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Over 4,000 Madrasas in Uttar Pradesh under ATS Scanner



- Plea against Assam Chief Minister in the Supreme Court
- Trump announces Board of Peace for Gaza
- Fierce fighting between army and BLA in Balochistan
- Rs 3,400 crore allocated to minorities in Union budget

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Summary

The Uttar Pradesh government has directed the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) to conduct a thorough investigation into the foreign funding and infrastructure of over 4,000 madrasas in the state. The government ordered the investigating officers to conduct a detailed inquiry into the bank accounts of the madrasas and their managers and submit its report to the police headquarters within two weeks. The government has already conducted an inquiry into the madrasas in the state. In that investigation it was confirmed that a network of madrasas is being established in the border districts of the state with foreign assistance and foreign students and teachers are being given shelter in them so that the flames of terrorism could be ignited in the future. Taking a serious note of this report, the Uttar Pradesh government has directed all Islamic institutions to provide complete information on foreign citizens staying in their institutions. Recently, cases were also registered against a few institutions on charges of concealing the identity of foreigners. However, Muslim organisations and Urdu media have opposed the government investigation. They say that the state government is taking action against Islamic educational institutions due to its feeling of hatred against Muslims.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has started a campaign to identify foreign infiltrators and expel them from the state. He claimed that the names of lakhs of 'Miya' Muslims have been removed from the voters' list. He urged the people to harass Miya people to the extent that they are forced to leave Assam. It is worth mentioning that in Assam, the Bangladeshi infiltrators are referred to as 'Miya' Muslims. The Urdu press and Muslims organisations have started opposing this decision of the government. Muslim organisation Jamiat Ulema has filed a petition against Chief Minister Sarma in the Supreme Court. It is stated in the petition that the chief minister has been issuing hateful statements against the Muslims of Assam. The Urdu media have urged the Muslims across the world to raise their voice in support of the Muslims of Assam.

The growing public anger in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has taken the form of a civil war in Pakistan. The residents of these provinces complain that they are not given any stake in the mineral resources of their area. They allege that the Pakistan government has given the contract to mine the mineral resources of their region to Chinese companies. This is the reason why organisations like Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) are fighting in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Recently, the Pakistan government has launched a massive military operation against the Baloch rebels. The Pakistan army killed more than 200 rebels during this operation, whereas the BLA claimed that they killed more than 350 Pakistani soldiers in retaliatory action. The interesting thing is that the women suicide attackers of BLA also played a role during this action against the Pakistan army.

US President Donald Trump has announced the names of members for 'Board of Peace' for the reconstruction of Gaza. Trump himself will preside over this board. Invitations were sent to 60 countries across the world to be part of this board. While a few countries accepted the invitation, few others rejected it. The interesting thing is that several European nations refused to be part of this board. Analysts believe that Trump constituted the board in an effort to weaken the United Nations. The Urdu media alleged that President Trump wants to hand over Gaza to Israel under the pretext of Board of Peace.

Over 4,000 madrasas in Uttar Pradesh under ATS scanner



Inquilab (January 31) states that the Uttar Pradesh government has directed the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) to conduct a detailed investigation into 4,000 madrasas in the state, including their managers, teachers and students of foreign origin with the help of district minority welfare officials. Director of Uttar Pradesh Minorities Welfare Department Ankit Kumar Agrawal directed all district minorities welfare officers in the state to provide a list of recognised and unrecognised madrasas to the ATS and fully cooperate with the investigation. The order also stated that transactions should be verified by examining the personal bank accounts of madrasas and their managers and the report shall be submitted to the police headquarters within two weeks. It has been said in the circular that though many madrasas have huge buildings, their managers have not yet provided any information about the source of money used to construct these buildings to the government. The intelligence units in the state have been directed to conduct an investigation into the foreign help being obtained by the madrasas.

General secretary of Teachers' Association Madaris-e-Arabia, Uttar

Pradesh, Diwan Saheb Zaman Khan accused the government of deliberately harassing the managers of madrasas. He said the allegation that these madrasas are linked to terrorist activities is completely false, because the government has not been able to detect even a single case in this regard. He said that the madrasa buildings were not constructed in a day, instead were built with small donations from people over several years. He said that donation receipts are kept only for a limited period of time and are destroyed after that, so it is not practical to produce very old receipts. Zaman Khan demanded Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to intervene in the issue so that the problems being faced by the managers of madrasas could be resolved.

Inquilab (January 18) states that the division bench of Allahabad High Court in Lucknow has said in a verdict that the minority community can run madrasas even without the approval of the education board. The court has given this direction in a case involving the closure of Madarsa Ahle Sunnat Imam Ahmad Raza in Shravasti district. The court also directed the district minorities welfare officer to withdraw the decision to shut down the madrasa and open its seal within 24 hours.



The court made it clear that under Article 30 (1) of the Constitution, the minorities have the right to establish and run educational institutions as per their choice. The court also made it clear that the unrecognised madrasas are not entitled to get government grants. On behalf of the manager of the madrasa, Abdul Rahman, advocate Syed Farooq Ahmad said in the court that the manager of this madrasa neither wants government recognition nor any government aid.

The lawyer of the madrasa also mentioned about the Supreme Court verdict regarding the Kerala Education Bill, 1957. He said the Supreme Court has divided the minority educational institutions into three classes. In the first category include those minority educational institutions which neither seek any financial aid from the government nor recognition. In the second category are those educational institutions which do not seek financial aid from the government, but wants recognition. In the third category are those educational institutions which seek both financial aid and recognition from the government. The lawyer of the madrasas said that Abdul Rahman's madrasa comes in the first category, because it neither seeks government aid and nor recognition. He argued that as per the verdict of the Supreme Court, such minority educational institutions are fully protected under Section 30 (1) of the Constitution and they have the right to run them as per their choice.

The lawyer of Uttar Pradesh government argued in the court that the

government is not in favour of running unrecognised madrasas as it may create many complications in running them. He told the court that the students studying in such madrasas will not get any government benefits or degree on the basis of their education and this will be a loss to the students. However, the government lawyer could not prove under which section of the law the unrecognised madrasas can be shut down. The

court made it clear that unrecognised madrasas can also be run, but they will not be entitled to get government grants, and neither the students of such madrasas will have the permission to take part in the examinations conducted by the madrasa board. This apart, the certificates issued by these madrasas will not get government recognition. Vice-president of All India Teachers' Association Madaris-e-Arabia Maulana Tariq Shamsi said the court has recognized the constitutional and legal status of madrasas. This is a victory for madrasas and Islam.

