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Opposition to Surya Namaskar



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- Explosive situation in Kazakhstan

- USA threatens Iran
- 16% Muslims in higher education

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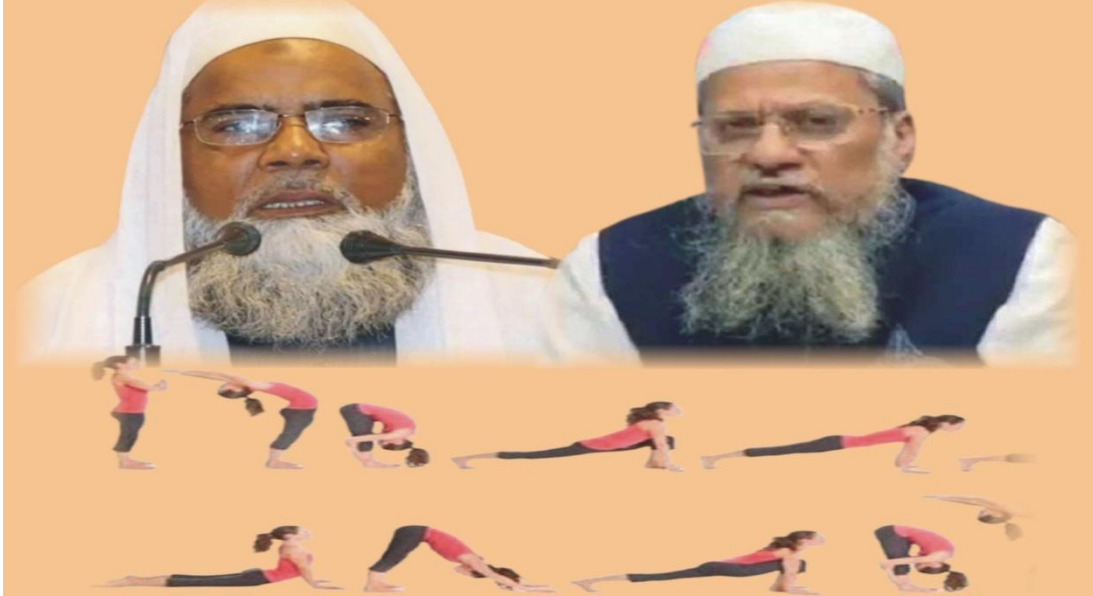
Summary

As the assembly elections have come closer, fundamentalist Muslim organisations have once again re-launched their campaign against the BJP and the Central government. On the occasion of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Union government has decided to organise Surya Namaskar in all the government schools in the country in the first week of January. However, General Secretary of Muslim Personal Law Board, Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani, opposed the decision and alleged that the ruling BJP at the Centre is forcibly imposing Brahminical religion and Vedic culture on Muslims. He also alleged that the aim of BJP is to make Bharat a Hindu Rashtra and Yoga education and Surya Namaskar are imposed on Muslims with the purpose of achieving this target. He urged Muslims to stop their children from participating in these programmes and instead boycott them. A few years ago, when the government of India introduced Surya Namaskar among the activities on International Yoga Day, the then General Secretary of Muslim Personal Law Board, Maulana Wali Rahmani, had tried to create a similar atmosphere against the majority community. In this connection, he had also sought the cooperation of imams of mosques across the country. He had urged imams to create awareness against Yoga, chanting of Om, Surya Namaskar and Vande Mataram in order to save Islam and Shariat. The Darul Uloom Deoband extended support to it by issuing a fatwa and Jamat-e-Islami, Popular Front and Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen joined the chorus with them.

This year, a sense of uncertainty has emerged over Haj. Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi had announced recently that more than 2 lakh Haj pilgrims would leave for Saudi Arabia for Haj. But the new Corona wave has put this year's Haj in a tight spot. This is because the Saudi government has decided to impose restrictions as per the Corona protocol. For the past two years, pilgrims from across the world could not undertake Haj as the Saudi government had banned Haj pilgrims from foreign countries.

The situation in Kazakhstan, a former republic of erstwhile Soviet Union, is turning explosive with every passing day. This Muslim-majority nation had declared independence from Soviet Union in 1991. Recently, the President of Kazakhstan announced lifting of regulations on the prices of petroleum gas. The people launched massive protests against this decision. Though the President tried to crush protests with the help of military, people started launching counter attacks on police and the military, forcing the President to seek help from Russia. Since there is a prior agreement between the two countries, Russia started sending troops to Kazakhstan. The Kazakhstan President alleged that foreign powers are conspiring to overthrow his government. Their eyes are on the highly valuable petroleum deposits in the country. He also declared the protesters as foreign agents. US, Britain and European Union have opposed the Russian decision to send troops to Kazakhstan. ■

Opposition to Surya Namaskar



Salar (January 4) states that the General Secretary of All India Muslim Personal Law Board, Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani, has demanded that the Central government should immediately withdraw its decision to organise Surya Namaskar across the country as it is against Islamic tradition. He said that India is a secular, multi-religious and multicultural nation. Our Constitution was founded on this principle. The Constitution does not give permission to hold the religious education of any particular religion or organise any function based on the belief system of a particular religion in any government educational institution in the country. It is very sad that the present government is throwing away this concept of the Constitution and forcibly imposing the religious belief of majority community on Muslims. Hence Muslims should unitedly oppose this decision. He said that a Deputy Secretary in the education department of Union government has directed to organise Surya Namaskar programme in 30 states under the guise of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in which

30,000 schools will participate in the first phase and a music programme based on Surya Namaskar is also organised on January 26. This decision is unconstitutional and it is a form of puja. Muslims and various other minority communities in this country do not consider the Sun as a devata and neither they are in favour of doing puja-archana for the Sun. Hence it is the responsibility of the government that it takes back its decision. Maulana Rahmani said that Muslim children should boycott Surya Namaskar programme and should not participate in it under any circumstance.

