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## Uproar over Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb



- Muslims get reservation in government contracts in Karnataka
- Baloch rebels hijack train in Pakistan
- Terrible war between Shias and Sunnis in Syria
- Arab nations present plan for reconstruction of Gaza

*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

A few days ago, Laxman Utekar-directed film 'Chhaava' was released in cinema theatres. The film depicts the brutal killing of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's son, Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj on the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Following this, public anger has erupted against Aurangzeb across the country. The surprising thing is that Muslim organisations and secular parties have jumped into the field in support of bigot Aurangzeb. Urdu media have also launched a campaign to glorify Aurangzeb. The Urdu media and Muslim organisations are targeting the Central government and the BJP in a well-planned manner. Their allegation is that the BJP wants to end the separate identity of Muslims and establish Hindu Rashtra in the country. The recent uproar created by Muslims in support of Aurangzeb in Nagpur cannot be ignored. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has described the riots as a pre-planned conspiracy.

The Congress government in Karnataka has announced four percent reservation to Muslim contractors in government contracts. This has sparked a new controversy in the country. Constitutional experts say that no community can be given reservation on religious basis, whereas the Congress claim that Muslims have become backward, hence the reservation system has been created for their development. This apart, the Siddaramaiah government in its latest budget has opened the government treasury for the welfare of Muslims.

The situation in Pakistan is deteriorating rapidly. Recently, the armed insurgents of Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) who are fighting for the freedom of Balochistan had hijacked the Jaffar Express train travelling from Quetta to Peshawar. Nearly 450 people were travelling in this train. The BLA had freed Baloch citizens, children, women and elderly people earlier itself, but despite that the Pakistan government claimed that its army had freed these hostages. The BLA demanded from the Pakistan government that it immediately release the Baloch freedom fighters lodged in jails, but the Pakistan government rejected this demand. Following this, the BLA announced that since the Pakistan government rejected the demand to release the Baloch prisoners lodged in jails, we have killed 154 people who were taken hostage, majority of whom belonged to Pakistan Army and other security organisations. In another attack, the BLA has confirmed the killing of more than 90 Pakistani soldiers. This apart, they also destroyed eight vehicles of Pakistan Army.

Bloody clashes are going on between Shias and Sunnis in Syria. According to foreign media, nearly 2,000 people were killed in these clashes. This apart, the government soldiers of Syria have gang-raped more than 1,000 women. Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa claimed that the hands of Hezbollah were behind the spread of this violence. Meanwhile, Iraq Prime Minister Shia Al-Sudani claimed that Iraqi security forces have killed the chief of terrorist organisation ISIS, Abu Khadija, with the help of the US soldiers. The new government of Syria has assured to cooperate with Iraq in its campaign against ISIS.



## Row over Mughal emperor Aurangzeb



A few days ago, Laxman Uterkar-directed film 'Chhaava' was released in cinema halls. This film is based on the well-known novel of Shivaji Sawant 'Chhaava.' The film depicts the valour, struggle and martyrdom of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's son Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj. The film also shows the brutal killing of Sambhaji Maharaj by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Following the release of this film, public anger has erupted against Aurangzeb across the country. The surprising thing is that a major section of the Muslims in the country and the secular gang have come out in support of bigot Aurangzeb.

**Aurangabad Times** (March 19) states that violence erupted in Mahal locality in Nagpur after fierce clashes between two communities. Thirty-three policemen were injured in this violence, including three DCPs. The rioters set fire to 12 bikes, several cars and one JCB. The police arrested more than 50 people in this connection. Curfew was imposed in 11 places in Nagpur. According to the newspaper, violence erupted in Nagpur when rumour spread in the city that Islam's holy book Quran was set on fire. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis alleged that the riots were pre-

planned. He appealed to the people to maintain peace. BJP MLA Ram Kadam blamed Samajwadi Party MLA Abu Asim Azmi for the violence. He alleged that Abu Asim Azmi has glorified Aurangzeb. Public anger erupted over this. Congress MP Praniti Shinde alleged that the BJP wants to turn Maharashtra also into a communal state like Gujarat.

**Urdu Times** (March 18) states that the activists of Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal set up a symbolic tomb of Aurangzeb in front of the statue of Shivaji in Mahal locality in Nagpur. A green colour *chadar* was also laid over it on which *kalima* was also written. Later this *chadar* was set on fire. When the news about the burning of the *chadar* on which *kalima* was written spread in the town, Muslim youths got provoked and they reached the spot. There they clashed with the activists of Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal. During this time, their vehicles were set on fire. The police had to use force to control the situation. The police arrested three activists of Bajrang Dal. According to the newspaper, the activists of Vishwa Hindu Parishad were demanding the removal of the tomb of Aurangzeb located in Khuldabad in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar. In this

connection, protests were held in several places in Maharashtra. Some leaders even threatened to break the tomb of Aurangzeb. Following this, the Maharashtra government stepped up security at the tomb of Aurangzeb. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced that those who promote the ideology of Aurangzeb will be strongly crushed. Commissioner of Nagpur Police Ravindra Singhal said the rioters are being identified. After that, stringent action will be taken against the accused.



**Urdu Times** (March 6) states that Congress MP Imran Masood also praised Aurangzeb. BJP MP Jagadambika Pal strongly reacted to it. He said that it is wrong to glorify an oppressor like Aurangzeb. Pal demanded that Rahul Gandhi should take action against Imran Masood. It is worth mentioning that Samajwadi Party legislator Abu Asim Azmi also praised Aurangzeb a lot. Leaders of BJP and Shiv Sena demanded that a case should be registered against Abu Azmi and he should be arrested immediately. A huge ruckus took place in Maharashtra Assembly as well on this issue. Following this, Abu Azmi has been suspended from the Assembly for the entire session. Later, Abu Azmi clarified that his statement was presented in a wrong manner.

**Aurangabad Times** (March 6) states that Uddhav Thackeray demanded that Abu Asim Azmi should be stripped of the membership of the Assembly on sedition charges.

**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (March 8) states that Uddhav Thackeray's son Aaditya Thackeray said in Maharashtra Assembly that Aurangzeb was a thief and a looter. What is the need to give him so much honour? He asked whether those who pay obeisance at the grave of Aurangzeb are his descendants. Aaditya said there were

several Muslims in the army of Shivaji Maharaj. Even some of his bodyguards were Muslims.

**Aurangabad Times** (March 18) states that differences have erupted in Maharashtra's ruling alliance Mahayuti on the question of removing the tomb of Aurangzeb. NCP (Ajit Pawar group) leader Amol Mitkari said the tomb of Aurangzeb is a testament to bravery and nobody has the right to remove the same. If anybody tries to break it, we will oppose it. NCP (Sharad Pawar group) MP Supriya Sule said that nobody should be given the permission to break the tomb of Aurangzeb. It is a historical monument and it is the responsibility of the government to protect it.

**Etemaad** (March 19) states that Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis alleged that the riots in Nagpur were pre-planned. He said that a mob of agitated rioters selectively targeted a few houses and shops. He confirmed that a symbolic grave of Aurangzeb was made out of straw in Mahal locality which was later set on fire. Following this, a rumour was spread in the town that some religious material was also burnt in this fire. On this, more than 300 Muslim youths held a protest against the incident. The police also resorted to mild lathicharge to disperse the rioters. Following this, nearly 300 masked people pelted stones in Hansapuri and also attacked a few people with knife. The third incident took place in Bhaldarpura chowk



are traitors of the country. He said we should not forget that Aurangzeb tried to wipe out the Maratha Empire. Our ideal is Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who is the embodiment of the spirit of Hindutva. Jamaat-e-Islami has condemned the violence that took place in Nagpur. Jamaat-e-Islami alleged that communal powers are inciting people against Muslims under the guise of Aurangzeb.

at night. Here, an agitated mob of nearly 100 people attacked police. Fadnavis alleged that a hospital was damaged and the *murtis* of Hindu Devi-Devatas were set on fire. Petrol bombs were also used in this attack. This clearly shows that it was a well-planned conspiracy to target a particular community.

