the atmosphere. According to government-owned channel Al Arabia, an incoming missile was destroyed right above the city before it could touch the ground. The missile was fired from an unidentified place. Commenting on the attack, the Houthi rebels said that they had no hand in the missile attack. However, an anonymous terror group called Alviya Alwad Alhaq has owned responsibility for the attack.

From 2015, Houthi rebels have been targeting Saudi Arabia.

Etemaad (January 25) reports that an Iraqi jihadi organisation had taken responsibility for the attack in Saudi Arabia and claimed that this was in retaliation for the terrorist attack that took place in Baghdad. The organisation has claimed that it has targeted a few buildings in Riyadh and if Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi continue with their terror attacks in Iraq, they would target the bases in Dubai as well. It is understood that at least 25 people were killed and hundreds of others injured when two suicide bombers exploded themselves in a busy market in Baghdad. A number of Iraqi organisations had blamed Saudi Arabia and its allies for the bomb blast. Meanwhile Islamic State has claimed that it would continue with its action of targeting Shias.

Iran test-fires modern ballistic missile and drone

Etemaad (January 17) reports that Iran has successfully test-fired a modern ballistic missile. The missile successfully hit a target nearly 1,800 km away. The missile has been recently manufactured by Iran.



Iran's commander-in-chief Mohammad Badri, commander of Islamic Revolutionary Guards Force Mohammad Hussain Salami, commander of air force Brigadier General Amir Ali Hazizadeh and senior officials of three services were present on the occasion. The target that was hit by the missile was located 1,800 kilometres away in Indian Ocean. Iran has started the war games. As per the claims of

the Iran's military, the missile cannot be intercepted on its way and it hits its designated target.

Iran's military has also acquired modern drones. The chief of Iran's forces

General Badri said its intention is not to attack any country but if any country attacks Iran, then they would be given a befitting reply. He said the military exercises would continue for two weeks. The missile that was developed by us could hit short, middle and long range targets. He said that they want to assure that they could destroy the country's enemy on land, sea or air.

UAE decides to open embassy in Israel

Avadhnama (January 26) reports that the UAE has decided to open its embassy in Israel. It has announced that the embassy would be opened in Tel Aviv shortly. The UAE and Israel had recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

Siasat (January 23) reports that Saudi Arabia has also decided to reopen its embassy in Qatar's capital Doha. According to the newspaper, the Saudi's foreign minister has announced that four nations had entered into an agreement with Qatar. Hence the four countries namely

Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain and Egypt would end its boycott of Qatar and open their embassies in Doha. The Qatar Airways has decided to operate its services to Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Arabia has also started its flight services to Qatar after a gap of three-and-a-half years. Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain and Egypt had ended their political and trade relationship with Qatar in June 2017 and had also announced a blockade. Now due to the efforts of US, these countries have re-established their relationship with Qatar.

Concern over increasing crimes among Muslims

Mumbai Urdu News (January 19) states that the founder of Tousif Research Centre, Hyderabad, Maulana Waqari Farooq Aziz has expressed concern over increasing number of incidents of anarchy, moral decay and crimes among Muslims. He said that a Muslim leader in Hyderabad, Mohammad Khaleel, was publicly beaten to death by some people who borrowed money from him. He was killed because he had sought his money back. Prophet Mohammad had been strongly prohibited Muslims from killing anybody without a reason. The way the crimes committed by Muslims are increasing, it is quite dangerous. Recently, there was a report from the government which claims that the number of Muslims jailed in various places is four times higher compared to the percentage of their population. The leaders of Muslims need to seriously think about stopping such increasing incidents of crime among Muslims.

Inquilab (January 18) has published a survey which claims that after the corona

pandemic, there is a huge increase in the number of eateries in Muslim majority areas. In Muslim majority areas of Delhi like Jafarabad, Seelampur, Kardampuri, Noor Ilahi, Kabir Nagar, Mustafabad, Khajuri and Seemapuri restaurants and eateries remain open throughout the night. The president of Muslim Unity Committee Haji Ekram Hussain has accepted that there is an increase in the number of crimes committed by the young generation of Muslims. There is not a single day in these areas when no major crimes are reported. There is a tendency among the new generation to collect illegal arms. Recently, during the pre-wedding procession of a youth's sister in Jafarabad, a country-made gun tucked in the pocket of the youth accidentally went off while he was dancing. The youth died on the spot. He urged the elderly among the Muslim community to keep an eye on the young generation so that they do not become misled. President of Muslim Council Rukhsar Ahmad said the new generation

spends their entire night near the hotels opened in their area. Recently, two groups opened fire against each other near Jama Masjid. He said that the elderly among the

community should take definitive action to curb the illegal activities of the young generation of the community. ■