Sahafat (January 22) states that Jamaat-e-Islami, All India Muslim Personal Law Board and the chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind Maulana Mahmoud Madani, while welcoming this decision of Allahabad High Court, said some chief ministers with a communal mindset are running a campaign to shut down Islamic madrasas. Their intentions will not succeed due to this verdict of the court. These Muslim organisations said the Constitution has given the rights to minorities to establish and run educational institutions. The court has also accepted this.

Inquilab (January 21) states that the Uttar Pradesh government has stepped up the investigations into the violation of Immigration Act and identification of foreigners staying illegally. The government has directed all district magistrates and police superintendents to launch intensive campaigns to identify foreign intruders living in their area. This apart, a detailed information has been



sought on students of foreign origin who are admitted to the madrasas in the districts bordering Nepal. Minorities welfare officer of Azamgarh district Varsha Agarwal said that many madrasas have not paid heed to the orders issued by the Home Ministry and have not entered the details of foreign students on the 'Form S' portal. This is an open violation of the Foreigners Act and the Immigration laws. As per this law, if any foreign citizen arrives to stay in anybody's house or institution, it is mandatory to provide information about the same to the Union government. In this connection, the Foreign Regional Registration Office has warned the managers of all the madrasas that if they don't provide information about foreign citizens immediately, stringent legal action will be taken against them.

Avadhnama (January 16) in its editorial said that bulldozers are run over masjids, mazars and madrasas in different parts of the country. This is very much worrying. However, these religious places are centuries-old. The newspaper said we want the government to find out once how many dargahs, masjids and madrasas are constructed in an illegal manner. Their list shall be published so that the remaining Muslim religious places could be saved from the wrath of the government. The newspaper said that due to these kinds of

campaign, India is being defamed in the world.

Hindustan Express (January 18) in its editorial complained that the Uttar Pradesh government has cancelled the recognition of several madrasas a few weeks before the starting of the exams of the madrasa board. All these are being done as part of anti-Muslim policy. Due to this government decision, the future of lakhs of students and teachers in madrasas has landed in trouble. The newspaper said that the madrasas whose recognition were cancelled by Uttar Pradesh Madrasa Education Council are located in Prayagraj, Ayodhya, Siddhartnagar, Maharajganj, Varanasi, Aligarh, Kushinagar and Lucknow. Following this decision, the government has stopped the payment of salaries of teachers in these institutions. Due to this government decision, the entire financial system of the madrasa managers has been ruined. The newspaper said that had there been any shortcomings in the recognition of these madrasas, then they should have been inquired into earlier itself. Now exams are near and this step by the government at such a time is an injustice to both students and teachers. This issue is not limited to one institution, a few teachers and students, instead the entire Muslim community is being affected. In such a situation, it is necessary that the

Muslims should get united for their existence and adopt legal measures.

Inquilab (January 31) in its editorial has criticised the Uttar Pradesh government's probe into madrasas. The newspaper claimed that the government has not yet been able to prove that any madrasa has any connection with terrorism. This decision of the government has hurt the sentiments of the entire Muslim community. The government claims that it is committed to the modernisation of madrasas. In Uttar Pradesh, if the modernisation of more than 7,000 madrasas had really been undertaken, then where are those madrasas? Are they on the ground or are they just adding to the glitter of the files? How many students who have studied in them have joined the mainstream of the society? The newspaper asked how can a government that could not modernize its government schools dream of modernizing madrasas? The public is losing faith in government schools. The newspaper claimed that the madrasas are

not dependent on any government aid, instead they thrive on the resources of the 'Ummat'. These madrasas have given not just imams and muezzins, but also produced great thinkers of Islam and freedom fighters. When the government itself is handing over railway, banks, electricity and aircraft to the private hands, why are religious madrasas being tightened under government control? This decision of the government is against the basic spirit of the Indian Constitution. If this 'religious fortress' weakens, the faith of future generations in Islam will be in danger.

Avadhnama (February 4) in its editorial has criticised this decision of the state government. The newspaper alleged that a feeling of hatred is being spread against Muslims in the country. The series of investigations against madrasas are also a part of it. Madrasas are always being run with the help of Muslims and the government should not interfere in them. This decision of the government is against Muslims and Islam.

Plea against Assam Chief Minister in the Supreme Court



Inquilab (February 3) states that Muslim organisation Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind has filed a petition against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in the Supreme Court. It has been said in this petition that Chief Minister Sarma is issuing hateful statements against the Muslims of Assam. This is tearing the Indian Constitution to shreds. It has been said in the petition that

the Chief Minister is promoting fundamentalists by issuing hateful statements against Muslims. This has vitiated the communal atmosphere in the state. The court has sought suggestions from the senior lawyers of Jamiat Ulema M R Shamsad and Farooq Rashid what all steps can be taken to stop the increasing hate campaign in the country.

In the petition filed by Jamiat Ulema, the statement made by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on January 27, 2026 has been specially mentioned in which he had claimed that the names of four to five lakh 'Miya' voters will be removed from the voters' list during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) being held in Assam. Sarma had also said that it was his duty to harass the Miya people and



his party is strongly opposed to the Miya people. It had been said in the petition that the word Miya is used in Assam as a derogatory term for Muslims.

In this petition, the Supreme Court has been urged to lay down a code of ethics for the speeches of persons holding constitutional posts so that anyone occupying a constitutional post should not be allowed to carry out any campaign in the country to incite communal hatred, incitement or defame any particular class. This statement is against the spirit of equality, brotherhood and secularism enshrined in Indian Constitution.

Inquilab (January 29) states that the Assam Chief Minister claimed that the names of lakhs of Miya Muslims have been removed from the voters' list as part of SIR. He urged the people that they should harass the Miya people to the extent that they are forced to leave Assam. He urged the people to economically boycott the Miya people. Addressing a public gathering in Tinsukia, the chief minister said that the Miya people should vote in Bangladesh, not in Assam.

Inquilab (January 30) states that Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that those people who do not have documentary proofs with them will be expelled from the state within a week and send to Bangladesh. For this, the

state government does not need the support of any agreement signed between India and Bangladesh. He said the Assam government has sent more than 2,000 people to Bangladesh in the past three months. He said this is government policy. Sarma said that the Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950 has been made effective. Under this law, all the district collectors and police superintendents have the power to push back all Bangladeshi infiltrators staying illegally in Assam through the Bangladesh border. There is no need for them to wait for the lengthy procedures of the foreign tribunal to handle every issue.

