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## Batla House Encounter Convict Sentenced to Death



- Nikita Tomar Killers get Life Imprisonment
- Saudi Arabia Offers Ceasefire in Yemen
- Sri Lanka Plans to Ban Burqas and Madrasas
- International Day to Combat Islamophobia

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## Summary

After 13 years, a Delhi court has finally passed its judgement on the famous Batla House encounter case. Prime accused Ariz Khan alias Junaid has been sentenced to death for the murder of Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma of Delhi Police. The capital was rocked by the serial bomb blasts that took place in September 2008. The police investigation revealed that the Indian Mujahideen, an Islamic terrorist organisation, is behind the bomb blasts in Hyderabad, Jaipur, Gujarat and Delhi. A suspect named Mufti Abu Bashir was caught in Ahmedabad, following the information police got from his interrogation, the special cell of Delhi Police raided a flat of Batla House located in Jamia Nagar Colony, Okhla. Two terrorists Mohammad Sajid and Atif Amin were killed in this encounter, while two other terrorists were successful in fleeing from the scene. Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma of Delhi Police was seriously injured in this encounter and he later succumbed to the injuries. Two terrorists were caught from a television studio while they were giving an interview. Later two other terrorists were caught, who admitted that they were involved in the bomb blasts that took place in different cities of the country.

Initially, a section of Congress party leaders had termed the Batla House encounter a fake one which was staged in order to dent the vote bank of the Muslim voters of eastern Uttar Pradesh. Congress general secretary Digvijay Singh demanded that a judicial inquiry be conducted into the encounter. A Muslim organisation called Ulama Council was formed in Azamgarh at the behest of a then Union Minister belonging to Madhya Pradesh. With the financial support of Congressmen, Aamir Rashadi, the head of this organisation reached Delhi in a special train with 2500 Muslims and there they demonstrated on the Parliament Street, alleging that the police deliberately implicated innocent Muslim students on false charges of terrorism. Among those who supported them were former Union ministers Salman Khurshid and Kapil Sibal. At the behest of the ruling Congress party, the Minorities Commission also demanded a judicial inquiry into the encounter, which was turned down by the then Home Minister Shivraj Patil. In those days, the Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia was Mushirul Hasan, whose had links to the Congress. At his behest, Jamaat-e-Islami and student organisations affiliated with the Left parties had also tried to declare this encounter as fake by demonstrating at several places in Delhi. Mushirul Hasan even went so far as to declare that because the police had implicated two Jamia students on fabricated charges of terrorism, the university administration would provide them free legal aid to prove their innocence in court.

Sushil Shinde, a senior Union minister in the Manmohan Singh government, was the first person to talk about saffron terrorism and spread the rhetoric everywhere. On the request of Congress General Secretary Digvijay Singh, his favourite journalist Aziz Burney wrote a book in an attempt to link the Mumbai terror attacks with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Israel. Because a terrorist, Aamir Ajmal Kasab was caught alive on the spot, the Congress propaganda was soon exposed.

Muslim terrorist organisations have spread their wings in Africa. Extremist Islamic organisations called Boko Haram and Al Shabaab, which have links with the Islamic State and Al-Qaeda, have been continuously waging civil wars in Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon for the past decade to establish Islamic rule. Till now, more than one lakh innocents have been killed. While 23 lakh people have had to flee to save their lives. The situation in these countries is becoming explosive with every passing day.

## Batla House encounter convict sentenced to death



According to **Inquilab** (March 16), Ariz Khan, the accused in the much-discussed Batla House encounter case has been sentenced to death by the Saket District Court in Delhi. Along with this, a fine of Rs 11 lakh has also been imposed on him. Of this, Rs 10 lakh will be given to the wife of Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma who was martyred during this encounter. Ariz Khan's lawyer M.S. Khan expressed shock after the death sentence was pronounced and said that there is no evidence or testimony against Ariz Khan to indicate that he had fired at anyone. While in this case, another accused named Shahzad has already been sentenced to life imprisonment, so Ariz should also have been given the same sentence. He said that they will appeal against this decision in the higher court. Khan said that the Medical Board had not confirmed whose bullet had become the cause of death of Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma, and nor did any police officers present there at the time of the encounter see any person fleeing from there. He also pointed out that it has not been proved till now that who all were living in the house where the encounter took place and for how long.

The Batla House encounter took place on September 19, 2008, in which two

terrorists Sajid and Atif were shot dead by the police. During the encounter, Special Cell Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma was also killed. According to the police, two terrorists, Shahzad and Ariz Khan, alias Junaid, managed to flee the scene. Shahzad was arrested by the police in February 2010. According to the police, it was Shahzad who opened fire on the police, in which Inspector Sharma was killed and head constables Balwant Singh and Rajveer Singh were injured. After three years of trial, the court convicted Shehzad in July 2013 and sentenced him to life imprisonment. The police had appealed against this decision and demanded that he be sentenced to death. After this, the police started searching for another accused Ariz Khan and arrested him from his village on February 14, 2018. The police had filed a charge sheet against him in the court alleging that he was involved in the Batla House encounter and also had a role to play in the bomb blasts in Delhi. According to Khan, the lawyer for the accused, the statements of 16 witnesses were also taken in this case. But none of them were able to identify the accused. The public prosecutor had claimed that he was the same person who had escaped from the scene during the Batla House encounter.



According to **Inquilab** (March 17), Maulana Aamir Rashadi, president of the National Ulama Council, described the punishment of Ariz Khan as unfortunate and said that people from every section of society had demanded the government to conduct a judicial inquiry into the encounter. But the government did not accept the demand. The then Congress government and administration implicated

the students in false case and presented fake evidence against them, so that the Congress government of that time could hide their misdeeds and governance failures. He said that they have hope that they will get justice from the higher court. The National Ulama Council has been considering this encounter as a botched-up case from the beginning. ■

## Nikita Tomar killers get life imprisonment



According to **Inquilab** (March 27), a fast-track Court of Faridabad has sentenced the two accused, Tauseef and his friend Rehan to life imprisonment in Haryana's much discussed Nikita Tomar murder case. Both of them were convicted by the court on March 24. Azharuddin, the third accused who provided the pistol to the other two, has been acquitted due to lack of evidence. A total of 57 witnesses recorded their statements in this case. Due to public pressure, the Haryana government had set up a fast-track court to hear the case and within 11 days of the murder, the Faridabad police had also filed a charge sheet in the case. After the sentence was pronounced, Nikita's father Moolchand Tomar said that he would go to the Supreme Court to ensure that the accused are given death sentence. At the same time, the mother of the deceased also said that the two accused should have been hanged to death.

Nikita Tomar was shot in front of Aggarwal College on October 26, 2020.

