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## Explosive Situation in West Asia



- Corona Wreaks Havoc in AMU
- Qatar FM Sacked over Corruption Charges

- Jihadi Organisation Banned in Germany
- Former MP Mohammad Shahabuddin Dies

*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**

*Website:*  
**www.ipf.org.in**

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## Summary

Almost all European nations are fed up with Islamic terrorist organisations. Recently, Germany announced a ban on Islamic terrorist organisation Ansar International. A government spokesperson confirmed that Islamic fundamentalism is increasingly promoted in masjids and madrasas. Hence it is necessary to curb its spread.

The violent clash between Israel and Palestinian Arabs in West Asia is of serious concern. However, both sides have agreed for a ceasefire after an appeal by United Nations. But it is difficult to say how long this lull in war would last. Both sides might be preparing for a long war. Recently, Israel got an opportunity to improve its relationship with a few Arab countries due to the efforts of US. In the past one year, at least six Muslim countries in the Arab region have not only recognised Israel, but under US pressure also opened their doors for Israelis to step on their land. There was a report that Saudi Arabia would also recognise Israel. However, till now Saudi has not announced such a decision. This is the reason why except Turkey, almost every Arab country remained neutral in the recent war between Israel and Hamas. India too has improved its relationship with Israel in different sectors. But India has also been supporting the cause of Palestinians right from the beginning. It was the P V Narasimha Rao government that took the step to recognise Israel, almost 50 years after Independence. After Modi came to power, the cooperation between Israel and India in different sectors improved a lot. This is the reason for India's dilemma on adopting a proper policy on the clash between the two sides. India's entire emphasis was on a ceasefire and restoration of peace in the region. India also did not support the United Nations resolution against Israel, and chose to remain neutral.

As soon as discussions started over the forthcoming assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, opposition parties have launched an effort to turn the sentiments of Muslim voters against Yogi government. Recently, the district administrations in the state razed two buildings constructed on government land in Barabanki and Muzaffarnagar. The government had stated that these two buildings were illegally constructed and they were demolished on the directions of the high court. However, Sunni Waqf Board and Muslim Personal Law Board started giving a communal angle to the demolition. They said that the demolished Garib Nawaz Masjid at Ram Sanahi Ghat in Barabanki was registered with Sunni Waqf Board. However, the administration had refused to accept this stand. The police have filed a case against the masjid management committee as well as the then inspector of Waqf Board on the matter. But the Allahabad High Court issued a stay on the arrest of the accused in the case. As far as the Muzaffarnagar case is concerned, when the officials reached the spot to carry out the demolition of the illegal structure, local people attacked the police party, resulting in injuries to several people. Muslim organisations are now demanding that stringent action should be taken against the officials who demolished the illegal structures.

## National

## Corona wreaks havoc in Aligarh Muslim University



**Inquilab** (May 10) states that a journalist, Hasan Khalid, had claimed in a special report that at least 44 professors of Aligarh Muslim University had died in the second wave of Corona pandemic. These professors included a few who had been staying on the premises of the university even after retirement. However, the count did not include the employees of other departments of the university. It is being said that 333 non-academic staff members got infected with the virus. This is the first such incident in the 150-year-old history of Aligarh Muslim University where so many professors have died in such a short span. This apart, more than 100 professors were admitted to J N Medical College. Those who passed away were all scholars of international repute in their respective fields. Vice-chancellor of the university, Professor Tariq Mansoor has sent a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the matter.

The viral genomes of the Corona-affected persons, which were kept at the microbiology wing of Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, have been sent to Delhi-based National Institute of Epidemiology for investigation. Professor Tariq Mansoor

had also requested the director general of ICMR, Professor Balram Bhargava, to hold a special investigation on the viral genomes that spread in Aligarh Muslim University and Civil Lines locality as hundreds of people have died in the area due to the virus.

In another story published in **Inquilab** (May 11), it was claimed that nearly 100 people had died due to Corona. This included more than 50 other employees of the university.

**Inquilab** (May 13) states that MP Kunwar Danish Ali had written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging him to send a special team of experts to Aligarh Muslim University to conduct an inquiry as a large number of professors have died due to the virus.

In another news, Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot in a tweet, expressed concern over the large number of Covid deaths in Aligarh Muslim University and demanded that the Centre immediately conduct an inquiry into it.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 15) reports that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a letter to the Vice-Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, expressed concern over

the Covid deaths and said that the Union government would be sending a team of experts to the spot to hold an inquiry.

**Inquilab** (May 14) reports that Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath visited Aligarh Muslim University along with officials to study the situation arising out of Covid wave. In fact, it was the first time that a chief minister visited the university in the past 33 years. Before this, Narayan Dutt Tiwari visited Aligarh Muslim University when he was the chief minister in 1988. As per a press release,

chief minister Yogi Adityanath visited Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, affiliated to Aligarh Muslim University and assured that special arrangements would be made to provide adequate oxygen and medicines to the university. The chief minister held a one hour meeting with Vice-Chancellor Prof Tariq Mansoor, Registrar Abdul Hamid, Principal of the medical college Prof Shahid Ali Siddiqui and Dean of Medicine Professor Rakesh Bhargava and assured them of full support from the state government.

## Assembly election results in the eyes of Urdu newspapers



A majority of Urdu newspapers has expressed happiness over the victory of Mamata Banerjee in the assembly elections in West Bengal.

**Inquilab** (May 3) published the results of the assembly elections as its top news. It also had several sub headlines. The headlines read: ‘Mamata once again conquers Bengal,’ ‘Defeat for BJP,’ ‘Despite using the full strength of cabinet starting from Modi, BJP limited to 81 seats,’ ‘TMC gets 209 seats,’ ‘Congress and Left parties fail to open account,’ ‘Congress-AIUDF magic did not work in Assam,’ ‘Congress saves its face in Tamil

Nadu,’ ‘Left parties win for second time in Kerala’ ‘Congress defeated in Puducherry.’

Commenting on the election results, **Inquilab** (May 3), in an editorial, took a swipe on BJP by describing its full form as “*Bahut Joote Pade.*” The mass mandate that Mamata Banerjee’s Trinamool Congress has got is a major setback to the BJP. However, the elections were held in four states and one Union Territory. But neither the BJP was worried about these four states nor the ‘Godi media’ had any interest in them. This is because the results were almost clear right from the beginning. The BJP did not know how to influence the electoral outcome in all these states. That’s

why the BJP mobilised its full force in Bengal.

In any case, the BJP was doing election campaign in Bengal for the past one-and-a-half years. BJP leaders were trying their best to provoke the Hindus of Bengal against Muslims and the 'Godi media' had been supporting them. Those who sit far away from Bengal felt that this time Modi and his bhakts would be successful in overthrowing Mamata Banerjee. Amit Shah had claimed many times that this time they would get more than 200 seats. The elections in Bengal had such an impact on BJP that they had hired workers from different parts of the country and held huge rallies in the state and tried to spark communal tension among those who speak Bengali and worship Kali and Durga. Meanwhile, Modiji remained on television screens almost every day in the name of some issue or the other for almost two months before the elections.

