

# REVIEW OF URDU PRESS

Vol.: 4

Issue : 8

April 16-30, 2021

₹ 20/-

## Petition Seeking to Scrap Quranic Verses Dismissed



- Hike in the Budget for Promotion of Urdu
- Imran Government Bans Tehreek-E-Labbaik
- Israel's Cyber-Attack on Iranian Nuclear Plant
- Pakistanis Lead in Securing Indian Citizenship

*Editorial Advisor*

**Dr. Kuldeep Ratnoo**

*Editor*

**Manmohan Sharma**

*Translation from Hindi  
Edition*

**K.S. Kumar**

*Editorial Assistance*

**Shiv Kumar Singh**

*Office*

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

*E-mail:*

**info@ipf.org.in**  
[indiapolicy@gmail.com](mailto:indiapolicy@gmail.com)

*Website:*

[www.ipf.org.in](http://www.ipf.org.in)

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

## Contents

Summary	03
<b><u>National</u></b>	
Petition seeking to scrap Quranic verses dismissed	04
Hike in the budget for promotion of Urdu	05
Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan passes away	06
Waseem Rizvi elected member of Shia Central Waqf Board	07
Campaign to save Khuda Bakhsh library	08
<b><u>World</u></b>	
Imran government bans Tehreek-e-Labbaik	10
Sri Lanka bans 11 extremist organisations	11
US soldiers withdraw from Afghanistan	12
Sri Lanka bans burqa	14
Pakistan imposes restrictions on social media	15
<b><u>West Asia</u></b>	
Israel's cyber-attack on Iranian nuclear plant	16
US supplies arms and ammunition to UAE	17
Efforts for Islamic unity	17
Withdrawal of US troops from Iraq begins	19
Saudi plan to extend ban on foreigner hajjis	20
<b><u>Others</u></b>	
Pakistanis lead in securing Indian citizenship	21
Women personnel for the security of Ka'aba	21
Charity by Saudi ruling family	22
Maliyana massacre case back in court	22
Ban on azaan at Al-Aqsa mosque	22

## Summary

The Supreme Court has dismissed a petition filed by Waseem Rizvi seeking to scrap 26 controversial verses from the Quran and slapped a fine of Rs 50,000 on him for filing the petition. A huge majority of the Muslims in the country has welcomed this decision of the Supreme Court. Muslims throughout the world are devoted to the Prophet and to the religion. They say that Quran is the infallible word of Allah and there cannot be any change to it. Perhaps this could be the reason why everyone considers the issue as a sensitive one and tries not to rake it up.

Meanwhile, an interesting development is that when one more Shia sect announced the expulsion of Waseem Rizvi from the sect and Islam, he emerged victorious in the election of members to the Shia Central Waqf Board. He has been elected as a member from mutawali (caretaker of endowment property) quota. However, many did not like his election and a few of them filed a petition in the Allahabad High Court seeking to quash the election. As of now, it is difficult to say what stand the high court would take on the sensitive matter.

The Modi government is quite generous with matters concerning the welfare of minorities. Accordingly, it has doubled the budget of National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language, constituted for promotion of Urdu and Arabic education. Interestingly, apart from promotion of Urdu, the government is also spending millions of rupees for promotion of Arabic education.

For the first time, a massive effort has been launched to bring Islamic nations on one platform. However, it is difficult to speculate who's hand is behind such an effort. It is a historical fact that right from the beginning various sects of Islam have been preaching their own belief systems. But they have also been beating the drum of Islamic unity throughout the world. Nowadays, the Islamic world is divided into three main groups. There is a permanent schism between Iran and Saudi Arabia because Iran sees itself as the leader of Shia world while the ruling family of Saudi Arabia belongs to the Wahhabi tradition of Sunni sect. In 2016, the Saudi government hanged to death some prominent Shia scholars. After this incident, a huge rivalry erupted between countries supporting Saudi Arabia and Iran. The two countries also withdrew their diplomatic relationships. Now efforts are on to restore the ties between the two nations. Similarly, there is fight between Saudi Arabia and Turkey over the leadership of Muslim world. Western newspapers claim that the leaders of Turkey and Saudi Arabia are now making an effort to form a single platform. It is difficult to predict the rate of success of the efforts being made to unite Muslim nations. ■

## Petition seeking to scrap Quranic verses dismissed



The Supreme Court has dismissed a petition filed by Waseem Rizvi, former chairperson of Uttar Pradesh Shia Central Waqf Board, seeking to remove nearly 26 controversial verses in Quran. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on Rizvi for filing such a petition. Almost all Urdu newspapers have welcomed this decision of the Supreme Court.

**Inqilab** (April 13) reports that a three judge bench of the Supreme Court, before dismissing the petition, heard petitioner Waseem Rizvi's advocate R K Raizada in detail. The advocate argued that students of madrasas are taught Quran, including these 26 controversial verses, leading to the spread of fundamentalism and terrorism. Hence it is necessary to remove these verses from Quran.

Earlier, Rizvi had claimed that these verses were not part of the original text of Quran and were included in it at a later stage. However, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court termed the contentions as rubbish and imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on the petitioner. Former judge Suhail Ajaz Siddiqui expressed hope that in future

people would not file such baseless petitions before the court in the wake of the SC ruling. He said it was a right decision and he would welcome it.

After the verdict of the court, Waseem Rizvi issued a statement claiming that he would file a review petition and would take the issue right up to the international court of justice. The entire world is feeling the heat of terrorism. Hence it is necessary to impose curbs on those who spread terrorism. President of All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat, Navaid Hamid, has demanded that Waseem Rizvi should be arrested for disturbing peace in society.