Inquilab (January 31) states that human rights activist Harsh Mander has filed a complaint against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at the Hauz Khas police station in Delhi. He demanded the police to register an FIR against the chief minister of Assam under sections 196, 197, 299, 302 and 353 of Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita, 2023.

Inquilab (January 30) in its editorial, while criticising Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, said that he is using the entire machinery of the state to target Muslims. He does not have the power to decide who is the citizen of the country and who is not. The newspaper said that already a legal system is present in

Assam for the identification of foreigners, but the chief minister has himself donned the attire of the judge and the executor.

Hindustan (January 31) has accused the chief minister of Assam of running a dangerous campaign against Muslims out of hatred. It is necessary to understand that if the chief minister of any state targets any particular community, then he defames the entire country and leaves a terrible example for future generations. Today, those who applaud his hate speeches should never forget that tomorrow their number will also come. The newspaper urged the Muslims to remain alert so that they could protect their existence.

Avadhnama (January 31) in its editorial alleged that as soon as the BJP came to power in Assam, a campaign has been unleashed against Muslims. It looks like that the BJP has made Himanta Biswa Sarma as the chief minister to destroy the Muslims. The chief minister is openly taking away the constitutional rights of Muslims. The newspaper claimed that currently the Muslims of Assam are passing through the most difficult time in their history. Their identity and citizenship are being curbed. The newspaper appealed



to Muslims across the world to raise their voice for the Muslims of Assam.

Urdu Times (February 1) in its editorial said that the Muslim population in Assam is 40 percent, but they are not united. This is the reason why the administration of the state is targeting them. In Assam, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal had formed his own political party named All India United Democratic Front (AIDUF), but now it is on death bed. The reason for this is that the AIDUF had never aligned with the secular parties. Today, the situation is that the BJP government in the state is hell bent on wiping out the Muslims. Now that Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has challenged the self-respect of Muslims, they should unite and demonstrate their strength and protect Islam.

Namaz held along with Saraswati Puja in Bhojshala

Hindustan Express (January 23) reports that the Supreme Court, while delivering an important verdict on the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula Masjid controversy at Dhar district in Madhya Pradesh, refused to ban namaz on the day of Saraswati Puja. The court clarified that the system in place since 2003 will remain in force for religious activities. The court said that Hindus cannot be given permission to do Saraswati Puja throughout the day on the occasion of Vasant Panjmi. It is worth mentioning that this petition has been filed on behalf of Hindu Front for Justice. In this petition, it had been demanded that on the day of Vasant Panchami, only Hindus shall be given

permission to do Saraswati Puja on the premises of Bhojshala and a ban shall be imposed on the juma namaz.

Advocate for the petitioners Vishnu Shankar Jain argued in the court that the timing of the puja should be from sunrise to the sunset and in any case the juma namaz is done in the evening. On this, the advocate of Kamal Maula Masjid Committee Salman Khurshid said that the time for juma namaz is fixed as per religion. This takes place between 1pm to 3pm in the afternoon. It is not possible to make any changes in it. He demanded the court that other religious activities shall not be allowed on Bhojshala premises during



the time of namaz. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice Vipul M Pancholi after hearing arguments from both the sides said that an order dated April 7, 2003 by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) provides the basic framework for religious activities at the site.

As per this order, the Hindu side has been permitted to do puja on every Tuesday and on the occasion of Vasant Panchami. Whereas Muslim side has been permitted to do namaz on every Friday.

The court, while rejecting the demand of the Hindu side seeking day-long puja, said that no change could be made to the time for juma namaz. The court directed the district administration to make separate entry and exit arrangements for both the communities within the campus so that a situation of conflict does not arise. The court directed the Muslim side to inform the administration in advance about the estimated number of worshippers so that security arrangements could be made accordingly. Following the direction of the court, the namazis offered namaz on the premises of the Bhojashala in the presence of police. Special arrangements were made for their security. Whereas the Hindu side offered Saraswati puja.

It is worth mentioning that this controversy escalated further when the

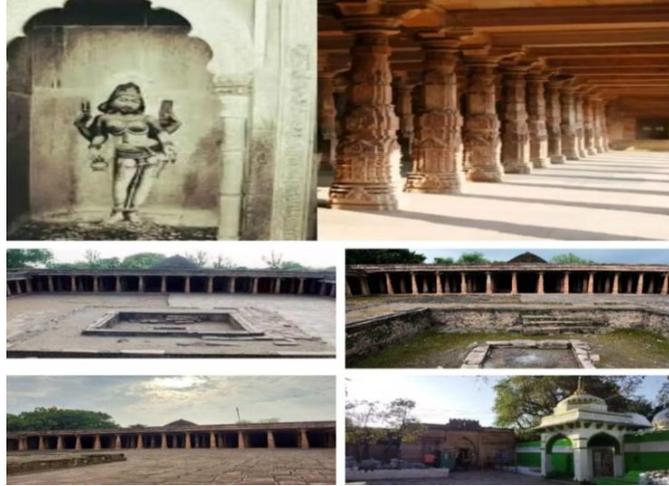
Madhya Pradesh High Court directed the ASI to conduct a scientific survey of the Bhojshala complex. The purpose of this survey was to bring forth the historical truth about this premises. In its preliminary report, the ASI had confirmed that the ruins of an ancient temple and mutilated idols were found during the excavations. This issue is now pending in the court.

Comment: As per the report of the ASI, the Bhojshala, which can also be called as Saraswati Sadan, was constructed by Raja Bhoj of Parmar dynasty in 1034. It is said that the reign of Maharaja Bhoj was from 1010 to 1055. It is worth mentioning that the centre of this dispute is at Dhar, which is 250 km away from Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal. Muslims claim that the mazar of Kamaluddin is located on the premises of this masjid. Kamaluddin Chishti was a sufi and he was the Khalifa of Nizamuddin Auliya in Delhi. During the reign of Alauddin Khilji, his commander Dilawar Khan had forcefully converted the Bhojshala into a masjid. Archaeological expert of Royal Asiatic Society Micheal Wills in his research paper had confirmed that the Bhojshala was constructed by Maharaja Bhoj of the Parmar dynasty. He had also installed the idol of the Goddess of Wisdom Saraswati on its premises, which is currently present at the British Museum in London. Wills had also confirmed that

the pillar of this masjid is of some ancient Hindu temple. There are six Sanskrit inscriptions on the portico of this masjid, which is said to be of 10th century.