BJP and its 'Godi media' have now understood that people could not be misled through campaigning. To win the Bengal elections, the BJP had kept its coffers open and started purchasing MLAs of Trinamool Congress. The situation was such that BJP fielded its MPs and even ministers as candidates in the elections. But the results are before you all. Finally, we would like to remind that this entire election was fought in the name of Modi and Amit Shah. Now both of them should also take the responsibility of the massive defeat in the Bengal elections.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 3) has given headlines like 'Hat-trick for Mamata in West Bengal' 'BJP in Assam' and 'Left Front back in Kerala.' The newspaper in its editorial stated that earlier assembly elections were limited to the respective states. Now, due to the increase in the number of media platforms, they have become national events. For Amit Shah, victory in West Bengal was a matter of prestige. That's the reason why he unleashed his resources in West Bengal elections ignoring the mayhem created by Corona pandemic. However, nobody can

now deny the truth that despite such a huge campaign, Mamata Banerjee emerged victorious in the polls, giving a clear message that one would not be able to win elections with the help of some wave or by raising hollow slogans.

An election analyst, Abbas Dhariwal, has cited the farmers' protest as the reason behind the defeat of BJP and said the way the BJP ensured that the polls in West Bengal would be held in 8 phases for its victory, has actually backfired. Congress, meanwhile, managed to become only an opposition party in both Assam and Kerala.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (May 4) in its editorial states that after the defeat of BJP in West Bengal, it has become clear that the magic show of BJP and Modi has ended in the country.

**Hamara Samaj** (May 4), analysing the electoral outcome, said the people of West Bengal did not succumb to the divisive campaign of BJP and instead stood by the secular ideology.

**Siasat** (May 4) states that the BJP leaders failed to mislead the voters in West Bengal.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 4) states that there is a decrease in the number of Muslim MLAs after the assembly elections in West Bengal. In the previous Assembly, there were 59 Muslim MLAs. Now it has come down to 42. In Bengal, the Muslim population is 27%. There are 60 seats in the state where the Muslim population is more than 50%. There are 40 seats in which the Muslim population is between 40% and 50%. This time, Trinamool Congress has given tickets to 42 Muslim candidates. In the previous Assembly, Trinamool Congress had 30 Muslim MLAs. This time, it has increased to 41. The other lone Muslim MLA belongs to Rashtriya Secular Majlis Party. In the previous Assembly, the Left Front had 9 Muslim MLAs and the Congress had 18 Muslim MLAs. This time, not a single Muslim candidate of these parties managed to win.

**Etemaad** (May 4) has described the results as a defeat for Hindutva ideology and said that Muslims played a major role in bringing Mamata Banerjee back to power.

**Inquilab** in a special editorial in its May 4 edition expressed happiness that the Muslim vote did not get divided in the West Bengal elections. Hence the BJP had to taste defeat. The BJP did not raise any development issues or any military action in the elections for victory. Instead, it brought in communalism and raised Jai Shri Ram slogans. The 'Godi media' had referred to Mamata Banerjee as a leader for Muslims only. Efforts were made to divide the Muslim votes also.

Owaisi Saheb landed in the arena of West Bengal politics from Hyderabad and met the hereditary administrator of Furfura Sharif and tried to divide the votes of Muslims. However, the Furfura Sharif cleric turned out to be smarter. He welcomed Owaisi with lot of fanfare but later formed his own political party and entered into an electoral tie-up with Congress and Left Front. The poor fellow thought that whatever he tells the Muslims, they would believe it immediately. However, the Muslims of Bengal have conveyed this message that they know the politics of this country very well. That is why they threw away the parties who

divide the Muslim votes out of the EVMs. They did not vote for traditional parties like Left Front and Congress as they understood that they would not be in a position to form the government. So to vote for them meant wasting their votes. The secular Hindus also voted along Muslims and brought back the Trinamool government to power. The most interesting fact is that Trinamool Congress fielded 42 Muslim candidates, out of which 41 won. Just one candidate-- Karim Raza--was defeated by Noushad Siddiqui, candidate of a local Muslim party called Rashtriya Secular Majlis Party. Due to the great understanding of secular Hindus and Muslims, their votes did not get divided in Bengal. Otherwise it would have been a huge win for the BJP.

The newspaper states that the cleric of the Furfura Sharif, Abbas Siddiqui, might have understood by now that the Muslims did not like the politics started by him under the cover of dargah. The fact is that even the diamond pearls of Owaisi Saheb could not shine in Bengal.

In Assam, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal had given a tough competition to BJP by aligning with Congress. However, he could not prevent the communal elements from coming back to power. In Assam, 50 candidates of Congress-AIUDF alliance won the elections, out of which 30 are Muslims.

## Row over demolition of illegal buildings in Uttar Pradesh

In Uttar Pradesh, a huge uproar has erupted after the state government demolished two illegal structures in Barabanki and Muzaffarnagar. The Muslim Personal Law Board has claimed that the two buildings destroyed by the administration in an illegal manner were masjids. It has announced that it would organise mass protests and would also approach the court against the decision.

In a news published in **Inquilab** (May 19), it has been claimed that 100-year-old Gareeb Nawaz Al Maroof Tehsil

Wali masjid, registered with Uttar Pradesh Sunni Waqf Board, was demolished by the SDM of Ramsanehi Ghat, Devansh Patel, by terming it as an illegal structure. The Sunni Waqf Board and All India Muslim Personal Law Board have condemned the action of the SDM. The chairman of the Waqf Board, Farooqi, said the administration has deliberately destroyed the masjid and they would take the issue to the high court. The Muslim Personal Law Board has demanded an inquiry into the whole incident. Farooqi said the



administration had openly flouted the directions given by the Allahabad High Court on April 24. The administration has stated that the controversy over the masjid has been going on for some time. The state government had ordered that all illegal structures erected on government property and on roads should be demolished. The administration has clarified that it had also issued a notice to the mutawali (caretaker) of the masjid, Mushtaq Ahmad. However, he neither replied to the notice nor produced any document to establish that the masjid was not built on government property. Later the managing committee of the masjid approached the Allahabad High Court, but there also they could not produce any document for their claims. The court had given the managing committee 15 days' time to prove their ownership of the building and produce evidence to show how they constructed the building on government property and under who's order they did it. However, the managing committee failed to produce any evidence for the same. Following this, on the basis of a report by the district minorities welfare department and the tehsildar, the sub divisional magistrate ordered the demolition of the structure. When the administration demolished the building with the help of a huge police force, a mob tried to forcefully stop them and the administration filed cases against at least 7

persons on the charge of preventing government servants from discharging their duties.