**Inqilab** in its April 14 issue carried nine news items indicating that different Muslim organisations welcomed the decision of the Supreme Court dismissing the petition of Waseem Rizvi. Raza Academy has presented offerings at Dargah Hazrat Nizamuddin as a thanksgiving step. Nearly two dozen prominent Islamic scholars also welcomed the decision of the Supreme Court. Shia leader Maulana Kalbe Jawad Naqvi described the Supreme Court

decision as a historic one and said that the faith of Muslims in Indian judicial system has increased manifold. Those who are trying to destroy the Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb of the country have got a slap on their face, he said.

**Inquilab** (April 13) in its editorial described the judgment as a historical one and said that even before the hearing began in the Supreme Court, the lawyers of Rizvi said that they wanted to withdraw all the contentions related to the case and limit the argument to the fact that these controversial Quranic verses have had an adverse effect on the students who study in madrasas. The newspaper also stated that the two lawyers who argued the case were both senior lawyers and they knew it very well that as per the Indian Constitution, neither the judiciary nor the Parliament has got any power to change any religious texts.

The newspaper claimed that anti-Islamic forces are behind Waseem Rizvi and their effort is to create an atmosphere against Muslims and Islam in the country. The editorial also claimed that Waseem

Rizvi has close relationship with RSS leader Indresh Kumar and he donated a huge amount to Indresh Kumar as part of Ram Mandir campaign. From this, it is clear that who is behind Waseem Rizvi. It is also claimed in the editorial that the announcement of Rizvi that he would take the case to international court of justice is a betrayal of the country.

Commenting on the decision of the Supreme Court, **Rozena Sahara** (April 13), in its editorial, expressed satisfaction that the court had acted wisely and stopped yet another controversy from taking shape in the country. It has also helped to stop India getting notoriety from the world. The newspaper states that the CBI has been investigating Waseem Rizvi for committing fraud at WaqfBoard. Hence he is creating these kinds of issues to escape from jail. The court's decision has helped non-Muslims in the country too to understand that there is nothing like that in Quran which Waseem Rizvi is trying to make them believe. ■

## Hike in the budget for promotion of Urdu

**Inquilab** (April 15) reports that the Union government has doubled the budget for promotion of Urdu language in the country. The budget for National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language was Rs 193 crore in 2014 and it has been increased to Rs 402 crore in 2020. This information was provided by Union minister for education Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank at the executive meeting of National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language. In the meeting, director of the council, Dr Aquil Ahmed presented its annual report. Vice-chairman of the council, Prof Shahid Akhtar, and a number of Urdu scholars were present. The minister said that Modi government keeps a special interest in promoting Urdu language. That is the reason why the government has increased its budgetary provisions to more than double. The number of Urdu computer centres and multi-language DTP centres have also been

increased to 559 from 464. The number of students who have passed out from these institutes has also increased to 1.7 lakh from 1.06 lakh. This apart, the number of centres for telegraphy and graphic designs has also been increased. Their number has increased from 55 to 74. The number of students have also increased by three times. A one-year diploma course has also been started for promotion of Urdu language. In 2014, 2.58 lakh students had passed out from Urdu teaching institutes and their number has increased to 4.98 lakh now. The number of Urdu teaching institutes has also doubled during this period.

Apart from teaching Urdu, a special interest has been taken for promotion of Arabic education. The number of such Arabic learning institutes has been increased from 500 to 800 and the number of students who pass out from these institutes have also doubled. Director of the



institute, Dr Sheikh Aquil Ahmed told the correspondent of **Inqilab** that whatever activities have been undertaken by the institute, their scope has widened. We have sought a special budget of Rs 100 crore from the government and we have been

assured that there would not be any dearth of funds for promotion of Urdu and Arabic languages, he said. Two buses would be purchased to take the publications of the council to different parts of the country.

## Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan passes away



**Roznama Sahara** (April 22) reports that renowned Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has passed away. He was 96 years old. He was unwell for a long time. He was born in Azamgarh in 1925. He had written hundreds of books on Islam and he had personal relationships with Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Ahmed Madani and Subhas Chandra Bose. He was also related to Jamiat Ulema. The Atal Bihari Vajpayee government had given him Padma Bhushan in 2000. In 2020, the Modi government honoured him with the country's second highest civilian award, Padma Vibhushan. He was identified among those great men who worked for peace. He was also identified among 500 most influential Muslim leaders of the world.

His most debated books include, 'Rights of Women in Islam,' 'Concept of Jihad' and 'Hijacking—ACrime'.

The Maulana became a target of

extremists when he urged the Muslims to hand over Babri Masjid to Hindus to gain their goodwill. He has written nearly 200 books. Those who closely knew Maulana say that Atalji wanted him to be nominated to Rajya Sabha but he did not accept the offer.

Maulana Wahiduddin was honoured with several awards apart from Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan. He received the Demiurgus Peace International Award, under the patronage of the former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, National Citizens' Award, presented by Mother Teresa and also received the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award. This apart, the Abu Dhabi government honoured him the Sayyidina Imam Al Hassan Ibn Ali Peace Award. He has written more than 200 books on Islam and Gandhian ideology in English, Urdu, Arabic and Hindi. He was a strong supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity. Hence he had lot of differences with people following extremist Islamic ideology.

Qaumi Tanzeem, Awadhnama and Roznama Sahara published a number of articles following his death.

**Inquilab** (April 27) reports that the controversial religious leader in Turkey,

Sheikh Fethullah Gülen, offered deep condolences on the death of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and described him as a messenger of peace, an advocate of Quran and the path of Prophet and a representative of Sunnat Ahle Jamaat. These days Gulen lives in self-exile in United States. He said that the Maulana was an influential leader of Indian Muslims. He worked for the greatness of Islam within the country and outside and served both Islam and humanity. He struggled for social harmony between Hindus and Muslims and tried for resolution of disputes between them. He said that the forthcoming generations would get their guidance from the legacy he left behind in the form of nearly 200 books.

