

# REVIEW OF URDU PRESS

Vol.: 4

Issue : 7

April 1-15, 2021

₹ 20/-

## Archaeological Survey at the Controversial Gyanvapi Masjid



- Dark Clouds over Khuda Bakhsh Library
- Crisis Averted in Jordan

- Protest Marches in Iran Against Treaty with China
- Life Imprisonment for 12 SIMI Activists

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Printed and Published by  
Manmohan Sharma on behalf of  
India Policy Foundation published  
at D-51, First Floor, Hauz Khas,  
New Delhi- 110016. Printed at Sai  
Printo Pack Pvt. Ltd., A-102/4,  
Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-II,  
New Delhi - 110020

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## Summary

The order of a civil court judge in Varanasi has created a flutter in the country. The judge has directed the Archaeological Survey of India to conduct a survey to find out whether the controversial Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi was built on the ruins of the ancient Kashi Vishwanath temple. The judge had also directed that if the need arises, an excavation of the site shall also be done to find the truth. But Muslim organisations and leaders have opposed the court's direction. They allege that BJP has been raking up such issues with an eye on remaining in power. They also claim that the issue of Gyanvapi masjid is already pending in the high court. Hence the order of the civil judge is a wrong one.

In this context, it is pertinent to note that the Parliament had passed a law in 1991 for protection of places of worship, that prohibits conversion of any ancient place of worship and to provide for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947. However, the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute case was kept out of the ambit of this law. This was because the Ramjanmabhoomi case was pending in the court even before 1947. The question here is what was the reason behind the Narasimha Rao government's decision to come up with this law? History researchers know it very well that the ancient Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi was destroyed on the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb and the Gyanvapi mosque was constructed on its place. In this context, the royal decree issued by Aurangzeb is available even now, which is an evidence for the same.

In the same way, a seven-storey beautiful temple built by the king of Orchha at Katra Keshav Dev on Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi in Mathura was destroyed by Aurangzeb through a decree. Not only that, he also built an Idgah where the sanctum sanctorum of the temple stood.

The situation in Arab world is changing fast. The recent revolt by Prince Hamzah of Jordan against his step-brother, King Abdullah II, is a clear example of changing times. However, the interesting thing is that United States, Saudi Arabia and a dozen Arab countries have extended their support to King Abdullah. Meanwhile, it is not in the interest of Bharat if it ignores the attempts by China to increase its influence among West Asian countries. Recently China signed a 25-year friendship treaty with Iran. On the basis of this treaty, China has started making huge investments in Iran. This apart, China has also announced its decision to buy oil in huge quantities on a cheap rate from Iran. Their aim is to transport the oil to China through the economic corridor built with the help of Pakistan. This increasing influence of China in the Arab world is sure to create a headache for Israel and United States in the coming days.

National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language has published RSS Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat's book 'Bhavishya Ka Bharat' in Urdu. The book was released by Sah Sarkaryavah of RSS, Dr Krishna Gopal. In his speech, he urged the Muslims in the country to come close to the Sangh and try to know about the organisation. This will enable them to remove the misconceptions and lies spread by others about Sangh.



## Archaeological survey at the controversial Gyanvapi masjid



**Inquilab** (April 9) writes that a civil court in Varanasi has given its verdict on the controversial Gyanvapi masjid. After the court order, many have voiced the opinion that Gyanvapi masjid will become another Babri masjid. The fast-track court has directed that a survey be conducted on its premises and the site below the Gyanvapi mosque shall be excavated. The survey will be done under the supervision of Archaeology department and a five-member committee, comprising two Muslims, has been formed for the purpose. But Muslim organisations have criticised the decision and said that a case has been pending in the court on the same issue and its hearing has been completed. Only the high court's verdict is pending. Instead of waiting for the decision of the high court, the civil judge has delivered his own verdict and it has raised a number of questions. Secretary of Muslim Personal Law Board, Zafaryab Jilani, has said that the verdict of the civil court is totally wrong. As per the places of worship act passed by the Parliament in 1991, even a case cannot be registered on the Gyanvapi issue. Sayed Farman Naqvi, who appears in

the Gyanvapi masjid case at the high court, has said that the civil judge who gave the order has already been transferred. The judge who issued the order is a controversial judge, he claimed. Hence his order would be questioned before the district judge. When he was asked whether the Hindus would benefit from his order, his reply was that it was obvious. The dispute over the Gyanvapi mosque has been going on for decades between the Swayambhu Lord Vishveshwar and Anjuman Intejamia Masjid Committee Banaras and Sunni Central Waqf Board. The argument on behalf of Lord Vishveshwar is that there was a temple on the premises of the present Gyanvapi masjid which was destroyed on the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1669. Hence the construction of the masjid itself was illegal. However, this stand has been opposed by the management committee of the masjid and the Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board.

**Inquilab** (April 10) reports that the Muslim Personal Law Board had urged the Muslims in the country not to get worried or feel desperate. The newspaper also

described the decision of the civil court as a travesty of law and said that efforts are on to appeal against the verdict. Acting general secretary of Muslim Personal Law Board Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani has said that as per the law passed by the Parliament in 1991, the status of all places of worship shall remain as it was on August 15, 1947. There cannot be any change in the law. Hence the decision of the court is of no consequence. The high court had already issued a stay order in the case. Despite all this, if the judge of a civil court has ordered a survey of the property of a masjid, then it is totally wrong and the order can never be accepted. A panel of Muslim lawyers has been created to appeal against the decision of the court.

**Hamara Samaj** (April 10) reports that a case was filed by Pandit Somnath Vyas on behalf of ancient Swayambhu Jyotirling in 1991 seeking construction of a new temple on Gyanvapi premises and allow Hindus to do puja there. The case is still pending in the court. On December 10, 2019, Vijay Singh Rastogi filed a petition in a court claiming that a temple of Jyotirling Shiva exists on Gyanvapi premises. Aurangzeb had destroyed the temple and constructed a masjid and started offering namaz there. According to the petitioner, the temple is still there below the controversial superstructure. Hence it is necessary to dig the premises and resolve the matter.

**Etemaad** (April 9) reports that the president of Sunni Central Waqf Board ZufarAhmad Farooqui had announced that they would question the decision of the civil court in high court.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (April 9) quotes head of the masjid management committee Syed Aasmin as saying that they would not allow any survey team to enter the masjid premises.