Roznama Sahara (January 10) states that a meeting was held in Mumbai under the chairmanship of the head of Raza Academy, Muhammad Saeed Noori, in which it was decided to oppose the programme of Surya Namaskar organised by the government and said that it was against Islamic values. Hence it is the duty of every Muslim to not only boycott it but also vehemently oppose it. In Mumbai, Mufti Muhammad Zubair Barkat issued a fatwa and directed Muslims to boycott Surya Namaskar

programme and give instructions to their children that if any such programme takes place in their school in this connection, they should boycott it and don't participate in it.

Etemaad (January 5) in its editorial condemned the move to impose Hindu religion and culture on Muslims. The newspaper said that the saffron party wants to keep Muslims away from Islam and its civilisation. This is the reason why two years ago, Union minister Prahlaad Singh Patel started the Surya Namaskar programme on International Yoga Day and urged all Indians to participate in it and he also told people that they start a campaign on social media so that it becomes a people's movement.

All India Muslim Personal Law Board had launched a campaign right from the beginning itself against starting Yoga and Surya Namaskar in schools. Muslims had time and again put pressure on the government against imposing Yoga and Surya Namaskar on Muslim students because it is against Islamic values. This time also the General Secretary of Muslim Personal Law Board, Maulana Saifullah Rahmani, while opposing the programme, appealed to all Muslims to boycott the programme.

The newspaper claimed that the aim of the saffron party is to establish Hindu Rashtra in the country and they are going all out to achieve this target. The textbooks are presented by twisting the history of the nation. The ideology of RSS is being introduced in these textbooks so that the new generation could be kept away from Islam. Recently, in Sonbhadra district in Uttar Pradesh, the students were made to take a pledge to establish Hindu Rashtra. This video has gone viral on social media. A controversy erupted after this. These innocent children were made to pledge that this nation be turned into a Hindu Rashtra and they would fight the war for Hindu Rashtra and if necessary, would sacrifice

their life. This apart, recently in Udupi district in Karnataka, the women were directed not to use Urdu to interact among themselves. Ever since BJP came to power at the Centre, they are mixing the poison of communalism in the minds of people. Muslims should strongly oppose this.

Comment: There will be serious consequences for the manner in which the Muslim Personal Law Board is using mosques and imams to destroy the harmony in the society. A few years ago, on the occasion of International Yoga Day, when the government had announced the decision to start Surya Namaskar programme, the Muslim Personal Law Board sent a circular to all the imams of all the masjids in the country and directed them that they boycott this government programme as it is against the principles of Islam and an effort is being made to forcibly impose Hindu religion and culture on Muslims. In the circular, it had asked for the boycott of Vande Mataram and chanting of Om.

The Muslim newspapers published several provocative articles in this connection. For example, **Inqilab** in its editorial said that Brahmin religion and Vedic culture are forcibly being imposed on Muslims and it is an open violation of Constitution. Another newspaper, **Sahafat**, had given a headline for its report as 'Muslims need to be saved from Brahminvaad.' This newspaper has told the imams of all masjids that they should prepare Muslims to take on Brahmin religion and Vedic culture.

Akhbar-e-Mashriq, while supporting the Muslim Personal Law Board, said that Allah had created Sun in order to serve human beings. Bending before it or doing namaskar before it is against Islam. Some people in this country want to keep Muslims away from Islam and want to give it a Kafir Brahmini colour.

Jamaat-e-Islami also, joining the chorus with Muslim Personal Law Board, urged Muslims to boycott such programmes. Darul Uloom Deoband issued a fatwa against Yoga and described it as against Shariat and Islam. It is mentioned in fatwa that Yoga

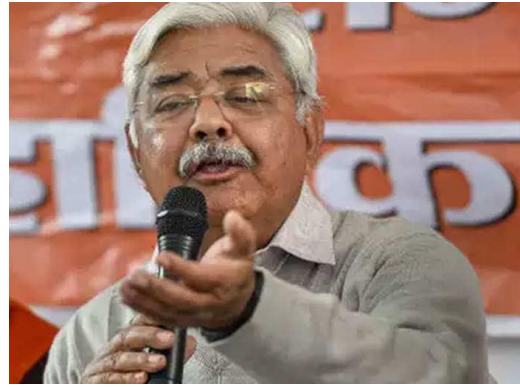
includes chanting of Om and reading of mantras. In Surya Namaskar includes puja and hence these are all against Islam. Surprisingly, the Muslim Personal Law Board and other Muslim organisations are once again creating a ruckus over the issue. ■

Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi not on agenda at the moment

Urdu newspapers, Muslim organisations and some Leftist secularists have tried to flare up the controversy over Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi in Mathura. Now, refuting the propaganda, international working president of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Alok Kumar clarified that the Krishna Janmabhoomi issue in Mathura is not on its agenda.

Mumbai Urdu News (January 1) states that Alok Kumar has said that as of now our full concentration is on constructing a grand temple at Ayodhya. He said that it is hoped that a grand temple would be built there before 2024 and one could have darshan of Ram Lalla. Mentioning about the ongoing debate in the country about Hindu, Hindutva and Hindu Dharma Sansad, Alok Kumar said that we have organised a Dharma Sansad in this decade in which sadhu sants from across the country took part. Later also several such functions were organised. The function that was organised recently by some people and sants cannot be termed as Dharma Sansad. We do not endorse statements issued against any religion, caste or community. Our faith is in the concept of Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinaha.’