Professor Akhtarul Wasey said it would be difficult to fill the void left in the society and the community due to the death of Maulana. Ameer of Jamiat Ahle Haadis, Maulana Asghar Ali, while offering condolences on the death of Wahiduddin Khan, described him as a scholar of high order and the one who dedicated his life to bring goodwill among different sections of the society. ■

## Waseem Rizvi elected member of Shia Central Waqf Board

**Inquilab** (April 21) reports that controversial leader Waseem Rizvi has been elected as a member of Shia Central Waqf Board through the mutawali (caretaker of endowment property) quota despite opposition from Muslims and religious leaders. Along with him, a leader of BJP, Sayeed Faizi, also got elected as a member through the mutawali quota. The newspaper claimed that seven persons had filed their nominations to contest the election to Shia Waqf Board through mutawali quota. Among them, Sayed Jafar Rizvi withdrew his nomination. For the election of the



remaining 6 persons, 29 voters out of the total 36 cast their vote. Every voter had the right to cast two votes. Four votes were declared null and void. Waseem Rizvi and Sayeed Faizi got 21-21 votes each while Azim got 1 and Musharif Hussain Rizvi got 5. Rampur Begum Noorbano was the only candidate who filed nomination through the quota meant for MPs and hence she was elected unopposed. The government will nominate two persons from the quota for Bar Council. This apart, a few other scholars, social workers and officials would also be nominated as members of the board.

However, though Waseem Rizvi has won the elections, a path of thorns lies ahead for him. A social worker, Jamir Naqvi, has filed a petition before the Allahabad high court questioning his election. He alleged that the ruling party is once again trying to make Waseem Rizvi as the chairman of Shia Central Waqf Board through backdoor. He asked why those who committed fraud by selling Waqf property were allowed to contest as candidates in the election. He requested the court to cancel the elections and schedule a new election under the supervision of the court.

**Inquilab** (April 22) reports that the Shias have announced that they would ensure social boycott of the mutawalis who voted for Waseem Rizvi in the elections. Along with this, a campaign has been unleashed on social media to boycott those who voted for Waseem Rizvi. Many have even threatened the mutawalis over the phone. Imam of Shia Jama Masjid at Kashmere Gate, Maulana Mohsin Naqvi, asked that while they had expelled

“shaitan” Waseem Rizvi, who expressed doubts about Quran, from the Shia fraternity, who gave him the power to represent the Shia community? Fifteen other Shia imams from the national capital have also announced their decision to oppose him and said that those who support Waseem Rizvi would face a complete social boycott. We would neither read their namaz-e-janaza (funeral prayer) nor we would attend their nikah (wedding) function, they said. The Shia community would socially boycott Waseem Rizvi completely as he has expressed doubts about Quran and the Prophet, they added.

**Inquilab** (April 22) has written a special editorial over the election of Waseem Rizvi in which it has criticised his election and said that anyone expelled by the Shia community cannot claim to be a representative of the community. The editorial claims that the entire Shia community had announced a boycott of Waseem Rizvi, but despite that 21 mutawalis out of the total 29 have supported him. The reason for this could be that all these mutawalis were chosen by Waseem Rizvi himself. These mutawalis were among those who filled their own pockets by looting the Waqf property. There is deep despair and anger among Shia community over the election. There is condemnation over the election of an enemy of Islam, who insulted Quran and the Shia community’s 12 imams, as a member of the Waqf board. The editor of the newspaper, Shakil Shamsi, said that some anti-Islamic elements are trying to prop up Waseem Rizvi as chairman of the board. ■

## Campaign to save Khuda Bakhsh library

**Roznama Sahara** (April 25) reports that the Bihar State Urdu Teachers Association has alleged that the Bihar government is conspiring to demolish a portion of the 130-year-old Khuda

Bakhsh Oriental Public Library and build a flyover in its place. In a memorandum submitted to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, it has been pointed out that it is the only institute in the state which has





been given heritage status by UNESCO. The library was built by a Muslim landlord, Maulavi Khuda Bakhsh in the year 1891 using his own money. The library has nearly 21,000 rare manuscripts written in Urdu, Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Pushtun and other languages and also has a collection of 2.5 lakh books on various subjects. It is the only such library where a 1,200-year old manuscript of Quran is kept. It is being said that when the third Khalifa, Hazrat Ali was murdered, he was reading this manuscript. This is the only manuscript of Quran in the world. The library also has a collection of manuscripts of Hindu religious texts like Shrimat Bhagwat Gita, Puranas and Mahabharata, translated to Persian during Mughal rule. More than 800 rare collection of coins, issued by different Muslim rulers of the country, can also be found in this library. Mahatma Gandhi, Subhas Chandra Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru and Lord Mountbatten had visited this library. What is surprising is that the state government has prepared a plan to destroy this institution which is linked to Muslim culture.

It is mentioned in the memorandum that if the state government doesn't change its plan regarding the library, they would launch a state-wide agitation against it. This is because the state government is deliberately planning to erase this institution which is closely linked to Muslim culture.

**Inquilab** (April 29) reports that workers linked to nearly 12 organisations in the state have started a campaign to save this institution. A human chain has also been formed on the occasion. Hundreds of workers have launched a protest under the new banner of 'Khuda Bakhsh Library Bachao, Rashtriya Dharohar Bachao.'