**Aurangabad Times** (April 10) reports that BJP MP Harnath Singh Yadav had appealed to the Muslims to hand over the Kashi Vishwanath temple and the Mathura Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi to Hindus.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (April 10) reports that Dr Qasim Rasool Ilyas of Jamat-e-Islami said that Muslims would not leave Gyanvapi mosque unclaimed. If the issue of excavations is raised, then the same has to be done with Jain and Buddha sites which were destroyed by Hindutva supporters in large numbers.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (April 10) in its editorial claimed that in the wake of the Babri Masjid Ram Janmabhoomi dispute, Hindus had appealed to the Muslims many times that they hand over the Babri Masjid site to them as a goodwill gesture. However, for Muslims and for legal experts, it was not that easy. Muslim leaders claim that the masjid belongs to the God and it cannot be surrendered to anyone as a goodwill gesture. Once a masjid is built, it will remain so till the doomsday. Some intellectuals fear that once the Babri Masjid is surrendered to the Hindus, then the claim will arise for other masjids as well. Muslim Personal Law Board and other Muslim organisations have been claiming that they would abide by the court verdict in the case.

Meanwhile, the other side claimed that it was an issue of faith and reverence. The court has nothing to do with it. Hence they would not abide by any court decision on the issue. They also raised the slogan “Ayodhya is just a preview, Kashi and Mathura are next in line.” Nobody was willing to accept the verdict of the high court and it was questioned in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court handed over the Babri Masjid to Hindus not on the basis of their right, argument or evidence but on the basis of faith. Now the RSS-BJP have been preparing to make Gyanvapi masjid an issue in the next elections. It is in this context that the civil judge in Varanasi recently directed the Archaeology department to conduct a survey on the premises of Gyanvapi masjid.

**Summary:** Muslim historian Firishta had claimed that Mahmud of Ghazni had destroyed hundreds of temples in Bharat and looted their huge wealth and herded way lakhs of people as slaves.

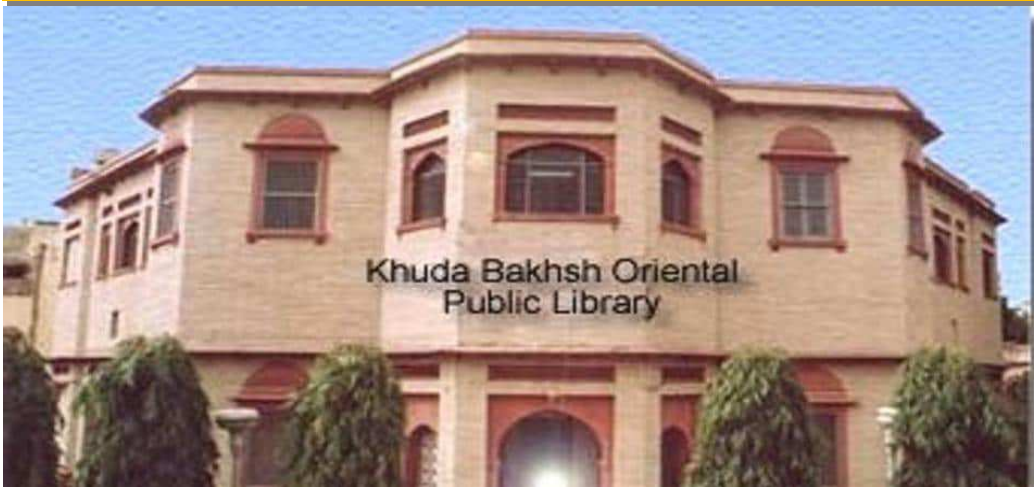
Every Muslim invader had targeted temples in Bharat. The temples were looted, murtis were destroyed and they were converted to masjids. In his book, Martin had proved using archaeological evidence that Aurangzeb had destroyed hundreds of temples and converted them to mosques. These include the world famous Kashi Vishwanath temple. When Aurangzeb attacked this temple for the first time in 1664, thousands of Naga Sadhus laid down their lives and protected the temple. Later in 1669, on the orders of Aurangzeb, the sacred temple of Kashi Vishwanath was destroyed and the Gyanvapi masjid was constructed on its place. Varanasi is one of the ancient cities of the world. Kashi Vishwanath is among the 12 most sacred Jyotirlingas of the Hindus.

A number of foreign historians have confirmed that the ruins of the ancient Kashi Vishwanath temple is still hidden in the present Gyanvapi mosque. According to historians, it was Qutbuddin Aibak who first destroyed the original Kashi Vishwanath temple in 1194. The temple

was rebuilt in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by a few Gujarati traders which was again destroyed by the Sharqi Sultans of Jaunpur. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the army of Sikander Lodhi once again destroyed the reconstructed Kashi Vishwanath temple. During Akbar's reign, Raja Todar Mal again constructed the temple. Later Aurangzeb destroyed this temple.

The present temple, which is located at a distance from the ancient temple, was constructed by Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar of Indore. It is being said that her father-in-law Malhar Rao Holkar had tried to rebuild a temple in place of the Gyanvapi masjid in 1742. However, he could not do it as he had already signed a treaty with the nawab of the Awadh. Hence Ahilyabai Holkar constructed the present temple in 1780. This mandir is situated at a distance from the original Lord Vishwanath mandir and the Gyanvapi masjid. The king of Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, had donated 1 tonne of gold to the temple, which was used to gold plate the temple's dome that gives it the glory even today.

## Dark clouds over Khuda Bakhsh library in Patna



**Hindustan Express** (April 7) reports that the existence of Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library in Patna, an institution of national importance, is at stake. The 115-year-old library is situated on Ashok

Rajpath in Bihar's capital Patna. In an effort to find a solution to the traffic jams on the road, the Bihar State Bridge Development Corporation decided to construct a flyover from Kargil Chowk to

NIT by razing a portion of the library. For this purpose, an NOC was sought from the administration of Khuda Bakhsh Public Library. The library administration, however, sent a detailed letter to the government, opposing the move. Director of the library, Shayesta Bedar, said that on the pretext of building the flyover, they want a major portion of the library including the garden and Curzon Reading Room to be razed. It is a historical building and it is a part of the green belt. The library is an important one not only for the country, but the entire world. The director said that the issue of traffic jam is actually on the roads near PMCH and further ahead at Patna market and Subzi Bagh areas only. The Khuda Bakhsh library has nothing to do with it. Hence, the flyover should not be constructed in this area. He said that it is the only library in the country which has been mentioned in the Unesco's world heritage list. He expressed the hope that chief minister Nitish Kumar would intervene in the issue. INTACH has also announced that if the library is touched, it would launch a nationwide campaign against it and would also knock at the doors of the Supreme Court to ensure its protection. Chairman of Bihar State Bridge Construction Corporation Pankaj Kumar Pal refused to comment on the issue.

**Avadhnama** (April 7) in its editorial has claimed that if the government wants, it would target any institution associated with Muslims. Why such things are happening especially in states ruled by the BJP? This needs to be given a serious thought. The newspaper also claims that the library has more than 21,000 rare manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Pali and other languages which are not available in any other library in the world. This is the reason why research scholars from across the world reach out to this library for doing research. The newspaper has asked whether the library has been targeted because its name is Khuda Bakhsh library? The newspaper also warned the Bihar

government and chief minister Nitish Kumar to act wisely on the issue.