Speaking exclusively to UNI, Alok Kumar said that he doesn’t agree with the statement given against Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi and cannot support any derogatory remarks made against him. Action should be taken against such people who make such remarks as per the law of the land. Talking about conversion, he said the Centre could make a law in this connection. Interestingly, there is a law to



deal with conversion in 11 states in the country. He said that it is a crime to convert through allurement and pressure. The issue could be dealt with by bringing a law at national level. When asked what is the meaning of conversion as Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Dr Mohan Bhagwat said that the DNA of both Hindus and Muslims is same and that Hindutva is considered incomplete without Muslims, Alok Kumar said it is true that the DNA of both is same. The ancestors are also same. But he is against conversion through allurement, threat or deceit. When asked about the law brought by Uttar Pradesh government against Love Jihad, he said that in no way it could be deemed appropriate to convert Hindu girls after trapping them through deceit. He said that Hindu and Hindutva cannot be termed separate. It is like human and humanity are two sides of the same coin. Hindus are not violent by nature. There is no space for fundamentalism among Hindus.

Avadhnama (January 1) has published an article written by Abubakar Sabbak Sufani, in which it has been

mentioned that as soon as the campaign for elections began in Uttar Pradesh, leaders of BJP flared up communalism in order to polarise votes. Several leaders including the Deputy Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh have raised their voice demanding construction of mandir at Krishna Janmasthan in Mathura. Later saffron organisations disturbed Muslims by threatening to install an idol at the Shahi Idgah masjid in Mathura. In the communal speech delivered during the destruction of Babri Masjid, it was also claimed that after Babri Masjid, the next target would be the Idgah masjid in Mathura and after that it would be Gyanvapi masjid in Kashi. Later the Babri Masjid was destroyed.

The Supreme Court had accepted during its verdict that there was no evidence to prove that the Babri Masjid was constructed after destroying the mandir of Ram Lalla. However, despite that a decision was taken to construct Ram Mandir in place of Babri Masjid based on the belief of Hindus. Secondly, though the crime of destroying the Babri Masjid is admitted, the special CBI court in Lucknow on September 30, 2020, had acquitted all the accused in the Babri Masjid demolition

case due to want of evidence. The interesting thing is that the day the court in Lucknow announced this decision, the dispute over the Shahi Idgah masjid in Mathura was raised in the court.

So far these sectarian groups are unable to achieve their target because the Supreme Court in its historical verdict on Ram Janmabhoomi had also cited a law passed by the Parliament, as per which the status of a place of worship as on August 15, 1947, cannot be altered. However, the Ayodhya dispute was not included in it. As per this law, the dispute over any present place of worship cannot be questioned in a court of law.

The writer said that it is claimed in the petition filed in a court in Mathura over Krishna Janmabhoomi that Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb had issued a 'farman' in 1699 and destroyed the mandir built on Krishna Janmabhoomi and built Shahi Idgah on its place. However, an agreement had reached between Krishna Janmasthan Seva Sansthan and Shahi Idgah Management Committee nearly 50 years ago. However, despite this, the BJP leaders are raking up the controversy due to political reasons. ■

Uncertainty over Haj

Inquilab (January 11) has published a news in which it has been claimed that a cloud of uncertainty is hanging over Haj pilgrimage for the past three years. Union minister for minority affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi had announced that highest ever number of Indians would visit Saudi Arabia for Haj this year. Soon after, the Central Haj Committee had invited applications from people interested in going for Haj. However, the way the Corona pandemic raised its head once again, the Saudi government was forced to impose restrictions in the country. Till now, the Saudi government has not issued any guidelines for the Haj in 2022 due to which the Hajis are in a dilemma. However, the Haj Committee is busy preparing for the Haj.

It is to be noted that due to Corona, the Saudi government has imposed a ban on foreigners from visiting the country for Haj or Umrah in the past two years and limited the Haj pilgrimage to citizens of Saudi Arabia. It is due to this uncertainty that the Haj pilgrims are not taking any special interest in submitting the applications. The quota for Hajis from Uttar Pradesh is more than 30,000 but so far only 4,510 people have submitted applications.

The newspaper has claimed that the Haj pilgrimage is becoming expensive day by day. According to sources in Haj Committee, if Hajis go for Haj this year, then they have to spend Rs75,000 extra. The reason is that there is an increase in visa fee, Haj tax, insurance and

accommodation. This year, the expenses are likely to be around Rs 3.5 lakh to Rs 4 lakh, whereas in 2015, the Hajis had to spend only Rs 1.75 lakh.

Siasat (January 9) states that Union minister for minority affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has claimed that the process to accept applications from Haj pilgrims started on November 1. However, so far 53,000 people have submitted their applications. But till now the Saudi government has not announced any programme related to Haj and neither any agreement has been reached with Indian government in this connection. He claimed that in the past seven years, lot of improvements have been made in the management of Haj pilgrimage. He said that after Indonesia, the maximum number of people who go for Haj is from India. Currently, India's quota is nearly 2 lakh pilgrims.

Salar (January 1) states that since the Saudi government has not announced the Haj policy this year those interested in going for Haj are in a dilemma. According to Indian embassy in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi government has announced a lockdown. Hence 20-25 thousand pilgrims will get the opportunity to do Haj. Secondly, the chief executive officer of Central Haj Committee, Maqsood Ahmad



Khan said that those interested in going for Haj should complete their preparations.

Roznama Sahara (January 11) states that the chairman of Delhi Haj Committee Mukhtar Ahmad said that the Hajis should be ready for Haj. So far, only 825 applications have been received from Delhi. He said that this year, the departure places for Haj have been cut down to 10 from 21.

Inqilab (January 2) states that the Haj Committee Act 2002 is likely to be amended. It is likely that apart from Haj, the responsibility to organise Umrah will also be entrusted to Central Haj Committee. This apart, it has also been given the responsibility to manage the visit to the holy places of Shias in Iraq, Iran, Jordan and Syria. Till now, these travels are being managed by private operators.