**Avadhnama** (March 6) reports that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had demanded the Samajwadi Party to immediately expel their MLA Abu Azmi from their party who has been praising Aurangzeb. He urged Maharashtra government to send Abu Azmi to Uttar Pradesh so that he could be given appropriate treatment. Chief Minister Yogi urged the leaders of Samajwadi Party to get the book on Shahjahan from the library of the Assembly and read it. Yogi said that Shahjahan had told his son Aurangzeb that Hindus are better than you, who serve their elderly parents while alive and after their death offer prayers to their ancestors once a year through shraddha. Whereas you made me crave for every drop of water. The chief minister said that no decent Muslim would feel proud about the activities of Aurangzeb.

**Aurangabad Times** (March 19) states that the chief of Bahujan Samaj Party, Mayawati said that if any effort is made to damage any tomb or mausoleum in Maharashtra, then the peace and harmony would be in danger. She demanded that stringent action should be taken against those who spread communalism in Nagpur. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said those who praise Aurangzeb

**Siasat** (March 18) states that Dinesh Sharma, who has filed a case in the court seeking the restoration of Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi, announced that anyone who runs a bulldozer over the grave of Aurangzeb would be given a reward of Rs 21 lakh. He said that Aurangzeb had razed several of our temples. He was a traitor. His grave should be shifted out of this country. His grave should either be in Pakistan or in Mecca-Medina.

**Aurangabad Times** (March 11) states that the chief of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, Asaduddin Owaisi said the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has become a puppet in the hands of the Hindutva ideology and it has been running a propaganda against Muslims for the past 15 years.

Urdu newspapers have also unleashed a campaign to glorify bigot Aurangzeb. These newspapers have composed eulogies in his honour.

**Etemaad** (March 9) said that Aurangzeb used to make his living by stitching caps and he never used to take a single paisa from the government treasury. This is the reason why before his death Aurangzeb had willed that his grave should be kept unpaved and no tomb should be built on it. The newspaper claimed that some communal forces are falsely accusing Aurangzeb of destroying Hindu temples in order to defame him. Whereas the truth is that Aurangzeb had given land to several Hindu mandirs.

**Siasat** (March 5) states that Aurangzeb had won Mansarovar region



and merged it with Bharat. When a border dispute arose between Bharat and China, the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had presented the *firman* of Aurangzeb as documentary evidence.

**Hindustan** (March 9) in an article claimed that Hinduvadi writers had defamed Aurangzeb in a well-planned manner. Recently, two foreign historians had released books. It has been claimed in these books that fake stories had been created in order to defame Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb was a secular ruler and he had the highest number of Hindu *mansabdar* and commanders in his durbar. Aurangzeb had freed Brahmins, Rajputs and Maratha *mansabdars* from the *jazia* tax. He had ensured that the non-Muslims are treated fairly and are given full protection. This apart, Aurangzeb had rewarded the person who had translated Ramayan to Persian.

**Urdu Times** (March 3) states that Aurangzeb was a Sufi. He was among the greatest kings of Bharat. The Mughals had played an important role in the development of this country. He had created such monuments in the country, where people from all over the world are coming to see them. Aurangzeb was not against any religion. He had given equal justice to people of all communities. The allegation against Aurangzeb that he had destroyed Hindu temples is totally wrong. Even if he had destroyed even a single temple, then its real reason is that it has become a centre of unethical activities. Aurangzeb had given special focus for the development of agriculture. He had made irrigation system for farmers and started the system of providing government aid for the development of agriculture. Aurangzeb was among the most learned kings of the country. He was a scholar in Persian and Braj language. Aurangzeb died on March 3, 1707 at the age of 90. That time he had just Rs 88 with him, which he had got by writing Quran. His last rites were conducted using that money. Aurangzeb's



unpaved grave was constructed at the dargah of south's great Sufi Saint Sheikh Burhanuddin.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (March 10) states that Aurangzeb was the greatest ruler of the country. He had ruled the country for nearly 50 years. His sultanate was spread from Afghanistan to Bangladesh and from Ladakh or Tibet to Kerala. He was an efficient administrator. He spent his entire life for the welfare of every Hindustani overlooking religion and communities. He had established several centres in the country for religious education, out of which several centres were temples. In these centres, arrangements were made for the education of Hindus on government expenses. Aurangzeb had imposed a ban on the production of *bhanga* and *charas* in the country. He had also imposed a ban on drinking liquor. During his regime, prostitution was legally banned. While following Shariah, Aurangzeb had imposed a ban on the non-Shariah customs of Akbar and Jehangir. Had he been against Hindus and temples, not even a single Hindu or even a single temple would have existed in our country today.

**Munsif** (May 17) in an article has alleged that the British had made the then historians write a fake history in order to defame a brilliant and secular ruler like Aurangzeb. The newspaper has written that on the directions of the prominent leader of Khilafat agitation Mohammad Ali Jauhar renowned Ulema of Azamgarh Shibli Nomani had written several books on Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. It is said in these books that Aurangzeb was a secular



ruler. He had made arrangements to provide scholarships to Hindu and Muslim students. In his book, Nomani had given a list of 62 prominent courtiers of Aurangzeb, all of whom were Hindus. The newspaper has written that currently there is lot of discussion about the film 'Chhaava' in Maharashtra. It is a fake film and it has been made in order to create an atmosphere against Muslims. The newspaper claimed that the accusation made on Aurangzeb of killing Sambhaji is completely false.

**Etemaad** (March 19) in its editorial alleged that the Sangh Parivar is running a hate campaign against Muslims in Maharashtra. Due to this, communal riots broke out in Nagpur. The BJP came to power due to the Sri Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute. Now it has understood that it could consolidate its vote bank by raising the issue of Aurangzeb's hostility towards Hindus. This is the reason why politics is being played with the grave of Aurangzeb located at Khuldabad locality in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district. The fact is that Union Minister Giriraj Singh, while describing Aurangzeb as 'Khalnayak' started describing the murderer of Gandhi, Nathuram Godse, as a son of Bharat. He has described Aurangzeb as an invader along with Babar. It looks like Giriraj Singh has no understanding about the history of the country. Aurangzeb did not come from outside, instead he was born in a village in Gujarat.

**Siasat** (March 19) in its editorial alleged that Nagpur has been preparing the background for violence for a long time

now. This started with the controversy over the grave of Aurangzeb. At one point of time, films were made in India to convey the message of social causes, but now attempts are being made to fulfil political agenda through films. The unity and harmony of the society are being torn apart with the help of films. The government is fanning the flames of communalism in

order to cover up its failures. The violence that took place in Nagpur is part of this campaign.

**Hindustan Express** (March 19) in its editorial has blamed the ruling party for the riots that took place in Nagpur. The newspaper said the activists of Hindu organisations held a protest demanding the removal of the grave of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb and also burnt his effigy. During this time, a rumour spread that Hindu organisations set Quran also on fire. In order to oppose it, a huge mob of Muslims came out on the streets. The police used force to disperse the mob. Following this, riots broke out in the city. However, the government said that incident of burning Quran was just a rumour. Whereas Muslims claimed that it was not a rumour, instead a truth.

It is worth mentioning that Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has openly delivered a provocative speech against Aurangzeb. He has threatened that those who glorify Aurangzeb will be strongly crushed. When people who sit on power maintain such a mentality, what can one expect from Bajrang Dal or Vishwa Hindu Parishad? The government is deliberately hurting the religious sentiments of Muslims. The newspaper said that there is strong evidence that the *chadar* on which *kalima* was written was set on fire.

**Urdu Times** (March 19) in its editorial said the results of the game being played in Maharashtra over the personality of Aurangzeb has finally come out. In



Nagpur, there were no riots in the past 100 years. Now, the flames of communal riots have spread there as well. Chief Minister of the state Devendra Fadnavis himself is a legislator from Nagpur. There is a BJP government at the Centre as well. In such a situation, the spread of riots is a concern. Now the chief minister is saying that this riots is the result of a planned conspiracy.