**Summary:** The Khuda Bakhsh library was established by Khan Bahadur Khuda Bakhsh in 1891. That time there were 4,000 manuscripts in the library which he had secured from his father, Maulavi Mohammad Bakhsh. It is an autonomous institution under the Union ministry of culture and its chairperson is the governor of Bihar. It is a world famous treasure house of manuscripts, oil paintings and historical documents. Currently, it has more than 21,000 rare manuscripts and over 3 lakh rare books available in 12 different languages of the world. The rare manuscripts of the library include the Taimurnama, which has the signature and seal of Mughal emperor Jahangir. Another manuscript named Padashahnama has the signature of Babur and it also has a 1,200-year-old collection of poems called Dewane-Hafiz. The library also has a manuscript of Quran written on deer skin which has the signature of three Khalifas of Islam. The library also has Jahangirnama, written on the orders of Emperor Jahangir in 1611. It has both the signature and the royal seal of Jahangir. A manuscript of Quran which was written in 667 CE during Abbasid era, is also there. The library has four books donated by King George V and they carry his signature. The manuscript of the Persian translation of Upanishad, a work undertaken by Dara Shikoh, is also an asset of the library. The manuscript of a book written by Abu Ali Sina, which gives details on how to do an eye surgery, is also part of the library. It has both the seal and signature of Abu Ali Sina. This library is one of the most important four libraries of the world. The other three are the Russian National Library situated in Saint Petersburg in Russia, the British Library in London and the Paris Library. The library is a unique source of Islamic literature in the world. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and Jawaharlal Nehru had visited the library. ■

## Cases related to Muzaffarnagar riots withdrawn

**Inquilab** (March 28) reports that the Yogi Adityanath government has withdrawn cases registered against a few BJP leaders over the Muzaffarnagar riots that took place in 2013. The leaders against whom the cases were withdrawn include minister for sugarcane Suresh Rana and MLA Sangeet Som. The cases were pending against them in the court of an additional district sessions judge. Earlier, the state government had announced that it would withdraw the cases pending against Suresh Rana and Sangeet Som. Later, government pleader Rajiv Sharma filed a petition in the court seeking withdrawal of the cases, which the court accepted. The two leaders were accused of making inflammatory speeches and thereby provoking the riots. The two leaders allegedly gave a speech against Muslims at Nagala mahapanchayat. In the same meeting, Sadhvi Prachi also made a call for revenge over the murder of Sachin and Gaurav. The Muzaffarnagar riots started after some Muslims molested a few Hindu girls. As per government data, more than 50 people were killed and more than 50,000 people were forced to leave their houses and take refuge in camps. Till now, the Yogi government has withdrawn more than 70 such cases. Before the Lok Sabha election, 48 such cases were withdrawn. The government claims that these cases were fake and were registered due to political vendetta. The leaders of BJP, against whom the cases were registered, include Kapil Dev Agrawal, Sanjeev Balyan, Bhartendra Singh and Shyampal.

Commenting on the decision of the government, former additional advocate general of UP, Zafaryab Jilani said the decision was contradictory to the directions given by the high court. The high court had made it clear that cases involving serious offences should not be withdrawn. He urged Muslim organisations to appeal against the government's decision. President of Peace Party Dr Mohammad Ayub said the riots were the result of an understanding between Samajwadi Party and BJP. While one was looting people in power, the other has withdrawn the cases. He said that the pressure from the administration is such that no victim would dare to question the government's decision in the high court. Congress spokesperson Shahnawaz Alam said that when the chief minister himself is an accused, who will take action against leaders of his party? What is shocking is that the judiciary itself has knelt down before the government, he said.

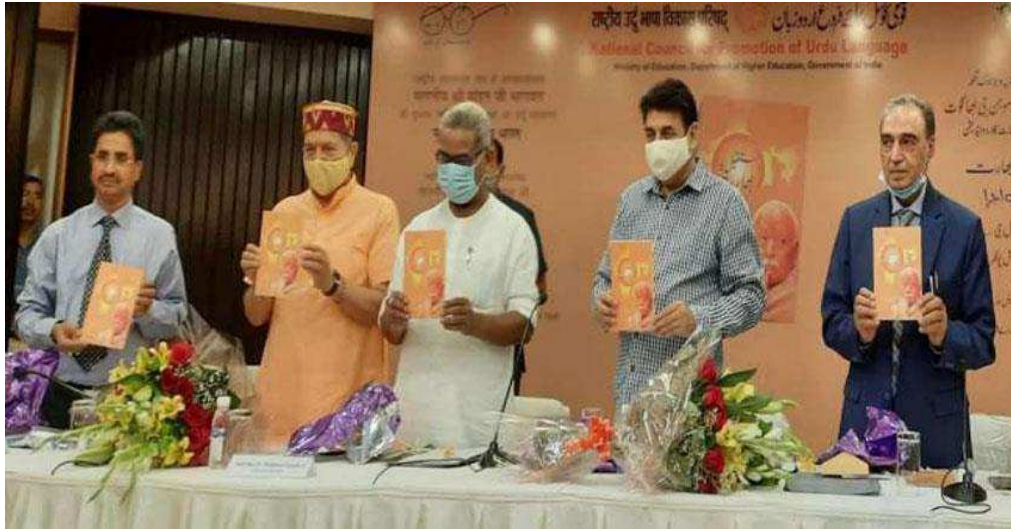
**Mumbai Urdu News** (March 30), criticising the decision of the Uttar Pradesh government in an editorial, said that nowadays what prevails in UP is jungle raj. The newspaper alleged that the attitude of Uttar Pradesh government is anti-Muslim. This is the reason why all the masjids in Shahjahanpur were covered using tarpaulin on the occasion of Holi. In Mathura, Sangh workers had beaten up policemen. Instead of taking action against them, the administration has filed cases against policemen. The newspaper alleged that the administration is openly tearing apart the law and justice system in the country.

## RSS chief's book released in Urdu

**Inquilab** (April 6) reports that the translation of a book written by RSS Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat, titled 'Bhavishya Ka Bharat' has been released in Urdu as 'Mustaqbil ka Bharat' at a function

held at India International Centre, New Delhi. Those who attended the event included RSS sahsarkaryavah Dr Krishna Gopal, convener of Muslim Rashtriya Manch, Indresh Kumar, chancellor of





Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Firoz Bakht Ahmed, and chairman of Islamic Cultural Centre, Sirajuddin Qureshi, and many other scholars. Translator of the book and director of National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language, Dr Aqeel Ahmed, spoke about the background of the book.