Row over hijab in women's college in Karnataka

Etemaad (January 3) states that six students of a government women's college in Udupi have alleged that their principal has refused to give them permission to attend classes by wearing a hijab. This apart, they have also not been allowed to interact among themselves in Urdu, Arabic and Persian languages. These Muslim students also held a protest in the college. They alleged that their principal Rudra Gowda has flatly refused to talk to their parents in this connection. On the directions of the principal, the attendance of the students is also not marked in the class. Secondly, principal Rudra Gowda

said that students can wear hijab on college premises but permission can't be granted to wear hijab in the class. Leaders of Popular Front also jumped into the controversy. Udupi unit president of SDPI Nazir Ahmad said that if students are not given permission to wear hijab then they would protest against them.

Inqilab (January 8) states that the issue has been solved on the intervention of district administration. Recently, along with Muslim students of the college, a delegation of Islamic Organisation of India met Deputy Commissioner Kurma Rao and told him that the ban imposed by the



principal is an open violation of the rights given to minorities by the Constitution. On the pressure of Deputy Commissioner, the college principal permitted these students to sit in classes wearing the hijab. Earlier, three fundamentalist Muslim organisations, Campus Front of India, Socialist Democratic Party of India and Islamic Organisation of India had threatened that if these students are not given permission to wear hijab, then Muslim organisations would hold a nationwide protest and dharna against it. The Muslim students have also demanded that instead of the prescribed

uniform they should be given permission to wear a separate dress like black kameez, black dupatta and churidar pyjama. But the principal said that all the students in the college should wear same uniform. In reply to the Muslim students, Hindu students have announced that they would wear a saffron scarf and saffron dress to the college. If they are not given permission for the same, then they would stage a dharna outside the college. They alleged that the administration is walking on the path of Muslim appeasement and these are not done in the interest of the nation. ■

Uttar Pradesh elections a challenge for Owaisi

Siasat (January 4) states that the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election is a major challenge for Telangana's political party All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen. Majlis has announced its decision to field 100 candidates in Uttar Pradesh. Earlier, Owaisi had won five seats in the Bihar Assembly elections and thereby secured a hold outside its region. But the party received a major setback in the West Bengal Assembly elections. Owaisi had fielded candidates in 40 seats in Bengal. But his candidates could not save even their deposit money. The opposition parties

in Uttar Pradesh, Samajwadi Party and Congress, are claiming that Owaisi is a B team of BJP and he has entered electoral fray to divide Muslim votes. Whereas Owaisi claims that he wants to become the kingmaker in Uttar Pradesh politics. Recently, he addressed 40 poll rallies in Uttar Pradesh in which people took part in huge numbers. A skilful speaker, Owaisi has been targeting BJP and Samajwadi Party in these election rallies. He has targeted Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Samajwadi Party's Akhilesh Yadav. Amit Shah has



described Owaisi as a successor of the Nizam Shahi and said that after the end of the Nizam rule, Owaisi is now trying to extend his Sultanate outside Hyderabad.

According to political observers, an excellent orator and an expert in law, Owaisi is displaying his skills during his speeches. His emphasis is that the 19% Muslims in Uttar Pradesh should stand united so that they get a role to play in governance and save themselves from getting neglected in all parts of the country. This is not the first time that Majlis is making an effort to step into the politics of Uttar Pradesh. In the 2017 Assembly elections, Majlis fielded 38 candidates out of the total 403 seats in the state. However, he failed to win even a single seat. Nearly 30 candidates lost their deposit as well.

Owaisi claims that Majlis has become stronger in Uttar Pradesh in the past five years. Initially he tried to strike a political deal with Omprakash Rajbhar but Rajbhar abandoned Majlis and joined hands with Samajwadi Party. Interestingly, last year was not a good one for Majlis as they suffered a

huge setback in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. In 2015, Majlis fielded six candidates in Bihar Assembly elections but had to suffer a crushing defeat. Five years later in 2020, Majlis fielded candidates in 20 seats in Bihar Assembly elections, out of which it managed to win five seats. In Jharkhand, Majlis fielded candidates in 16 seats but did not win even a single seat. Till 2013, Majlis was limited to Hyderabad city. However, it tasted success in some local bodies in Maharashtra and Karnataka. Majlis has been holding the Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat for the past 35 years. Majlis was founded in 1927 with the purpose of forming an Independent Nizam state. One of its leaders, Qasim Rizvi, was accused of fighting against the Indian Army. Hence after its merger with Hyderabad in 1948 the Indian government had imposed a ban on the organisation. However, in 1958, Owaisi's grandfather Maulana Abdul Wahid Owaisi revived it in a new format. Majlis claims that it runs more than a dozen hospitals, medical colleges and engineering colleges in Telangana.

Explosive situation in Kazakhstan



The situation in Muslim-majority Kazakhstan is deteriorating day by day.

Inqilab (January 8, 2022) states that the protests against hiked petroleum prices are taking a serious turn in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has ordered the military to open fire on protesters taking part in rallies. According to government sources, the number of people killed in the protests has reached 48. The Kazakhstan President has claimed that foreign powers are provoking people to overthrow the constitutionally elected government of the country. On his request, Russia has sent its soldiers to curb the protests.

It is to be noted that after protests by people, the Kazakhstan cabinet submitted its resignation on January 2 and President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev declared a state of emergency in the country. Despite imposition of curfew in Almaty and Mangystau, protests continued to simmer. Those who have been killed include 28 citizens and 18 policemen. However, according to non-governmental sources, the number of people killed could be between 150 and 200. The interior ministry has claimed that foreign agents disguised as protesters are firing shots on police and

soldiers. Those who were killed in police and military action are not citizens of Kazakhstan but foreign agents. The protesters claimed that the President alone is responsible for the entire controversy and he had dissolved his ministry in order to save his skin and took the entire powers in his hand. The European Union has threatened that if Russia sends its troops there then there would be serious consequences. According to foreign media, hundreds of people have been injured and more than 4,000 protesters have been arrested. The President of Kazakhstan has claimed that the situation is under control and foreign agents cannot be tolerated under any circumstance.