For the past several days, Bajrang Dal, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and other saffron organisations have been creating provocation in the town in the name of Aurangzeb. From prime minister to chief minister promoted the controversial film 'Chhaava.' Similarly, in the film 'The Kashmir Files' also efforts were made to spread hatred against Muslims. The truth is that the saffron brigade in Nagpur has publically set on fire the *chadar* on which *kalima* was written and made its video viral so that the atmosphere could deteriorate. It is totally correct for Fadnavis to say that the riots were well-planned. Yes, the riots were planned and its planning was done by the people of saffron organisations.

The newspaper said that was protesting in Nagpur, 500 kilometres away from Aurangzeb's tomb in Khuldabad, not unleashing communal poison? Why the government did not try to stop it? Also, why the government is not taking action against such elements? Chief Minister Fadnavis is just pouring ghee into the fire. He had given the statement that his government wanted to uproot Aurangzeb's grave. When a chief minister of a state himself talks like this who will save the state from defame and riots? All small and big time leaders of BJP have started demanding uprooting the grave of Aurangzeb. On this, the Godi media have created such an atmosphere that if there is any big issue in Maharashtra, it is the grave of Aurangzeb and once his grave is removed all the problems of Maharashtra will be resolved.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (March 19) in its editorial alleged that whatever has

happened in Nagpur in Maharashtra is enough to open the eyes of people. The headquarters of RSS is also in Nagpur. An atmosphere of peace has always prevailed there. Right wing organisations deliberately held a protest in Muslim-majority region Mahal demanding the removal of Aurangzeb's tomb. Several objectionable slogans were raised against Muslims there. Even the *chadar* on which *kalima* was written was also set on fire. On this the people got provoked, because these were done in a planned manner. Thousands of protesters were already prepared against the Muslims. These protesters were brought from outside Nagpur. They started stone-pelting at Mominpura locality. Due to this, the situation turned further worse. However, the police tried to control the situation. Several policemen were also injured in it.

**Munsif** (March 7) in its editorial alleged that the BJP, which has been ruling the country, wants to remove the country's history and create a new history, which is based on hatred towards a few communities of the society. They want to rule the country for centuries on this basis. In this connection, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had clearly given the message time and again. In the NCERT textbooks, chapters dealing with Muslim rulers are being removed and those people who had no role in the freedom movement of the country are being presented as heroes. Yes, they had definitely propagated Hindutva and divided the people of this country on communal lines. The newspaper alleged that old Muslim rulers are being termed as cruel and anti-Hindu.



**Hindustan** (March 6) in its editorial alleged that the government is running a campaign against Muslims across the country. In this connection, it is necessary to throw light on some news. The first news is related to Maharashtra. Under the guise of Abu Asim Azmi's statement on Aurangzeb, not only a case was registered against him, he was also expelled from the entire session of the Assembly. Whereas the second news is from Delhi. A few days ago, the national president of Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), M K Faizi, was arrested from Delhi on fake charges. SDPI is linked to Popular Front of India. Earlier, Popular Front was also

targeted based on fake charges. The third news is from Sambhal. A judge has described the Shahi Juma Masjid in Sambhal as a disputed structure. One thing that is clear from the three news is that currently only Muslims are at the target of saffron rulers.

**Roznama Sahara** (March 19) in its editorial alleged that Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal and other saffron organisations have become paramilitary squads, who are conspiring to kill Muslims. Efforts are being made to erase the religious identity of Muslims and the government is watching this disgusting game as silent spectators. The newspaper alleged that the *chadar* on which *kalima* was written was deliberately burned in Nagpur. When the Muslims opposed it, they were brutally beaten and now they were arrested and punished. Had the government been really fair, why did not it take stringent action against those who were trying to attack the grave of Aurangzeb?

## Muslims get reservation in government contracts in Karnataka

**Aurangabad Times** (March 16) states that the Congress government in Karnataka has decided to give four percent reservation to Muslim contractors in government contracts. In this connection, a Bill will be presented in the next session of the Assembly. BJP MP Ravishankar Prasad criticised this decision of Karnataka government. He said that the BJP will oppose this decision because reservation in government contracts is unconstitutional. He said that reservation could be given on the basis of social backwardness, but giving reservation on religious basis is unconstitutional. Presenting the budget in the Assembly on March 7, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddharamaiah said that a provision for 4 percent reservation for Muslims will be made in contracts for

public construction work under Section 2B. Its sole purpose is to financially strengthen the Muslims in the state.

In this budget, a decision has been taken to provide a monthly allowance of Rs 6,000. This apart, Rs 150 crore will be spent for the development of Waqf properties and Kabristans this year. For the development of Urdu schools, an allocation of Rs 100 crore has also been made. Whereas a provision of Rs 1,000 crore has been made for various welfare programmes meant for minorities. BJP spokesperson Shahzad Poonawala and former minister Syed Shahnawaz Hussein have opposed this decision of the state government.

**Siasat** (March 18) states that the BJP has announced that it would oppose this decision of Karnataka government.



Opposition leader in Karnataka Assembly, R Ashok alleged that the state government is appeasing Muslims. Targeting Chief Minister Siddharamaiah, he said the chief minister wears Muslim topi and celebrates the birthday of Tipu Sultan. This apart, he had also announced salary for the imams of the masjids. Ashok said the BJP had made Dr APJ Abdul Kalam as the President. This apart, the Modi government at the Centre had made Najma Heptullah and Arif Mohammad Khan as Governors. Hence this allegation is wrong that the BJP is against Muslims.

**Hindustan Express** (March 9) said that the BJP has opposed the budget of Karnataka government. However, this budget is of more than Rs 4 lakh crore. In this budget, a provision of Rs 4,500 crore only has been allocated for the welfare of minorities, which is less than one percent of the total budget. Whereas the population of minorities in the state is more than 20 percent. The newspaper alleged that the BJP is displaying a politics based on complex mentality. The BJP has described this budget of Karnataka government as 'halal budget' and 'Pakistani or Islamic budget.' The policy of BJP is anti-Muslim from the beginning. After coming to power, the Modi government at the Centre has either closed almost all programmes meant for the welfare of minorities or sharply reduced the money meant for them. The

newspaper alleged that the Congress has made tall promises for minorities in its election manifesto. In its election manifesto, the Congress had said that a special fund of Rs 10,000 crore would be created for the welfare of minorities, but this budget has no mention of this fund. The newspaper has advised the minorities that they fight for their legitimate rights.

**Siasat** (March 8) in its editorial alleged that the BJP has been depriving the Muslims of their rights. If any other party tries to do justice with Muslims, the BJP is not ready to accept that as well.

**Hindustan** (March 17) in its editorial said that among the minorities across the world, Indian Muslims are the most oppressed and deprived. They have lagged behind other communities in the society in every respect. Muslims have been demanding for a long time that the allocation in the budget for their welfare should be proportionate to their population. Seeing the legitimate demand of Muslims, the Congress government had constituted the Sachar Committee. In its report, the committee has stressed on separate allocation for Muslims in different ministries but after the end of the Congress government, this issue has ended forever. The issue of reservation for Muslims has been a topic of debate time and again. Anti-Muslim BJP is opposing it for the votes of the majority community.



**Siasat** (March 16) in its editorial said that Karnataka's Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivkumar has made it clear that all minorities in the state will get four percent reservation. Despite this, the BJP is opposing it in order to mislead the voters of majority community. The policies of BJP had always been anti-Muslim. Among the BJP-ruled state governments, the programmes meant for the welfare of minorities are being shut down, because the

aim of the BJP is to keep the Muslims weak and backward forever.

**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (March 19) in its editorial claimed that Muslims have become the most backward in political, financial and educational sectors in the country where Muslims had ruled for one thousand years. The recommendations made by the Sachar Committee for their uplift have been thrown into the dust bin by the Modi government.