Two British archaeological experts Sir John Malcom and William Kinkaid had also mentioned about its premises. They had said that this building was definitely a Hindu building. In 1943, Historian O C Ganguly had published an important research paper on the murti of Vaghdevi of Parmar period currently in the British museum. In this paper, he had claimed that an inscription on Sanskrit is there on this murti. This murti was made by Maharaja Bhoj and it was installed in Saraswati Mandir. In the Assembly elections held in Madhya Pradesh in 2003, the renovation of Bhojshala was made the main election issue. Due to this, power slipped out of the hands of the then Congress Chief Minister Digvijay Singh and the BJP came to power. Former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan had announced in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly in 2022 that the government is making efforts to bring back the idol of Vaghdevi from London.

Urdu Times (January 20) states that the civil court in Ajmer has admitted a petition filed by the national president of Maharana Pratap Sena, Rajavardhan Singh Parmar. In this petition, it has been claimed that the Ajmer dargah was originally a Shiv Mandir. This petition has been filed in the civil court in Ajmer through senior lawyer in Supreme Court A P Singh. After initial hearing, the court admitted the petition and issued notices to all the sides concerned.



Its next date of hearing is February 21. The court issued notice to the Rajasthan government, archaeological department and the dargah committee after describing them as respondents.

A P Singh told the court that the Maharana Pratap Sena has been raising voices across the country for the protection of Bharat's history. He said that Ajmer was previously known as Ajaymeru which was inhabited by the king of Chauhan empire Raja Ajayapal Chauhan. Earlier, an ancient Shiv Mandir was there in place of the present-day Ajmer dargah. The rulers of Chauhan dynasty used to offer puja there. Later the invaders converted it into a dargah. A P Singh said this issue is related to the sentiments of crores of Sanatani Hindus. He said we are hopeful that the court will ensure the protection of Shiv Mandir so that the Sanatani Hindu will be able to bring water from Prayagraj and Pushkarraj and do jalabhishek of Bhagwan Shiv. It is to be noted that earlier in 2024, the national president of Hindu Sena Vishnu Gupta had also filed a petition in the court in this connection.

Rs 3,400 allocated for minorities in the Union budget

Avadhnama (February 2) states that in the budget presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Parliament for the year 2026-27, a minor increase has been made in the allocation for

minorities. This year, Rs 3,400 crore has been allocated for the Ministry for Minority Affairs. Whereas last year this allocation was of Rs 3,350 crore. Out of it, nearly Rs 1,913 crore has been envisaged for various



projects meant for the welfare of minorities. This is basically a part of Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK). Under this project, priority has been given for the construction of schools, hostels and hospitals in minority-dominated areas.

Inqilab (February 2), while referring to the Union budget, said that no special announcements have been made for the welfare, development and education of minorities. The newspaper said that in the budget for 2026-27, Rs 3,400 crore has been allocated for the Ministry for Minority Affairs. However, in the last year's budget, through Rs 3,350 crore had been allocated for minorities, later it was brought down to Rs 2,160 crore. This time too, there is a possibility of reduction in the budget allocated for minorities. Such number games are played to show rosy pictures to the minorities in the budget. This time, a huge reduction has been made in the funds for Maulana Azad National Fellowship. Last year, Rs 53 crore was allocated for Maulana Azad National Fellowship. This time it has been reduced to Rs 36 crore.

The newspaper said that only Rs 10 crore has been allocated for the free coaching for minorities. Rs 303 crore has been allocated for Prime Minister's Heritage Promotion Scheme. Only Rs 32 crore has been allocated for National Waqf

Board Development Scheme and for Urban Waqf Property Development Scheme. In last year's budget, an allocation of Rs 195 crore and Rs 413 crore were made for pre-Metric and post-Metric scholarships respectively. Later, it these were reduced to just Rs 60 crore. In this year's budget, Rs 198 and Rs 581 crore were allocated respectively for these scholarships. It is clear that this is like a grain of cummin in the mouth of a camel. There is this possibility that the money allocated in the budget will not be spend for scholarships and it would get lapsed. For the National Commission for Minorities, only Rs 15 crore has been allocated.

The newspaper claimed that there is nothing in this budget for the 20 crore Muslims and other minority communities in the country. The newspaper, while mentioning about the National Waqf Board Development Plan and the Urban Waqf Property Development Scheme, said the goal of these schemes is computerisation and digitalisation of Waqf records, strengthening the administration of state waqf boards and protecting vacant Waqf land from encroachment so that they can be developed on commercial basis in future.

The budget also stated that a transparent digital system will be established through the 'Umeed Portal.' This will facilitate registration, verification,

approval, GIS mapping and tagging of Waqf properties so that minorities can avail full benefits of Waqf properties.

While criticising the Union budget in its editorial, the newspaper said the government has once again made tall claims about development.

The government has shown rosy promises of capital investment, but no attention



has been paid to human development, equal education and development of the underprivileged. The strange thing is that though this year's Union budget is of more than Rs 53 lakh crore, only Rs 3,400 crore has been provisioned for the minorities. It cannot be overlooked that nearly 20 percent people belonging to the minority communities stay in this country, but no proper attention has been given for their development in the budget.

The newspaper said that in this budget, a huge cut has been made in the allocation of money for the scholarships meant for minorities, free coaching and in education loan. It is through these schemes that minority students can access higher education. When this very foundation is weakened, what is the significance of announcements like establishing women's hostels in every district? Mere buildings and institutions are not enough for education, rather it is necessary that active economic support is provided for the education of minority children and they get the opportunity for equal development like other sections of the society.

Similarly, there seems to be no hope of materialising the tall claims of developing skills and providing employment. The minority youths are already facing unemployment, social discrimination and limited resources for employment. In this budget, there has been a huge cut in schemes related to skill

development and employment. The government has no interest in helping the weaker sections of society move ahead in the race for development. It is worth mentioning that states like Telangana and Karnataka are spending more than the budget prescribed by the Union government. This comparison is not just a political one, instead it raises moral and constitutional questions as well. If any state government can be serious about the welfare of minorities despite its limited resources, then this indifference of the Central government proves the hollowness of its tall claims. In the Union budget, a huge allocation has been made from basic infrastructure, industries and defence, but this development cannot be sustainable unless it reaches all sections of society.

The newspaper said that the slogan 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas' feels hollow because its shadow is not visible in the budget figures. This budget raises questions on the intentions of the government. If the government truly wants to build a developed India based on inclusive justice, it will have to provide abundant financial resources for the education, skill development and employment of minorities. Otherwise, this budget will certainly leave behind some bright growth figures, but will be very heavy on the generations to come who feel social inequality, educational backwardness and deprivation.