**Inquilab** (May 29) reports that the administration has filed a case against the managing committee of this illegal building and also against the then Waqf inspector stating that the masjid was built in an illegal manner on government property and the then Waqf inspector in collusion with the managing committee registered it as a Waqf property. The police have filed a case against all the accused under various provisions including sections 419, 420 and 467 of Indian Penal Code. The accused then approached the high court and demanded that the FIR against them be quashed. The court has issued a stay on their arrest but ordered them to fully cooperate with the investigation of the police.

**Inquilab** (May 25), quoting the spokesperson of Dargah Ali Hazrat, said dargah chief Mohammad Sujana Raza Khan had condemned the demolition of the masjid and demanded that the Uttar Pradesh government shall immediately reconstruct the building and register a case against the officials who had demolished it. If this is not done, then the Bareilvi sect would organise a state-wide mass protest, he said.

As per a news published in **Mumbai Urdu News** (May 28), the administration

had also demolished Masjid Al Jamil in Muzaffarnagar. This masjid was located in Kasba Khatoli in Muzaffarnagar. The local people had clashed with the police during the demolition in which many people were injured. The police have registered cases

against a few of them. The local people had claimed that the masjid was not an illegal structure and claimed that they had the proof with them. However, the administration did not take their claims seriously.

## Protest against developmental activities of Lakshadweep administration

The Lakshadweep islands, located off the shore of Kerala, are in the midst of a storm these days. The local Muslim leaders have alleged that the BJP-led administration is involved in 'saffronisation' of their territory. The Muslims leaders are raising a hue and cry against the administration.

Lakshadweep is an archipelago of 36 islands, spread over 32 square kilometres and its population is roughly 65,000. Nearly 99% of the population are Sunni Muslims. After the formation of Pakistan, that country made an effort to seize the territory, but due to the intervention of the then chief minister of Travancore-Cochin state, P Govinda Menon, the islands got saved from becoming a Pakistani territory. The islands were in news in 1987 when the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi went on a picnic therewith his entire family and friends on Indian Navy's aircraft carrier INS Viraat. Till now, only Muslim MPs have been elected as Lok Sabha member from Lakshadweep. The Islamisation of the tribal-majority islands began in the seventh century. An Islamic preacher, Miyan Abdullah, landed on the islands from Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. Now, the administrator of the islands is Praful



Khodabhai Patel, who was once the home minister in the Narendra Modi government in Gujarat. In order to remove the backwardness of the region, Patel started many new developmental initiatives including the renovation of narrow and dilapidated roads on the islands. In order to start a few industries, some industrialists were also invited to the islands. Patel's aim is to develop the group of islands as a tourist destination. Hence he also brought in a law that allows land acquisition for developmental activities. However, the local Muslim League leaders did not like his initiatives and started a campaign against Modi government. The allegation is that despite the islands being Muslim-

majority, beef has been banned, liquor shops have been opened and those having more than two kids are not allowed to contest panchayat elections. Patel, however, claims that he is interested only in the development of the region. His intention is to open more hotels and build cold storages to store fish. Recently, prohibited drugs and huge cache of arms and ammunition were seized from the vicinity of the islands. It is also believed that China, which has increased its influence in Maldives and Pakistan, is trying to get a foothold on the islands as well.

**Inquilab** in its May 28 edition has carried the Lakshadweep issue as its main story with the headline ‘Communal game in Lakshadweep.’ The newspaper has also claimed that all the leaders in Lakshadweep are feeling the heat of Praful Patel’s policies and the local BJP leaders had sent a letter to the President and Prime Minister on the matter. According to the newspaper, eight office-bearers of BJP’s youth wing, Yuva Morcha, have resigned from the party. General secretary of Yuva Morcha in Lakshadweep, P P Mohammad Hasim, has said they joined the BJP for the development of the islands. However, the administrator is deliberately interfering in the lives of the people. Hence we submitted our resignation. The current MP Mohammad Faizal has also written a letter to the Prime Minister in protest against the administrator alleging that he is inappropriately interfering in the traditional life of the people in the islands. He also demanded that the administrator shall be called back from the island. In a letter to the President, Rajya Sabha MP Elamaram Karim also urged him to remove the administrator from his post and said that there is huge public anger against him over opening of liquor stores and for stopping the sale of beef on the islands.

According to the newspaper, the people of the islands are protesting against

the administrator and the Modi government. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has also dashed off a letter to the Prime Minister in which he had claimed that it was our duty to protect Lakshadweep’s natural beauty and its unique culture. The policies adopted by the administrator were anti-people and hence they must be withdrawn, he had said.

**Inquilab** (May 30) reports that the president of SIO, Mohammad Suleiman, had alleged that the administrator was deliberately involved in saffronisation of the islands. The recent law promulgated by him for land acquisition was meant to favour big investors and ordinary people’s properties were being used for their welfare, he had alleged.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 29) has published an article in which it is claimed that the administrator is deliberately breaking the traditional culture and heritage of the islands and that he wants to end the traditional way of life of the people there. Till recently, there was a total ban on liquor on the islands and now they have started opening liquor shops there and also stopped supply of beef. This is a direct interference in the Islamic way of life. That is the reason why people are opposing the move. The editor has demanded that whatever policy the government wants to adopt there, those should be implemented only with the permission of the local people and there should not be any forceful implementation.

**Inquilab** (May 31) states that Muslim thinker, Professor Akhtarul Waze, said that the Lakshadweep administrator is sabotaging the ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas’ policy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said that it was for the first time that a politician has been appointed as an administrator of the islands and he has implemented the saffronisation policy on Muslims. He demanded that all actions taken by the administrator should be cancelled immediately.

## Jamiat chief passes away



**Inquilab** (May 22) reports that the chief of Darul Uloom Deoband and the national president of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, Maulana Qari Syed Mohd Usman Mansoorpuri, passed away due to Corona at Medanta Hospital in Gurugram. He was 76 years old. He was counted among internationally acclaimed Islamic thinkers and scholars. He was born at Mansoorpur in Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh in 1944. He studied at Darul Uloom Deoband. In 1982, he became a teacher at Darul Uloom Deoband and worked there as a teacher for 40 years. In 2010, following the death of the manager of Deoband, Maulana Marghubur Rahman Bijnori, he was declared as the Amir-al-Hind as per Emarat-e-Shariah. In 1979, when Maulana Asad Madani launched 'Millet Bachao' agitation, Maulana Mansoorpuri too went to jail as part of the agitation.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 23) states that the Maulana was buried at

Deoband. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi and president of Samajwadi Party Akhilesh Yadav offered condolences on the death of Maulana. Bahujan Samaj Party MP from Saharanpur, Haji Fazlur Rahman, in his message said that one would not be able to forget the services rendered by Maulana for the country and the community. Chairman of Uttar Pradesh Sunni Waqf Board, Zafar Ahmad Farooqi, described the passing away of Maulana as a huge loss for Islam, a void which would not be able to fill.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 28) reports that an executive committee meeting of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind has appointed its general secretary Maulana Mahmood Madani as the interim president of Jamiat Ulama Hind after the passing away of Maulana Mansoorpuri. Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind is the biggest organisation of Muslims which was formed in 1920 during the Khilafat agitation.