Releasing the book, Sahsarkaryavah of RSS Dr Krishna Gopal said that Muslims need to come close to RSS to remove their misconceptions about the organisation. It is necessary for one to come close to another to remove any doubt or misconception that he holds about the latter. Unless all classes in the society correctly understand each another, the nation will not be able to stand united. That is the reason why we invite you to come close to us. If you know and understand us better, then the misconceptions will disappear. Watching from a distance and believing hearsays are not correct. Whatever questions you have, we are willing to answer. We believe in debates and discussions and give respect to different ideologies. We are among those who change with the times. We believe in the oneness of all the 135 crore people in the country and do not differentiate between them in any manner. We are one, we belong to one family and belong to one nation. If anyone has any doubt in this, it

would affect the unity of the country, Dr Krishna Gopal said.

The book is based on the three-day lecture series held by Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat at Vigyan Bhawan in 2018. Dr Krishna Gopal said that the aim of RSS is to contribute in building Bharat with discipline. Our history is thousands of years old. If we want to become the Vishwa Guru, then we need the cooperation of lakhs of people. Keeping this vision in mind, Sangh is actively trying to bring the change. We believe in bringing people together with this aim. In times of corona, swayamsevaks of Sangh have visited many Muslim bastis and took steps to ensure their welfare. He said that Hindu is a broader term. It should not be viewed from the point of Westerners. It is a platform for thousands of paths and schools of thought. It is necessary to contemplate on the development of Hindu and Hindutva. Hindutva got developed as a concept with the help of thousands of people and not just one individual. They include Buddha, Mahavira, Ras Khan, Rahim and innumerable others who contributed to it. This is a river, not a pond.

Dr Aqeel Ahmed said that ‘Bhavishya ka Bharat’ is a unique book by Dr Mohan Bhagwat which gives an insight into country’s civilizational, cultural ethos and unity. This apart, it paints a glorious

picture on the nation's future. In the book, Dr Bhagwat has underlined the give-and-take between different religions. He also stressed on the need for imparting a basic knowledge about Islam and its history among people associated with Sangh. He urged Muslims to visit Sangh shakhas to get direct information about the

organisation. He said that he kept the title of the book as 'Mustiqbil ka Bharat' so that the doubts and misconceptions among Muslims about a welfare-oriented organisation like RSS will get removed and they get a basic understanding of its ideology and thereby end the gap between the two sides. ■

## All accused acquitted in Ishrat Jahan encounter case



**Inquilab** (April 1) reports that a special CBI court has acquitted three more persons in the Ishrat Jahan encounter case. The court said that it has got no evidence to prove that Ishrat Jahan was not a member of Lashkar-e-Taiba. Hence the report of intelligence wing cannot be refuted. It is, therefore, established that she was a terrorist. Hence the three police officers namely, Tarun Barot, Anju Chaudhary and Girish Singhal are acquitted of all charges. The court said that these officials of crime branch had acted on the basis of the information received from the intelligence wing. They were supposed to act like that only. These three officials had filed a petition in the CBI court claiming that their seniors had already been acquitted in the case and hence they shall also be

discharged. The CBI also did not oppose their plea in the court. Earlier also when four officials were discharged in the case, the CBI did not file an appeal in the higher court.

Ishrat Jahan and her three companions namely Javed Sheikh, Amjad Ali and Zeeshan Johar were killed in an encounter by Gujarat crime branch in June 2004. Following the encounter, former DGP PP Pandey, chief of crime branch D G Vanzara and DSP N K Amin were named as accused in the case but the court had acquitted all of

them in the initial stage itself.

Commenting on the decision, Shakil Rashid asks in **Avadhnama** (March 6) whether the story of Ishrat Jahan is over? It looks so after the acquittal of the then police officers who were named as accused in the encounter case. Now, should we have to accept that Ishrat Jahan was a terrorist? She had arrived in Ahmedabad with her colleagues with the intention of assassinating the then chief minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi. Whether one accepts it or not, both the police and judiciary want only this story. The court kept saying that by killing Ishrat Jahan and her colleagues, the police officers did their duty though we know that these people did a fake encounter in the cruellest manner. If these acquitted officers are questioned, then

Ishrat Jahan will get a fresh lease of life and the story would not end. It could not be proved in the court that Ishrat Jahan was a terrorist. There were several loopholes in the police story. Sadly, the Gujarat government did not grant permission to file charges against any police officer. Hence the court also had to accept that whatever the police did was their duty.

The writer claims that the story of Ishrat Jahan begins on June 15, 2004. I was at the Muslim-majority colony of Mumbra in Mumbai. That was the time when Ishrat Jahan's body was brought from Ahmedabad and buried at the local Khabristan. That time it was felt that everybody was keen to get justice to the 19-year-old student from Khalsa College. Later, this responsibility fell solely on the head of her mother, Sameena Kausar. Now, after the last three officers also been acquitted in the case, Sameena Kausar's comment that the case was one-sided right from the beginning has come true. The accused in the case was not any ordinary person, but one of the most influential and powerful politician. Today's number two leader in BJP, Amit Shah, also had to spend his time behind the bars in this case. The accused also included the top officers of Gujarat police. They were accused of the conspiracy behind the kidnap, illegal custody and murder of Ishrat Jahan. First Dinesh MN came out of the case. DG Vanzara also got out of the jail. Former DGP PP Pandey got acquitted in the first instance itself. Everybody knows that PP Pandey was not only behind the fake encounter of Ishrat Jahan, but he also spent time saving those who were accused of Gujarat riots.

According to the writer, it is a reality that PP Pandey was the chief of Gujarat police when four persons including Ishrat Jahan were killed in a fake encounter on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. In the FIR, it was claimed these were terrorists who came to Ahmedabad with the intention of killing Narendra Modi. From the statement of witnesses and the CBI inquiry, it is clear that PP Pandey was present in the meeting where the encounter was planned. The encounter was conducted in the name of dealing with Islamic terrorism, but was actually aimed at spreading panic and make Modi as the Hindu hridaya samrat.

Surprisingly, a magistrate in Gujarat has mentioned in his report that the four were not killed in encounter but were fired upon when they were sitting together. The magistrate also raised the question that had it been an encounter with terrorists, then why no policeman was injured in the firing? The weapons seized from the corpses did not have any licence and these were planted. The people who were described as Pakistanis had their identity cards in English, though Pakistan's official language is Urdu. There was no evidence to prove that Ishrat and Javed were members of Laskhar-e-Taiba. When this report of the magistrate came, the Modi government got shaken. Today, all these police officers got acquitted. The question now is will policemen easily get away like this in future also after killing people? The answer is most likely, yes. In Ishrat Jahan case, the doors of high court are still open. The decision of the CBI special court can be questioned there. However, the question is how long can a lonely mother keep fighting the government?