Prime Minister Modi meets foreign ministers of Arab countries



Inqilab (February 1) states that Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a meeting with the foreign affairs ministers of 22 Arab nations and the General Secretary of Arab League. This delegation of Arab foreign ministers had arrived in New Delhi to take part in a meeting of India-Arab Foreign Ministers. Prime Minister Modi stressed on improving the strong historical relations between the people of India and Arab countries. He said that India and Arab countries have a similar history due to trade and a joint culture.

Due to this, our relationship with Arab countries are getting strengthened day by day. He expressed hope that we all will jointly face the present troubles and will remain committed to getting closer to each other. PM Modi outlined his vision for India-Arab partnership in the years ahead. PM Modi reiterated India's commitment to enhance cooperation with Arab countries in trade, investment, energy, technology, healthcare and other areas. He said that this will bring prosperity to the region and will greatly benefit the people on both sides.

Prime Minister Modi highlighted India's continuous support to the people of Palestine and welcomed the Gaza peace plan. The Arab leaders, while welcoming

India's increasing relationship with Arab countries, said that India is a trusted ally of Arab countries. He praised India's balanced foreign policy and its commitment to dialogue. The Arab leaders said that India's credibility has increased in the Arab world. Several top officials including Prime Minister Modi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval took part.

Avadhnama (January 31), while welcoming this meeting, said that it is an important diplomatic achievement for India. The meeting also discussed Iran-Israel tension and the increasing activities of Houthis in Red Sea. India's effort is to maintain power balance and strengthen relationship with Arab countries. This is the reason why this meeting has been organised. In this meeting, representatives from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain, Oman, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Mauritania, Comoros, Yemen and Palestine took part.

Siasat (January 23) in its editorial has welcomed India's growing relationship with Arab countries. The newspaper said that currently India's energy policy stands



at a critical juncture. It is clear from the recent developments that India is rapidly reducing its dependence on buying oil from Russia. India is moving towards enhancing energy ties with Arab and West Asian countries. This change is not just commercial, but indicates a serious diplomatic interest. After the Ukraine war, Russia has started selling oil at a cheaper price in international market. India has taken full advantage of this.

However, the US and European countries did not like this policy of India. The US said that by buying Russian oil, India is playing its role in spreading the war in Ukraine. The US is pressuring India to stop buying oil from Russia. The newspaper said that India can buy oil from countries like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Oman. Recently, India has signed agreements with several other

Gulf countries like Iraq and Oman related to crude oil supply. This policy of India is based on foresight. If implemented, this policy could be the beginning of India's new trade agreement with Arab countries.

Siasat (January 31) in its editorial, while mentioning about the security working group between India and Saudi Arabia, said this will establish stability and peace in the two countries. Extensive discussions were also held in the meeting over stopping terrorism and fundamentalism. The growing global terrorism is not a problem of any particular nation or region now, instead it has become a threat at international level. The newspaper said that it is clear from the manner in which India and Saudi Arabia support each other's policy that the two countries are in favour of long time peace and stability in the region.

Fierce fighting between Pakistan army and BLA in Balochistan



The Pakistan army has unleashed a military offensive against the rebels in Balochistan. This has worsened the situation in Pakistan. In retaliation against the Pakistan army's campaign, the fighters of Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) created a sensation by carrying out simultaneous attacks in more than 16 places in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. According to the media wing (ISPR) of the Pakistan army, more than 216 rebels were killed so far in this campaign. In a press release, the ISPR has claimed that these armed rebels targeted the headquarters of Frontier Corps and at least four cantonments with foreign help. This apart, more than 30 government buildings were targeted including banks, administrative offices and judicial complexes. As per official claims, nearly 90 soldiers including a few senior officers of Pakistani army were killed in this attack. Whereas the BLA claimed that their fighters killed more than 350 Pakistani soldiers. The BLA also claimed to have taken a few soldiers as hostage.

Siasat (February 2) reports that the Pakistan army has claimed that it has killed 133 rebels in separate operations in Balochistan. The Pakistan army claimed that these rebels had planned to carry out

destruction in Balochistan at the behest of foreigners, which the army foiled. Nearly two dozen innocent citizens were also killed in these operations carried out by the Pakistan army.

Akbar-e-Mashriq (February 1) states that the BLA has claimed that its fighters carried out simultaneous attacks at 16 places in Pakistan. This attack was carried out in retaliation against the Pakistani army's genocide of Balochistan citizens. These attacks began from Balochistan's capital Quetta. In an attack carried out in Quetta, nearly 70 Pakistani soldiers were killed. The Baloch fighters also destroyed several bridges on the roads so that the other commands of Pakistan army do not reach the place to take part in the operations. The BLA claimed that its Fateh Squad, Majid Brigade and Zirab unit took part in these attacks. The women suicide attackers of BLA carried out blasts in Mastung, Kalat, Gwadar and Makran by blowing themselves up. More than 150 Pakistani soldiers were killed in these attacks.

The Baloch rebels captured Mastung and Nushki jails and freed all the prisoners lodged there. The Pakistan government has imposed an indefinite curfew in several

localities in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and suspended internet and mobile services. Along with this, the movement of more than two dozen drones has been stopped. Pakistan's interior minister Mohsen Naqvi said that all the wings of Pakistani armed forces are carrying out operations against the terrorists using modern weapons, drones and fighter planes. Pakistan's army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, while talking to media persons in Islamabad, alleged that two neighbouring countries are spreading disturbances in Pakistan. He declared that we will not allow their plan to succeed and will search their agents and wipe them out.

Pakistani newspaper **Express News** claimed that the BLA has released a photo of Hawa Baloch who took part in the suicide attack in Gwadar. She was in the Majeed Brigade of BLA. Spokesperson of BLA, Junaid Baloch, said that due to the atrocities of Pakistani Army, now our women were also forced to pick up guns. He said though we did not want to see such a scene, the Pakistan army has forced the Balochs to fight till their last breath. He claimed that until the last Baloch freedom fighter is alive, our struggle will continue.

BBC Urdu states that four suicide attackers of BLA attacked the Cantonment of Frontier Corps located in Nushki and triggered a blast in a vehicle filled with ammunition. This attack was led by a woman suicide attacker Asifa Mengal. Following this, they attacked the Pakistani army using rocket launchers. At least 67 Pakistani soldiers were killed in this attack. Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif claimed that the Baloch rebels are now using women for their attacks.

Aurangabad Times (February 2) reports that due to the military operation in Balochistan, a large number of people have left their homes and are leaving for secure places. Those who are fleeing told



journalists that it was announced from the masjids in their villages that the Pakistani army was getting ready to take strong action against the rebels, hence they should leave their houses and move to secure places.