Inqilab (January 9) states that the US Secretary of State has expressed concern over Russia sending its troops to Kazakhstan and said that it can lead to a serious situation and it would be a danger to peace in the entire world. According to the newspaper, so far more than 2,500 Russian soldiers have been sent to Kazakhstan. The US Secretary of State asked why the Kazakhstan government was unable to tackle the situation on its own. If Russia enters the country once, then it would be very difficult to throw them out.

A spokesperson of the Russian government said that the President had sought its help. Since Russia has an agreement with Kazakhstan, we have sent our troops there. As per another report, a former national security chief of Kazakhstan, Karim Massimov, has been arrested on charges of treason. Following eruption of violent incidents in the country, he had been removed from his post.

Roznama Sahara (January 8) has published a detailed account of the background of the explosive situation in Kazakhstan and said that the deteriorating situation there could be assumed from the fact that Russia has started sending troops there on the basis of the appeal by the Kazakhstan President. The newspaper stated that the Russian President took this decision due to the agreement his country had signed with six former Republics of Soviet Union. The countries with which it has an agreement are Belarus, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Armenia. Russia has a social security agreement with these countries which is called CSTO.

According to the newspaper, Russia has sent senior military officials, intelligence and paramilitary forces in huge numbers to crush the protesters in Kazakhstan. The newspaper claimed that there is dictatorship in Kazakhstan and Russia wants to retain this dictatorship. Following the dissolution of Soviet Union, the Republics which had declared independence include Kazakhstan. Along with declaring a state of emergency in the country, the Kazakhstan President also imposed a nationwide curfew and ordered that those who protest against him should be shot at.

It is to be noted that Kazakhstan had severed its ties with Soviet Union in 1991. The first President of Kazakhstan was Nursultan Nazarbayev and he was removed from power by the present President who took over the reins of power. Since the region has severe cold conditions, people have launched protests against the sudden increase in the prices of petroleum and LPG. The current President is in power for

the past three years. Since Kazakhstan government has cut off internet, telephone and other information facilities in the country, it is difficult to know about the real situation there. In the country's largest city of Almaty, protesters stormed government buildings and the officials fled to nearby countries and took refuge there. According to foreign sources, the situation there is like what was there in Kabul a few months ago. For the past two months, massive protests have been going on in the country. Earlier this year, in order to calm down the protesters, the President had dissolved his entire cabinet and took all the powers in his hands. Later he used the military to crush the protesters. But when the protesters started aiming their guns at the soldiers as well, then he had to seek military help from Russia. The newspaper claimed that in 2019, the current President had forced the then President Nursultan Nazarbayev to flee from the country.

Etemaad (January 7) states that the European Union has warned Russia that it should respect the sovereignty of Kazakhstan and do not send its troops to that country. The European Union has urged all the sides to remain patient and resolve the controversy in a peaceful manner. Secondly, the Russian spokesperson said that till peace is established in Kazakhstan, the Russian troops would remain there.

Etemaad (January 8) has expressed surprise that Kazakhstan, Central Asia's financially strong nation with huge petroleum deposits, has to face such a huge crisis. The newspaper claimed that like the Arab rulers, former President Nursultan had ran a dictatorship under the guise of a fake democracy and did nothing for the people. During the time of Soviet Union, Nursultan was a prominent leader of the Communist Party. In 1991, he announced independence from Soviet Union and became the President of the newly formed independent nation. Later he held on to power through rigging of elections. He has been accused of promoting corruption and crushing opponents with an iron hand.

After coming to power, he ran a campaign to do his publicity in the country. Several government buildings in the old capital Almaty has been turned into a heap of rubble. The protesters tried to storm the Presidential palace during which the military shot dead several people. Earlier, there was control over the prices of petrol and LPG in the country which was lifted in the beginning of this year. It has resulted in a huge increase in the prices of petrol and LPG. People came out on the streets against this hike in prices. Later, Prime Minister Askar Mamin's government submitted its resignation.

The national bank of Kazakhstan has shut down all its branches. In terms of geographical area, Kazakhstan is the ninth biggest nation in the world. However, its total population is less than 1.75 crore. It has 10 provinces. It is a country with its own coast line. Nearly 67% people are of Kazakh origin and 19% are of Russian origin. There are a few people of Uzbek and Uyghur races as well. This Islamic

country was once part of the Ottoman Empire. Following the First World War, Soviet Union occupied this country.

Nearly 72% of the population are Muslims. The Arabs converted the people of this country into Muslims in the 8th century. Since the country shares its border with Iran and Afghanistan, the clerics have been spreading Islam among the people of the country.

Siasat (January 10) has expressed concern over the deteriorating situation in this Islamic nation and alleged that despite having huge oil reserves, the people of the country remain poor and its rulers are making merry. The nation has strong relationship with China. This is the reason why the President of China has also claimed that there are foreign hands behind the efforts to overthrow the elected government of Kazakhstan. This is the reason why China has extended its full support to the ruler in Kazakhstan to crush the disturbances in that country. ■

Eight lakh Afghan refugees in Iran

Siasat (January 8) states that the Iran government has confirmed that in the past four months, more than eight lakh Afghan citizens have taken refuge in Iran. Iran government claims that every day five to ten thousand Afghanis enter Iran. Iran has requested nations across the world to extend help to these homeless Afghan refugees. Iran's foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that the aid they received from Norway has been handed over to these refugees. He urged the United Nations to extend help to them on humanitarian basis. Iran has also announced that if India is willing to extend any help to Afghanistan, then Iran would help in reaching it to Afghanistan.