In a related development, an MLA of AIMIM, Akhtarul Iman, has said that his organisation would launch a state-wide agitation to save Khuda Bakhsh library and would make every effort to save this institution which is linked to Muslim culture. If the state government doesn't help, then they would approach the Supreme Court, he said. ■

## Imran government bans Tehreek-e-Labbaik



**Inqilab** (April 15) reports that Pakistan's Interior minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad has announced a decision to ban radical Islamist party Tehreek-e-Labbaik under the provisions of Anti-Terrorism Act. He said that the state government of Punjab had recommended a ban on the Islamist terrorist party and the Central government had given its nod to the proposal. He alleged that some elements are creating unrest in the country to target Imran government. They are misleading the people by launching protests on the streets and provoking them to indulge in violence. They are also provoking people to attack the police and military. Sheikh Rasheed said that the government is planning to bring a comprehensive law in the parliament to deal with the situation. We have been forced to take this decision after seeing the aggressive approach of this extremist Islamic organisation, he said. He added that he had never supported this

Islamist terrorist organisation nor did he ever met its chief Khadim Hussain Rizvi and refuted all such allegations. However, he accepted that the Pakistan government has been in talks with the organisation for quite some time now. They wanted to create distrust in the society and spark violence in Islamabad. They made lot of preparations for the violence. Hence we have to use a protective shield to stop them. In the protests launched by this organisation, at least seven security personnel have been killed and over 500 injured so far. He said that some people are provoking the people of Pakistan through social media. Hence the government had to arrest the chief of the organisation. The members of this organisation held protests throughout Pakistan following which the police had to file several cases and take into custody hundreds of protesters. When the situation went out of control in places like Rahim Yar Khan, Chakwal,

Sheikhupura and Gujranwala, paramilitary forces had to be deployed to deal with the situation. The protesters created considerable disturbances in these places and damaged properties.

According to Pakistani newspapers, the organisation has been demanding that Pakistan should sever its diplomatic relationship with France and expel its Ambassador from the country as France has been deliberately insulting the Prophet. This apart, it demanded that Pakistan should boycott all French-made goods in the country. Pakistani media reported that members of the organisation blocked traffic in various parts of the country and hence the Army's help had to be sought to restore it. According to government sources, more than 2,000 protesters had been arrested. Cases have been registered against the protesters in special courts.

**Siasat**, published from Hyderabad, in its editorial on April 16, welcomed the decision of the Pakistani government to impose a ban on the radical Islamist organisation. It pointed out that the Imran government had taken this step under the Anti-Terrorism Act. For more than a week, violent clashes took place between security personnel and supporters of Tehreek-e-Labbaik across Pakistan in which at least seven security personnel were killed and hundreds of people were injured. The newspaper also expressed happiness on the Pakistani government's decision to take

stringent action against people extending financial help to organisations that create disturbances in the society. Prime Minister Imran Khan had refused the demand to cut off diplomatic relationship with France, following which violence erupted throughout Pakistan.

**Siasat** reports that the radical Islamist organisation is quite popular in Pakistan. In the 2018 general elections, it secured more than 30 lakh votes. Initially, the reins of the organisation were in the hands of Pakistan's well-known Shia Islamic leader Khadim Hussain Rizvi, who passed away a few months ago. It is claimed that nearly 10 lakh people attended his funeral prayers. An approximate calculation on the popularity of the organisation could be gauged from this single incident.

The newspaper states that history stands testimony to the fact that every government in Pakistan had to deal with such Islamist organisations, often resulting in violence. Till now, Pakistan's military rulers did not allow radical Islam to raise its head. As far as the current Imran government is concerned, it has the full support of the country's military. The newspaper also stated that had the Imran government severed its diplomatic relationship with France soon after the publication of the cartoons insulting Prophet Mohammad, then the situation would not have reached this stage. ■

## Sri Lanka bans 11 extremist organisations



**Siasat** (April 26) reports that after the bomb attacks at two churches in 2019, the Sri Lankan police probing the incident has arrested a Muslim member of parliament, Rishad Badiuddin. According to the newspaper, the MP is related to All Ceylon Makkal Party. He was also a minister in Sri Lanka. Rishad Badiuddin and his brother were arrested after a midnight raid at their house by intelligence officials. They were arrested under the country's anti-terrorism law. A government spokesperson said he had

links with the suicide bombers who attacked the churches. However, Islamist organisations in Sri Lanka claimed that he was arrested as part of a political conspiracy. This is because All Ceylon Makkal Party had opposed President Gotabaya Rajapakse in the 2019 elections. Recently, the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Sri Lanka, Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith alleged that the government has been deliberately taking a soft stand against terrorists. The two Muslim leaders were arrested soon after this statement.

**Inquilab** (April 15) reports that Sri Lanka has banned 11 radical Islamist organisations. President Gotabaya Rajapakse has issued a special order under anti-terrorism law to enforce the ban. Majority of the organisations which have been banned are Muslim bodies and it is

said that they had links with terror organisations. The government has also stated that these banned organisations had their links with Islamic State and Al Qaida. A huge fine has also been imposed on them and there is a provision to register cases in courts against people linked to such organisations under which they could get punishments of up to 20 years in jail. The Sri Lankan government has also seized all the properties of these banned organisations. Government sources said these organisations are linked to the suicide attacks that took place at two churches in 2019. A total of 271 people were killed in the bomb explosions and the victims were Christians of Roman Catholic Church. Earlier, the Roman Catholic Church of Sri Lanka had accused the government of being soft on Islamic terrorists. ■

## US soldiers withdraw from Afghanistan

**Siasat** (April 16) reports that US President Joe Biden had announced that all US troops would be withdrawn from Afghanistan by September 11. He said the US would not turn a blind eye towards terrorism and if the Taliban starts the war again, it would take steps to give a befitting reply. US would also ensure continuous military aid to Afghanistan. He said that in order to maintain peace in Afghanistan, the support of neighbouring countries,



especially Pakistan, is necessary. As per the latest decision, 2,500 US soldiers and 7,000 soldiers from NATO countries would exit Afghanistan. Biden said that due to the September 2001 attack on World Trade Center in New York, the US had to launch a war against Taliban in Afghanistan. He said that in order to stop terrorism and maintain peace in the region, it is necessary

that Pakistan, Russia, China, India and Turkey extend maximum help to Afghanistan and it would also be in the interest of these nations to have peace in the region.