## World

## Jihadi organisation banned in Germany



**Inquillab** (May 6) reports that the German government has imposed a ban on Islamic terrorist organisation Ansaar International. As per a government statement, this organisation has links with Islamic terrorist organisations like Al Shabab, active in Somalia, and Palestine-based Hamas and it has been regularly providing financial support to these terrorist organisations. This organisation has been promoting Islamic terrorism throughout the world through their network. A spokesperson of German government said if one wants to wipe out terrorism, it is necessary to take stringent action against all such organisations that provide financial support to terrorists. As soon as the announcement of ban on the Islamic jihadi organisation was made, the intelligence agency conducted massive raids in 10 out of 16 regions of Germany, during which more than 100 Islamic jihadis had been arrested.

Government sources said this jihadi organisation has been promoting Islamic terrorism under the cover of social service. It is claimed on its website that this organisation has been providing financial aid to the poor in both within the country and outside. However, the organisation has

been regularly funding terrorist organisations that are active abroad under the guise of providing social service. The organisation has been under the watch of the government from 2019 and its activities have been under close scrutiny. Government sources also alleged that the organisation had been sending children abroad to foreign madrasas under the garb of providing them education where they were given training in carrying out terrorist activities. These Islamic madrasas are run by fundamentalist Sunni Muslims belonging to the Salafi ideology who believe in the establishment of an Islamic rule throughout the world through armed struggle. The intelligence agency of Germany in its annual report has stated that there is a huge increase in the number of Salafi and Wahhabi fundamentalist Muslims. Their number is stated to be around 15,000 in the country. In 2011, their number was around 3,000 only. The intelligence agency is keeping a close watch on the madrasas, masjids and organisations of these extremist Muslims in order to stop the spread of Islamic terrorism.

## US planes for withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan



there are 3,000 US soldiers and 7,500 NATO soldiers in Afghanistan. The US Secretary of State had said that once the US withdraws its troops from Afghanistan by September, the Afghanistan government forces should be able to protect the country and stop Islamic terrorist organisations from increasing their foothold. He had also admitted that apart from

Taliban, Islamic State is also currently active in Afghanistan.

In a broadcast on May 22, BBC had said that the Pakistan government is establishing a huge military station in Balochistan, most likely for the air force. The defence ministry of Pakistan has announced acquisition of thousands of acres of land for the purpose. Those in the know of things have claimed that Pakistan government is establishing this military station with the help of US. The US soldiers would be stationed in this military station so that they would be able to control the increasing activities of Taliban and Islamic State jihadis in Afghanistan.

The defence ministry of Pakistan has denied the allegation that it is planning to hand over one of its air bases to United States. However, a spokesperson has indicated that the government is planning the construction of a military station in Balochistan on the basis of a demand from the military and also to keep an eye on neighbouring countries. When asked whether the government is currently acquiring land for the proposed airbase, the spokesperson said that land acquisition is a subject matter of state government. It will take some time to complete the construction of the airbase as it is a huge project. It is important for Pakistan to implement the project as it is crucial for the security of the country.

**Inquilab** (May 8) states that the US defence department had announced that it would be sending military aircraft for the safe return of US and Nato soldiers from Afghanistan. It said that the decision has been taken due to the increasing attacks on US soldiers by Taliban in Afghanistan. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark Milley, said most likely the US would be sending 6B fighter planes and F-18 fighter jets to Afghanistan. If the situation demands, it would be sending other military aircraft as well so that the soldiers could return safely to the US. He said that the government sources had claimed that the Taliban launches 80 to 100 attacks every day on government forces in Afghanistan. Hence it is necessary to provide them security and extend help so that the Afghanistan army should be able to maintain the security of the country. He said that if Taliban wins the war or takes control of Kabul, then there would be serious consequences. We are considering the option of US army giving training to Afghan soldiers in some other country, he said.

This apart, the US is also thinking of extending more help to Afghanistan's air force. He said that as of now we are withdrawing our soldiers from Afghanistan. After that, it is important that the Afghan government forces should be able to tackle Taliban effectively. Currently

## 50 students killed in explosion in Kabul

**Roznama Sahara** (May 10) reports that at least 50 students were killed and more than 100 injured in two bomb explosions that took place in a girls' school in Kabul. The explosions took place near Sayed Al-Shuhada School in the Shia-majority Dasht-e-Barchi region. Majority of those who were killed were Shias. So far, no organisation has taken the responsibility for the attack. However, the two terrorist organisations active in Afghanistan namely Taliban and Islamic State are both hardcore Sunnis who have been playing with the blood of Shias for the past few years. Following the explosions, people in the region held a huge protest. Local people attacked the rescue teams and ambulances that reached the spot to take away the injured, resulting in injuries to them.

**Inquilab** in its special editorial on May 10 condemned the incident and described it as 'Afghani terrorists, an enemy of girls' education.' The newspaper stated that at least 60 girls were killed and more than 100 were injured in the terrorist attack that took place in a girls' school in Kabul. Majority of those killed were students. As per reports, initially a blast was triggered in a car outside the school and then rockets were fired at the school with result that the entire compound turned red with the blood of children. The only crime of these children was that they wanted to study. However, the terrorists want Muslim girls to remain uneducated. They think of women only as machines that produce children. They want women to do only favours for men. We have also seen the Taliban regime where women were denied any rights. Now, once again women's life is in danger.



Islamic terrorists have killed many women doctors in the past. Even women anchors of news channels were not spared. They even played holi with the blood of women journalists. Now it looks like Afghanistan would soon become a slaughterhouse for women. Those women who want to get educated and build a career will be shown the way to Kabristan (graveyard). The fact is that the activities of Islamic State has increased in Afghanistan. This new fake Khilafat is the biggest enemy of women. We have seen this in Syria and Iraq. In the name of Jihad al-Nikah, Christian and Yazidi women in Syria and Iraq were traded in open market. They were also subjected to gang rape by Islamic State.

We know that Islamic State also has Westerners as its members. After their defeat in Syria and Iraq, these Westerners were supposed to return to their countries. However, the Western nations had refused to take back these people who went to Middle East in the name of Jihad. Hence a number of them had no choice but to go to Afghanistan and resume their activities there. Ever since the formation of Islamic State, the maximum benefit from their activities was for the United States. Now by killing innocent people in Afghanistan, they are serving the purpose of US. This is

because the US wants to convey to the world that if it withdraws its troops from Afghanistan, there would be anarchy in that country.