## Ban on two separatist organisations in Jammu-Kashmir

**Chattan** (March 12) states that the Union Home Ministry has imposed a ban on two separatist organisations in Jammu-Kashmir for five years on charges of illegal activities and for promoting terrorism. As per a notification of the home ministry, a ban has been imposed on Awami Action Committee, the organisation headed by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, and Jammu-Kashmir Ittehadul Muslimeen, headed by Masroor Abbas Ansari, for the next five years. It is being said in the notification that Awami Action Committee is involved in illegal activities, which are harmful to the unity, integrity, sovereignty and the security of the country. Those belonging to this organisation are involved in separating Jammu-Kashmir from the country and in anti-national propaganda. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the agencies belonging to the state government have filed cases against Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and many others. It is also stated in the notification that people linked to Jammu-Kashmir Ittehadul Muslimeen have been promoting separatist activities. This organisation has also been accused of collecting money to promote the agenda of separating Jammu-Kashmir from Bharat.

Jammu-Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah told correspondents that



the Central government did not hold any discussions with the state government to impose a ban on these two organisations and neither we have been taken into confidence in this connection. He said that I am against this decision of the Union government. Abdullah said that the chief of Awami Action Committee Mirwaiz Umar Farooq is an Islamic scholar of Kashmir. Whereas the chief of Jammu-Kashmir Ittehadul Muslimeen is Shia leader Masroor Abbas Ansari. Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the ban has been imposed on the two organisations as per the policy of the Central government to stop the terrorist activities and wipe out separatist organisations.

**Chattan** (March 14) states that the Central government has detained Mirwaiz Umar Farooq in his house. Former chief minister of Jammu Kashmir and PDP chairperson Mehbooba Mufti criticised the

detention of Farooq. She described this decision of Union government as against democracy.

It is worth mentioning that the Union home ministry has imposed a ban on nearly a dozen separatist organisations in Jammu-Kashmir in the past five years. In 2019, a ban was imposed on Jamaat e Islami Jammu Kashmir under the UAPA Act. One month later, a ban was imposed on another separatist organisation, Jammu-Kashmir Liberation Front. On October 2023, a ban was imposed on Jammu Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (JKDFP), an

organisation headed by Shabbir Ahmad Shah. Two months later, the Union home ministry had declared Masrat Alam's organisation Muslim League and Tehreek-e-Hurriyat as banned organisations. On February 28, 2024, the home ministry also imposed a ban on Jammu-Kashmir Muslim Conference (Sumji faction) and Jammu-Kashmir Muslim Conference (Bhatt faction). On March 16, 2024, a ban was imposed on four groups belonging to Jammu Kashmir People's League and Jammu-Kashmir People's Freedom League.

## Spread of Christianity among Muslims of Uttar Pradesh



their children and healthcare facilities. Aslam Khan, who belongs to Balrampur district which borders Nepal, said his family was earlier a victim of financial difficulties, but now due to the help of missionaries, the financial situation of his family has improved a lot. His children are enrolled in English

**Aurangabad Times** (March 2) states that now the Christian missionaries are converting financially weak Muslims. As per a report of Amar Ujala, in February 2025, a dozen Muslim families at Katsaria and Kamlapur in Hargav and Sidhouli areas in Sitapur district adopted Christianity. Similarly, in 10 villages in Ambedkar Nagar and Sultanpur, Muslim families abandoned Islam and adopted Christianity. It has been reported that the masjids in these villages have been converted to churches. According to knowledgeable sources, Christianity is rapidly spreading among the backward class Muslims staying in the border areas of Balrampur and Shravasti. As per the news, the Christian missionaries are not only providing financial help every month to the Muslim families who have converted, arrangements have also been made for the education of

medium schools.

In the year 2022, the STF has unravelled conversion in Fatehpur. In this connection, an issue of more than Rs 60 crore funding from abroad came to light. It is being said that a man named Prashant Masih has played an important role in converting Muslims to Christians. Now the ATS is investigating his bank accounts and other sources of income. This apart, a pastor named David Asthana had played a significant role in religious conversion in Awadh region. According to intelligence sources, Christian missionaries are doing largescale conversion in Maharajganj district under Gorakhpur division. In Jogiyabari locality here, hundreds of Karwala families have adopted Christianity. Similarly, the entire Karwala locality in Mathuranagar adopted Christianity.

## Death penalty for religious conversion in Madhya Pradesh



**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (March 9) states that the BJP government in Madhya Pradesh has decided to award death sentence to those involved in religious conversion. While delivering a speech in Bhopal, Chief Minister of state Dr Mohan Yadav said necessary amendments are being made in the Religious Freedom Act. Congress legislator Arif Masood criticised this announcement of the chief minister. He said that as per the Constitution, every individual has the full freedom to choose a religion of his choice. If the state government takes any such decision, then it is an open violation of the Constitution.

**Hindustan Express** (March 12) in its editorial said the Madhya Pradesh government is creating a provision to award death sentence to the accused involved in religious conversion by making an important amendment in the anti-conversion law. If it happens, Madhya Pradesh will become the first state in the country to award death sentence to the accused involved in religious conversions. The newspaper said that under the present law on religious conversion in Madhya Pradesh, the accused involved in the conversion could be awarded a jail term of maximum 10 years. The question that arises here is what is the reason for the Madhya Pradesh government to make the law regarding conversion so stringent? The

newspaper said that as per Indian Constitution, any individual in this country can preach his religion and run a campaign for conversion, but the BJP leaders do not like this provision in the Constitution. Nine states in the country have laws to prevent illegal conversions. They include Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat,

Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh. Now Rajasthan and Maharashtra have joined this race.

It is worth mentioning that in November 2020, the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh had decided to make a law to stop forced conversions. An ordinance was also issued with this aim. Later this ordinance was passed by the Assembly. According to official sources, 835 cases were registered in Uttar Pradesh during 2020-24 and 1,682 people were arrested on charges of illegal conversion. Among them, 124 were released due to lack of evidence.

Similarly, more than 200 cases were registered in Madhya Pradesh in the past four years. In Madhya Pradesh, there is a provision to award a five-year jail term apart from a fine of Rs 25,000 to those involved in forceful conversion under the anti-conversion law. This apart, if any person converts a minor, or people belonging to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, he will be awarded a jail term ranging from two years to 10 years apart from a fine of Rs 50,000. If any person marries by concealing his religion, he will be awarded a jail term extending from three years to 10 years. This apart, a fine of Rs 50,000 will also be imposed on him. ■



## Baloch rebels hijack train in Pakistan



**Urdu Times** (March 12) reports that the fighters of Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) hijacked Jaffar Express in Pakistan and took 450 of its passengers as hostages for nearly 24 hours. Spokesperson of Pakistan Army Lt General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry claimed that the Army killed all the 33 attackers who hijacked the train. He admitted that the assailants killed 40 people, out of which 21 were passengers and the rest were employees of the police and the army. Chaudhry told correspondents that the army freed 190 passengers during its operation. On the other hand, the BLA claimed in a press statement that hundreds of Pakistani soldiers were killed in this attack. It is said in the press statement that the fighters of BLA had already freed Baloch citizens, women and children who were travelling in Jaffar Express. The statement of the spokesperson of Pakistan army that these passengers were freed by the army was baseless.

The spokesperson of BLA claimed that after hijacking the train, the BLA demanded the Pakistan government to set free all Balochi freedom fighters and militiamen but the Pakistan army did not release these prisoners. Following it, the BLA killed 154 people who were taken hostage in the train, majority of whom

belonged to Pakistan army and other security agencies.

**Etemaad** (March 13) states that the spokesperson of Pakistan Army, Lt General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry claimed that no passenger suffered any injury during the army action. He said the Baloch rebels had seated a suicide attacker among the passengers and threatened that if the army takes any action against them, then the suicide bomber would explode himself during which the passengers taken hostage would also be killed.