Rehan, a resident of Sohna and Azharuddin, a resident of Nuh were charged with conspiracy to murder and were later arrested by the police. The accused belong to an influential political family of Mewat, hence the public had expressed suspicion that the police were trying to save the accused. A Special Investigation Team was formed on the orders of the Haryana government and a fast-track court was set up to hear the case.

According to **Inquilab** (March 25), the father of the deceased, Moolchand Tomar, described it as a case of love jihad. Nikita Tomar was originally from Hapur in Uttar Pradesh and was currently living in Ballabgarh, Haryana with her family. On 26 October 2020, when she exited the college after taking the exam, the accused Tauseef along with his friend Rehan attempted to kidnap her. When Nikita tried to defend herself, the accused shot her. She later succumbed to her injuries in a hospital. The incident was captured in a

CCTV camera, on the basis of which the police arrested the accused.

Earlier, the accused had tried to kidnap Nikita in 2018 and Nikita's family members had filed a complaint with the police at that time. But because the accused belonged to the influential political families of Haryana, the police officers forced a compromise between the two sides. After Nikita's murder, on the order of the Haryana and Punjab High Court, a fast-track court was formed with Additional Sessions Judge Sartaj Baswana to hear the case. The court heard this case every day for 3 months and 22 days. Tauseef's grandfather has been a legislator from the Congress party and even today a close relative of his is a legislator in Haryana Assembly.

**Comment:** Tauseef belongs to an influential family of Mewat, the background of which is mainly Congress.

Tauseef's grandfather was a minister in the Haryana government. While his father was also a minister in the Bhupendra Singh Hooda government, his uncle is still a legislator. It was also alleged in the media that the police commissioner of Faridabad during earlier kidnapping was also a relative of the accused. The father of the deceased also admitted on a TV channel that he was under heavy political pressure, because of which he was forced to withdraw the case in 2018. Political observers said that the accused would not have dared to kill Nikita Tomar in broad daylight if this case was not withdrawn. There were fierce protests in many areas of Haryana to get the accused punished, due to which the Chief Minister of Haryana Manohar Lal Khattar said that the matter is of love jihad and the culprits will not be spared.

## Muslim society shaken by Ayesha's suicide



The entire Muslim society has been shaken by the uproar created on social media following the suicide of a 23-year-old Muslim girl, Ayesha Arif Khan, earlier this month, who took the drastic step after being fed up with dowry harassment. For the first time since independence, awareness has been created in the Muslim society against the malpractices of dowry. After a ten-day meeting of the Social Reform Committee of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board at the national level, a joint appeal was issued on behalf of the nine prominent leaders of the Muslim Personal Law Board in the name of Muslim society, which was published as a full-page advertisement on the front page of the

March 27 issue of Roznama Sahara. It emphasized that *nikah* or marriages should be conducted in mosques with great simplicity and dowry should not be demanded. Practices like engagement, *haldi* and pre-wedding reception should be avoided as all these are against the basic spirit of Islam. Emphasis was also laid to avoid feasts, banquets, fireworks, singing and videography in weddings. Among the signatories to this appeal are Maulana Mohammed Rabbani Hasani Nadwi, Chairman, All India Muslim Personal Law Board and General Secretary Maulana Wali Rahmani, besides Jamiat Ulema and Jamaat-e-Islami and also the important leaders of Shia organisations.

The Muslim Personal Law Board has also announced a campaign against dowry in Muslim-dominated areas across the country for ten days.

According to **Sahafat** (March 2), Ayesha, a Muslim girl in Gujarat who became a victim of dowry harassment by husband and in-laws for three consecutive

years, uploaded a video on social media that went viral and created a commotion in the Muslim society. This girl hailed from Jalore, Rajasthan and she was married to a person residing in Ahmedabad. Tired of harassment and torture, the girl died by suicide by leaping into the Sabarmati river earlier this month. The girl had exposed the brutal violence she was subjected to by her in-laws and husband in the name of dowry. According to the media, Ayesha Arif Khan committed suicide on 25 February. Later, on the complaint of Ayesha's parents, a case was filed against her in-laws and they were arrested. In July 2018, Ayesha Bano was married to Arif Khan who is a resident of Ahmedabad. Ayesha's father said in a statement to the police that after a few months of marriage, Arif Khan sent Ayesha back to her maternal home and demanded a hefty amount of sum as dowry. The father gave Rs one and a half lakh to her husband with the hope of seeing his daughter settled in life. But Arif demanded more money from him and sent Ayesha back to her maternal home. Complaints were lodged against the in-laws for domestic violence, but this did not solve the problem. Ayesha also started a job in a bank to become self-reliant. But the in-laws continued to demand more dowry. As soon as the news of her suicide went viral, all Muslim newspapers covered the case.

According to **Siasat** (March 8), the Ahmedabad police has got a letter written by Ayesha, which says that her in-laws used to keep her locked in a room for four days at a stretch. During this time neither food nor water was given to her. Her in-

laws beat her up, which led to her miscarriage.

**Siasat** (March 4) expressed shock that Ayesha's stone hearted husband had no remorse about his wife's death. During the interrogation, Ahmedabad Police DCP Ravindra Patel said that Arif's attitude was shocking as he did not exhibit even an iota of sadness on his wife's death.

**Siasat** (March 7) in its editorial expressed deep concern over the increasing deaths due to dowry in Indian society and said that though dowry has been banned in the country by law, but the practice still continues. The sad thing is that now this evil practice is spreading fast among the Muslims too. Society should be made aware in this regard. According to data from the Special Crime Bureau of the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2014, on an average, every hour one woman in some corner of the country dies by suicide due to dowry harassment.

The **Aurangabad Times** (March 2), in its editorial blamed the entire society for the suicide of girls like Ayesha for teaching their daughters right from the beginning that they must tolerate every oppression of their in-laws as the family's respect is at stake.

**Avadhnama** (March 2) blamed the whole Muslim society for Ayesha's death and said that the practice of dowry is not part of Islam.

**Hamara Samaj** (March 3) has also said that the root cause of all the problems of Muslims is that they are moving away from Islam and Sharia. ■

## Opposition to Waseem Rizvi's petition

Former chief of Uttar Pradesh Shia Waqf Board, Waseem Rizvi, who had filed a petition in the Supreme Court regarding the removal of the 26 disputed verses from the Quran, has been facing strong opposition from all sections of Muslims. According to Urdu newspapers, so far more than a dozen different Muslim organisations have filed

cases in police stations against Waseem Rizvi for inciting communal tensions.

According to **Inquilab** (March 14), retired judge Sohail Aijaz Siddiqui said, "My guess is that the Supreme Court will dismiss this petition immediately and Waseem Rizvi will be fined heavily". An interesting fact is that both Shia and Sunni communities stand united on this issue.