Gul Afridi, a shopkeeper in Tirah Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said more than 50,000 people have left for Punjab from their homes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. An official of Pakistan army said that he was asked to vacate disturbed regions in view of the security of ordinary people.

Etemaad (February 2) states that the Indian government has made it clear that it has nothing to do with the rebel organisations active in Pakistan. Spokesperson of India's External Affairs Ministry Randhir Jaiswal said that Pakistan is making false allegations against India to mislead its people and the world. By saying so it wants to cover up its failures. He said when the people of Pakistan raise their voice against their government, the government there is making allegations against India instead of finding solutions to the issues of people. This is their old habit. It is worth mentioning that recently the Interior Minister of Pakistan Mohsen Naqvi alleged that India was behind the attacks taking place against the Pakistan army.

Avadhnama (January 25) states that a suicide attack took place at the residence of former commander of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Noor Alam Mehsud in Dera Ismail Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The attack took place when the

marriage celebrations of his nephew was on. Nearly seven persons were killed and 25 were injured in this blast. As per the news, Noor Alam Mehsud was the

commander of TTP's operation 'Zarb-e-Azb' till the year 2016. Later he cut off his relations with TTP and joined Pakistani army's intelligence agency ISI.

Bangladesh's textile industry is in crisis



Urdu Times (February 2) states that the new announcements related to textile industry in India's recent budget are likely to have a negative impact on the Bangladesh's textile industry. Bangladesh is the world's second largest exporter of readymade garments. Whereas India is at the sixth place. The relations between India and Bangladesh soured after Muhammad Yunus assumed power in Bangladesh. On the other hand, Bangladesh's proximity with China and Pakistan started growing. The newspaper said that the latest agreements between India and European Union will negatively impact the textile markets in China and Bangladesh. It is worth mentioning that the textile import market of European Union is of 263 billion dollars. Nearly 21% of it is from Bangladesh. European Union does not impose import duty on Bangladeshi clothes. Due to this, there is improvement in their trade. Whereas, India's share in European Union's textile import market is 5 to 6 percent. Before the latest agreement between India and European Union, the European Union used to impose an import

duty of up to 12% on textile from India. Now, due to the India-European Union free trade agreement, no duty will be imposed on Indian clothes. This is likely to have a negative impact on Bangladesh's business.

Chattan (February 1) states that the agreement between India and European Union will have a negative impact on the textile market in Pakistan as well apart from Bangladesh. However, Pakistan is granted duty exemption under the European Union's GSP Plus scheme. Now, as per the new agreement, there will be no duty on garments exported from India to European Union countries. This will put Pakistan's export of textiles, leather goods and artificial jewellery to European Union countries under tough competition.

Chief Executive Officer of Pakistan's Textile Council Muhammad Hasan Shafqaat told journalists that till now there has been exemption on duty on the clothes being exported by Pakistan to European Union nations, but now the agreement signed between India and European Union nations will have a negative impact on our exports.

USA imposes sanctions on Iranian Interior Minister and top officials

Avadhnama (February 1) states that following the mass protests that took place in Iran, the US has imposed a ban on several top Iranian officials including Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni from entering the US. A spokesperson of US State Department said that Momeni is guilty for the murder of protesters in Iran. The US Treasury Department said that Eskandar Momeni is guilty for implementing 'murder law' in Iran. This apart, the US has seized all the properties and financial interests of Momeni. This apart, sanctions have also been imposed on the top officials of Pasdaran-e-Inqilab (IRGC) and Iranian businessman Babak Murtaza Zanjani. Zanjani has been accused of providing financial aid to the Iranian government to crush the protesters.

The US has directed all its citizens and companies that they should not enter into any financial dealings with these banned people. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said that instead of building a prosperous Iran, the Iranian government is using the revenue from petrol to develop nuclear weapons, produce missiles and provide financial support to terrorist organizations spread across the world. Among the top officials of Iran on whom the US has imposed sanctions include the chief of the intelligence wing of IRGC



Brigadier General Majid Khademi, IRGC commander in Tehran province Seyyed al-Shohada, Corps commander Gherban Mohammad Walizadeh, IRGC commander in Hamdan Province Hossein Zare Kamali and the commander in Kermanshah province Mehdi Hajian.

Inqilab (January 16) states that the US has imposed economic sanctions on five other Iranian top officials as well. This includes the secretary of Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani. US President Trump told reporters that due to the increasing public anger in Iran, the current government is likely to be overthrown. However, he did not support Reza Pahlavi, the son of former King of Iran, Mohammad Raza Pahlavi. Trump said that he is not holding any talks with the 65-year-old Reza Pehlavi. It is noteworthy that Reza Pehlavi has been leading a life of exile in the US. Following the Islamic Revolution in 1979, he had fled along with his father to the US.

USA announces sale of defence equipment to Saudi Arabia

Qaumi Tanzeem (February 1) states that the US has approved the sale of patriot missiles worth 9 billion dollars to Saudi Arabia. According to the US defence department, the security of Saudi Arabia will be further strengthened due to these

missiles. The US State Department said that the US has decided to sell 730 Patriot missiles and equipment associated with it to Saudi Arabia. This decision has been taken to strengthen the national security of the US and its important non-NATO ally



this occasion, discussions were held with various sides for strengthening the diplomatic ties between the two countries. The Saudi Defence Minister said that due to this decision of the US, the defence tie-up between Saudi Arabia and the US would get further strengthened. The decision would also boost world peace and regional security.

Saudi Arabia. The US State Department has also made it clear that the process of supplying most modern defence equipment to the Saudi Arabian army will continue.

It is worth mentioning that this announcement was made during the visit of Saudi Arabia's Defence Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman al-Saud to the US. On

It is to be noted that due to this decision of the US, the efforts of Russia and China would suffer a setback. For the past some time, Russia and China have been trying to supply defence equipment to Saudi Arabia and trying to set up real industries related to defence equipment there.

Imam sentenced for conducting minors' nikah in Britain

Inquilab (January 21) states that a British court has sentenced an imam to 15 weeks in prison for performing the marriage of two minors. It is to be noted that this was the first time that a person has been sent to jail in Britain on charges of conducting the nikah of minors. It is noteworthy that in Islamic Shariah, there is no ban on conducting the nikah of children. However, Shariah does stipulate that the bride's departure should be done only after she attains her puberty.