## Maulana Wali Rahmani passes away

General Secretary of All India Muslim Personal Law Board and one of the most prominent Islamic thinkers of the country, Maulana Wali Rahmani passed away at Paras hospital in Patna on April 3.

**Hindustan Express** (April 4) reports that he was buried with state honours at Dargah Rahmania at Munger where his grandfather and father were buried. Maulana Wali Rahmani was related to renowned Sufi Abdul Qadir Gilani of

Baghdad. Maulana Wali Rahmani's father was Syed Minnatullah Rahmani. He was vice-chairman of Bihar Legislative Council. In 1991, after becoming the Sajjadanashin of Dargah Rahmania, he withdrew from active politics. He was counted among the world's most renowned Islamic scholars. He had also started an Urdu daily



newspaper in Bihar. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by Colombo University and he was also a recipient of Rajiv Gandhi Award. He had also received several awards from US and Russia. It is being said that the former dictator of Libya, Col Muammar Gaddafi had once requested him to stay in Libya and take the responsibility of Islamic education in that country. He was offered the same salary of Gaddafi. However, Rahmani rejected this offer. He was also the vice chairman of Maulana Azad Education Foundation. Recently, he was involved in the promotion of Urdu language in Bihar. There was no Urdu newspaper which did not carry a special feature on Maulana.

**Inquilab** (April 7) reports that the chairman of All India Muslim Personal Law Board, Maulana Syed Mohammad Rabey Hasani Nadwi had announced that Khalid Saifullah Rahmani would take over as the acting general secretary of Muslim personal law board. He said that the selection of a permanent general secretary would be made at the next meeting of the Muslim personal law board.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (April 6) in its editorial has appealed to the Muslims of the country to take to the streets to complete the work started by Rahmani. The newspaper has described him as a frank and fearless leader of Indian Muslims who would not compromise on any situation. This was the reason why he launched a nationwide campaign against the law to

scrap Triple Talaq in the country and tried his best to protect Muslim personal law. His entire effort was to set up Shariat courts in every district of the country so that Muslims can approach them to settle their problems and keep themselves away from the law and legal justice system of the country.

**Avadhnama** (April 4) reports that Maulana Wali Rahmani spent his entire life in service of the poor and raised the voice of Muslim community. Chief of Jamiat-i-Ulama Maulana Mohammad Usman Mansoorpuri and general secretary Mahmood Madani expressed deepest condolences on his death and said that his leaving has left a huge void for the Muslim community which could never be fulfilled. He had always maintained that apart from receiving religious education, Muslim children should also receive modern education.

**Inquilab** (April 6) in its editorial has described that the death of Maulana Wali Rahmani as a huge setback for Indian Muslims. He had established an institution named 'Rahmani 30' for imparting modern education to Muslims. Through this institution, he provided free coaching to thousands of Muslim students to attend competitive examinations that helped hundreds of Muslims to secure senior-level government jobs. He also started industrial education to Muslim students in each district of Bihar. He was a priceless person for Indian Muslims.

## Protest marches in Iran against treaty with China



**Siasat** (March 31) reports that huge protests have taken place in Iran against a secret deal signed between Iran and China. The protesters shouted slogans like “Iran is not for sale” during the march. The protest marches held in various cities of Iran went viral on social media. Recently, a 25-year cooperation agreement on the further development of Iran-China relations was signed in Tehran by Iranian foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi. Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden, while replying to a question by a journalist, said he was quite worried about the increasing influence of China in the middle-eastern countries. On the basis of the new deal, China will invest heavily in industries related to petroleum and gas in Iran. In return, Iran will supply petrol to China on cheap rates and China will make payments after a gap of two years. In the same manner, China will also make investments worth nearly 128 billion dollar in the Iran’s transport sector. Due to the deteriorating relationship between Iran and US, the former’s deal with China has gained a special significance.

**Roznama Sahara** (March 29) in an article expressed concern over the increasing influence of China in the Middle East and said that US had good relationships with Arab countries right from the beginning. However, after getting entangled in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the influence of US started decreasing in the region with China and Russia filling the space left by the US. China is taking a huge interest in increasing its influence among Arab countries. However, this is not in the interest of the Arab countries. The Chinese policy is to trap its friendly countries into debts and thereby financially enslave them. Interestingly, US is also responsible for making China increase its influence in the Arab world. This is because US never took any concrete step to stop China on its expansionist path. US never took any interest in improving the situation in Syria. This was when Russia was openly supporting Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Interestingly, the increasing influence of Russia and China in the region is not in the interest of US either. China also took advantage of the sanctions imposed on Iran by the Trump administration. Recently, the Chinese

foreign minister held detailed talks with the secretary of Gulf Cooperation Council. It is being said that China is keen to make huge investments in the energy and infrastructure sectors of Gulf countries. As of now, China meets 30% of its petroleum requirements from Gulf countries. It now aims to double this target. If anybody thinks that Arab countries would be hesitant to make friendship with China due to the harassment meted out to Muslims in that country, then one should not fall prey to such misconceptions. This is because, for the Arab countries, their own welfare is more important than the welfare of Muslims. Currently, the Arab countries are divided into three groups. This is also the reason why China is keen to improve its relationship with Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Bahrain.

In **Dainik Inquilab** (April 6), analysing the increasing influence of China among Arab countries, Hasan Kamal writes that the China-Iran deal has reversed the political trends in South Asia. Even if the US continues with its sanctions on Iran, it would not make much difference to the latter as China has openly come out in support of Iran. However, the increasing friendship between China and Iran could become a headache for Saudi Arabia. Anticipating this situation in mind, the Chinese foreign minister has already

visited Saudi Arabia and also came up with a six-point formula to end its war with Yemen. It is also believed that the formula is put forward with the consent of Iran. China is also making efforts to exploit any benefits out of the US's efforts to improve bilateral relationship between Israel and Arab countries. The US is slowly withdrawing itself from Asia and China is trying to fill up the space. Iran will supply its petrol to China through the Pakistan-China economic corridor. This route is small and the expenses are also less. Pakistan will get lakhs of dollars as taxes and Afghanistan will also benefit from the friendship between China and Iran. However, this increasing influence of China in the region is not in the interest of India. India has put a spike on its own interest by stopping purchase of petroleum from Iran. When India announced its decision to stop purchase of petroleum from Iran, the Iranian Supreme Leader's advisor, Ali Larijani, had signalled its intentions by saying that Iran takes its own decisions on relationship with other countries. Our foreign policy does not change on the basis of somebody's phone call. This message was meant for India as well. It is said that India stopped purchase of petroleum from Iran after a single telephone call from US President Donald Trump. ■

## Pakistani hand behind anti-Modi protests in Bangladesh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi returned to India after a two-day visit to neighbouring Bangladesh. India also signed five agreements with Bangladesh during this visit. Despite all this, there were several protests against him throughout the country. Nearly two dozen people were killed in this violence.