The reality is that in the past 20 years, the US did not take a single action against these terrorists. This is because they want to tell the world that the people of Afghanistan would remain safe only if the US troops are present there. By entering into a deal with Taliban, the US also conveyed to the world that it believes in the policy of gun and not in democracy. Now one can say it for sure

that once the US troops withdraw from Afghanistan, the Taliban would overthrow the government there and once again the old era of bloodshed will begin.

Everybody knows this truth that the Islamic State, which was formed by the US agencies to weaken the Taliban, would start a fight with Taliban. But what would one do? Muslim countries have fallen into the traps laid by Western countries and their people would continue to be bathed in blood. Their cities would remain rattled and the term terrorism would remain affixed to Islam.

## China spreads its influence in Africa



**Etemaad** (May 25) reports that China is fast spreading its influence in African countries. The US is very much concerned about this move. China is establishing a large number of military bases in different countries of Africa. Recently, the chief of US army's African Command, General Stephen J. Townsend said that China was trying to influence African nations in a systematic manner and using every trick to make it a success. China's strategy includes offering loans without interest, largescale investment by Chinese companies and free education for children in Chinese universities. Recently, there were also some reports of Chinese beauties being sent

to lure the heads of governments of African countries.

In 2017, China established its first military base in the eastern coast of Africa at Djibouti. The US military strategists got alarmed over this development. This is because the US military station, Camp Lemonnier, is located next to Djibouti. From that time onwards, China has been extending its influence in the nearby African countries. Recently, China has also established a modern naval base in the region. Even big Chinese naval ships get anchored at this base apart from aircraft and submarines armed with nuclear missiles.

Now, China has targeted Tanzania as its next major target. They have started establishing at least three military stations in that country. Whenever the Chinese military needs fuel, food and modern arms and ammunition, it can get it them at these bases. Recently, China has sent a few submarines also to these bases, raising an alarm among Western nations. So far, only Western countries had its monopoly in African waters. Now, China has started questioning this monopoly.

China has made investments worth 60 billion dollars in different African nations. Nowadays, it is taking a special interest in establishing diplomatic relationships with small African countries.

As of now, China has its Ambassadors present in at least 52 African countries while the US has only 49 Ambassadors in the region. Recently, China also started a venture to sell arms and ammunition to different African countries. Compared to the weapons of US and Western Nations, Chinese weapon systems are much cheaper.

This apart, China has also started an initiative to provide training to military officers from different African nations. US military officials have warned that unless immediate measures are taken to stop the increasing Chinese interventions in the region, the US would end up paying a heavy price for it.

## **African nation Chad's President killed in battle with rebels**



**Avadhnama** (February 22) reports that the 68-year-old President of African country Chad, Idriss Déby, was killed by rebels in a war. He was in power for the past 30 years. According to a news agency, the son of the former President has been elected as the acting President of the country. As per media reports, Idriss Déby assumed power in 1990 and he was among the African presidents who had been in power for decades. The rebels had unsuccessfully tried to overthrow him many times in the past. Recently, the rebels had launched an armed offensive in the northern part of the country. As per media reports, almost a civil war prevails in Chad. Till now, the

ruling party has the full support of the military. Now, fissures have surfaced in the military as well.

It is being said that the former President, who was killed, maintained a close relationship with France and US. Some people alleged that foreign elements are also behind the rebels fighting the civil war in Chad. Idriss Déby had recently won the Presidential elections. The Opposition parties had refused to participate in the elections and had alleged that the President had manipulated the elections. According to newspapers, Libya is behind the recent attacks launched by rebel Islamic terrorist groups. Idriss got injured in a battle and he was brought to the national capital for treatment. Meanwhile, national emergency has been declared throughout the country and the country's National Assembly was dissolved and a nation-wide curfew was imposed for an indefinite period. A military spokesperson has said that it is taking strong action against rebels and added that it would not allow any foreign elements to capture power in the country. As soon as the Emergency was declared, an exodus of the people started. People are fleeing to neighbouring countries as refugees.

**West Asia**

## Explosive situation in West Asia



Ramzan, the month of peace, got soaked in a bloody war between Israel and Islamic terrorist organisation Hamas. According to health ministry officials in Gaza, 227 Palestinians were killed and 1,620 others were injured in these clashes. As per a report by World Health Organisation, at least seven soldiers of Israel and 11 civilians were also killed apart from injuries to 50 others. Israel liberally used its fighter jets, tanks and missiles in the fight. On the other hand, Hamas fired 10,000 rockets and missiles at Israel. Israeli Army destroyed many houses, leaving nearly one lakh people homeless. Hamas claimed that Israel had deliberately targeted civilian population. However, Israel claimed that Hamas has been using residential houses as their bases and using them as cover to manufacture rockets and missiles. Hence Israeli forces picked up only such houses as their targets. Israel had also given notices to people staying in such houses to vacate them so that innocent people were not killed during the targeted attack.

The interesting thing is that except Turkey and Iran, the entire Arab nations remained mute spectators during the attacks. However, the more interesting thing is that the Muslims of the entire world

held huge protests in support of the Muslims in Palestine. In India, despite the grim Corona pandemic, Muslims held huge protests against Israel in at least a dozen cities and demanded that the Indian government extend open support to Palestinians. There was a possibility of the situation turning into a world war. This is because both the US and Russia had started giving indications of joining sides in the war. However, due to the pressure exerted by United Nations, Egypt and US, both Israel and Islamic terrorist organisation Hamas agreed for a truce in the region. However, the tensions between both the sides have also increased. Soon after the ceasefire, Israeli police stormed the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound after Friday prayers and opened fire on Palestinians resulting in the death of several protesters. Hamas has threatened that they would finish off Israel as revenge. Adopting a strong stand, Israel also said they would take the war to its logical conclusion.

In Islam, there is no concept of nationalism and Muslims across the world are considered as one society. That is the reason why Muslims throughout the world held protests against Israel. As far as India is considered, almost all newspapers except

the Urdu ones carried news related to Corona pandemic as their main stories while Urdu newspapers focused on the war in Israel.

**Etemaad** (May 17) has published a story on its front page titled 'You cannot silence the Palestinians.' Some of the sub headlines of the main story published in the same newspaper on May 16 were: 'Refugee camp under Israeli bombardment, media building also targeted,' 'Eight children, two women of same family killed,' '140 Palestinians martyred in Gaza including 39 children,' 'Ten thousand Palestinians forced to take refuge in school buildings', 'UN Security Council and OIC meeting discuss explosive situation.'