Fiftytwo-year-old Imam Ashraf Usmani has also been accused of consummating the marriage of 16-year-old children. Usmani told Northampton Crown Court that he was not aware that nine months before he consummated the marriage of minors in 2023, the minimum age for marriage has been prescribed at 18



years in England and Wales. Since he accepted the crime, the imam has been awarded only 15 weeks in jail. However, he may not be send to the jail at all. He might be kept under the supervision of the police. The court also imposed a fine of 150 pounds on the Imam. The court also directed that the identity of the minors whose marriages were consummated by the imam will be kept a permanent secret.

Trump announces Board of Peace for Gaza



Inqilab (January 18) states that the White House has duly announced members for the ‘Board of Peace’ constituted for Gaza. As per the official announcement, the chairman of the board will be US President Donald Trump. Its executive members will include US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Special Representative of Trump in Middle East Steve Witkoff, Trump’s son-in-law, Jared Kushner, former prime minister of Britain Tony Blair, Chief Executive Officer of Apollo Global Management Mark Roven, President of World Bank Ajay Banga and Deputy National Security Advisor of US Robert Gabriel. As per the official announcement, this board will supervise the ‘peace plan’ announced by the US President in Gaza. Bulgarian diplomat Nickolay Mladenov was appointed as the High Representative for Gaza. The US also appointed *Aryeh Lightstone and Josh Gruenbaum* as advisors of the Board of Peace. This apart, Turkiye’s Foreign Affairs Minister Hakan Fidan, Qatar Ambassador Ali Al Thawadi, Turkiye’s President Recep Tayip Erdogan and Egypt President Abdel Fatah el-Sisi have also been included in this board.

According to the newspaper, US Army Major General Jasper Jeffers will

take over the command of International Stabilisation Force. The national committee for the administration of Gaza will be headed by former Deputy Minister in Palestinian Authority Dr Ali Shaath.

Inqilab (January 22) states that the US President has clarified that he does not intend to make the Gaza Board of Peace a substitute for the United Nations. Pakistan, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Belarus have also accepted the invitation to join this board.

Inqilab (January 19) states that US President Trump has invited 60 nations to be part of this board. Israel President Benjamin Netanyahu has also accepted the invitation to be part of this board.

Inqilab (January 21) states French President Emmanuel Macron has rejected the invitation to be part of this board. On this, Trump threatened that he will not remain the President of France for long. Morocco has also confirmed its participation in the board.

Inqilab (January 24) states that Britain has objected to the inclusion of Russia in this board. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said that it’s absurd for someone who is bombing Ukraine and waging war to be part of peace talks.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carnie has refused to be included in this board. Similarly, Ireland's Deputy Prime Minister Simon Harris said this board can create serious international situations. Hence Ireland will not be part of it.

As per another news, US President Trump said that India's participation in this board will be welcomed, because it is acceptable to both sides.

Aurangabad Times (February 1) states that New Zealand and Spain had refused to be part of this board. This apart, Norway and Croatia also declared that they will not be part of this board.

Urdu Times (January 18) in its editorial, while criticizing the constitution of this board, said this is a new threat to the people of Gaza. The newspaper said that the intentions of the US President is not good. He wants to remove the people of this region from there and hands it over to Israel.

Urdu Times (January 28) said in its editorial that the US has got the opportunity to reduce the influence of the United Nations Security Council and start a new political maneuver through the board under the guise of world peace. This is the reason why majority of the European nations had opposed the constitution of the board, because they know that this will destroy the balance of world power and establish American dominance. Whatever the US is doing today is not just a matter of managing and developing Gaza, but it is also indirectly preparing to hand over this area to Israel.

Siasat (January 28) in its editorial described the Gaza Board of Peace as very dangerous. The newspaper said that Trump

has taken over the chairmanship of this board indefinitely. In this declaration by the US, neither there is any mention of Gaza nor there is any discussion about the rights of the people of Palestine. The newspaper alleged that Israel carried out destruction in Gaza at the behest of the same US. The surprising thing is that today it is presenting itself as a peace messenger. It is being claimed that this board will carry out the work for stability and reconstruction in Gaza, but President Trump has opened the doors for a profitable business plan for himself under its pretext. Meanwhile, several pro-US Arab countries have joined it, but India should not take any decision in a hurry. If this plan is implemented, the power of Trump will go beyond that of the United Nations. New Delhi needs to be cautious before taking any decision, because today if it is Gaza, then tomorrow Kashmir could be brought under this model.

Hindustan (January 24) in its editorial has advised the world powers to be cautious about the dangerous intentions of Trump. The newspaper said that the US is conspiring to hand over the Gaza region to Israel under its pretext. It looks like Trump wants to usurp the powers of United Nations and turn it into a puppet. Though the United Nations is supposedly a global organization, it has failed miserably in promoting justice, freedom, equality, and the empowerment of weaker nations. This international organization has been under the control of the US and European nations right from the beginning. It looks like Trump is trying to establish an alternative international organization under the pretext of Gaza Board of Peace.

India opposes resolution against Iran in the United Nations

Urdu Times (January 25) states that India has voted against the resolution against Iran in the United Nations Human Rights Council (NCHRC). The resolution has condemned the violent suppression of those

who took part in the recent protest marches in Iran and demanded an international investigation into it. This resolution has been adopted at the 39th special session of UNHRC. A total of 25 nations voted in

favour of this resolution. While seven nations opposed it, 14 countries did not take part in the voting. Apart from India, China, Pakistan, Indonesia, Iraq, Vietnam and Cuba voted against this resolution. Whereas European Union, Britain, Ireland and Latin American nations supported this resolution. The resolution has described the crackdown on protests which started on December 28, 2025 as a violation of human rights. It has been alleged in the resolution that the Iranian army opened indiscriminate firing which killed thousands of protesters which included women and children. This apart, nearly 40,000 people have been arrested and nearly six to seven thousand people were hanged to death following a quick hearing.



The resolution extends the jurisdiction of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran for two years. While the investigation into the persecution of Iranian protesters has been demanded within a year. It is being said that India is holding talks with the US to extend the relaxation in restrictions for the Chabahar port project, which will be ending on April 2026. This port will be an important medium for India to connect with Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries by bypassing Pakistan. The US is now not a member of UNHRC. It has moved away from it.

Iranian Ambassador in New Delhi Mohammad Fatah Ali has supported this stand of Indian government. In a social media post, he said that he thanks the Government of India for its principled and strong support to Iran. He said that India has opposed a proposal which is illegal and having political objectives. The newspaper said that India has neither supported the Iran government's action against protesters nor dismissed reports of harassment of protesters. According to the Indian government, this special session of

UNHRC was unnecessary. India had in the past also kept itself away from voting in similar resolutions. In November 2022, India did not vote for the establishment of a fact-finding mission in Iran.