**Etemaad** (April 17) in its editorial has described the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan as a victory for Taliban. The newspaper claimed that the US stepped

into Afghanistan under the guise of fighting Al Qaida after Russian forces withdrew from the country in 1992. The US has been keeping Afghanistan as its military station for the past 20 years. The US had seen four Presidents during this period and none of them could ensure permanent peace in Afghanistan and in the end, a powerful country like the US has been forced to sign a peace treaty with Taliban. Now the situation is such that President Ashraf Ghani's rule is limited to Kabul and nowhere else in the country. Taliban has seized almost the entire country. The general view is that once the US troops withdraw from Afghanistan, a civil war will break out again. As of now, more than 10,000 US and NATO soldiers are present in Afghanistan. They provide training to Afghan army and keep an eye on the country's important buildings and places. Once these foreign troops are withdrawn, then Afghan soldiers have to replace them at their positions. This would further reduce the strength of government forces currently deployed against Taliban and ISIS fighters in different parts of the country.

Now the US has no interest in going ahead with its longest war in history. The US mission in Afghanistan had originally ended with the killing of Osama bin Laden. One interesting fact is that the US, which had sent missions to Moon and Mars, has lost its war with Taliban. This is a victory for Islam. When the US started the war in Afghanistan in 2001, its aim was to finish off one of the bases of Al Qaida, an organisation that had given a bloody nose to the US. In the past 20 years, the US had spent trillions of dollars in Afghanistan and lost thousands of soldiers. The people of Afghanistan too had to pay a heavy price for the war. However, the US still failed to weaken the strength of Islamic organisations.

**Siasat** in its editorial on April 19 has appreciated the role played by India in Afghanistan. Welcoming the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, India's minister for external affairs, S Jaishankar,

said that in order to find a lasting peace in Afghanistan, it is necessary to enforce the rule of law, restore democracy and above all, ensure security for women. On this occasion, Jaishankar held talks with foreign affairs minister of Iran, Javad Zarif, and the national security advisor of Afghanistan, Hamdullah Mohib. India is worried that after the US soldiers leave Afghanistan, it would create serious problems for it as well. This is because right from the beginning, India has been extending support to the Ashraf Ghani government against Taliban. India had taken up several renovation works in Afghanistan. Indian officials were even targeted by Taliban many a times. Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat has said that if US forces are withdrawn from Afghanistan, then it could result in a vacuum and it could lead to further violence. Hence it is necessary to take steps now itself to stop them. The National Security Advisor of Afghanistan had held lengthy talks with India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval to ensure that Jihadi organisations in Afghanistan do not stir up another wave of violence. Everybody knows that extremist Islamic organisations in Afghanistan are preparing for another round of bloodshed. Recently, the influence of the terrorists of Islamic State has increased in Afghanistan and it may cause further unrest. It is necessary to keep an eye on them.

**Inquilab** (April 30) reports that president of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, has offered Taliban that if it participates in the measures to ensure peace in the country, it would be given representation in the government. He said the government wants to save the country from a civil war. Hence it wants Taliban to be part of the government and stop the river of blood flowing for the past 20 years in the country. Foreign affairs minister of Pakistan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, has welcomed this offer of Ghani and said that it would help restore peace in Afghanistan and would lead to a new age of development in the entire region. ■

## Sri Lanka bans burqa



**Inquilab** (April 28) reports that the Sri Lankan government has banned burqa across the country. Now, no woman would be able to appear in public places wearing a burqa or a veil. The country's cabinet has described burqa and face covers as a threat to national security. Earlier in March, Sri Lanka's defence minister had stated that it was necessary to impose a nation-wide ban on burqa and face cover to stop increasing incidents of terror attacks in the country. Muslim organisations in Sri Lanka and other countries had opposed this statement. They had interpreted it as government's interference in Islamic religious practices. Later the matter was brought before the cabinet for consideration. Now the cabinet has decided that nobody in the country should be allowed to wear a burqa or a veil. Recently, due to the increasing cases of terror incidents in the country, there has been a demand from various sections of the society seeking a ban on burqa and face cover. This is because it was helping terrorism. Last month, Pakistan's Ambassador in Sri Lanka, Muhammad Saad Khattak, had opposed the plan to impose a ban on burqa and alleged that

such discriminatory laws were being implemented in the name of national security. Such steps would hurt the religious sentiments of Muslims and would be a violation of basic human rights, he had said. The newspapers in Sri Lanka expressed hope that there would be no problem in the parliament in getting the nod for the law, considering the atmosphere against Islamic violence in the country.

**Etemaad**, published from Hyderabad, in its editorial on April 30, condemned the decision of Sri Lankan government to ban burqa in the country and said that Sri Lanka has joined the list of countries that target Muslims in the name of terrorism. The newspaper also complains that Sri Lanka has an anti-Muslim attitude right from the beginning. This is the reason why the government there had imposed restrictions on Muslims from burying bodies and instead started consigning them to flames on the pretext of fighting Corona pandemic. Earlier, the Sri Lankan government had shut down nearly one thousand madrasas in the country. That time it was claimed that the syllabus of

these madrasas was not in tune with the country's national education policy. Recently, the government there has imposed restrictions on 11 Islamic organisations and also imposed huge penalties on them. Following the 2019 suicide attack at two churches, the Sri Lankan government had expelled 600 foreigners from the country. It included 200 Islamic preachers. At that time, one minister had argued that these Islamic preachers were expelled because they were luring Sri Lankan people, especially the youth, towards terrorism.