According to **Inquilab** (March 20), Syed Ahmed Bukhari, the Shahi Imam of Delhi's Jama Masjid, condemned Waseem Rizvi and also blamed Akhilesh Yadav and Azam Khan for this. An interesting fact is that for the first time in the history of Jama Masjid, General Secretary of Majlis-e-Ulema-e-Hind, dozens of Shia scholars including Maulana Kalbe Jawad Naqvi, read the Namaz in Sunni Ahmed Bukhari's office and after that Shia and Sunni religious leaders jointly demonstrated against Waseem Rizvi up to the Supreme Court. On this occasion, the Shahi Imam said that no one in the world has the right to make any changes in the Quran. Removing 26 verses is a far-fetched wish, no one can remove even a single punctuation. Those who are putting forth this demand have no connection with Islam and such people are automatically banished from the religion. Ahmad Bukhari said that the Akhilesh government supported such corrupt persons which gave them the strength to speak against the Prophet and the Quran. He added that the secularism of Akhilesh Yadav was just pretence and expressed hope that the Supreme Court will throw the petition in the trash bin.

Maulana Kalbe Jawad said that Muslims from all over the world, irrespective of their ideology, are united on this issue. He added that no conspiracy against the Quran, Islam and Muslims will be allowed to succeed at any cost. All India

Islamic Cultural Centre President Sirajuddin Qureshi has condemned the petition against the Quran and said that no court in the world has the power to even think of making any changes in the Quran. This is the reason why the courts have been immediately quashing petitions for amendment of the Quran without even hearing the plea. Former Delhi Minorities Commission Chairman Zafarul Islam Khan said that they have called for a response from Waseem Rizvi for this impudent and anti-Islam act. He added that no person in the world has any right to raise any question on Islam.

Maulana Arshad Madani, president of the Jamiat Ulema, condemned the petition, stating that no Muslim is willing to consider Waseem Rizvi a Muslim. He said that everyone is aware that this act of Waseem Rizvi is the result of a deep-seated conspiracy and there is no need to pay attention to it. He said that as far as the 26 disputed verses are concerned, they are soon publishing a booklet with explanations of them in Urdu, Hindi and English which will give clarity to everything. He added that the comment made by Waseem Rizvi about Caliph Rashidun is very unfortunate and no Muslim can ever tolerate it. He pointed out that Shias have distanced themselves from Rizvi and they are no longer willing to accept him in their fold. The Indian Union Muslim League has demanded that



Waseem Rizvi be exiled from India as he is spreading hatred among various sects.

According to the **Hindustan Express** (March 20), the former chairman of the Delhi Minorities Commission, Jafrul Islam Khan, has launched a war against Waseem Rizvi on social media and has presented details of 27 cases filed against Rizvi in various police stations. He asked how can a person against whom there are so many cases filed not be a notorious criminal? He explained that 27 cases of murder, cheating and robbery have been registered in various police stations against Waseem Rizvi but he has not been arrested yet. In addition, the CBI has launched investigations against him in a dozen other cases. Waseem Rizvi has been accused of illegally occupying Auqaf when he was the chairman of Shia Waqf Board. He has also been accused of assault and cheating people. Now the Shias have banished him from Islam. It appears that this person is playing in the hands of enemies of Islam, Prophet and the Quran. In November 2017, he announced the support of the Shia Waqf Board for the construction of a Ram temple on the disputed land of Ayodhya and hurt the sentiments of Muslims. Similarly, in December 2017, while being the chairman of the Shia Waqf Board, he wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting that the term of sentence in the triple talaq law be increased from three years to ten years. In January 2018, Rizvi called the All India Muslim Personal Law Board a terrorist organisation. Earlier in February 2018, he also advocated for the handing over of many mosques to Hindus. In November 2018, Rizvi also made a film related to the demolition of Babri Masjid, titled 'Ram Janmabhoomi'. Later, this film was caught in various controversies. In January 2019, Rizvi accused the Islamic madrasas of promoting terrorism and demanded the government to shut them down. Similarly, in September 2019, Rizvi made a film related to Hazrat Ayesha which was opposed by Muslims across the country.

According to **Hamara Samaj** (March 15), Sajjadanashin Council has said that Waseem Rizvi is destroying the peace and unity of the country to avoid going to jail on corruption charges. The paper called for his immediate arrest.

According to **Etemaad** (March 16), a notice has been issued to Waseem Rizvi on the instruction of Atif Rasheed, Deputy Chairman of the National Minorities Commission, stating that his actions are objectionable and pose a threat to the maintenance of peace and harmony in society, hence he should promptly apologise. This notice has condemned Rizvi's petition filed in the Supreme Court for the removal of 26 disputed verses of the Quran. The Commission has said in the notice that within 21 days Rizvi should withdraw this petition and issue an unconditional apology or else legal action will be taken against him under Section 9 of the National Commission for Minorities Act 1992.

According to **Dainik Sahafat** (March 16), the All India Muslim Federation's national president Farhat Ali Khan has demanded that action be taken against Rizvi immediately, because he is not only insulting the Quran but have also been causing unrest and communal tensions in society.

According to **Sahafat** (March 20), Syed Jaleel Ahmed, president Majlis Tameer-e-Millat, has condemned Waseem Rizvi's plea and termed him an enemy of Islam and the Quran.

As per **Mumbai Urdu News** (March 16), a mob of Muslims has broken the tomb built by Waseem Rizvi. One Ulema has announced that no funeral prayers will be held for Rizvi and permission will not be granted to bury his body in any of the burial grounds of Muslims.

According to **Mumbai Urdu News** (March 15), former member of Law Commission of India Prof. Tahir Mahmood has said that the petition filed in the court against the Quran is a serious offense under sections 53A and 295A of the Indian Penal Code. He added that in 1984 also a person

had filed a similar petition in the Calcutta High Court. Dismissing that petition, the court said in its judgment that the court taking up this matter is against the Indian

Constitution and the petitioners have committed a serious crime by bringing such matters to the court. ■

## UP Governor gives assent to conversion ordinance

The Governor of Uttar Pradesh Anandiben Patel has given her assent to the ordinance that the Yogi government had introduced with regard to conversion in cases of Love Jihad in the state. With this, the conversion ordinance has now become law. The Governor had approved this ordinance on March 4 itself and notification was also issued in this regard. Later, after being passed by the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, it was sent to the Governor for assent. Additional Advocate General of Uttar Pradesh Manish Goyal has also confirmed this. Last year, a law was enacted against Love Jihad in Uttar Pradesh. The decision was approved by the Cabinet on 24 November. Under this, if a person cheats someone and gets her converted only for the purpose of marriage, he can be sentenced to ten years of imprisonment. Under the same law, if a woman changes religion only to get married, then her marriage can be declared illegal. Also, if a woman who wants to change religion after marriage, then she will have to give an application to the District Magistrate in this regard. The police will investigate whether the conversion was done by coercion, luring or cheating. If the investigation does not confirm this, only then the administration will give its approval.