**Siasat** (May 20) has its main headlines 'Israeli attack continues,' 'More deaths in Gaza' and 'World fraternity remains mute spectator.' The headlines of the news items published in the same newspaper on May 18 were 'Israeli bombardment continues' and '218 Palestinians killed.' In a meeting, Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC), suggested that different Muslim countries should jointly form an international protection force to shield the Palestinians. The meeting also demanded that the solution to the Palestinian issue should be based on the resolution passed in 2018.

**Siasat** (May 19) reports that the health minister of Palestine had said that every third person killed in the Israeli attack in Palestine is a child. He said that many people from Israel were also killed in the war but that country has been deliberately hiding their actual number.

The same newspaper has published a news in its May 20 edition which states that in a meeting held in Kolkata, 'Indian Friends For Palestine' had praised the stand of India against the Israeli attacks. Spokesperson of the organisation and former MP K C Tyagi said that India should intervene in the matter and stop the war. The Palestinian land seized by Israel should immediately be returned to them.

**Siasat** (May 23) claims that the US President had stated that in order to solve

the Palestinian problem, it is necessary to divide the region into two parts with a common capital, Jerusalem. He said that he is a supporter of Israel, but along with it an independent Palestinian nation should also be formed.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (May 19) reports that president of World Sufi Forum, Mufti Muzaffar Hussain Khan has expressed surprise that at one level Israel is playing with the blood of innocent Palestinians while at another level Muslim countries are remaining mute spectators instead of extending any help to Palestinians. This silence of Muslim nations is a proof of their stupidity. This is because a majority of heads of Muslim nations have become immoral and selfish or they have moved away from Islam. He urged Muslims across the world to boycott items manufactured in Israel.

The same newspaper in its May 29 edition said that the United Nations had passed a resolution against Israel. While 24 countries favoured the resolution, nine opposed it. Eleven countries including India remained neutral. The resolution has called for an immediate end to hostilities and described Israel as the aggressor. The resolution also said the way Israeli military has bombarded the Palestinians was a crime and an inquiry should be conducted into it.

The same newspaper, while analysing the ceasefire in an editorial published on May 22, said that the ceasefire has been declared against the wishes of Israeli Prime Minister. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has been threatening of a lengthy war. He wanted the war to continue so that the opposition parties in his country could not form a new government by dethroning him.

The newspaper said that US President Joe Biden keeps supporting Israel openly and at the same time secretly exerts pressure on Egypt and Qatar to force Hamas for a ceasefire and then forces Israel also to accept the ceasefire. The newspaper claimed that due to the continuous firing of rockets by Hamas, Israel also had to accept

the ceasefire. The newspaper has also interpreted the ceasefire as a victory for Palestinian community and a setback for Israel.

**Hamara Samaj** on May 23 published the report of the death of 230 Palestinians as its lead story.

**Etemaad** (May 14) reports that on the occasion of Eid, the Israeli army resorted to heavy bombardment in Gaza in which 87 Palestinians were killed. The newspaper also claimed that 150 war planes of Israel bombed Gaza strip, resulting in the destruction of hundreds of buildings. The airports of Israel were closed. Thousands of people from Jordan and Lebanon rallied on the borders of Gaza in solidarity with the people of Palestine. President of Turkey, Erdogan, announced that revenge would be taken against Israel for shedding the blood of innocent Palestinians.

**Avadhnama** (May 17) in a report has claimed that Muslims in different parts of Jammu and Kashmir tried to take huge protests in support of the people of Palestine, but their attempts were foiled by the security forces. Director general of police, Jammu & Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said that nobody would be allowed to create disturbances in the state. Urdu newspapers have published several editorials on the war between Hamas and Israel and they all condemned Israel for the war.

**Avadhnama** (May 7) has published an article written by Khursheed Alam Dawood Qasmi on Al Aqsa mosque in which it was stated that Masjid Al Aqsa is the third most holier mosque for Muslims. Prophet Mohammad and then his followers offered namaz for hundreds of years looking in the direction of Masjid Al Aqsa. As per Islamic belief, on the occasion of Shab-e-Miraj, Hazrat Mohammad was brought by angels from Mecca to Masjid Al Aqsa to offer namaz.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (May 16) has published a special article written by Shakil Rashid, in which he has appealed to all Muslims in the world to listen to the voices

from Masjid Al Aqsa and free the poor Palestinians from the clutches of Israel.

**Inquilab** (May 15) while condemning Israel in an editorial, demanded that the Indian government extend support to Palestine and put pressure on Israel to vacate the Palestinian land that it has forcefully occupied.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 22) in an editorial has expressed happiness that India has abstained from voting in support of Israel in United Nations and thereby extended support to Palestinians. The newspaper said that the Indian government has been supporting the Palestinian cause right from the beginning and Modi government should follow the same policy.

**Siasat** (May 23) in its editorial has supported the decision for ceasefire between Israel and Hamas and said that the ceasefire should be a permanent one so that one could keep away from the horrors of the war in future. Israel has no good intentions and it wants to usurp the entire Palestinian territory. That is the reason why it frequently unleashes a war on some pretext or other. The newspaper also said that in the recent war, whatever the Israel had to face, it would again take revenge for it under any circumstances. Hence the US should put pressure on Israel not to unleash a war in future.

**Etemaad** (May 18) in an editorial expressed concern over the war between Israel and Hamas and said the way Israel has been forcibly evicting Palestinians from their homeland and seizing their land is deeply condemnable. Muslims in the entire world should unite to oppose this action, the editorial said.

The same newspaper in an editorial on May 21 accused the US of adopting a double standard on the issue of Palestine and writes that even when the US tells Israel to accept ceasefire, it simultaneously extends military and financial aid to that country in a secret manner. Recently, the Palestinians living in Sheikh Jarrah for centuries have been forcibly evacuated from there and the Jews were settled there in total violation of the United Nations

resolution. Surprisingly, the US remains a mute spectator to these incidents.

**Hamara Samaj** (May 17) has published an editorial written by Abid Anwar which states that Palestinians have become helpless in the face of Israeli onslaught. This is because Muslim countries are remaining mum instead of extending help to Palestinians. This is against the teachings of Hazrat Mohammad.

**Hamara Samaj** in an editorial on May 16 expressed hope that the Organisation of Islamic Countries would persuade different Muslim countries in the world to extend help to the people of Palestine and protest against Israel.