New Muslim political party in West Bengal

Inquilab (January 22) reports that the chief of Furfura Sharif dargah Abbas Siddhiqui has launched a new political party named Indian Secular Front. He announced that his party would contest the West Bengal elections in alliance with other Muslim parties. It is understood that in the past few days, leader of Majlis Asaduddin Owaisi held several talks with Abbas Siddiqui and announced that his party would contest the elections in West Bengal under his leadership. When he was asked about the allegation by chief minister Mamata Banerjee that he was playing in



the hands of BJP and trying to bring BJP to power by dividing the Muslim votes, he said that you should tell Mamata Banerjee that the BJP had no base in West Bengal till ten years ago. Now what is the reason for BJP increasing its foothold in Bengal? He alleged that due to the politics played by Mamata Banerjee, the BJP is getting strengthened in the state. In the past 10 years, Mamata has done nothing for the welfare of minorities, adivasis and Dalits. She has targeted the Muslims during her rule. It is due to her misbehaviour that Siddiqui had to leave Trinamool Congress and decided to plunge into electoral politics to get justice to them. ■

Dargah chiefs call on Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi



Inquilab (January 20) reports that a delegation of hereditary administrators of Ajmer dargah and other dargahs under the leadership of the Dewan (spiritual head) of Ajmer Sharif dargah Syed Zainul Abdein met Union minister for minority affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and held talks with him. The delegation included the chief of Nizamuddin dargah Peer Ahmad Nizami,

hereditary administrators of dargah chistiya Gujarat Syed Ziauddin Shah, dargah Hazrat Syed Amir Abdul Ilahi of Agra Inayat Ali and dargah Hazrat Syed Shah Jamal Hyderabad Firakhat Ali. This apart, Syed Shah Zaki Hasani and Afzal Mahmood Farooqi of Karnataka and a dozen other hereditary administrators of different dargahs took part in the meeting. It is said that the administrators of these dargahs apprised the minister of various issues related to Waqf, Haj and other problems and sought a solution to them.

Mumbai Urdu News (January 21) reports that a delegation of Sufi Sajjada Nasheen Council met National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and held talks with him. The delegation was headed by

chairman of Kul Hind Sajjada Nasheen Council (AISEC) Syed Naziruddin Chishti. The delegation has assured the National Security Council that if the Modi government takes stringent action against any terrorist groups the organisation would extend its full support to the government because the Sufi tradition stands for peace and it is against terrorism. He said that they were against supporting any form of

terrorism in the country. The delegation demanded that the government shall form a separate ministry to take care of various Sufi dargahs situated in different parts of the country. As per a press statement, Ajit Doval has praised the role of Muslims in the development of the country and said that the dargahs situated in different places play a major role in maintaining social harmony and brotherhood.

France shuts down nine mosques

Mumbai Urdu News (January 17) reports that France has stepped up its efforts to curb increasing incidents of Islamic terrorism in the country. French home minister Gerald Dermanin said that the government has decided to shut down nine mosques as part of its nationwide effort to curb Islamic terrorism. These mosques are situated in different parts of the country. Last year in October a student murdered his

teacher because he showed the students cartoons of the Prophet in the class. After this incident, there was a huge sentiment against Islamic terrorism in the country. Later French President Macron had vowed to deal Islamic terrorism with an iron hand. The French National Assembly also passed a law to stop Muslim refugees from entering the country.

Campaign to make BJP popular among Muslims

Hamara Samaj (January 1) reports that the new president of BJP's minority morcha, Jamaluddin Siddiqui, said that a special programme has been planned to make BJP popular among Muslim community, as per which the representation of Muslims in the organisation and in different institutions would be increased. A special campaign has been started to remove whatever misunderstandings the minorities have about BJP and make the party more attractive to them. For this, efforts would be made to improve the representation of Muslims in panchayats and nagarpalikas.

Speaking to reporters, he said that they have given this slogan, "whoever contests the election, moves forward." A programme would be launched to prepare Muslims to work for BJP and training would also be given to them. Our effort is to make Muslims attracted to BJP and they


in turn get the full benefits of various schemes launched by the government. On a question by journalists, he admitted that there are several misconceptions among Muslims about BJP and Sangh Parivar leading to sheer disharmony.

According to him, he could site his own experience to say that neither Sangh Parivar nor BJP is interested in religious conversions. In order to win the trust of Muslims, it is necessary to give Muslims enough representation in the organisation and in institutions. Because BJP stands for everyone and for everyone's development. We do not believe on religion-based politics. If anybody kicks up religious sentiments, then he would be working against the ideology of BJP. He said that once the minority morcha is strengthened, the voices of minorities, especially Muslims, would be heard better.

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