It is worth mentioning here that after the conversion ordinance was passed, many cases were registered in the state in the name of Love Jihad. However, in many cases, the court ruled that the arrest of the youth by the police was wrong and ordered for their release. Muslim leaders allege that this law is motivated by communalism and has been passed to target a particular sect.

According to **Mumbai Urdu News** (March 25), some ministers of the Uttar Pradesh government keep raising various

issues to divert attention of the public from real problems. Anand Swaroop Shukla, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Uttar Pradesh, wrote letters to district officials and requested them for the removal of loudspeakers in mosques. The newspaper has claimed that Shukla wrote a letter to the District Magistrate of Ballia in this regard, directing for the removal of loudspeakers in mosques because it causes problems to the public.

The newspaper said that due to political pressure, the administration has removed loudspeakers in many districts, which is completely illegal. Shukla, while speaking to reporters, said that after triple talaq, the government will now liberate Muslim women from the burqa. He added that there are many countries in the world where the use of burqa is banned. These include many Muslim countries as well.

According to **Avadhnama** (March 26), commenting on Shukla's statement, Sunni leader of Uttar Pradesh Maulana Khalid Rashid Firangi Mahali has said that Shukla's statement is against the Indian Constitution. Because offering *azaan* is part of Islam and if the loudspeaker is removed from a mosque, it is an open violation of Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, which gives every Indian the right to practice his/her own religion. He has also said that Shukla's demand to ban the burqa is a direct interference in Islam. Because the veil is part of Islamic Sharia and no one has the right to raise any objections to it. He opined that no person has any right under the Indian Constitution to interfere in any kind of religious faith or to prevent anyone from following any religious practices. He said that ministers should not interfere in the religious affairs of Muslims by making such a statement. ■

## Hundreds of innocents killed by Islamic terrorists in Niger



Islamic terrorists have wreaked havoc in the African nations of Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon. Till now thousands of innocent people have been killed. Millions of people have migrated from their homes to save their lives. The day-to-day situation in this region is becoming explosive. Behind this civil war is the hand of the Islamic terrorist organisation Al Shabaab, which has links to the Islamic State.

According to **Inquilab** (March 24), a Niger government spokesperson claimed that at least 137 innocent people have been killed in an attack on a village in southwestern Niger by Islamic militants. This is the most horrific incident of genocide. Government spokesman Abdur Rahman Zakaria, speaking on the government television channel, said that the number of people killed in attacks by Islamic terrorists is increasing rapidly. Armed terrorists riding motorcycles attacked several villages near the border of Mali and fired indiscriminately, killing hundreds of people. The government has announced a three-day national mourning. The government has sent new troops to the militancy-hit area.

Mohamed Bazoum was elected President in the election held in Niger a few weeks ago. His election was later confirmed by the country's Supreme Court. After this, the process of killing innocent people by armed Islamic terrorists has intensified.

According to **Inquilab** (March 18), indiscriminate fire was opened on four vehicles carrying passengers in the Tillabéri region of the Nigerian western country, killing at least 58 people. However, no Islamic terrorist organisation has taken responsibility for this attack. But the official statement is that Al Shabaab and Boko Haram, Islamic terrorist organisations associated with the Islamic State and Al Qaeda are behind these attacks.

In January too, more than 100 innocent people were killed by Islamic militants in the region. The increasing incidents of genocide by terrorists have posed a new challenge for the newly elected President Mohammad Bazoum. He defeated former President Mohammad Yusuf in the presidential election last month. The place where the terrorists have

carried out this massacre connects Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali. Islamic terrorists are very active in Niger. Earlier in December 2019, jihadis launched a major attack on Niger's army, killing at least 70 soldiers, whereas 89 people were killed in another attack in January 2020 in a similar manner.

**Comment:** A fierce war between Islamic militants and government forces has been continuing in Nigeria for the past eight years. 85 million people have been adversely affected by this war. According to the UN report, this region is currently affected by violence and 69 lakh people are in need of immediate relief. If relief does not reach in time, millions of people may die due to hunger and thirst. It is said that Al Shabaab, the militant jihadist organisation of Islam is behind this war. Boko Haram is also a part of this war. Due to the civil war, 17 lakh people have had to flee their homes to save their lives. The civil war in the region started in 2009. Most of the victims of violence in this war are civilians and women and children are being specially targeted. Al Shabaab is more active in areas like Adamawa, Borno, Yobe etc. Due to severe shortage of food and drinking water in this region, the whole region is in the grip of a severe famine. Ten lakh people have recently had to flee their homes.

### What is Boko Haram?

Boko Haram is Africa's most dreaded terrorist organisation which is headquartered in North East Nigeria but also has footprints in Chad, Nigeria and Cameroon. It was founded in 2002 by Mohammad Yusuf, a Sunni extremist. These days the leadership of this jihadi extremist organisation is in the hands of Abubakar Shekau. Their goal is to spread original Islam in Africa and to erase fake Muslims. The strings of this organisation are attached to the dreaded terrorist organisation, the Islamic State. According to UN sources, so far, this militant organisation has stained its hands with the blood of more than one lakh innocents and has caused 23 lakh people to flee their

homes. The United Nations' Global Terrorism Index has ranked this deadly organisation as one of the world's most dangerous terrorist group. Its chief Mohammad Yusuf was killed by the Nigerian Army in July 2009. But then suddenly its extremist activities increased. It is said to have received a large number of arms and a huge amount of financial aid from foreign sources. Citizens are bonded and sold as slaves in many countries through this organisation. At present, an area of 50 thousand square kilometres is said to be under the control of this terrorist organisation. Recently there has been a split in this organisation and a new jihadi organisation called the Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA) has come into existence.

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari claimed that Al Shabaab has been upended from the country. But after that, the bloodbath that has been unleashed by this organisation on a large scale has put question marks on the government's claim. This Islamic organisation is opposed to Western education and wants to end secularism and establish Islamic rule based on Sharia. Two years ago, it attacked more than 150 Christian schools in Northern Nigeria and killed teachers and Christian priests. Boko Haram's spokespersons have claimed that their goal is to establish a true Islamic order in Africa that is essentially based on the ideology of the Quran and Mohammed. They want to establish a radical regime based on Sharia in Africa. One of its leaders, Mohammed Murwah, has announced in 2019 that they consider secularism and Christianity as anti-Islam and will suppress it by destroying it. He added that the only guiding forces for them are the Quran and Mohammed. He said that they will establish Islamic rule in this region through jihad at all costs and added that they are advocates of the Salafi ideology and have strong faith in the Wahhabi doctrine. Because it is the most virtuous form of Sunni Islam. This organisation has also announced that it will



eradicate Sufis and Shias because they are against the basic tenets of Quran and Islam.