**Background:** The Gaza Strip is a small territory in Palestine. It is located on the east coast of Mediterranean Sea and borders Israel and Egypt. The territory is ruled by Hamas. Israel had made several attempts to seize the strip. However, due to Hamas, it had to withdraw all the times. Hamas was founded by Palestine Liberation Organisation and so far it has refused to recognise Israel. In 2017, it made an announcement that its war was not against Jews but against those who have occupied the Palestinian territory. If Israel withdraws from the territories that it had forcibly occupied during the 1967 war, then Hamas would be ready to enter a permanent peace deal with Israel. It is being said that Hamas has the support of Iran and a few other nations. Its ideology is like the Muslim Brotherhood, considered as a Sunni terrorist organisation, on which almost all Arab nations had imposed a ban. It was Sheikh Ahmad Yasin, leader of Muslim Brotherhood, who established Hamas in 1988. Since then, Hamas has been continuously waging an armed struggle against Israel. It had declared in its manifesto that Palestine is an Islamic Waqf property which will remain with Muslims till eternity and there is only one solution for the Palestine issue which is to wipe out the enemy through armed jihad. During the Oslo treaty, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) had recognised the

existence of Israel and also suggested that Palestine could be divided into two independent countries but Hamas has refused to accept such a solution.

According to historians, the Israel-Palestine issue is thousands of years old and it is even mentioned in the Bible. It is said in the Bible that God had gifted the land to Jews but the Roman army had evicted them from there. After Romans, the territory fell into the hands of Christians. Later Muslims snatched the land from Christians and forced the Jews to flee to different parts of the world.

During the First World War, Ottoman Empire was an ally of Germany and they were defeated at the hands of the British. The British divided the erstwhile Ottoman Empire into several small states and handed over their reins to its allies. That time, Britain had announced that Palestine is the homeland for the Jews who were scattered as refugees throughout Europe. When Britain started the effort to create a separate nation for the Jews in Palestine, the Arabs opposed it. However, Britain encouraged Jews to settle in the territory. To escape from the torture unleashed by then German dictator Adolf Hitler, the Jews started settling in huge numbers on the land. In 1947, the United Nations voted for the division of Palestine between the Jews and Arabs. This apart, Jerusalem was declared as an international state. While Jews accepted this declaration, the Arabs rejected it. They said that the entire Palestine belongs to Arabs and they were not ready to give even an inch of land for the Jews.

In 1948, the first war broke out between the Arabs and the Jews. Britain assured Jews that they would help them establish an independent republic called Israel. However, after seeing the strong opposition from Arab nations, British did not dare to announce the formation of Israel and left Palestine without making the declaration. After this, Jewish leaders announced the formation of Israel. However, Palestine Muslims strongly opposed it. During the war, many

Palestinians had to flee from their homes leaving everything. By the end of the war, Israel had captured majority of the land of the Palestinians. The territory seized by Jordan in this war is called West Bank and the territory occupied by Egypt is called Gaza Strip.

In the next war that took place in 1967, Israel captured East Jerusalem and West Bank as well. This apart, it captured Golan Heights from Syria and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. While Israel claims the entire Jerusalem as its own, the Palestinians consider Eastern Jerusalem as their own. Those who have recognised the claims of Israel include several countries including US and Britain. The Muslims who reside in Gaza and West Bank claim

that they are being suppressed by Israel. The latest clash started during the holy month of Ramzan when Israeli soldiers stopped the Muslims who went for namaz at Al Aqsa mosque. The soldiers opened fire at them in which several Muslims were injured. Israel has also arrested several Muslims on charges of attacking its soldiers. Another reason for the clash is that Sheikh Jarrah has been made an Arabic colony. Israeli government claims that the land belongs to them and it has been forcibly occupied by Muslims. Last month, the Israeli Army evicted 2,000 families settled there. This was opposed by the Palestinian government and the Hamas. Soon after, the war erupted between the two sides.

## Egypt to buy Rafale jets from France

**Inquilab** (May 5) reports that Egypt has signed an agreement with France to buy 30 Rafale fighter jets worth 4.5 billion dollars. The Egyptian defence ministry has confirmed the deal. From 2013 to 2017, France was the biggest supplier of arms and ammunition to Egypt. According to a news agency, Egypt is also buying missiles and other defence systems worth more 20 crore Euros. However, French newspapers criticised the deal saying that in Egypt there is no democracy but only military dictatorship. In 2013, Army general Abdel Fattah el-Sisi had captured power after removing Prime Minister Mohamed Morsi, who was elected by Muslim Brotherhood. From that time, Egypt is under military dictatorship. There is a ban on Muslim Brotherhood and thousands of



people linked to that organisation have been sent to jail. More than 1,000 people have been hanged to death.

Before this, in 2017, France had signed a deal with Egypt to supply 24 fighter aircraft. However, due to protests, the government had to cancel the deal.

## Saudi Arabia to expel those breaking quarantine rules

**Roznama Sahara** (May 5) reports that Saudi Arabian government had announced that those who break quarantine rules would be awarded two years' imprisonment and a fine of two lakh Riyals. If any foreign citizen breaks the

rules, then he would be expelled from the country forever and he would not be allowed to enter Saudi Arabia in future. The government also announced that those who contract Corona virus should quarantine themselves at home. The

government would closely monitor them. Only those who have taken two doses of vaccine would be allowed to go out of the country. The aircraft of those airlines that

violate the above rule would not be allowed to enter Saudi Arabia in future. The Kuwait government had also made a similar announcement.

## Iran a threat to Morocco



**Roznama Sahara** (May 8) reports that the foreign minister of Morocco, Nasser Bourita, said that Iran is a major threat for Morocco. He was speaking at a function organised by America-Israel Public Affairs Committee in Rabat. He said that Iran is interfering in the domestic affairs of Morocco and extending all kinds of help to the rebels so that they overthrow the current government in the country. He said that Iran is supplying arms and ammunition to the cadre of Polisario Front. This apart,

their cadre are also given training for the war by Iranians. He alleged that Iran is promoting Islamic terrorism in African countries through Islamic jihadi organisation Hezbollah.

Nasser said that they were countering the threat from Iran. However, Morocco needs the help of its allies. Following this statement by Morocco, the German government has called its Ambassador back to Germany for discussions. Morocco has alleged that though the US has given recognition to the Western Sahara region under the occupation of Morocco, the German government had opposed it. Recently, Germany had demanded that the United Nations Security Council should call a closed-door meeting to discuss the situation arising out of the capture of Western Sahara region by Morocco.

## Qatar finance minister sacked over corruption charges

**Roznama Sahara** (May 8) reports that the finance minister of Qatar Ali Shareef al-Emadi has been removed from his post on allegations of corruption. On the orders of the Emir, he has been



arrested. The Emir has ordered that an inquiry be conducted against al-Emadi on corruption charges. The government has also alleged that the former finance minister had misused his powers and embezzled government funds and sent a

huge sum abroad in an illegal manner. He invested the money abroad. Ali Shareef al-Emadi is originally a banker. He has made immense contribution for the development of National Bank of Qatar. It was due to

his contributions that the Qatar Emir had made him the finance minister in 2013. However, the government has not mentioned how much money he had embezzled. Sources claim that he has swindled nearly 1 billion dollars.