Urdu Times (January 25) in its editorial has criticized the resolution adopted against Iran in the UNHRC. The newspaper said that on international platforms, such resolutions are not limited to just human rights, it is necessary to understand the politics behind it. Today whatever is happening in Iran is not the result of internal dissatisfaction, instead it is an outcome of the proxy politics played by the United States and its allied countries. The US wants to make Iran dance to its tunes. But Iran is no ordinary country. It is a politically powerful country. This is its biggest crime. Iran's crime is that it has adopted an independent foreign policy and it questions the US dominance in its region. The US and its allies are unable to tolerate this, hence it is putting pressure on Iran on the pretext of human rights. This is a move in their multi-political chess game.

The newspaper alleged that inciting the people of a free country against their rulers, exploiting their political advantage, and then advocating for human rights exposes America's dangerous actions. If it is an issue of human rights, then where did the morality of the world go when the US has been openly staking claim on Greenland. Why does the love for humanity of these countries fall into a Kumbhakaran sleep when Israel continues

its illegal occupation of Gaza? When thousands of Palestinian children are buried alive under the rubble then why doesn't their conscience awaken? When Israel attacks Syria and Lebanon and their big cities are turned into ruins, why these world

powers remain silent? Using the platform of United Nations for political manoeuvring by powerful countries and putting weak or disadvantaged countries on the dock causes the greatest harm to the dignity of human rights. ■

Trade agreement between India and UAE



Etemaad (January 20) reports that India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have agreed to set a target to increase the annual bilateral trade between the two countries to \$200 billion by 2032. In this connection, the two countries have signed on a strategic defence agreement. The two countries also agreed to enhance cooperation in energy, space, and civilian nuclear reactors. President of UAE Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan had arrived in Delhi to hold talks with India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The two countries have agreed to work together to establish a supercomputing cluster in India.

The UAE President has visited India five times in the past one decade. Nahyan

visited India at a time when the global politics is in turmoil. On the one hand, the US is at loggerheads with China and Russia over Venezuela, and on the other, the situation in Iran is very bad. Moreover, tensions between Saudi Arabia and UAE over Yemen and the unstable political situation in Gaza

are sensitive issues in the Middle East. On this occasion, Prime Minister Modi presented exclusive handicrafts from different states in India as gifts to the President of UAE.

Siasat (January 27) states that the Bollywood films are popular in UAE right from the beginning. UAE has emerged as a big and profitable market for Indian films. However, recently many Indian films did not get permission to screen in UAE due to political reasons. Due to this, the Hindi film industry had to suffer lot of damages. As per the information, 40 percent of the overseas earnings of Bollywood films come from Gulf countries. ■

Ceasefire between SDF and government forces in Syria

Chattan (January 28) states that the government forces in Syria has recaptured majority of the areas occupied by Kurdish organisation Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in Syria's North-Eastern region. Later, due to the efforts of the US, a ceasefire has been announced between the Syrian army and the SDF. It is worth

mentioning that the US has been supporting the SDF for a long time, but now there is a new government of Ahmed Al Sharaa in power in Syria, which has the support of the US. This is the reason why the US wants to make SDF a part of Syrian national army instead of an independent army. As part of this ceasefire agreement,

the fighters of SDF will be inducted into Syrian army and the police. Thousands of Kurds have fled from these regions. So far, nearly 1.75 people have fled their houses. It is to be noted that civil war broke out in Syria during the reign of former president Bashar Al Assad. Last year, thousands of people were killed in Shia-Sunni clashes in several regions of Syria. Majority of Syrian areas are under the control of government forces. The newspaper said that one of the important conditions of ceasefire is that the government forces will not enter Kurd-majority localities, but this condition is being violated.

Qaumi Tanzeem (January 24) states that Syrian defence ministry has confirmed that the SDF has violated ceasefire in 35 places. In these attacks, 11 government soldiers were killed and more than 25 were injured. Syrian President Ahmed Al Sharaa confirmed that the chief of SDF Mazloun Abdi will send his representatives to the Syrian Parliament and induct the fighters of



SDF in government army and police. He said that our goal is to ensure the cooperation of all communities in the reconstruction of Syria.

Etemaad (January 22) states that Turkiye's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan urged the Kurdish army to surrender their weapons before the government soldiers and dissolve their organization so that peace could be established in Syria. Erodgan said that Turkiye considers SDF as a terrorist organization. It is linked to Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). He welcomed the ceasefire between SDF and the government soldiers of Syria.

Saudi Arabia suspends agreement with 1,800 foreign agencies



Qaumi Tanzeem (February 2) states that Saudi Arabia has decided to improve the Umrah system. Under this plan, the Saudi government has suspended its agreement

regarding Umrah with 1,800 foreign agencies. It is to be noted that the Saudi government had signed agreements with 5,800 travel agencies over Umrah.



According to the Haj and Umrah Ministry of Saudi Arabia, during regular review, huge irregularities have been found in the service quality of these foreign agencies. These foreign agencies have been unsuccessful in meeting the set standards for foreign agencies, accommodation, transportation and visa processing. This is the reason why the government has suspended the agreements with 1,800 Umrah travel agencies. Following an investigation, it has been found that these Umrah agencies used to mislead those interested in doing the Umrah and collect a huge amount from them.

The ministry has given 10 days' time to these affected agencies to rectify their shortcomings. The licenses of those agencies which meet the standards within the stipulated time-frame will be restored. It is being said that the Egyptian government has sent a report about the performance of Umrah agencies. Recently,

the Egypt government had cancelled the licence of a few Umrah agencies based in the country. It is being said that the agencies whose licences were cancelled had sent the travellers to Saudi Arabia on a travel visa instead of Umrah visa and no proper healthcare or accommodation were given to them.

Etemaad (January 24) states that Saudi Arabia's Haj and Umrah ministry claimed that more than 1.48 crore performed Umrah in the month of Rajab. Among those offered Umrah, more than 20 lakh were foreigners. The newspaper said that the increase in the number of those who offered Umrah is the result of the continuous efforts of the Saudi Arabian government. The Saudi government is working towards linking its economy with tourism and service sectors under its 'Vision 2030' programme. The goal of the Saudi government is to host 3 crore Umrah pilgrims annually by 2030. ■

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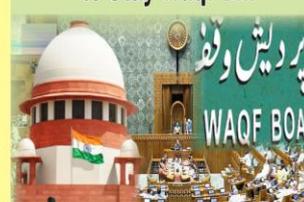
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