Siasat (January 4) states that after India announced to supply Corona vaccine and wheat in large quantity to Afghanistan, the Taliban said that it is in favour of re-



opening of the Embassy of India and that it would provide full security to the employees of the Embassy. It is to be noted that after Taliban captured power in Afghanistan, India has closed its Embassy in Kabul. India has not opened its Embassy so far. However, it is supplying food items to the people of Afghanistan on a humanitarian basis. The newspaper claimed

that there is a full likelihood of India reopening its Embassy in Kabul. India is keen that the help it extends to Afghanistan reaches the ordinary citizens there. There are complaints that there is foul play in the distribution of the items supplied by India.

Inqilab (January 10) states that for the first time after coming to power, foreign minister of Afghanistan, Ameerullah Muttaqi, has paid a visit to

Iran. A spokesperson of Taliban's foreign ministry has claimed that the purpose of the visit is to hold discussions on political, financial issues and on matters concerning the refugees. Iran shares a 900-km long border with Afghanistan. Till now, Iran has not recognised the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Interestingly, earlier also when Taliban was in power in Afghanistan, Iran did not recognise the government.

Pakistani infiltrators sent back from Malaysia



Roznama Sahara (January 6) states that Malaysia has stepped up its efforts to identify Pakistanis illegally staying in the country and deport them. Last year, 8,000 Pakistanis were sent back to their native country. The Pakistan High Commission in Malaysia has urged the government there that in future action shall be taken only as per the new policy adopted last year to send back infiltrators staying illegally in Malaysia. As per the policy, if a person staying illegally in the country reaches the airport with a flight ticket and Corona investigation report and expresses his wish to return to his native country, then the Malaysian government provides him the permit and no legal action is taken against him.

The Pakistani Embassy has accepted that currently thousands of Pakistanis are staying illegally in Malaysia and they want

to return to their own country in order to escape legal action. However, this concession has ended on December 31, 2021. Hence it is necessary to extend this concession for one more year. It is being said that currently nearly 10,000 Pakistanis are illegally staying in Malaysia. They do not have any

documents with them. The Pakistan High Commission has advised the Pakistanis staying illegally in Malaysia that they make use of the Malaysian government's policy and return to their native place. If they do not do it, then the government would put them in jail. According to the immigration department of Malaysia, last year 1.92 lakh foreigners, who were illegally staying in the country, registered their names with the foreign ministry. The largest group among them were Indonesians who were nearly 99,000. The second number was that of Bangladeshis who were 27,000. On the third spot was Indians, whose number was 24,000. Majority of them have already returned to their native countries. But a number of Pakistani infiltrators are still staying in the country which the Malaysian government want to expel from there.

Explosion in Quetta

Avadhnama (December 31) states that an explosion took place on Jinnah Road in Quetta, which is the largest province of Pakistan, in which four persons were killed and 15 people were injured. It is being said that the hands of those elements, who are seeking freedom from the slavery of Pakistan and want to establish an independent Balochistan nation, are suspected to be behind the blast.



The advisor of the home ministry of Balochistan, Mir Ziaullah, said the explosion was triggered through remote control and the hands of the enemies of Pakistan are behind it. Condemning the incident, Chief Minister of Balochistan Abdul Quddus Bizenjo said that it is the handiwork of terrorists who are spreading violence in Pakistan at the behest of foreigners. He expressed regrets on the

death of the innocent citizens who were killed in the blast and said that the government will not spare these foreign agents under any circumstances. The Chief Minister directed the police chief of Balochistan to trace the accused as early as possible and take stringent action to stop such incidents in future. He said that innocent citizens cannot be left at the mercy of terrorists.

Pakistan SC refuses to change order to demolish mosque

Roznama Sahara (January 6) states that the Pakistan Supreme Court has refused to stay the demolition of a mosque built in a park in Karachi. The court said that Islam is wrongly invoked in order to illegally occupy government property. The Attorney General of Pakistan government Khalid Javed urged a three-member division bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmad to reconsider its order on December 28 last year to demolish a mosque built in a park on Tariq Road in Karachi because the decision has evoked religious tension in the country. One judge, Qazi Amin, while addressing the Attorney General, said that the way Islam is being used to illegally occupy government properties in Pakistan cannot be tolerated under any circumstance. He said that we had seen with our own eyes the construction of the mosque. It is difficult to tolerate the illegal occupation of the park. If the Sindh government wants it can allot a plot for the

reconstruction of the mosque. But we will not change our order under any circumstance. This mosque which was built in an illegal manner will be demolished whatever be its consequences.

Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmad said that it will be a black day for the judiciary if the court changes its decision on the basis of some pressure. The Attorney General told the court that he knows that it was the responsibility of the provincial government to allot land for construction of masjid. But due to this decision of the court, there is religious tension among the people and after seeing it, it is necessary that in order to maintain peace, the court should reconsider its decision. The judge said that the decision to demolish the illegal structure cannot be taken back. It is totally against Islamic tradition to build mosque on government property in an illegal manner.

USA threatens Iran



Etemaad (January 5) states that the President of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, has demanded that former US President Donald Trump, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and other US officials should be tried in an open court and punished for the murder of Iran's General Qasem Soleimani. If this is not done, then Iran would take revenge for the murder. We would not be able to pardon them under any circumstance. This case should be tried at International Court of Justice. The President said that if no case is filed against Trump, then Muslims would take revenge for the death of their martyrs. The US Air Force attack to kill General Soleimani is an attack on the entire Iranian nation. We would not be able to turn a blind eye to it.