**Inquilab** (April 3) reports that nearly a week passed after the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh. Even then a debate was still on

about the Pakistani hand behind the nationwide protests against Modi. The protests had raged for almost a week in Bangladesh. However, there is no doubt that the protests against Modi and India had started even before the beginning of the visit. The protests against Modi started from masjids soon after namaz. According to sources in Bangladesh government, the activists of Hefazat-e-Islam were behind these protests. The intelligence agencies of Bangladesh are investigating the allegation



that the Pakistani embassy in Dhaka had organised these protests and extended financial help to the protesters. Intelligence sources indicate that the current chief of this pro-Pakistan organisation is Junaid Babunagari. He was making efforts to launch a major action so that his organisation becomes a topic of discussion at international level. It is said that he was controlled by the intelligence agencies of Pakistan. Babunagari had spent four years in Islamic madrassas in Pakistan. Last year, when the chief of the organisation Shah Ahmad Shafi passed away, Babunagari took over the reins of the organisation at the instance of Pakistan.

In another report, a youth was arrested in Bangladesh for allegedly creating a music video on social media making fun of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sheikh Hasina. The arrested youth has been identified as Rabiul Islam. He was held under the provisions of Digital Security Act. He is likely to get punishment up to 14 years in jail under the Act.

**Dainik Inquilab** (April 4) in its editorial stated that the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina invited Narendra Modi on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> foundation day celebrations of the country.

On this occasion, the heads of nations of a few countries like Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Nepal were also present in Bangladesh. Interestingly, the members of Awami League had expressed happiness on the visit of Prime Minister Modi. However, a political slugfest was taking place in India at this point of time. Mamata Banerjee's party alleged that Modi was trying to influence the voters in West Bengal by visiting the temple of Matua community in Bangladesh which was an open violation of model code of conduct for elections. However, the Election Commission did not take notice of this allegation. In any case, the way the model code of conduct has been violated in West Bengal, has no parallel. Trinamool Congress has been alleging that the BJP has been making all sorts of efforts to win the elections in West Bengal. They are making use of the Prime Minister and Central agencies to achieve this target.

The newspaper says that following the visit of Prime Minister Modi, the properties of Hindus and their temples were targeted in some places in Bangladesh and one cannot turn a blind eye towards this violence. It is the democratic right of the citizens of any country to protest against

the visit of a foreign head of the nation. However, an extremist Muslim organisation of Bangladesh, Hefazat-e-Islam launched a protest against Modi claiming that Muslims in India are facing harassment and for this Modi and his party are responsible for it. Hence he should not be allowed to enter Bangladesh. The unfortunate thing is that those protesting against the harassment of minorities in India are themselves targeting the minorities in their country and killed many of them. We feel that by protesting in this manner for Muslims in India, they are ultimately bringing them damage. It is a pity that the teachings of Islam are not followed by the Islamic organisations. Our advice is that if the Bangladeshis are angry or upset about the treatment meted out to Muslims in India, then they should create such a positive situation for the Hindus living in Bangladesh that the communal elements in India should feel ashamed about themselves. They should first create

a situation in Bangladesh where the minorities of that country feel secure about themselves.

**Sahafat** (April 7) has published an article written by BJP leader Seshadri Chari which claims that Bharatiya Jan Sangh had actively participated in the freedom struggle for Bangladesh and had organised several non-violent protests in different parts of the country and put pressure on Indira Gandhi government to grant recognition to the provisional government of Bangladesh. He said that Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid too admitted in 2015 that Atal Bihari Vajpayee, though he was an opposition leader at that time, had extended support to Indira Gandhi government on the Bangladesh issue in the interest of the nation. The RSS too had passed a resolution condemning the harassment of the citizens of the then East Pakistan and requested the Indian government to extend full cooperation for liberation of Bangladesh.

## Suicide attack outside church in Indonesia

**Inquilab** (March 29) quoting Indonesian police states that two suicide bombers blew themselves up outside a Catholic church in Makassar. At least 14 people were injured in the blast. The intelligence agency of Indonesia is probing the attack to find the extremist organisation that was involved in the blast. The police have raided the hideouts of suspected people and arrested two persons. The two were suspected to be involved in a bomb attack that took place at a church in Philippines in 2019 in which more than 20 persons were killed. The police have claimed that the two were associated with an extremist Islamic organisation called Jamaat Ansharut Daulat. This organisation is linked to Islamic State. Earlier in 2018 also this



extremist Islamic organisation had attacked a few churches and police stations in which more than 30 people were killed. The intelligence wing has launched a nationwide search to nab the terrorists involved in the attack.



## Life term for attackers on German tourists in Turkey



**Inquilab** (April 8) reports that a court in Turkey has awarded life term to four persons involved in a suicide attack in Istanbul in January 2016. Nearly a dozen people were let off for want of evidence in the case. The attack took place in Sultan Ahmed Square in Istanbul in which 12 German tourists were killed and 16 others were injured. The Turkey government had blamed terrorist organisation Islamic State for the attack. However, Islamic State had refused to accept the blame.

Turkey had ended capital punishment in 2002. Hence the biggest punishment now in the country is life sentence without parole. The court had also awarded life sentence to the accused in another case related to terrorism. The case had been filed against 26 people. In 2018, the court had awarded life term to all the accused. However, after an appeal in the higher court, only four have been awarded punishment.

## 48 officers killed in attack on military station in Somalia

**Roznama Sahara** (April 4) reports that Islamic terror organisation Al Shabab attacked two military stations and killed 47 officers and injured a dozen others. Following the attack, a pitched battle broke out between the army and the jihadis in the country. A Somali military spokesperson claimed that more than 100 terrorists were killed in these clashes and nine soldiers

also lost their lives. According to the spokesperson of Somali army, more soldiers had been deputed to take on the terrorists, following which the terrorists had fled from the spot. However, a spokesman of Al Shabab refuted the government stand and said that they had seized army vehicles and ammunition stores and that the war was still on.

## Crisis averted in Jordan



**Sahafat** (April 7) reports that an agreement has been reached between King Abdullah II of Jordan and his step brother Prince Hamzah. It is believed that Saudi Arabia had played a major role in reaching this agreement between the two warring brothers. Earlier, Prince Hamzah had staged a revolt against King Abdullah with the help of some of his colleagues, after which he was arrested by the military and imprisoned in a palace. This apart, the Jordan government also banned publication of any news related to the revolt and the subsequent arrest, both in media and social media.