## Others

**Former MP Mohammad Shahabuddin dies**

**Inquilab** (May 4) reports that Bihar strongman and former MP Mohammad Shahabuddin has been buried in Delhi. He had died due to Corona. His family members alleged that he was murdered. Hence they demanded a judicial inquiry into his death. It is being said that his family members wanted his body to be buried in Bihar, but the Union government did not allow it. A large number of police and central police personnel were deployed at the graveyard.



His body was buried after that only. Later Aam Admi Party MLA Amanatullah Khan and chairman of Delhi Minorities Commission Jakhir Khan reached the spot. However, they were stopped outside the graveyard. Shahabuddin's family members alleged that when he was lodged in the high security prison, the administration shifted a Corona-infected Pakistani to the same cell so that Shahabuddin would also get infected. They said they would take the issue to the court.

**1,100 Pakistanis in Saudi jail to return home soon**

**Roznama Sahara** (May 11) reports that the interior minister of Pakistan, Sheikh Rashid, had announced that following the visit of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, Saudi Arabia has announced to send back nearly 1,100 Pakistani prisoners lodged in Saudi prisons. Speaking to Urdu News in Jeddah, he said that hundreds of Pakistanis are lodged in Saudi jails as they could not pay penalties. If we get 1

billion rupees from somewhere, we would bring them back to Pakistan, he said. He said that there are 30 Pakistani prisoners in Saudi jails who were arrested on serious offences like murder or drug trafficking. They were given death sentences by the courts in Saudi. We would not bring them back to Pakistan. But the rest 1,100 prisoners would soon return to Pakistan, he said.

## US navy seizes arms and ammunition



**Roznama Sahara** (May 10) reports that the US navy conducted a raid at sea and seized a ship carrying arms and ammunition. It is being said that the ship was being sent by Iran to the Houthi rebels in Yemen. According to Iranian media, the Houthis have seized a portion of Saudi Arabia. Recently, a general of Houthis had

visited the region that was seized by Houthis from Saudi Arabia. The seized weapons include missiles, rockets, mortars and different types of rifles. The Houthis are active in Yemeni capital Sanaa and its surroundings since 2014 and has been creating lot of troubles for Saudi Arabia.

## Baba Farid's lodge in Jerusalem

**Inquilab** (May 21) reports that there is an 800-year-old dargah and lodge in Jerusalem, established by an Indian, Darvesh Farīduddīn Ganjshakar. It is being said that he came for Haj and he spent lot of time in Jerusalem where the current dargah and lodge is situated. The current

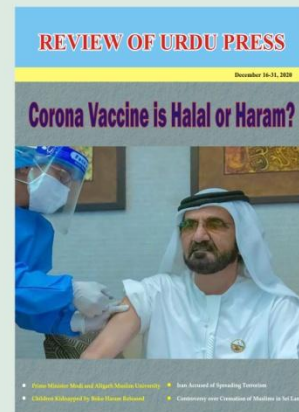
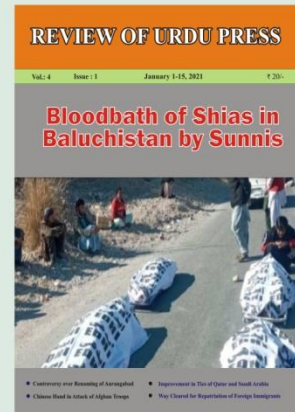
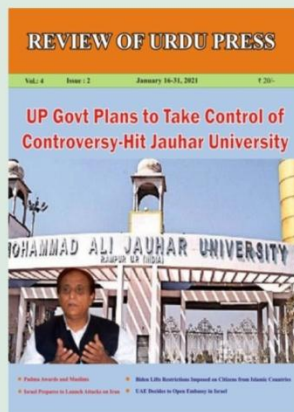
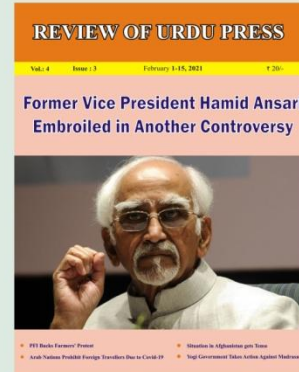
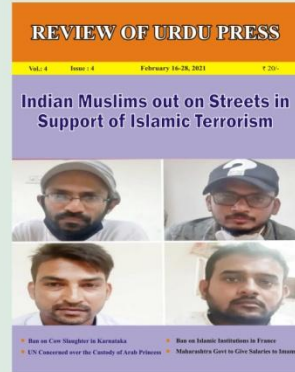
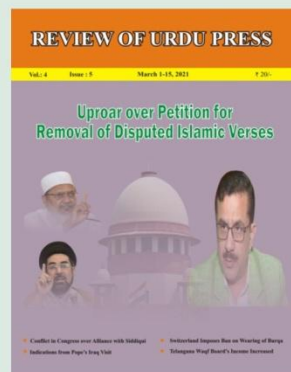
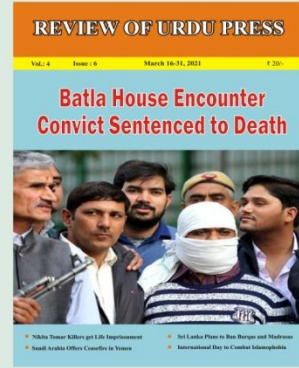
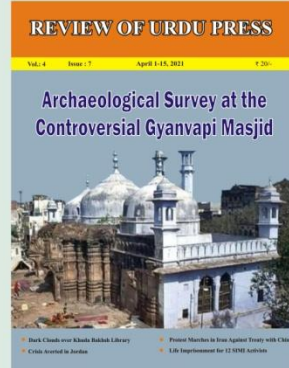
caretaker of the lodge is Mohammad Munir Ansari, who originally belongs to Lucknow, and is taking care of the dargah and the lodge for the past 60 years. Any Indian can stay in this lodge and it has been providing free food for them for the past several decades.

## Imran Khan's visit to Saudi Arabia

**Siasat** (May 10) reports that Pakistan has hastened its efforts to improve bilateral relationship with Saudi Arabia. Recently, Prime Minister Imran Khan paid a visit to Saudi Arabia. Apart from going for Umraah, he also visited the tomb of the Prophet and also offered namaz at Masjid-al-Nabawi at Medina. As per newspaper reports, Imran visited Saudi Arabia on the invitation of Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman. Earlier, Pakistan's army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa also visited

Saudi Arabia all of a sudden. He had lengthy closed-door meetings with the Crown Prince, army chief and other senior military officers. According to Saudi newspapers, when Qamar Javed Bajwa was asked about his visit to Saudi, he said that Saudi Arabia is his country's old friend. In the meetings, discussions were held on jointly solving a few defence-related issues faced by the two nations. He also said that he was not in a situation to divulge more details.

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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, indiapolity@gmail.com  
Website : www.ipf.org.in