Along with this, the Sri Lankan government also announced a policy of not extending visa to Islamic preachers in future. It is being said that the population of Muslims in Sri Lanka is nearly 2.2 crore, which is 9% of the country's total population. The followers of Buddhism constitute 70% of the population. The population of Tamil Hindus is nearly 15%. For the past several decades, the Buddhists have made Muslims as their target. In 2014 and 2018, anti-Muslim riots had broken out

in the island country. What is shocking is that instead of taking action against the rioters, Muslims have been selectively targeted. It is being said that the Buddhist Army's hand is also suspected in the riots. The Buddhists have also demanded that curbs should be imposed on Muslims doing namaz and azaan in mosques.

The newspaper has expressed concern that this campaign against Muslims is not limited to Sri Lanka but similar restrictions are imposed on Muslims in almost all the countries of Europe. There is a ban on use of burqa and veil in at least eight countries like France, Belgium and Holland. There is a restriction on azaan in many countries. In reality, hatred is being deliberately spread against Muslims across the world. China has broken all the limits. It has been forcefully trying to change the life of Muslims in its Muslim-majority regions. What is shocking is that till now not a single Muslim country has criticised the Sri Lankan government nor taken any measure to stop the torture of Muslims.

## Pakistan imposes restrictions on social media



**Siasat** (April 17) reports that the Pakistan government has imposed curbs on the use of social media. The Ministry of Interior ordered the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority to block access to social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook,

WhatsApp, YouTube and Instagram across the country. However, the government has not given any reason for its decision. For the past few weeks, a Pakistani terrorist organisation, Tahreek-e-Labbaik, has been using social media to provoke people against French citizens and companies. The Pakistan government had directed all French citizens and companies to leave the country. The government had also deployed security forces in and around the residence of the French Ambassador in Islamabad and had stopped movement of people in the area.

## Israel's cyber-attack on Iranian nuclear plant



**Roznama Sahara** (April 13) reports that Israel's intelligence agency Mossad has carried out a cyber-attack on Iran's secret nuclear plant. The aim of the attack was to sabotage the nuclear programme. In the past, Mossad had murdered quite a few nuclear scientists of Iran. Foreign affairs minister of Iran, Mohammad Javad Zarif said they would take revenge against this attack and would boost uranium enrichment to give a befitting reply to Israel. Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, said nothing has happened to the nuclear programme nor any damaged occurred to the nuclear plant in the attack. He said that last year also Israel tried to destroy Iran's nuclear plant. We would take revenge on Israel, he said. Meanwhile, spokesperson of Iranian foreign ministry Saeed Khatibzadeh admitted that the power

supply to the nuclear plant got cut off in the cyber-attack launched by Israel.

**Inqilab** (April 13) quoted a spokesperson of Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps as admitting that a fire erupted at the nuclear plant following the Israeli attack. He added that the loopholes in the security system were being plugged and most modern equipment were being installed in the plant. He said that they would take revenge against the Jews under any circumstances. The uranium enrichment plant where the explosion took place is located underground. According to Iran's Mehrnews agency, chief of Iran's nuclear programme Ali Akbar Salehi had admitted that the damages that occurred due to Israel's cyber-attack have been rectified within a few hours and a few nuclear scientists got injured in the incident. ■



## US supplies arms and ammunition to UAE



**Inqilab** (April 15) reports that the US government has decided to supply arms and ammunition worth 23 billion dollars to United Arab Emirates. When the US had persuaded UAE to recognise Israel, it had also promised that it would supply most modern weapons like F-35 multirole combat aircraft to the UAE. Later the regime changed in US and new President Joe Biden had stated that it would reconsider the decision taken by Trump administration to supply arms and ammunition to Arab countries. Now, the

new administration has given green signal to supply arms and ammunition worth 23 billion dollars to UAE. A high-level meeting was held between the two countries ahead of the deal. The Trump administration had signed several deals with UAE, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco in return for these countries' recognition for Israel. Now the new administration has assured military aid to these countries as per the agreement signed by Trump administration. ■

## Efforts for Islamic unity

Crown Prince Salman of Saudi Arabia has appealed for Islamic unity and efforts have started to bring an understanding between the two rival groups in the Muslim world.

**Roznama Sahara** (April 29) reports that the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammad bin Salman had given an interview to Al Arabia television network in which he had described Iran as a neighbouring country and said that we aspire for a good and special relationship with Iran. He claimed that it was a fact that the attitude of Iran till now was negative.

We want to improve our relationship with Iran but their controversial nuclear programme and the help extended to rebel militants in other countries hinder our initiatives, he said. Saudi Arabia does not want Iran to be in a difficult situation and rather want to make Iran grow, he said. This is because our interests are intertwined. However, Iran also has to change its attitude. He said that Yemen-based Houthi rebels are getting support from Iran and these rebels are camping on the border of Saudi Arabia due to which the



country's national security is in danger. Hence we have invited Houthi rebels for talks for one more time, he said.

In 2016, protests broke out in Shia majority areas of Saudi Arabia against the Sunni government of the country during which a revered Shia cleric was hanged to death. After this incident, there occurred a huge strain in the diplomatic relationship between the two countries. Recently, both Iran and Saudi Arabia have started their own efforts to improve the relationship between the two countries. Mohammad bin Salman also said that our Constitution is Quran and we would formulate our policies for the society and in other fields on the basis of the light of education spread by Quran. Right from the beginning, our guiding light is Quran and it would remain so. He also said that income tax would never be imposed in Saudi Arabia. The 15% Value Added Tax being implemented currently is a temporary one. He said that the Saudi government is making largescale efforts to end unemployment due to which the unemployment ratio has come down from 14% to 11%.

**Inquilab** (April 20) reports that Iran said that it wanted to improve its relationship with Saudi Arabia and hence its doors are always open for holding talks. The spokesperson of Iran's foreign affairs ministry has refused to deny reports of

secret talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia for an understanding. Spokesperson of Iranian foreign ministry Saeed Khatibzadeh said it always maintain the hope to improve its relationship with Saudi Arabia because it is of mutual interest to the two nations. British news agency Reuters had claimed that secret talks were on between Iran and Saudi Arabia for the past several months to improve the relationship between the two countries.