A commando squad of the Pakistani army had very carefully made this suicide attacker the target of their bullets so that he could not endanger the lives of the passengers by launching an attack. He also claimed that the Pakistani Air Force, Pakistan Army, Frontier Constabulary and SSG took part in this operation. Pakistan's home minister Mohsin Naqvi claimed the attackers were in touch with their masters in Afghanistan through satellite phone and they were following their instructions. According to BBC, 200 coffins were sent from Quetta to the spot by a special train to bury the bodies.

**Munsif** (March 14) states that a huge uproar took place in Pakistan's Parliament on the issue of hijacking Jaffar Express. The Opposition alleged that the



surrounding areas. A passenger named Mehboob Hussain claimed that the attackers killed nearly 100 Pakistani soldiers, jawans of Frontier Corps and police personnel during the attack. He also said that the attackers had set up their bases in the nearby hills. Meanwhile, nearly 100 attackers had surrounded the train from all four sides.

government has failed to maintain peace in the country and there is a rapid increase in terrorist incidents in the country. Opposition leader Omar Ayub Khan asked whether the intelligence agencies were sleeping, as they have failed to provide any kind of information regarding the plans of the terrorists.

As per another news, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif made a surprise visit to Balochistan. There were 12 other ministers also with him apart from Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar. Talking to correspondents, Shehbaz Sharif alleged that the hands of two neighbouring countries were behind this incident.

According to Pakistani Media **Geo News** (March 15), the Pakistan army took a few selected journalists in a helicopter from Quetta to Bolan. The BLA targeted the Jaffar Express travelling from Quetta to Peshawar in Bolan locality. According to the reporters, the attackers first lifted the railway track and later they opened indiscriminate fire on the train engine. After the train stopped, the attackers sneaked into seven coaches of the train and they started checking the identity cards of the passengers. The passengers were divided into five groups. One group was that of Baloch, the other had Sindhi, the third was Punjabi, the fourth were police personnel and the fifth had the soldiers. The journalists were not allowed to enter the coaches of the train. The journalists said blood has been spilled in huge quantity outside the bogies of the train and a foul smell was emanating from the bodies strewn all around. The journalists found nearly two dozen bodies lying in

Another passenger, Zahid Hussain, told correspondents that the attackers had freed 145-150 Baloch residents, elderly persons, women and children. These people reached Mach railway station on foot.

Later, the Frontier Force of Pakistan made arrangements to send them to Quetta. Another passenger claimed that 150-200 people were killed in this attack. He said the attackers selectively targeted Pakistani soldiers, police personnel and the employees of Frontier Corps, who were on their way from Balochistan to their houses in Punjab to celebrate Eid.

**Inquilab** (March 15) states that the spokespersons of India and Afghanistan governments have rejected the allegation of Pakistan government that the hands of any of their agencies were behind the hijacking of the train. The spokespersons of the two countries claimed that the Pakistan government has failed to curb terrorism and hence they are targeting the foreign governments now.

**Roznama Sahara** (March 17) states that BLA has claimed that more than 90 Pakistani soldiers were killed in an attack on a convoy of Pakistan Army. As per a press statement of BLA, the fighters of BLA's Majeed and Fatah brigades attacked a convoy of Pakistan Army and destroyed eight buses. Whereas the Pakistan police claimed only five Pakistani soldiers were killed in this attack. The BLA has also released a video of the attack in which it has been stated that the attack was carried out in Nushki locality in Balochistan.

**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (March 16) states that Pakistan has levelled serious

charges against India in connection with the attack on train. Spokesperson of Pakistan army Lt General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry claimed that the hands of India were behind this attack and it is funding to promote terrorist activities in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Pakistan also claimed that the Indian intelligence agency is running these terrorist activities with the help of Afghanistan government. The newspaper claimed that Pakistan is now preparing to launch retaliatory action and it will carry out attack on Afghanistan any time.

**Hindustan Express** (March 17) states that it has been claimed in a press statement of Pakistan army that the Pakistani security personnel have killed nine terrorists in two separate operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The army carried out this operation in Mohmand and in Dera Ismail Khan. During the operation held in Mohmand, the security forces raided a base of the terrorists and in the ensuing armed clash, two Pakistani soldiers and seven terrorists were killed. Whereas in Dera Ismail Khan, the terrorists attacked a police outpost. The soldiers killed two terrorists in retaliatory action.

According to Pakistani newspaper **Jung** (March 15), the founder of banned organisation Lashkar-e-Islam, Mufti Munir Shakir, was killed in a bomb explosion. SHO of Urmar police station Noor Mohammad said as soon as Mufti Munir entered the masjid, the bomb that was kept there was triggered through remote control. Senior Superintendent of Police of



Peshawar, Masood Ahmad said Mufti Munir had informed police two weeks ago that there had been a threat to kill him at the behest of terrorist organisation ISIS's Khorasan chapter. Following this, he was provided security. Mufti Munir belongs to Bangash tribe. He laid the foundation of the extremist organisation named Lashkar-e-Islam in 2004. Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur condemned the killing of Mufti Munir. He said Mufti Munir belongs to Deoband ideology.

**Chattan** (March 8) states that in the Global Terrorism Index, Pakistan has moved to the second position from the fourth place. The most terrorism-affected nation in the world is Burkina Faso. Pakistan's position comes next. Similarly, Syria is in the third position. Compared to 2023, there is a 45 percent increase in terrorist incidents in Pakistan in 2024. The highest number of attacks were carried out in Pakistan by the BLA. At the second position is Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and on the third position is Balochistan Liberation Front. Analysts say that terrorist incidents have come down in countries like Iraq and Syria.

## 100 Ahmadiyyas arrested for offering namaz in Pakistan

**Chattan** (March 4) reports that the Pakistan government has stepped up its campaign against Ahmadiyya Muslims on the occasion of Ramzan. Recently, the Sialkot police arrested 23 people offering

Juma namaz in a masjid. A person who stays in Daska filed a complaint with police that people belonging to Ahmadiyya sect were entering masjids and offering Juma namaz. It is an open violation of the





Constitution of Pakistan. On this, the police registered a case under sections pertaining to the law against insulting Islam and arrested 23 people belonging to Ahmadiyya sect. Whereas in Faisalabad district, 40 Ahmadiyya Muslims were taken into custody on charges of offering namaz. In Gujranwal and Sheikhpura also the police have taken into custody 10 and 12 Ahmadiyya Muslims respectively. This apart, in Jhang also three Ahmadiyyas were arrested. These people were delivering Khutba (sermon) in Arabic in a masjid.

According to a police officer, Anwar Babar, Ahmadiyya Muslims have already been declared as non-Muslims in Pakistan. In this connection, an amendment has been made in the Constitution of Pakistan during the regime of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. As per this amendment, no Ahmadiyya can neither offer namaz in any masjid nor can deliver Khutba. According to Pakistani newspaper 'Jung,' a case has been registered against 23 Ahmadiyyas on charges of offering namaz in a masjid in Sargodha district but they were not arrested. Spokesperson of Jamat-e-Ahmadiyya in Pakistan Amir Mahmoud said that stopping Ahmadiyyas of their religious worship is a violation of the Constitution of Pakistan and the Islamic rules. He alleged that Ahmadiyyas have been stopped from entering masjid throughout Pakistan and they are not given permission to bury the bodies in Kabristan. He alleged that due to pressure from fundamentalists, the Pakistan government

is registering fake cases against Ahmadiyyas.