The current head of Al Shabaab, Shekau has declared that for every Muslim to propagate Islam it is necessary to follow the path of jihad and act against the opponents of Islam. It is also interesting to note in this context that when the British occupied Nigeria in 1900, it was ruled by a Muslim Sultan. After the British came to

power, the activities of Christian priests in this area increased and a number of Muslims converted to Christianity. In 1960, the British declared the region an independent country. From then until 2000, this area has been under the control of Sunni military dictators. Subsequently, a confrontation between the Islamic jihadis and the army began in the region which continues to this day.

## Sri Lanka plans to ban burqas and madrasas

According to **Inquilab** (March 14), preparations are underway in Sri Lanka to impose several restrictions on Muslims. Minister of Public Security of Sri Lanka Sarath Weerasekara has said that the government is seriously considering banning burqa in the country. In addition, 1000 Islamic madrasas are also being closed. He said that in view of national security, a ban is being considered in the Union Cabinet regarding the complete covering of the face by Muslim women. He pointed out that in the beginning, burqa was not worn in Sri Lanka. But recently, due to increasing Islamic extremism burqa is being increasingly worn by Sri Lankan women. He added that hundreds of innocent people were killed two years ago in the blasts that were carried out in some of the Sri Lankan churches by Islamic terrorists. Islamic jihadist organisations operating in India were behind the attacks. The intelligence agencies had revealed that some of the Islamic terrorists who carried out the blasts had received training in secret camps in India.

In 2019, the wearing of burqa was temporarily banned in Sri Lanka following the series of blasts by Islamic militants on churches and hotels. The minister announced that the government also intends to ban more than 1000 Islamic madrasas as the education given in these madrasas is against the national education policy. He said that in order to stop the spread of terrorism, it is necessary that a ban be imposed on persons opening an



educational institution on their own and teaching what they want.

Regarding Muslims who died due to Covid last year, the Sri Lankan government decided that the bodies will be burnt instead of being buried. This decision was strongly opposed by the Sri Lankan Muslims and they termed it interference in Islam.

Criticising this decision of the Sri Lankan government, **Roznama Sahara** (March 14) stated in its editorial that Sri Lanka has been seen as a country where citizens were not discriminated by the government on religious grounds. But now the Government of Sri Lanka wants to adopt a new path. Therefore, the decision to ban the burqa and close 1000 Islamic schools in Sri Lanka is not surprising. With such decisions, the Sri Lankan government is giving an indication that it is changing its policies. Before complaining to the Sri Lankan government, Muslims should see what the instructions of Islam and Sharia are in this context. To understand them, they must study the Quran and Hadith themselves. Because in Sri Lanka or in any

country, conditions did not worsen for Muslims in a single day. It is not easy to convince the rulers that there are good and bad people in every community.

In April 2019, 250 people were killed in churches and hotels in Sri Lanka. After this, Sri Lankan Muslims came under the web of suspicion. But in the same year in a city in New Zealand, a person opened fire on mosques, killing 51 people and injuring 40 others. But no one tried to relate the incident to Christianity, nor did the Muslims say that Christians are against Muslims. The question is that if the so-called terrorist activities in Sri Lanka were carried out by Muslims, then why are innocent peace-loving Muslims being punished for their actions? If it is necessary to ban the burqa and close Islamic schools, then which veil was the person who attacked the mosques in New Zealand wearing? Or in which madrasa did he study? It seems that the Sri Lankan government wants to divert attention of the people from the real problems of the country by imposing bans on burqa and Islamic schools. Such things will weaken Sri Lanka's credibility globally. The Sri Lankan government should focus on strengthening the country from an economic point of view, but instead, it is focusing too much on the ten percent Muslims present in the country. It is not just the Ulema who is responsible for teaching and explaining about religion, judgements and customs because they have more things to do. Common people should get information about Quran and Hadith on their own. Sri Lankan Muslims should find their own way.

**Etemaad** (March 16), strongly criticised the decision of the Sri Lankan government in its editorial, stating that since the attacks on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka, Muslims there have been facing severe restrictions and hardships. Along with the ban on Muslim women wearing burqas in the country in the name of national security, it has also been decided to ban 1000 Islamic madrasas. Even before

this, the burqa has been banned in many countries of the world. If Sri Lanka officially prohibits Muslim women and girls from wearing burqas, it will become the 19th country in the world where the burqa is banned. The other countries include Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Tajikistan, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Gabon, Morocco, Tunisia, Chad, Congo, Algeria, Uzbekistan, The Netherlands etc.

Earlier also, under the guise of Covid-19, the Sri Lankan government had banned the burial of the bodies of Muslims in an Islamic manner. Sri Lanka is the only nation in the world in which Muslims were forced to burn their dead. This decision is totally wrong. Sri Lanka has a population of more than two crore, ten percent of which are Muslims. On April 28, 2019, on the occasion of Easter, 359 people were killed in the blasts that took place in the churches. Since then, Sri Lankan stance has been opposed to Islam and Muslims. The need is that terrorism should be eradicated globally and not under the guise of targeting any particular religion or community. Countries around the world should protest against this decision of the Sri Lankan government.

**Siasat** (March 17) has stated in its editorial that even small countries like Sri Lanka are now openly hurting the religious sentiments of Muslims. Recently, the burning of dead bodies of the Muslims who died due to Covid-19 was declared mandatory by the government there. It is a shame that no Islamic country except Pakistan opposed this decision. No Muslim country has dared to raise its voice against the recent announcement by the Sri Lankan government to ban burqas and madrasas as well. The newspaper has said that now the idea of *Millat* (community) has perished in the Muslims. Therefore, if a country oppresses Muslims, then no Muslim country has any concern about it. This is the reason that now Islamic countries are extending a hand of friendship to enemy countries like Israel. ■

## Imposition of Islamic education on non-Muslims in Pakistan

According to **Avadhnama** (March 21), the Government of Pakistan has announced that same syllabus will be implemented in all schools in the country. The course introduces Islamic studies as a compulsory subject. This has caused deep concern among non-Muslim citizens of Pakistan. Pakistan's renowned educationist Peter Jack has said that the new curriculum of the Government of Pakistan is an open violation of the spirit of the Pakistani Constitution. Because in the Constitution, minorities have been given full freedom to study and practice their religion. He said that he is a member of the Equal Education Curriculum Board constituted by Pakistan. But his objection has not been taken into consideration by the extremist mullahs. A new syllabus has been introduced for students from first to fifth grade from this month all over Pakistan. According to this, the study of Islam has been made compulsory for all students.