It is to be noted that General Qasem Soleimani was the commander of the clandestine military operations wing of Iranian militia, Pasdaran-e-Inqilab. He was killed in a drone attack by the US near Baghdad on January 3, 2020. General Soleimani had gone to Iraq on a secret mission. Iran has condemned the fact that even the International Court of Justice is mum on the incident. Iran President Raisi said last week he had sent a letter to the

United Nations General Assembly and demanded that a resolution be passed in the General Assembly against the murder of Soleimani. Earlier, Iran had urged Interpol to issue a Red Corner notice to arrest Donald Trump.

Iran's head of justice department, while speaking on Iranian television, said that a list of 127 accused involved in the murder of General Soleimani has been handed over to United Nations. This includes 74 US citizens. A few days after the murder of General Soleimani, the US had told the United Nations that the US had taken this step for its own security. The then Attorney General of USA, William Barr, said that Trump had the powers to order the assassination of General Soleimani.

In Iran, General Soleimani had the status of a national leader. But the US government considered him as a terrorist. Iran had formed a special court a few days ago where, it had been stated that, complaints could be registered against foreign elements in connection with the murder of General Soleimani. On the second anniversary of the murder of General Soleimani, martyrdom day events

were organised across Iran. In a function organised in Teheran, Ambassadors of Palestine, Syria, Yemen and many other countries took part. A special programme was organised at the airport in Baghdad as well, where groups supporting Iran raised slogans against USA.

Mumbai Urdu News (January 9) states that Iran has posted a video on social media where the US soldiers were shown preparing for the murder of General Soleimani. On the occasion of the anniversary, Iran's militia targeted the airport in Baghdad with rockets. After this attack, US helicopters were seen hovering over the capital city. US sources claimed that armed drones attacking the Baghdad airport were shot down. They also admitted that the Iranian militia had targeted a US base. A spokesperson of US Defense department said five missiles landed near

the US military station. However, it did not cause any damage to life and property.

Avadhnama (January 4) reports that the martyrdom day of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani, his deputy General Abu Mahdi and eight other top Iranian military officers was observed in Iran, Iraq and Syria. Iranian sources claimed these Iranian officials had reached Baghdad on the invitation of Iraqi government.

Etemaad (January 11) states that the US Defence department has threatened Iran that if they target any American, then there would be dire consequences. US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said they were prepared to stop any attack by Iran and give them a befitting reply. If Iran targets any American in any corner of the world, then we would not spare them, he said.

USA concerned over Iran sending satellite to space

Etemaad (January 1) reports that Iran had sent a satellite to the space in the beginning of this year. Iran's defence ministry claimed the satellite was sent 470 kilometres into the atmosphere. However, it did not say anything about the reason for sending the satellite or any technical details regarding it. Iranian television, while showing a video of the satellite being sent to the space, described it as a success for the Iranian scientists. The US expressed concern over sending of satellite into the space by Iran and said that its technology would help Iran promote its ballistic missile programme. The US claimed that this action of Iran is an open violation of the resolution of United Nations Security

Council, in which Iran has been asked not to participate in any activity related to manufacture of ballistic missiles.

Inqilab (January 10) states that France has also condemned the launching of satellite into space by Iran and described it as a threat to peace. Germany said that the launching of satellite by Iran will lead to ending the talks being held in Vienna and this step by Iran is a threat to peace in the world. Meanwhile, Iran bluntly said that it is within its right to continue research in the areas of science, space and aeronautics and it would continue to do so in the future as well. It is not bothered what its enemy tells about its programmes.

Rebels kill 200 citizens

Roznama Sahara (January 10) reports that as a revenge for Nigerian soldiers launching a nationwide drive against Islamic terrorist organisation Al Shabab, terrorists of Al Shabab riding on motorcycles attacked 10 villages and

massacred more than 200 people. According to media reports, the Nigerian Army and Air Force had targeted the locations of Al Shabab in forests and nearby areas. At least 100 terrorists were killed in this action. The government



television has described those who were killed as bandits. Following this action, more than 300 terrorists belonging to Al Shabab attacked 10 villages and set fire to these villages. Before the attack, they resorted to looting as well. Later, all the residents of the villages were shot dead.

As per media reports, the number of people killed is believed to be between 200 and 300. However, according to government, only 58 were killed. The villagers also claimed that a number of people were tied up and taken away by the terrorists of Al Shabab.

Arab princess released from jail

Roznama Sahara (January 10) states that the daughter of Saudi Arabia's late King Saud, Princess Basmah bint Saud, has been released from jail due to illness. The princess has been in jail for the past three years without registration of a case. She is considered as an opponent of the present ruling family of Saudi Arabia. She has been running a campaign for a long time seeking democratic rights in Saudi Arabia. Due to this, she was arrested along with her daughter in March 2019. The princess is aged around 57 years. She fell ill in the jail. She had refused to undergo treatment in the jail as a mark of protest due to which her health deteriorated day by day. In 2020, the World Women's Organisation had urged Saudi ruler and Crown Prince Mohammad



bin Salman to release the ailing Princess from jail on humanitarian basis. The organisation of Arab women, in a tweet, announced the Princess and her daughter have been released from jail after three years. The two were arrested from the airport in 2019 when they were leaving for Switzerland for medical treatment.

Protest against military in Sudan

Siasat (January 4) reports that Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok has announced his resignation two months after an agreement with military. He claimed that he decided to leave his office in order

to save the country from destruction. Let any other Sudanese national take on the responsibility, he said. It is to be noted that people are holding huge protests against the military for the past two months. At least

four persons were killed after police opened fire on protesters. Later, on the orders of the military, mobile and internet services were stopped across the country.