On the other hand, chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council Tahir Mahmoud Ashrafi said that the Constitution of Pakistan, law and mazhab-e-Islam do not allow any non-Muslim to adopt Islamic ways. He said that it has been clarified in the Constitution that Ahmadiyyas do not have the right to offer namaz in masjid. They could construct separate places of

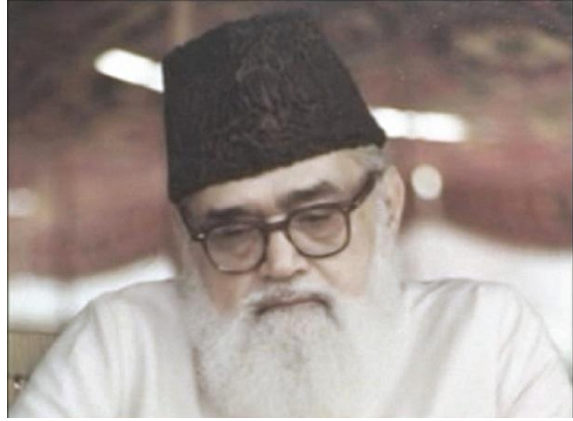
worship and Kabristans, but they did not pay any attention to it. Another leader of Pakistan Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya, Rashid Ahmad, alleged that this year the fundamentalists had destroyed 51 Kabrs of Ahmadiyyas. Similarly, huge mobs had damaged five places of worship of Ahmadiyyas. He complained that fundamentalist elements are doing social and economic boycott of Ahmadiyyas.

**Hindustan** (March 16) states that the founder of Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) Althaf Hussain has condemned the attacks on the shops and the places of worship of Ahmadiyyas in different cities of Pakistan. He urged the people of Pakistan that they do not take part in this campaign of fundamentalist maulavis. In Pakistan, religious frenzy is being spread as part of a well-planned conspiracy. The lives of Ahmadiyyas are in danger. Their women are being humiliated. Altaf Hussain said if Pakistan government had amended the Constitution earlier itself and declared Ahmadiyyas as non-Muslims, then why are they being prosecuted? He said that if you attack any individual just for him being Hindu, Christian, Jew and even Ahmadiyya, then it is against the teachings of the Prophet and Quran.

**Background:** In both India and Pakistan, fundamentalist Muslims are running a massive campaign against the people of Ahmadiyya community. Towards the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, Mirza Ghulam

Ahmad, a resident of Sialkot, had established the Ahmadiyya sect. The British government had promoted this sect. The British government donated thousands of acres of land in a town named Qadian in Gurdaspur district in India in order to establish a new city. The Ahmadiyyas had played an active role in the creation of Pakistan. They were hopeful that after the creation of Pakistan, the British will hand over the reins of Pakistan to Sir Mohammad Zafarullah Khan, but the British handed over the reins of Pakistan to Muslim League leader Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Ahmadiyya leader Sir Zafarullah remain the foreign minister of Pakistan for seven years.

In 1953, widespread anti-Ahmadiyya riots took place in Pakistan. More than one lakh people were killed in these riots. Jamaat-e-Islami founder Maulana Maududi was the mastermind of these riots. The Munir Commission was formed in 1954 for investigation into these riots. On the basis of the report of the commission, 17 maulanas were awarded death sentence, including Maulana Maududi. However, later military dictator Ayub Khan commuted the death sentence of all the accused and released them from jail. Due to



the pressure of radical Muslim organisations, the Constitution of Pakistan was amended in 1974 and Ahmadiyyas were declared as non-Muslims.

It is worth mentioning that after the creation of Pakistan, a split took place in Ahmadiyya Jamaat. One group maintained their headquarters in Qadian, whereas the other group established their new headquarters in Rabwah in Pakistan. Following the anti-Ahmadiyya riots in Pakistan, the Ahmadi Caliph fled to London to save his life. In India also, Jamiat Ulema and other Muslim organisations have been demanding the Indian government to declare Ahmadiyyas as non-Muslims.

## Resignation of Afghanistan's Interior Minister



**Inquilab** (March 16) states that Afghanistan's Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani has resigned from his post. He has handed over his resignation to Taliban's supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada. As per media reports, Akhundzada has accepted his resignation. However, though this resignation does not cite any reasons, it

is said that there are huge internal differences among the Taliban leadership on several issues. Due to this, Sirajuddin Haqqani has not been coming to his ministry for some time now.

It is to be noted that Afghanistan's Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai had also resigned from his post. He said that the doors of education should be opened for women in Afghanistan, because this ban is not in accordance with Shariah. After this statement by him, trouble has erupted in the ruling Taliban leadership in Afghanistan. It is also speculated that Taliban's supreme

leader Hibatullah Akhundzada had ordered his arrest but Stanikzai left for Dubai from Kabul before his arrest. Later he had sent his resignation letter to the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Since then,

Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai is living in exile. Earlier, Afghanistan's deputy interior minister Mohammad Nabi Omari had also demanded that the doors of education should be opened to women.

## Roza Iftar organised for the first time in royal palace in Britain

**Hindustan** (March 6) states that for the first time in the history of Britain, Roza Iftar was organised at the official residence of the British King. Nearly 350 distinguished Muslim leaders took part in it. This iftar was organised at St George Hall. This hall is situated on the premises of Windsor Castle, the official residence of British King. The King of Britain, Charles III and his wife were also present to welcome the guests invited for the Roza Iftar programme. The azan for namaz was given before the iftar at the royal palace. This was the first time any person was given the opportunity to give the azan for namaz at the official residence of the British King. Recently, Muslim leaders living in Britain complained that a sentiments of public anger against Muslims and Islam is growing rapidly in the British society. It is said that there are 10 percent Muslims among the total population of Britain.



**Hindustan Express** (March 3) states that like in the US, a campaign against illegal infiltrators has been stepped up in Britain as well. There are large numbers of Muslims among the infiltrators, hence sentiments of public anger are rapidly growing among the Muslims in Britain. As per an official report, the British home ministry has set up a new wing called Immigration Enforcement. Nearly 1,000 secret agents have been recruited for this department. According to the British media, the secret agents are investigating those places including saloons, restaurants

and offices which are considered as the bases of those who illegally infiltrated into Britain. According to foreign media, approximately 500 infiltrators are taken into custody every week in Britain.

**Etemaad** (March 2) states that after the Gaza war, there had been a rapid increase in incidents against Islam and the Muslims. As per an official report, a total of 5,837 incidents of Islamophobia have been registered with police. Whereas in 2023, the number of such incidents was 3,767. Similarly, in 2022, this number was 2201. It is confirmed from this data that there is a rapid increase in hatred against Muslims in Britain as well, which is considered as the most liberal and secular society in Europe. As per official report, after the Gaza war, the online anti-Muslim trend has got a new direction. Recently, an Islamic extremist in Southport in Britain killed three minors. It is being said that the Roza Iftar organised by British King Charles III is an important step towards eliminating the anti-Muslim sentiments.



## Wave of Islamic radicalism in Europe



**Aurangabad Times** (March 10) states that the Spain Police have started a nationwide campaign against Islamic terrorism. Till now, 10 Muslims have been arrested on charges of terrorist activities. These arrests have been made by the anti-terrorism department of Spain. Majority of those who have been arrested belong to Pakistan and Iran. On March 6, the police have produced 12 so-called terrorists before the national investigation court. They were accused of promoting terrorism and recruiting people for terrorist organisations. The accused were also charged with collecting money for terrorist activities. There was one woman among those arrested. This woman

has been running an online Islamic group. This group has been publishing material related to Islamic terrorism on social media and has been inciting people to take part in terrorist activities.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (March 5) states that in Mannheim city in Germany, an Islamic extremist crushed to death two persons using his vehicle and also injured several persons. According to police, when an Easter carnival was being organised in the city, a person ran his vehicle over the crowd. According to police, a Muslim refugee was speedily driving a black vehicle and he deliberately crushed the Christians taking part in the carnival. According to the newspaper, there has been a huge increase in Islamic extremist activities in Germany recently. In the past three months, four extremists had killed dozens of people by crushing them to death using vehicles. Whereas in another incident, an Islamic extremist killed two elderly persons using knife. It is to be noted that the German government had imposed a ban on a dozen Islamic extremist groups and also sealed six masjids.

## Terrible war between Shias and Sunnis in Syria



Over 2,000 people were killed in the war which was taking place between Shias and Sunnis for the past one week in Syria and more than 1,000 women had been gang-raped.