It is also being said that apart from Saudi Arabia, King Abdullah's uncle Prince Hassan too had played a major role in resolving the crisis. As per a royal decree issued by the palace, Prince Hamzah said he would remain loyal to the King of Jordan and the country's Constitution. The decree also carried his signature. In an earlier statement issued to foreign media organisations, he had stated that he was not afraid of the king and that he was just fighting for his rights. The Jordan King had alleged that Prince Hamzah was playing into the hands of foreign powers and he

was trying to create instability in the country. He said that they were able to defeat this foreign conspiracy with the help of intelligence agencies.

However, Prince Hamzah had refuted these allegations and said that he was being punished for raising his voice against corruption.

Jordanian military's chief of staff Major general Yousef Huneiti claimed that any effort to endanger the country's security would be dealt with firmly. Prince Hamzah is the son of the most beloved begum of late King Hussein of Jordan, Queen Noor. When King Hussein fell ill, he permanently entrusted Prince Hamzah with power. However, due to reasons unknown, when King Hussein returned from the US, he announced his other son, Abdullah, as his successor. Subsequently, Prince Hamzah was announced Crown Prince. In 2014, present King Abdullah II removed Prince Hamzah as Crown Prince and appointed his own son as the Crown Prince. Prince Hamzah is very popular among the people of Jordan. He is known for his goodness and simplicity. US has announced that their support was for King Abdullah in this issue. There are nearly

3,000 US soldiers in Jordan, primarily engaged in training Jordani soldiers. Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister Ayman Safadi told media persons that the hand of Bassem Awadullah, a business tycoon, was visible among those who conspired to destabilise the government. It is being said that the businessman had planned to take Prince Hamzah's wife in a special plane out of Jordan. He also admitted that many suspected to be involved in the revolt have been detained. The interesting thing is that those who have come out in support of King Abdullah include Egypt, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine and Lebanon.

**Comment:** As far as Jordan is concerned, it came into being with the blessings of Britain soon after the First World War following the defeat of Germany and the Ottoman Empire. The British partitioned the erstwhile Ottoman Empire into different regions and handed over their administration to their loyalists. The King was appointed from the Hashemite family of Jordan. Since then, Britain is wielding considerable influence on Jordan. The wives of many rulers of Jordan are mostly of British origin. Following the creation of Israel in 1948, a total change took place in the political equations in Middle East. In 1922, the Council of League of Nations had given Trans-Jordan the status of a country and kept it as a protectorate under the British. In 1946, the United Nations granted it freedom and recognised it as an independent country. When Israel was established in 1948, many Palestinian refugees fled to West Bank and Jordan. In 1950, Jordan seized the territory of West Bank. In 1951, the then King Abdullah of Jordan was assassinated by a Palestinian jihadi. In 1952, King Hussein ascended the throne in Jordan. In 1957, the last British soldier also left Jordan. In 1967, Israel seized Jerusalem and West Bank during the six-day war. In 1972, the military staged an unsuccessful coup to overthrow King Hussein. In 1986, enraged over the coup

attempt, King Hussein severed all ties with Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and closed their offices in Jordan. In 1963, curbs were imposed on all political parties in Jordan and hence when the elections were held in 1989, people voted in favour of the king. In 1994, Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel. In 1996, King Hussein passed away. In 1999, his eldest son, Abdullah, took over the reins of the country.

In 2000, six persons were sentenced to death for conspiring to target Israeli and US installations in protest against Jordan establishing diplomatic tie-up with Israel. In 2002, Jordan and Israel launched a joint project to carry water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea. In 2002, Al Qaida had assassinated a senior diplomat of US. In 2003, elections were held in Jordan and two loyalists of the King got elected. In 2004, Al Qaida had planned to explode a bomb in the capital city of Amman, but the intelligence agencies foiled their plan. In 2005, Al Qaida launched an attack and killed seven persons. As a revenge for this, al-Qaeda leader in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, was killed in an aerial attack in 2006. Jordan has a defence agreement with Saudi Arabia and it also extends support to Saudi Arabia in its fight against Houthi rebels in Yemen.

There is a constant influx of refugees in Jordan due to violence in Middle East and currently, nearly 10% of the total population of Jordan are actually Syrian refugees. They have been given financial aid and food by United Nations. This year, UN World Food Programme had extended financial aid worth 60 crore dollar to Syrian refugees. As far as Prince Hamzah, who staged a coup against his step-brother King Abdullah, is concerned, he received higher education from Britain and US. Observers say that the peace deal between the two brothers is likely to be temporary in nature. As per latest reports, Prince Hamzah and his mother Noor al-Hussein are under house arrest. ■

## Agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iraq

**Etemaad** (April 2) reports that the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammad bin Salman, and the Prime Minister of Iraq, Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, signed an agreement on five projects. The Crown Prince welcomed the Iraqi Prime Minister at the seat of the power in Riyadh and prepared a plan to improve the bilateral relationship between the two countries. It is being said that Iraqi Prime Minister held talks on improving political security and cooperation in financial sector with Saudi Arabia.

**Siasat** (April 6) reports that there is a huge increase in the influence of US and Israel in the Arab world. Last week, during a meeting of foreign ministers of Egypt,

Jordan and Iraq, discussions were held on Yemen, Libya and Palestine but the problems being faced by Lebanon were totally ignored. The increasing influence of China in Iran is also important to the Arab world. Saudi Arabia has planned investments worth 3 billion US dollars in the agricultural sector in Iraq. This is the first time that Iraq has openly stressed on its Arab identity. The defence minister of Saudi said that Iraq is also another Arab country and its identity cannot be changed. What is required is for every Arab country in the region to unite so that the Arab world rises as a separate power in front of the world. But the sad part is that the Arab region is yet to get united. ■

## Talks on with Iran on nuclear treaty



**Sahafat** (April 7) reports that an important meeting of European Union has commenced in Vienna focused on bringing US and Iran back into compliance with their landmark 2015 nuclear deal. Iran, China, France, Germany, Russia and Britain are part of the negotiations. Currently, US is keeping itself away from these talks. In 2018, the Trump

administration had walked out of the Iran nuclear deal. However, new US President Joe Biden is keen to return to the deal. The way forward for this is to approach the six other signatories of the deal and also by initiating talks to lift the sanctions imposed on Iran by the Trump administration. Iran's stand is that until the US lifts the sanctions imposed on them, it would not enter into any talks with US. Iranian foreign ministry's spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh said they want the US to lift all the sanctions imposed on it in one go. Until this is done, nothing much would come out of the current talks, he said. In June, presidential elections are scheduled to be held in Iran and it would prefer the US to lift the sanctions before the elections. ■

## Dubai deports group involved in naked photo-shoot

**Roznama Sahara** (April 8) reports that Dubai has decided to expel from UAE a group of women, men and photographers involved in shooting nude photos in the emirate. In Dubai, display of obscenity, drinking liquor and taking objectionable photos in public places are punishable offences and violators can get a jail term extending from six months to 18 months apart from huge penalties. On April 3, a group of more than 20 European models were spotted posing for a naked photo shoot on the balcony of a high-rise in Dubai Marina, mostly dotted by towering buildings. After the photos went viral on social media, the police arrested 40 people including the models and the photographer. The Dubai has a population of just 28 lakh.