As per latest reports, President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, held lengthy talks with King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman of Saudi Arabia. After the talks, both the leaders refused to divulge any details to the reporters but said the discussions were centred around issues of mutual concern. This included economic, constructive and commercial relationships.

**Etemaad** (April 30) in an editorial, while expressing happiness over the improving relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran, said the two nations are considered as enemies in the Arab world. In 2016, after Saudi Arabia hanged to death a revered Shia cleric, Iran had launched an attack on the Saudi embassy. Following this, Saudi decided to cut off its diplomatic relationship with Iran. In the recent past, there is a change in the tone of Saudi Arabia. Secondly, Iran has also indicated

its willingness to start peace talks. This apart, Iran has refused to extend help for the war in Yemen. In 2017, soon after assuming power, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia had announced that Saudi's economy would not be dependent on the income from oil. To achieve this, special efforts would be taken to improve relationship with Russia, China and India. Former US President Donald Trump had sown the seeds of discord in Arab world and tried to increase Israel's sphere of influence in the region. He had given the hope that he would win the presidential elections in US with the support of Jews. But his plan has already bitten the dust.

As per latest reports, at the behest of the Prime Minister of Iraq, a secret meeting of the senior officials of Saudi Arabia and Iran was held in Baghdad and its aim was to improve the relationship between Muslim nations. A government official in Iraq had confirmed that such a meeting was held.

**Summary:** In the past few years, the conflict between Muslim nations increased a lot. Two years ago, Saudi Arabia and its six allied nations had not only cut off economic and commercial cooperation with

Iran but also severed air traffic and land links between them. That time, it was reported that tensions arose between the two countries due to the interference of US. In any case, Iran is a Shia nation and Saudi Arabia is ruled by Sunnis that follow the Wahhabi tradition. The Shia-Sunni relationship had always remained bitter. The US had made several efforts to isolate Iran and prepared six Muslim nations to establish diplomatic relationship with Israel. These nations include UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Sudan and Oman.

This apart, Saudi Arabia and Turkey are stuck in a tussle for the past two years over the leadership of Muslim world. Till now, the reins of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation were in the hands of Saudi Arabia. Two years ago, President of Turkey, Erdogan, questioned Saudi's leadership and organised a meeting of Muslim nations in Malaysia in which 27 out of 57 Muslim nations took part. In reply to this, Saudi Arabia organised a parallel meeting of the heads of state of Muslim nations in Riyadh in which heads of state of 31 nations took part. Pakistan is the only country which participated in both the meetings.

## Withdrawal of US troops from Iraq begins

**Inqilab** (April 20) reports that the Prime Minister of Iraq, Mustafa Al Kadhimi had said that a high-level committee had been formed to formulate an action plan for the withdrawal of US troops from the country. The committee includes the senior-most military officer of Iraq. He said that the country's security set-up is ready to take on the challenges posed by Islamic State right from the beginning. A spokesperson of Hezbollah militia in Iraq said that US troops are operating in Iraq under the guise of NATO. He also said that the hands of US, Israel and Saudi Arabia are visible behind the terrorist attacks



taking place against civilians and security establishments in Iraq. Iraq's member of parliament Mohammad Karim said Iraq

had decided that the US troops would have to withdraw from Iraq under any circumstance. Now it is up to the US to decide how fast it can withdraw the troops from Iraq.

As per latest information, Islamic State terrorists had carried out a rocket attack on US military station in Salah ad Din province in which many people were injured. Islamic State militants have been carrying out continuous attacks on Balad air base, the biggest military station of US in

Iraq, for some time. Recently, the IS also carried out a rocket attack on the US military station situated in Erbil.

In yet another report, a series of rocket attacks took place at three US air bases in Iraq. A number of people were injured in these attacks. The injured included several foreign soldiers as well. However, nobody has taken responsibility for the attacks so far. Even then it is believed that the attack was carried out by Islamic State.

## Saudi plan to extend ban on foreign hajis



**Avadhnama** (April 17) reports that due to the increasing cases of Corona in the world, the Saudi government is planning to extend the ban on foreign Haj pilgrims for one more year. Before the pandemic, at least 25 lakh foreign Haj pilgrims used to visit Mecca and Medina every year. During the year-long Umraah, the Saudi government used to get an income of 12 billion dollars every year. Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman had directed that the number of Haj pilgrims shall be increased up to 1.5 crore till 2020 and that of Umraah pilgrims to 50 lakh in the same period in order to tide over the financial crisis in Saudi Arabia.

He had also directed that the number of people that come for Umraah shall be

increased to 3 crore till 2030. However, due to the increasing cases of Corona pandemic this year, the Saudi government has shelved this plan. This year, only Saudi Arabian citizens have been allowed to undertake Haj and that too only for those who have taken the vaccine shots or those who had turned negative for the virus at least six months before. Initially, the government thought of giving permission to Haj and Umraah pilgrims from some select countries. But seeing the number of mutations of the virus, the government was forced to change this plan. This is the first time in the history of Islam that the Saudi Arabian government had to ban the visit of Haj pilgrims from foreign countries.

## Pakistanis lead in securing Indian citizenship



**Inquilab** (April 16) says that Indians have a passion for settling abroad. Even then, there is no dearth of foreigners who desperately look for Indian citizenship. The interesting fact is that the maximum number of foreigners who secured Indian citizenship are Pakistanis. As per an RTI reply received by social worker ZishanHaider, 2,838 Pakistani citizens had managed to secure Indian citizenship between 2015 and 2020. During this

period, 19,034 citizens from 56 other countries too secured Indian citizenship. The second place is for Afghanistan. Total 666 Afghan citizens got Indian citizenship during this period. Even citizens of US and UK took special interest in securing Indian citizenship. While 107 US citizens got Indian citizenship, 40 from Britain too took Indian citizenship. This apart, 14,864 Bangladeshis also secured Indian citizenship.