Talking to a BBC Urdu correspondent, Peter Jack said that this is a setback to the basic rights of non-Muslim Pakistani citizens. He pointed that Article 22 of the Pakistani Constitution makes it clear that no person who is studying in a religious institution can be compelled to study a particular religion, especially when such education is not related to his/her own religion. The emphasis of Urdu education is on the study of Islam. As per the syllabus, the first lesson in the textbook of Urdu model is that, 'Students, think and tell

what are the rules Allah has given us'. In the same book, on page number 11, the teachers have been instructed to make all the children remember poetry that was written in the glory of Hazrat Muhammad and listen to the recitation.

Jack has said that there is no textbook that does not include lessons related to Islam. The children of Nargis Aijaz, a Christian woman, attend a government school in Lahore. Now they are being forced to read the verses from the Quran in class. They cannot read any lessons related to Christianity in school. It is compulsory for them to study Islam. Similarly, a Hindu from Sialkot, Ramesh Kumar, complained that his child is being forcibly taught the Quran and Islam in schools, which has been made a compulsory subject. Doesn't this make it clear that Islam is being forced on Hindus? If 40 percent of the curricula in Urdu will be based on Islam, then is it appropriate for Hindus to teach that to their children? Pakistan's Union Minister of Education Safakat Mehmood said that Islam is the very foundation of Pakistan. Therefore, no one has any right to object to the teaching of Islam in schools. Till the eighth grade, children of all schools will have to study the syllabus prepared by the government at all costs. Christians and Hindus live in considerable numbers in Pakistan. Therefore, forcibly imposing Islam on them is completely against the basic spirit of the country's Constitution. ■

## Fire breaks out at Rohingya relief camp

According to **Etemaad** (March 24), the United Nations has announced that at least 15 people were burnt alive, 500 injured and more than 400 people were injured in a fire that broke out at the Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. At least ten thousand camps have been

reduced to ashes. This means that at least 50,000 people have been rendered homeless. Medical and food distribution systems have come to a standstill due to the fire. Authorities have announced that a high-level investigation is being conducted to ascertain the cause of fire. According to



the United Nations, since August 2017, nine million Rohingya Muslims have had to migrate from their homes in Myanmar and take refuge in Bangladesh after they were attacked by Buddhist extremists. According to a senior police officer, Zakir Hussain, seventeen bodies have been

recovered so far, and more bodies are likely to be found. One and a half lakh refugees are staying in this camp. It is expected that most of the 400 persons who are said to be missing have been burnt to ashes in this fire.

According to **Inquilab** (March 26), the United Nations has announced USD 1.14 million in aid for the reconstruction of the Rohingya refugee camp in Cox's Bazar. The United Nations Refugee Agency has stated that this assistance will be the first instalment. Further assistance will be given if the need arises. According to the UN spokesperson, currently 10-11 lakh Rohingya refugees are residing in Bangladesh with the chances of their return remaining bleak.

## 14 get death penalty for conspiring to assassinate Sheikh Hasina

According to **Roznama Sahara** (March 25), a Bangladesh court has awarded death sentence to the 14 terrorists for plotting to assassinate the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. According to media reports, these terrorists had conspired to carry out bomb blasts in public meetings with the aim of assassinating Sheikh Hasina. It is said that these accused have links to Jamaat-e-Islami. According to the newspaper, Sheikh Hasina has been targeted by the extremists of Bangladesh due to her secular approach and they have attempted to attack her at least two dozen times. After these attacks, security agencies in Bangladesh took action against militants on a nationwide scale, in which more than a hundred terrorists were killed and more than 1000 suspected terrorists were arrested.

According to Bangladesh Justice Department spokesperson Abdullah Bhulian, the court sentenced 14 people to



death after charges of treason and conspiracy to murder were proved against them. Five of them are still absconding. The accused planted two bombs in a college ground where Sheikh Hasina was supposed to address a public meeting. But intelligence agencies had detected these bombs and defused them. The arrested militants have links with Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami, Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen (Bangladesh) and Jamaat-e-Islami. Prior to this, Mufti Abdul Hannan, the head of the Bangladesh cell of the Islamic terrorist organisation Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami and his associates were given death sentence in 2017 for trying to assassinate the British High Commissioner in Dhaka. In the last two years, Sheikh Hasina's government hanged five leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami, the largest religious organisation in Bangladesh, for supporting Pakistan in the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War.



## Saudi Arabia offers ceasefire in Yemen



According to **Inqilab** (March 23), Saudi Arabia has offered ceasefire to rebels who have been waging a civil war in Yemen for years. According to the Saudi foreign minister, the ceasefire will be implemented under the supervision of the United Nations. Saudi Foreign Minister Faizal bin Farhan al-Saud has said that his country has put forth new peace proposals to Yemen, the poorest country in the Arab world and aims to establish peace there. In line with this proposal, the rebels have been offered a cease-fire, which has been implemented by the United Nations. The Houthi rebels will be allowed to reopen Sanaa's airport and import fuel and food from outside via the port of Hudaydah. At present, Sanaa's airport and port are under the control of the rebels. Along with this, the Houthi rebels will have to resume their peace talks with the pro-Saudi Arabian government.

A civil war has been going on in Yemen for the past six years. The Saudi government has been alleging that the Houthi rebels have Iran's support. A representative of the Houthi rebels while commenting on the Saudi proposal said that there was nothing new in it. Despite this, Mohammed Abdul Salam, the chief negotiator of the Houthi rebels, said that

they will continue talks with the Saudi government and the US etc in the hope that the civil war can be brought to an end and a settlement for peace can be reached. He said that the organisation formed by the Saudi Arabia united bloc against the rebels are also of the opinion that the air and sea blockade of Yemen should be lifted so that it puts an end to the starvation of people of Yemen. The end of this blockade is very important for peace talks. On the other hand, the Saudi government claimed that this blockade was imposed to stop Houthi rebels from receiving weapons from abroad. After Biden came to power in the US, there has been a lot of change in US policy related to Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The new US President has announced that the US will stop supplying arms to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates but will continue its action against the terrorist organisation Al Qaeda.

According to the **Siasat** (March 24), the United Arab Emirates has supported Saudi Arabia's peace proposal to bring an end to the war in Yemen. UAE Foreign Minister Al-Sheikh Abdullah bin Zahid al-Nahyan has expressed hope that Yemen will receive help in resolving its crisis. He said that he fully supports the Saudi government in this regard. He added that

this proposal is a golden opportunity to find a political solution to the dispute. In addition, the US State Department has also welcomed Saudi Arabia's proposal and has requested all the parties to support the negotiation of a ceasefire agreement under the supervision of the United Nations.