**Etemaad** (March 8) reports that when Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which has seized power in Syria, tried to arrest a few supporters of deposed Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, Shia mobs launched an attack on government soldiers, during which 12 soldiers were killed. It is worth mentioning that HTS has now taken the role of the Syrian Army. This apart, bloody wars have begun between the two sides in the Shia-majority regions of Syria. Two prominent Shia-majority regions of Syria namely Latakia and Tartus have become the centres of this war. It is worth mentioning that the deposed president of Syria, Bashar Al-Assad, belonged to Latakia.

According to Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, more than 2,000 people were killed in these clashes. Majority of those killed belonged to the Alawite group among the Shia sect. As per a press statement issued by this organisation, more than 500 soldiers have been killed in these clashes. It has also been claimed in the statement that the government soldiers

have gang-raped more than 1,000 women. The government has cut off electricity and water supply to the entire region for the past one week. Whenever the citizens come out of their houses for water and ration, the government soldiers kill them. According to this organisation, more than 10 lakh Shias have fled from their houses and took refuge in neighbouring countries in order to save their lives and this situation still prevails.

On the other hand, a spokesperson of Syria's defence ministry claimed that the supporters of Bashar Al-Assad are trying to overthrow the government with foreign help so that deposed President Al-Assad could be brought back to power in Syria. They are getting huge financial help and supply of weapons from abroad. The government claimed that 159 government soldiers were killed in the clashes, whereas nearly 500 supporters of deposed president Bashar Al-Assad were also killed in these clashes.

**Avadhnama** (March 10) has alleged that the government army is indulging in loot in Shia-majority regions and gang-raping women. The newspaper claimed that thousands of corpses are rotting on roads and inside houses. According to the newspaper, the

government soldiers are setting fire to the prominent dargahs, tombs and masjids of Shias and destroying them and are also selectively killing Shias. As per another news, Syria's caretaker president Ahmed Al Sharaa said we are not against any Syrian citizen, but some people are trying to disturb peace in our country at the behest of foreigners. We have appealed to all citizens that they hand over their weapons to the government, but the mischievous elements have deliberately not handed over their weapons to the government and now they are trying to create disturbance. He said we will rest only after wiping out each and every rebel. He also alleged that armed gangs are carrying out attacks on government army.

**Munsif** (March 10) states that the number of those killed are more than 2,000. Syria's caretaker president Ahmed Al-Sharaa alleged that the hands of Hezbollah were behind the spread of this disturbance. Iran has been providing weapons to Hezbollah. A top official of government army told journalists that the hands of Hezbollah were behind the disturbances. The rebels are getting large quantities of weapons from Lebanon. This apart, the fighters of Hezbollah have infiltrated Syria in huge numbers at the behest of Iran. Recently, armed gangs of Shias infiltrated into Syria through the sea. He alleged that Iran once again wants to bring back Bashar Al-Assad to power in Syria. Governor of Latakia Mohammad Othman told news channel 'Al Arabia' that foreign powers are conspiring to spread the flames of rebellion against the government and overthrow the present government. They once again want Shias to seize the power in Syria. He said the government will not allow these elements to spread disturbance and they will be strongly crushed.

**Urdu Times** (March 12) reports that the government has announced suspension of military operations against the rebels.



Syria's caretaker president Ahmed Al-Sharaa, while addressing namazis in a masjid in Damascus, said that rebels have been wiped out from majority of the regions in Syria.

**Etemaad** (March 1) states that Israel has announced that its army will remain deployed in Mount Hermon (Jabal El-Sheikh) in south Lebanon. Israel claimed that it does not trust the new government in Syria. Israel spokesperson confirmed that Israeli aircraft carried out attacks on Syria four times recently and targeted several military bases. The spokesperson said that it is very much important for the Israeli Army to remain deployed in Mount Hermon in south Syria because the military activities of four nations namely Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine could be observed from there.

**Roznama Sahara** (March 16) states that US Vice-President J D Vance launched an attack on the new government in Syria while talking to correspondents. He said the US is not sending any extra soldiers to Syria but will take all possible steps to provide diplomatic and financial help for the protection of minorities there. He said the stand being adopted by the Syrian government against Christians and other minorities is unacceptable. In this connection, the US is talking to its allies so that security could be provided to the Christians and other minorities living in Syria. It is worth mentioning that more than 2,000 US soldiers are present in Syria earlier itself.



## Arab nations present plan for reconstruction of Gaza



**Inquilab** (March 14) states that a top official of the US also took part in the summit meeting of the foreign ministers of Arab nations held in Qatar. In this meeting, discussions were held on the proposal by Egypt for reconstruction of Gaza. A spokesperson of the foreign affairs ministry of Egypt confirmed this. The spokesperson said that a high-level delegation of Egypt and other Arab nations is going to the United States. This delegation will hold talks with the US on the Gaza reconstruction plan. Following this, a summit will be held in Cairo with the help of Palestine government and the United Nations with the purpose of collecting funds for this project. The draft of the project for reconstruction of Gaza has been prepared by a group of experts in Egypt. This draft is of 100 pages, and it has been prepared in English and Arabic. This draft was distributed at the summit of the Arab nations held in Cairo recently.

**Urdu Times** (March 5) states that according to Egypt's plan for the future of Gaza, Hamas will be separated from the government and a caretaker administration will be established in Gaza, which will work with the cooperation of Arab, Muslim and Western nations. It will oversee the reconstruction of Gaza. This plan has no mention of elections or about a future government. A senior spokesperson of

Hamas, Sami Abu Zuhri, rejected the draft prepared by Egypt. Zuhri said the decision about the future of Gaza will be decided only by the people of Palestine. He said we will not allow any foreign power to interfere in Gaza.

**Siasat** (March 15) states that the US has begun talks with three African nations for the rehabilitation of displaced Palestinians so that the displaced Palestinians in Gaza could be settled on the land of these countries. In this connection, the Trump government is holding talks with three nations namely Sudan, Somalia and Somaliland. Israel's finance minister has given the indication in Israel Parliament that Trump's plan to occupy the Gaza Strip and evict its population is being considered.

**Etemaad** (March 9) states that at a conference of foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation held in Jeddah on the suggestion of Iran, the Palestine issue and the Al-Aqsa Mosque (Baitul Muqaddas) were extended support. The meeting extended support to the plan of Arab nations for reconstruction of Gaza. Addressing the meeting, General Secretary of OIC, Hissein Brahim Taha, said OIC fully supports the plan prepared by Egypt for the reconstruction of Gaza. Addressing the meeting, Pakistan's foreign affairs minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar said

Pakistan stands with the people of Palestine and supports the decision of Arab League. He said that along with the reconstruction of Gaza, it is also necessary that Israel stops the persecution of Palestinians and abide by international law. The meeting has opposed the plan to settle Palestinian people in some other country.

**Etemaad** (March 6) said that the Arab leaders have given their approval for the plan by Egypt for reconstruction of Gaza. A cost of 53 billion dollars is likely to be incurred for this. The Arab leaders have also opposed the development of Gaza as a river and the decision of US President Trump to settle the Palestinians in some other country. Addressing the meeting, Egypt President Abdel Fatah El-Sisi expressed confidence that Donald Trump will cooperate with the reconstruction of Gaza apart from establishing peace in Gaza Strip which has been destroyed in the war. El-Sisi said that there is a need to discuss about a few issues related to it. The main question among them is who will administer this enclave and from where will the billions of dollars for the reconstruction come? He suggested



that an administrative committee of Palestinian technocrats shall be formed in solidarity with Palestinian people which should be handed over the responsibility of the administration.

Head of Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas, while welcoming the suggestion of Egypt, urged the US President to ensure that his plan does not involve the eviction of any Palestinian residents. He said that he is ready to conduct elections in Gaza. Secretary General of United Nations, while supporting this plan of Egypt, said the reconstruction of Gaza should be based on the premise that there is no need for the residents to be evicted.