It is to be noted that the military had removed Sudan President Omar al-Bashir from his post on October 25 and took Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok into custody. Later, massive protests began against military across the country. The protesters demanded that Army chief Abdul Fatah Al Burhan hand over the power to a Sudanese citizen and restore democracy in the nation. Later, due to pressure from people, military has announced its decision to release Abdalla Hamdok from jail. In this connection, more than 100 protesters were killed.

Etemaad (January 1) states that protests have increased across the country. The protesters attacked security forces and in retaliation soldiers opened fire on them. The protests have also spread to all parts of the country. The security forces raided media offices located in different cities of the country and took a large number of media persons into custody. The Committee of Doctors in Sudan has put the number of people killed by military at 52. Due to pressure from United Nations, the military had to hand over the power back to former Prime Minister Abdalla. Later Abdalla alleged that the military is not allowing him to run the administration. Hence, in order to save the country from destruction, he is resigning from his post.

Hamara Samaj (January 11) states that the United Nations offer of holding talks between people and the military in Sudan in order to establish peace in the country has been turned down by a group of citizens and said that they would not participate in any such talks. An organisation of citizens, FFC, said that there is only one solution to the current crisis in Sudan and that is to oust the military council from power and hand over the administration of the country to people elected through democratic process.

Meanwhile US, Britain, Albania and France have demanded summoning of a



special session of the United Nations Security Council in order to discuss the deteriorating situation in Sudan. The Sudanese citizens are protesting against the military for the past four months. The Army chief of Sudan, Al Burhan has claimed that the Army did not make effort to capture power in October. Its only aim was to organise elections in a peaceful manner in the country. His statement, however, was refuted by former Prime Minister Abdalla, who said that his claim was totally false.

Comment: Sudan got freedom from foreign occupation in 1956. Since then military's interference in politics also started. In 1958, the then Army chief of Sudan, Major General Ibrahim Abboud captured power through a bloody revolution. However, in 1964, the military had to abdicate power due to people's anger. The democratic government that came to power after the elections could not sustain itself for long. Five years later, the military once again captured power. In 1985, a rebel group of soldiers captured power after ousting the military officials saddled in power. Later elections were held and a democratic government headed by Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi was formed. However, three years later in 1989, military once again captured power under the leadership of Brigadier Umar Al Bashir. Umar Al Bashir remained in power for 30 years. In 2019, he had to hand over power due to public anger. After this, a joint executive council of military and civilians were running the administration of the country. However, after four months, the military once again captured power due to public anger.

Case filed against Jawed Habib for spitting on hair



Inquilab (January 8) reports that Muzaffarnagar police in Uttar Pradesh has filed an FIR against renowned hair stylist Jawed Habib on the allegation of spitting on the hair of a woman while doing a haircut. The video of the incident that took place during a workshop held in Muzaffarnagar on January 3 went viral on social media which shows Jawed Habib spitting on the hair of the woman and he was also heard saying that when there is shortage of water, use the spit. The video shows people sitting at the workshop laughing at his comment. Later Jawed

Habib expressed regrets over his comments and claimed that he did it just to make people laugh.

Hindu Jagran Manch set fire to his effigy and demanded his arrest. The woman shown in the video is identified as Pooja Gupta and she runs a beauty salon. On the basis of a complaint filed by Pooja Gupta, who stays in Baraut town, an FIR was registered at Manzurpur police station in Muzaffarnagar. This apart, the National Commission for Women sent a letter to Uttar Pradesh police and asked them to conduct an inquiry into the incident.

16% Muslims in higher education

Etemaad (January 10) states that while delivering a speech on the occasion of the Foundation Day of Maulana Azad Urdu University, former chairperson of University Grants Commission, Professor Sukhdev Thorat said that only 16% Muslims get higher education which is the lowest among minorities. Jains are the most forward in this connection. Their rate is nearly 72%. The rate for Hindus is 27%. Thorat was speaking on the topic 'Why Muslims are back in higher education?' Mentioning about the National Sample Survey, he said that 70% of Muslims are



unable to go for higher education due to financial difficulties and they stop their education much early. He said that the issue need to be discussed at a higher level.

Barbers told not to trim beard



Roznama Sahara (January 2) reports that the Taliban in Afghanistan has issued a new order directing barbers not to trim beard of any male and neither shave it off. It is mentioned in the order that growing of the beard is a natural process and prophet had stressed that Muslims should not shave off their beard. This order was issued in

Pashtun language and in order to support this claim, quotes from Quran and Hadis were also included. The order has directed all departments to stop employees from trimming their beard. Because maintaining beard is an order of the Prophet and every Muslim should follow it. ■

Committee for maintenance of Jama Masjid

Inquilab (January 1) reports that the Delhi Waqf Board has formed a committee for the maintenance work at the historic Jama Masjid in Delhi which not will not only collect funds for the purpose but will also contact experts on the issue. The committee includes Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid Maulana Syed Ahmad Bukhari, chairman of Waqf Board Amanatullah Khan, Advocate Jamal Akhtar, Razia



Sultana and Hafiz Mahfooz Mohammad. The committee has decided to contact other institutions like Aga Khan Foundation for the maintenance work of

Jama Masjid so that the work starts at the earliest. The committee will work under the supervision of Waqf Board and with the cooperation of Shahi Imam. A decision has also been taken to collect funds for the purpose. ■


Women take part in Camel festival

Roznama Sahara (January 10) reports that for the first time women took part in the King Abdul Aziz Camel Festival organised in Saudi Arabia. In order to participate in the festival, 38 women had registered their names. Later 10 women took part in the

festival by riding on the camels and five women won first prize and took the money. More than 5,000 camels take part in the festival and more than 1 lakh tourists arrive at the festival to watch them. The festival is organised in a 32 square kilometre area. ■

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