**Comment:** The Yemen crisis began in 2011 when Yemen's dictator President Ali Abdullah Saleh refused to hand over power to Vice President Mansoor Hadi. Subsequently, the jihadis in South Yemen started a separatist movement. The origins of this movement were linked to President Abdullah Saleh. In response, the Shias, who were called Houthis, started a rebellion against Saleh's forces and captured the northern part of Yemen. Some Yemeni Sunnis also sided with the Houthis, and in early 2015, the Houthi rebels captured the capital Sanaa of Yemen. The struggle between the Houthi rebels and Saleh's supporters to gain power began, which resulted in Vice President Hadi having to flee abroad to save his life. The Houthi rebels are said to have Iran's support. In response, Saudi Arabia, along with eight other Arab Sunni nations, launched airstrikes on the Houthis. This alliance was also supported by the United States, Britain and France. Initially, Saudi Arabia anticipated that the war would last only for a few weeks. Saudi Arabia's auxiliary forces captured the port of Aden in August 2015 and pushed the Houthis and their allies to South Yemen. Hadi's government attempted to establish its office in Aden but had to seek refuge in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabian forces were unsuccessful in seizing the capital, Sanaa and north-western Yemen from the Houthis. The Houthis continued to have hold over the third biggest city of Yemen, Taizé and they continued to target Saudi Arabia's oil producing machinery with missiles and drones strikes. These strikes reduced the production of oil in Saudi

Arabia. Taking advantage of Yemen's civil war, Al Qaeda and the Islamic State took some areas in their control. The attack on Saudi Arabia then intensified, which angered Saudi Arabia and its allies because of which they put stringent sanctions on Yemen. It was claimed that the blockade was done so that the rebels could not receive arms from Iran. However, Iran has always denied this. This blockade led to a severe crisis of food and fuel in Yemen. The alliance between Ali Abdullah Saleh and the Houthis broke over the occupation of the largest mosque in Sanaa, and in the same war, President Saleh was killed. In June 2018, Saudi Arabia and its allies launched a massive war against the Houthis.

After six months of war, due to the efforts of Sweden, both the sides reached an agreement and exchanged thousands of prisoners. The UAE had to withdraw its troops from Yemen in July 2019 due to international pressure. The Southern Transitional Council established its authority over Aden in April 2002. Saudi Arabia had announced a unilateral ceasefire which was rejected by the Houthis.

According to the United Nations, more than eight thousand civilians have been killed due to air strikes by Saudi Arabia. Whereas according to informed sources, the death toll is ten times more than what is being reported. According to the United States, at least one lakh people have been killed in Yemen's war, including several thousand citizens of the country. In addition, thousands of people have died due to hunger and thirst. According to the United Nations, in the period from April 2015 to October 2018, at least 85,000 children have died of hunger. While 20 lakh children are expected to die soon due to hunger and thirst among which more than three and a half lakh children are younger than five years of age.

## Campaign against corruption continues in Saudi Arabia

According to **Etemaad** (March 17), a nationwide campaign against corruption in Saudi Arabia has led to arrests of more than two hundred and fifty officials of various ministries. According to a statement from Saudi Arabia's National Anti-Corruption Commission, those taken into custody include officials from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Housing, Education, Social Welfare and Customs. There are allegations of taking bribes against those arrested and the charges also include misusing governmental positions, and committing fraud. According to a spokesperson of this commission, more than 200 people have been arrested earlier. These include both Arabs and foreigners. At present, corruption charges are being investigated against 757 people and cases are being prepared and filed in courts. Some Arab officials illegally sent USD 3 billion abroad from Saudi Arabia. 32 people have been arrested in this regard. Intelligence sources have learned that Saudi central banks take

bribes from foreign companies and in turn helped them in illegally transferring money out of Saudi Arabia.

Last year, the Saudi government arrested several dozen members of the royal family on charges of corruption. But they were released later. Similarly, in March 2020, Prince Ahmed bin Abdul Aziz, the brother of King Salman of Saudi Arabia, and former Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef were also arrested. Prince Nayef was asked in 2017 to abdicate the position of crown prince in favour of Mohammed bin Salman, the son of the current king. He was then placed under house arrest. According to the media, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has removed all his rivals from power on one pretext or the other to strengthen his claim on the throne. The government spokesperson said that the members of the royal family against whom actions were taken have been found to be involved in serious allegations of corruption.

## Four more Arab countries likely to establish ties with Israel

Jared Kushner, senior advisor to former US President Donald Trump, said that diplomatic relations with Israel will soon be established by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan and Mauritania. In addition, many other Arab countries are also trying to establish friendly relations with Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently said that Israel is likely to forge diplomatic relations with at least four more countries. But he did not disclose the names of these countries.

Prior to this, four Arab countries, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco have established diplomatic ties with Israel. According to another news, the Israeli Prime Minister has said that Prince

Mohammed bin Zayed, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi, has announced an investment of USD 12 billion in Israel. Netanyahu wanted to go on a tour of the United Arab Emirates. However, the Jordanian government did not allow him to fly over their territory, so he had to postpone his tour.

An analyst with BBC Urdu Service, Asad Mirza said in an article that there is growing cooperation between the UAE and Israel in various fields. On August 31 last year, Israeli airlines started its service from Abu Dhabi and with this, the Israeli embassy also officially started its functioning from there. In order to attract Jewish tourists, Abu Dhabi has instructed

all its hotels to start serving kosher food options. In addition, Israeli tourists are also being given special discounts in hotel rentals. For years, the doors of Arab countries were closed to Jews and the enmity was such that, even if a person's passport was found to have an Israeli visa stamped on its, he would not be granted a visa to enter any Arab country. Now at least five Arab countries have allowed Jews to build their places of worship. In 2019, a Jewish priest was appointed for the first

time in the United Arab Emirates. After thousands of years, Jews are getting an opportunity to step inside an Arab nation. The Jews have always had trouble finding kosher food in Muslim countries. The Jewish way of slaughtering animals is different from the Islamic way. The Jews do not eat the meat of animals that have been cut the Islamic way. Surprisingly, countries like the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have also started buying weapons from Israel.

## Israeli attack on Iranian militia hideout in Damascus



According to **Roznama Sahara** (March 18), the Syrian government news channel reported that Syrian air defences have intercepted Israeli aggression on its capital, Damascus. According to the news, Israel had fired dozens of missiles on Syrian defence targets. But they were destroyed by the Syrian air defence system before they could reach the targets. According to foreign sources, loud blasts were heard in the capital Damascus which were caused by Israeli attacks. The attacks targeted Iranian militia hideouts. According to the

monitoring group, Syrian air defence resorted to anti-missile system from abroad to intercept these missiles. For the past few months, Israel has increased its attacks on Syria. Last month, more than a hundred people of the Syrian army and Iranian army were killed in an attack. Israel has not taken responsibility for these attacks. It had admitted that last year that it had fired more than 100 missiles at Syrian targets.