## Women personnel for the security of Ka'aba

**Roznama Sahara** (April 30) reports that in Saudi Arabia, after Mecca, the security of Medina located Masjid-an-Nabawi has also been handed over to women personnel. For this purpose, 113 women officers were given special training. These women will look after the security of Mecca and Masjid-an-Nabawi round-the-clock. They have been divided into four groups. The director general of Medina police said

that these women security personnel would extend help to pilgrims as well. A woman officer, Hannan Abdul Rashid, said that they were proud that they were serving Islam. Another, Rahim Al-Jawad, said there is a huge change in the old traditions of Saudi Arabia and women have come up in different fields of the society in service of the nation.

## Charity by Saudi ruling family



**Roznama Sahara** (April 18) reports that King Salman bin Abdul Aziz has donated 2 crore Riyals in charity for different social welfare activities in the country. His son and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman

donated 1 crore Riyals in charity. The money would be distributed for various activities to help the poor through an organisation called 'Ehsaan.'

## Maliyana massacre case back in court

**Roznama Sahara** (April 21) reports that journalist Kurban Ali has approached the court to re-investigate Maliyana massacre case. Kurban Ali is allegedly linked to opposition parties. During the Maliyana massacre incident, Kurban Ali had filed a petition in the Allahabad high court after which the court had directed the Uttar Pradesh government to file its reply in the form of an affidavit.

According to Kurban Ali, on May 23, 1987, the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) had arrested more than 125 Muslims from Maliyanabasti in



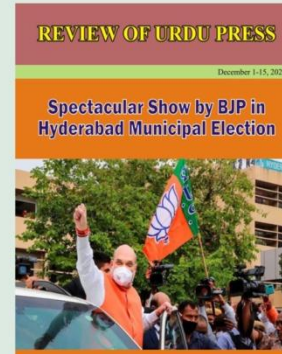
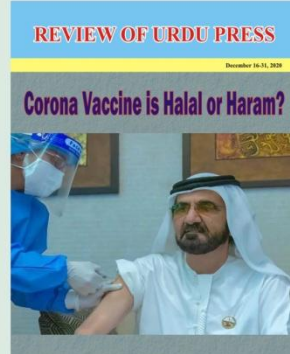
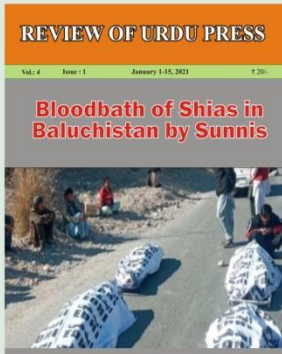
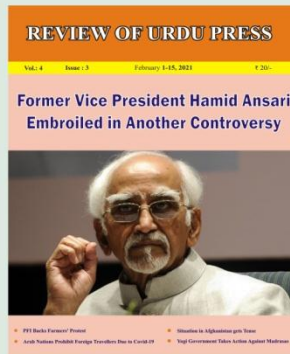
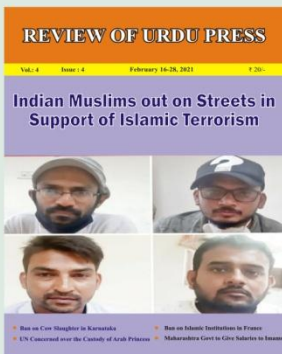
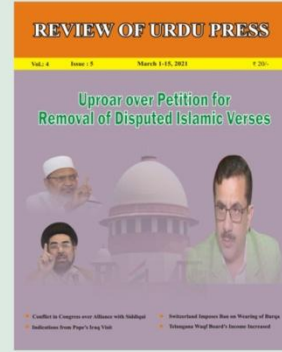
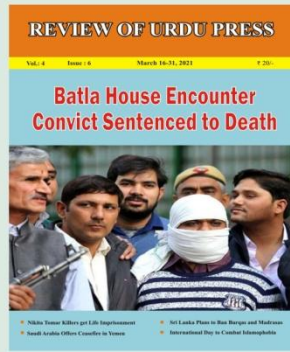
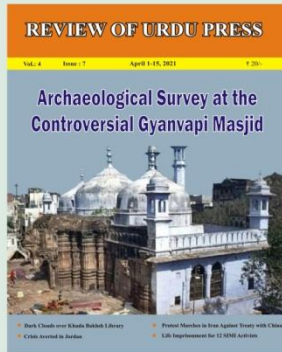
Meerut and they were all shot dead. He alleged that the Uttar Pradesh government had made the file related to the massacre disappear from the office. Before this, a senior police officer, B N Rai and one Ismail had also raised the matter before a court in

Meerut. However, since every document related to the case had disappeared, the case was closed. It is being said that the petition filed by Kurban Ali was opposed by the counsel for Uttar Pradesh government but the court accepted the petition.

## Ban on azaan at Al-Aqsa mosque

**Etemaad** (April 16) reports that Israel Army personnel had arrived at Al-Aqsa mosque in huge numbers and beat up those doing namaz there and cut off the wires of the loudspeaker, thereby preventing azaan. Israeli Army also

arrested six Palestinians during the incident. The foreign affairs minister of Jordan alleged that Israel is deliberately interfering in the religious matters of Islam and their anti-Muslim stance would not be accepted at any cost.



भारत नीति प्रतिष्ठान  
India Policy Foundation

D-51, First Floor, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016  
Tel : 011-26524018 • Fax : 011-46089365  
E-mail : info@ipf.org.in, indiapolicy@gmail.com  
Website : www.ipf.org.in