However, almost its entire economy is dependent on tourism. That's the reason why despite being an Arab emirate, there is no ban on drinking or organising dance parties and also no restriction on overnight stay for couples in hotels. This is also the reason why prostitutes from throughout the world reach Dubai to make it big. The Dubai government did not file a case against those involved in the naked photo shoot because it fears that such a step would affect the tourist flow in future. As per government sources, nearly 45 to 50 lakh foreign tourists visit Dubai every year and they lavishly spent money in the emirate. This revenue is the backbone of the emirate's economy.

## 10 former military officers held for conspiracy against Erdogan

**Hindustan Express** (April 7) reports that Turkey has taken into custody 10 retired senior officers of its navy. These officers had openly criticised a project to construct a shipping canal in Istanbul. These officers were among the 104 retired officers who wrote a letter to President Erdogan warning that the project could be a violation of the international treaty on Bosphorus Strait.



The Bosphorus Strait is the only waterway that connects Black Sea with the Mediterranean Sea through Marmara Sea.

In 2016, following a failed coup attempt against Erdogan, many senior officials were forcibly retired from the service. Recently, Turkey's relationship with Cyprus has deteriorated as Turkey started digging Mediterranean Sea close to Cyprus for petrol and natural gas. In 2011, Erdogan had announced that Turkey was

preparing for an Istanbul shipping canal. The canal would be bigger than Panama and Seuz canals. Once the shipping canal is built, it would help decongest Bosphorus Strait. The estimated cost for its construction was pegged at 10 billion dollars at that time. However, observers claim that the current financial situation of Turkey would not allow it to start an expensive project like this at least for now.

Other

## Life imprisonment for 12 SIMI activists



**Inqilab** (March 31) reports that a court in Jaipur has awarded life-term for 12 activists of banned organisation SIMI. In 2014, 13 computer engineering students were arrested for a conspiracy to make bombs. Government pleader Liaquat Khan said that the court has released one accused for want of evidence. The case was filed for anti-national activities as well. He said that charges against them like amassing of

explosive material for making the bombs have been proven in the court. The convicted persons have been identified as Mohammed Ammar, Mohammed Sajjad, Mohammed Aqib, Mohammed Umar, Abdul Wahid Ghauri, Mohammed Waqar, Abdul Majid, Mohammed Maruf, Waqar Azhar, Barkat Ali, Md Saqib Ansari and Ashraf Ali Khan. One Musharaf Iqbal has been acquitted by the court.

## Largest masjid for Shias in Kashmir

**Inqilab** (March 31) reports that foundation stone has been laid for the construction of the largest masjid for Shias in Kashmir. This masjid is being constructed at Hussainabad locality on Kashmir University Road. The foundation stone has been laid by the president of Jammu and Kashmir Anjuman-e-Sharie Shian, Aga Syed Hassan Mosavi Al-Safvi.

The masjid will be built over an area of 19,000 square feet and nearly 12,000 people would be able to offer namaz at same time. The masjid will be four-storeyed and there will be a huge library on the third floor. The library will house the literature on Islam. According to Shia leaders, this would be the biggest Shia masjid in Jammu and Kashmir.

## RSS leader holds talks with Shia leaders

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (March 31) reports that two prominent Shia leaders of the country, Maulana Syed Hussain Qumi and Maulana

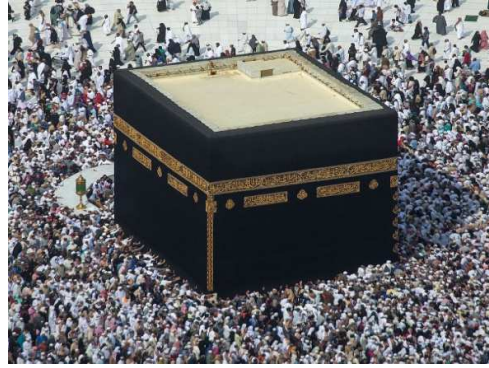
Rajani Hassan Ali Rohani, held talks with the patron of Muslim Rashtriya Manch, Indresh Kumar, and greeted him on the

occasion of Holi. Indresh Kumar said that the aim of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is to unite people from all sections of the society. In our view, all Indians, irrespective of their religion, are Indian. He said that Hindustani Muslims should forget

their internal differences and unite so that they could contribute to the resurgence and development of the country. He requested both the Shia leaders to make efforts to strengthen the unity among Indian Muslims and integrate them to the society.

## Man held for shouting Islamic State slogans in Ka'aba

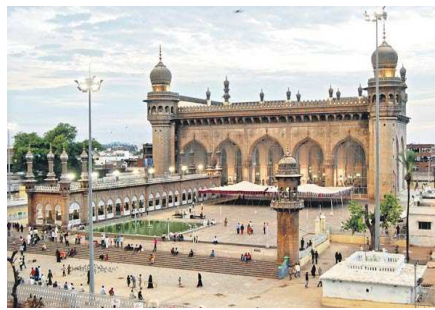
**Sahafat** (April 3) reports that a man who shouted slogans in favour of Islamic State at Ka'aba has been arrested. The police also seized a knife from him. It is being said that the man started shouting slogans and waved a knife soon after the namaz on the first floor of Ka'aba. Imam and khateeb of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, Sheikh Abdul Rahman Al-Sudais said that Ka'aba is a house of peace and shouting of extremist slogans is not acceptable. This is because it is against the basic principles of Islam. The man did not show respect to Ka'aba. Ka'aba is for namaz, parikrama and haj. It is being said that in 2017, the Saudi security forces had foiled an attempt



to attack Ka'aba. A number of people were killed in the clashes between the extremists and security forces and one building was totally razed during the fight.

## Hyderabad Mecca Masjid employees to be terminated

**Siasat** (March 30) reports that the Waqf department has decided to remove from job nearly 13 employees of the historical Mecca Masjid and Shahi Masjid in Hyderabad. They include the khateeb, imam and




muezzin. In place of them, staff of an agency would be employed. An employee of Mecca Masjid alleged that he had written a letter to the director of the Waqf department saying that the salary of the employees of these two masjids shall be increased due to inflation. However, instead of increasing their wages, they have

been kicked out of their jobs. He said that there has been no increase in the wages of the employees of these two masjids since 1976 and the imams have not been paid for the past 11 months. He alleged that the Waqf

department has no time to look into the affairs of masjids. The newspaper has urged the home minister of Telangana, who is also the Waqf minister, that these employees, who have been working there for decades, should not be removed from their jobs.

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