According to the **Hindustan Express** (March 20), the Israeli Chief of Staff has stated that Lebanon is becoming a



threat to Israel's security. He said that Israel has full potential to address the threats posed by Lebanon. He claimed that the influence of the Shiite terrorist organisation Hezbollah in Lebanon is increasing day by day and the Security Council resolution has not yet been implemented in Lebanon. Addressing a ceremony in Paris, he said that Hezbollah in Lebanon had built

thousands of missile bases in residential areas aimed at Israeli targets. He added that Israel will use its full strength to destroy the bases and they will not spare the enemies who have maintained their base against Israel. He stated that the Lebanese government is fully responsible for the actions of Hezbollah against Israel.

## Israeli attack on Iranian ship



According to **Roznama Sahara** (March 15), Iran has alleged that Israel attacked one of its ships, whereas Israel has maintained silence on this issue. Iran's container ship Shahre Kord was attacked by a missile at sea, setting the ship on fire which was later doused. There was no loss of life or property in this incident. Iran has alleged that its ship was targeted by an unknown missile. Iran's official agency Noor News has claimed that the location at which the ship was targeted clearly indicates that this act of terrorism has been done by Israel. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said the attack on the Iranian ship was an open violation of international rules and the country will not leave any stone unturned

to find the culprits of this attack. Iran's state-owned shipping company, IRISL has announced that it will take legal action against the perpetrators of the attack. Two weeks before this incident, an Israeli ship was attacked with a missile and both sides of the ship were pierced in this. Israel had blamed Iran for the attack, but Iran denied any role.

In another news, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has said that Israel will do everything possible to ensure that Iran does not make nuclear weapons at any cost. The Israeli Prime Minister has said that he will not enter into any compromise with an extremist country like Iran and will do everything possible to prevent it from becoming a nuclear power.

Others

## International day to combat Islamophobia



According to **Etemaad** (March 16), the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has decided to observe International Day to Commemorate Islamophobia on March 15 every year to create awareness

amongst the public regarding growing hatred against Islam in the world. In this context, Pakistan had moved a resolution in the organisation which was approved by all the countries. This decision was made at the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers meet. Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi acknowledged that hatred against Islam is being instigated in a planned manner around the world.

Therefore, it is necessary that Muslims around the world should be made aware to address the growing hatred against Muslims and Islam.

## Ten Hindu candidates to be fielded by Muslim party



According to **Mumbai Urdu News** (March 16), the Indian Secular Front, which has been facing allegations of Muslim communalism, has announced to field ten Hindu candidates in the West Bengal assembly elections. The head of this Front, Abbas Siddiqui, has said that his party is a secular party but some communal parties are falsely accusing it of resorting to communalism to polarise the Hindu votes.

To address this allegation, Front has fielded 20 candidates, out of which 10 are Hindus. This decision will improve the image of the Indian Secular Front and will also benefit the Left Front and the Congress.

Asaduddin Owaisi of Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen had announced that his party will contest elections with Sajjadanashin Pirzada Abbas Siddiqui of Furfura Sharif Dargah, but his proposal

was turned down by Siddiqui. He alleged that Owaisi is making his candidates contest elections to divide the Muslim votes in order to help BJP in the elections. Siddiqui stated that he will not fall into Owaisi's trap. With this, Siddiqui also announced the establishment of his new political party, the Indian Secular Front. His Front has formed an electoral alliance with the Congress and Left Front. The Hindu candidates who have been fielded by

Indian Secular Front include Milan Mandi from Raipur, Vikram Chatterjee from Mahishadal, Gauranga Das from Chandrakona, Sanche Sarkar from Mandir Bazar, Simol Soren from Haripal, Dinesh Chandra Viswas from Ranaghat, Krishnaganj, Anup Mandal from Sandesh Khali, Varun Mahato and Kanchan Maitra from Chapra and Tapas Chakraborty from Ashok Nagar.

## Imarat Sharia calls for promotion of Urdu



According to **Hindustan Express** (March 15), Shariatul Islam Maulana Wali Rahmani, Imarat Sharia, Jharkhand organised a special conference for the development and preservation of Urdu in Ranchi, where he said that if Islam and Muslims were to survive, they will have to promote and preserve Urdu with vigour. He complained that the ruling forces of the country are hell bent on erasing the separate identity of Muslims. Therefore, it is necessary that Muslims come out firmly for the protection and propagation of Islam, Madrasas and Urdu. For this, special arrangements need to be made for the teaching of Urdu. It is important to buy Urdu books and newspapers. Islamic madrasas are the forts of defence of Islam,

so to strengthen them and attract new generation of Muslims towards these Islamic madrasas, a special campaign should be carried out all over Jharkhand. An initiative called 'Urdu Caravan' has been formed to make Urdu accessible to the people in Jharkhand.

He said that their demand is that Urdu should get the status of second official language in Jharkhand. He said that they will soon meet the Chief Minister and the

Education Minister in this regard and apprise them about the problems of Urdu and Urdu speaking people. He said that the Islamic madrasas are being destroyed everyday due to the neglect of the Muslims and the government. He also pointed out that Urdu schools are closing down. Therefore, it is necessary that Muslims join hands to protect Urdu and the Islamic civilisation. By studying the new education policy that was recently formulated by the Government of Jharkhand, it is clear that the coming years will be very dangerous for Muslims and Urdu. Therefore, it is necessary that a network of Islamic madrasas should be created in Muslim-dominated areas and they should be made self-sufficient.



## Shia Sunni Waqf Board in Jammu and Kashmir



According to **Siasat** (March 3), union minister of Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has announced in Srinagar that the Central Government will establish a Shia and Sunni Waqf Board in Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the government will not go back on this decision. He said that there are a lot of Muslim Waqf properties in the princely state. Most of these have been illegally occupied by the people. The central government is determined to liberate the Waqf properties from these illegal occupations so that the

income generated from them is spent for the development of Muslims. He said that in addition to this, a separate Waqf Board will also be established in Ladakh. Earlier this year, there was a meeting of the Ulama in the office of Anjuman Sharai Saiyan under the chairmanship of Aga Syed Hussain, demanding that a

separate Waqf Board be formed for Shias in Jammu and Kashmir. So far in Jammu and Kashmir, the Shia Sunni Auqafis managed by the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Waqf Board, which was founded in 1932 by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. Recently, there was a demand raised by Shias that separate waqf boards be created for them in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh so that the income from them can be spent on the upliftment and development of Shias.

## Popular Front commander arrested

According to **Inquilab** (March 15), the Uttar Pradesh STF team arrested Mohammad Rashid, the training commander of the Popular Front of India, from a bus station near a township. He has been sent to jail on charges of conspiring against the country and treason. According to the police's claim, the police recovered a fake Aadhar card, PAN card and some secret documents from Rashid's possession. During interrogation, Rashid confessed that he had received training in bomb making and also got weapons training from Pakistani terrorists in secret camps in Kashmir. After this, he was given the responsibility by the Popular Front to train its cadre to make bombs and use



weapons. The police have arrested a dozen activists of the Popular Front earlier also.



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