## USA and Britain attack bases of Houthis in Yemen



**Inquilab** (March 17) states that the planes of US and UK carried out dozens of attacks on the bases of Houthis in Yemen's capital Sanaa. At least 71 people were killed and hundreds of people were confirmed to have been injured in these attacks. According to

a spokesperson of Yemen government, these attacks were carried out on the residential areas of Sanaa. The Yemen government condemned the attack on citizens and described it as war crime. According to the spokesperson, several residential buildings were destroyed in Shueb district in the US and British attacks. Earlier, US President Donald Trump had announced that he had directed the military to start a decisive military operation against Yemen.

The US Central Command has announced that its action against Houthis in Yemen is still on. US President Donald Trump said I have this message to all

Houthi terrorists that your time is over. Now your attacks should stop. If you do not do that, then you will be thrown into hellfire. He warned Iran that it immediately stops supporting the Houthi terrorists. Trump said that now we will not allow Houthis to do blockade in the sea under any circumstance. On the other hand, a spokesperson of the political bureau of Houthi rebels said that a befitting reply will be given to this attack. Our army is fully prepared to fight the American invaders. Spokesperson of Houthi rebels Mohammad Abdul Salam said the US attack on Yemen is an open aggression against an independent country.

As per another news, the chief of Iranian militia Pasdaran-e-Inqilab (IRGC) Hussain Salami said that we are ready to give a befitting reply to the threat of Trump. Speaking on a television channel, he said that Iran doesn't want war, but if anyone issues a threat then we will give a befitting reply. Iran's foreign affairs minister Abbas Araghchi said the US should not teach Iran about any foreign policy, instead should immediately stop the series of attack on Youthis in Yemen. We



will not tolerate the massacre of Yemeni people under any circumstance.

**Avadhnama** (March 17) states that a Pentagon spokesperson said that the Houthis had carried out 174 attacks on US fighter planes and 145 attacks on commercial ships from 2023 till today. The latest attack on Yemen was carried out from US aircraft carrier USS Harry S Truman which is present in the Red Sea. The Russian foreign minister urged the US that it immediately stop its attack on Yemen. In this connection, the Russian foreign affairs minister held talks with US Secretary of State on phone. The Houthis announced that they are once again starting the series of attacks on the ships of Israel and its allied countries passing through Red Sea, Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Eden.

## Indian woman hanged to death in UAE

**Aurangabad Times** (March 4) states that the Indian government had tried to save the life of a woman from Uttar Pradesh, Shahzadi Khan, in United Arab Emirates, but its efforts did not succeed. A spokesperson of External Affairs Ministry said that 33-year-old Shahzadi Khan was hanged to death in Abu Dhabi on February 15, 2025. Meanwhile, the United Arab Emirates government informed the Indian government in this connection on February 28. The foreign ministry has given the indication that the



Indian government will make efforts to send her family members to Abu Dhabi to take part in the last rites of Shahzadi. It is worth mentioning that the mother of



Shahzadi had filed a petition before the Delhi High Court. In this petition, the court was urged that it direct the external affairs ministry to take efforts to save the life of Shahzadi. In this petition, the mother of Shahzadi claimed that on February 14, her daughter telephoned her and informed that there is possibility that she would



be hanged. In this petition, the family members of Shahzadi said they had appealed to the Indian Embassy in Abu Dhabi to save the life of their daughter and urged the government that arrangements should be made to pay blood money to save the life of Shahzadi.

It is worth mentioning that Shahzadi was working with a social organisation in Dubai. In 2021, she came in contact with one Uzair, who belongs to Agra, through Facebook. He took her with him to Dubai on the pretext of getting her a job. In November 2021, he sold Shahzadi to a man residing in Dubai named Faiz. Shahzadi wrote a letter to Indian Embassy and alleged that Faiz and his family have been holding her hostage. They also took away her passport. She wanted to come back to India, but these people are not allowing her to return. Shahzadi also alleged that the family had a four-month-old baby, which died due to illness, but Faiz and his family trapped her on charges of killing the boy. A hearing was held in the court against Shahzadi on the charges of killing the child and the court awarded her death sentence. Later Shahzadi filed an appeal before the higher court, but the court rejected her appeal.

**Avadhnama** (March 4) states that Shahzadi belonged to Banda district in Uttar Pradesh. In February 2023, a video

recording of Shahzadi was found in which she had accepted that she had killed the child of Faiz. The family members of Shahzadi alleged that the United Arab Emirates police had obtained this confession by putting pressure on her. The court awarded death sentence to Shahzadi on the basis of this confession.

**Aurangabad Times** (March 9) states that the United Arab Emirates government had sent a few photos and videos to the family members of Shahzadi Khan on March 6. As per this video, Shahzadi Khan was given death penalty by shooting her dead in a jail in Abu Dhabi on the morning of February 15. The video showed Shahzadi being tied to a pillar wearing a special type of attire. Her eyes were blindfolded and both her hands were tied to a pole. A special mark was made above her heart so that it would be easier for the shooter to shoot her in the chest. This was the way to execute a death sentence in United Arab Emirates. The bodies of those who are awarded death sentence are buried there itself. The United Arab Emirates government has indicated to the family members of Shahzadi that if they want, they can come to Abu Dhabi and present there when Shahzadi's body was being buried, but her father Shabbir Khan said that it was not possible for him to go to Abu Dhabi due to financial crisis.

## Chief of terrorist organisation ISIS killed



**Chattan** (March 16) states that Iraq Prime Minister Mohammad Shia Al-Sudani announced that the Iraqi security forces, with the help of the US soldiers, killed the chief of Islamist terrorist organisation ISIS, *Abdallah Makki Muslih al-Rifa* aka Abu Khadija. The spokesperson of the US Central Command also, while confirming the killing of Abu Khadija, said that Abu Khadija has been running the activities of ISIS across the world as the organisation's Khalifa. Commander of the US Central Command, Michael Erik Kurilla said the US is committed to destroy terrorist organisations like ISIS. US President Donald Trump wrote on social media platform X that the brave soldiers of the US have killed Abu Khadija because the US wants peace. Syria's foreign minister Asaad al-Shaibani said in Baghdad that his government is ready to give all kinds of help to Iraq for the total elimination of ISIS. Asaad al-Shaibani has gone on a visit to Iraq recently.

**Roznama Sahara** (March 16) states that the relations between the two countries are likely to improve due to the visit of Syria's foreign minister to Iraq. It is worth mentioning that the deposed president of Syria Bashar Al-Assad was an ally of Iraq government. In Iraq, the Shias are in

majority, but Iraq also has close relations with the US. Iran was also a supporter of Bashar Al-Assad, but when the fighters of HTS moved against Bashar Al-Assad government, Iran did not extend any help to him. Bashar Al-Assad was entrenched in power in Syria with the support of Russia and Iran. This apart, the Lebanese militia Hezbollah was also a supporter of Bashar Al-Assad and Hezbollah had the support of Iran.

As per another news, Abu Khadija was targeted in a joint operation by the US and Iraqi military in Al Anbar region in Iraq on March 13. A spokesperson of US military said that Khadija was identified through his DNA test. Abu Khadija was born in 1991. He joined Al Qaida in 2009. He was arrested in 2011. Later he fled from a jail in Iraq. In 2014, the ISIS was rising in Syria and in Iraq. Khadija joined them and his influence slowly grew in the terrorist organisation. Later he was made the chief of ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Following this, he expanded ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Later he was made the deputy Khalifa of ISIS. In 2019, after the killing of the then chief of ISIS Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, he was made the chief of ISIS. He used to decide on the ISIS operations across the world. For the past several years, the militaries of Iraq and the US have been carrying out a campaign against ISIS in Syria and Iraq. The back of ISIS was broken in Iraq in 2017 and in Syria in 2019, but despite that the terrorists of this organisation are still active in Iraq and Syria. Currently, there are 2,500 US soldiers deployed in Iraq, who are running a campaign against ISIS jointly with Iraq military.

