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Beginning of New Relations Between India and Afghanistan



- Politics intensifies in the name of Waqf property
- Campaign to erase the name of Mujibur Rahman in Bangladesh
- Ruckus over map of Greater Israel
- Indian nurse gets death sentence in Yemen

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 new chapter is likely to begin in the relationship between India and Afghanistan. The Taliban government in Afghanistan is now taking interest in improving relations with India due to its bitter ties with Pakistan. Recently, India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri held an important meeting with Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Maulvi Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai. Afghan government's spokesperson said India is an important regional and economic partner and hence we want strong and friendly relations with it. India has maintained a close and friendly relationship with Afghanistan. India launched several projects worth billions of dollars for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. After the Ashraf Ghani government was deposed in 2021, there was some deadlock between the two countries, which has now been resolved.

Recently, Pakistan has closed its border with Afghanistan. This has caused a huge blow to the trade between the two countries. Now, India has offered Afghanistan to import and export through the Chabahar Port. Pakistan does not like the growing relations between India and Afghanistan. Pakistan hoped that the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan would increase its dominance in the region, but the exact opposite has happened.

The relationship between India and Bangladesh is getting more stressful day-by-day. The Bangladesh government has opposed the work started by Indian government to fence the India-Bangladesh border to stop illegal infiltration and smuggling. India stated that it has every right to erect the fence to ensure its security. Pakistan is taking full advantage of the tense relationship between the two countries. Recently a senior military officer of Bangladesh, General SM Kamrul Hassan, visited Pakistan. He met Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir. It is reported that an agreement has also been reached between the two countries regarding security.

Recently, Israel has released a map of Greater Israel. The map showed places in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Palestine and Saudi Arabia as part of Israel. The Arab countries have condemned this step of Israel. They described it as Israel's expansionist policy. These countries expressed the fear that Israel wants to capture the territories of Arab countries, therefore it should be jointly opposed.

After two years of deadlock, finally the Army chief of Lebanon, General Joseph Aoun, has been elected as the new President of the country. It is being said that he succeeded in becoming the President due to a deal with Hezbollah. The Hezbollah did not take part in the elections this time. Earlier, presidential elections were held nearly a dozen times, but no candidate got a two-thirds majority. The new President of Lebanon Joseph Aoun appointed the Chairman of International Court of Justice Nawaf Salam as the new Prime Minister of the country. Nearly 84 members out of 128 members in Lebanese Parliament supported Nawaf.

Beginning of new relations between India and Afghanistan



Roznama Sahara (January 10) states that a high-level meeting was held between the Taliban government in Afghanistan and the Indian government in Dubai recently. The meeting took place between India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and the Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Maulvi Amir Khan Muttaqi. During the meeting, discussions were also held on using the Chabahar Port to improve the trade between the two countries. Afghanistan's foreign minister has expressed happiness that the Indian government is giving significant support to Afghanistan in overcoming the food crisis and for its reconstruction. Earlier also, several meetings were held between the two countries.

It is noteworthy that recently India has condemned the attack of Pakistani Air Force in Afghanistan. Nearly 50 people were killed in this attack. While criticising Pakistan, India said that Pakistan has a long standing habit of blaming neighbouring countries to hide its internal failures. After the talks in Dubai, discussions have also started that India may recognise the Taliban government in Afghanistan. However, currently the two countries do not have any diplomatic relationship. It is noteworthy that India and Afghanistan have a close relationship right from the beginning. India had extended help to Afghanistan in every difficult moment.

Siasat (January 10) states that Afghanistan's foreign ministry said that it

sees India as an important regional and economic partner. India has offered Afghanistan import and export through the Chabahar port. Meanwhile, Pakistan has almost closed its trade relationship with Afghanistan. It is worth mentioning that a consulate of India is still present in Kabul.

Siasat (January 10) said in its editorial that the relations between India and Afghanistan have been friendly from the beginning. India had always taken interest in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and had extended all possible help. India is making every effort to help Afghanistan overcome the current economic crisis. India has assured Afghanistan that it is ready to play an active role in the reconstruction of war-ravaged Afghanistan. The development projects that have been halted in Afghanistan can be revived again. For this, the Indian government has made only one condition, that the Afghanistan government should not allow its territory for any anti-India activity.

Urdu Times (January 10) in its editorial said the relationship between Bharat and Afghanistan is centuries-old. India has made significant contributions to the development projects in Afghanistan. In 2001, following the end of the first-term of Taliban government in Afghanistan, India had started several development projects. India made largescale investments in basic infrastructure, health, education and agriculture sectors in Afghanistan. This



includes construction of a dam in Herat town in Afghanistan. India has not only started scholarships for Afghan students, but also established several educational institutions there. Even the Parliament House of Afghanistan was constructed by India.

The newspaper said that Taliban captured power for the second time in Afghanistan in August 2021, but till today it has not got international recognition. However, after Taliban came to power, the civil war has subsided. The Taliban government is trying to improve its economic and trade relations with neighbouring countries. Recently, several mining projects have been started in Afghanistan with foreign cooperation. The deadlock between India and Afghanistan over trade and economic relations is being resolved. It is hoped that a new chapter of friendly relationship will begin between India and Afghanistan.

Munsif (January 11) has said in its editorial that the Taliban government's friendship with India is growing day-by-day. The Taliban came to power in Afghanistan in 2021 after deposing Ashraf Ghani government. Experts had assumed that with the Taliban coming to power in Afghanistan, Pakistan's hold in Afghanistan would get strengthened. The then Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan, while welcoming the Taliban, had said the people of Afghanistan had broken the chains of slavery. In order to improve Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan, Imran Khan had sent the then chief of ISI Lt General Faiz Ahmad to Afghanistan, but now the relations between the two countries have become very tense. Pakistan's allegation is that banned terrorist organisation Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

(TTP) is using Afghanistan's territory to carry out terrorist attacks in Pakistan. Recently, the Pakistani air force bombed several places in Afghanistan after violating Afghanistan's air space. In response to this, there have been fierce bloody clashes between the Afghan and Pakistani armies.

After the overthrow of Ashraf Ghani government in Afghanistan, it was felt that it was a huge blow to India. Then it was feared that the billions of dollars invested by India in Afghanistan during Ghani's regime would go down the drain, but it does not seem that this is going to happen. In the meeting held in Dubai, both the countries expressed interest in improving mutual cooperation and business. The biggest problem due to the increasing relationship between Taliban and India is for Pakistan. Pakistan's senior diplomat Hussain Haqqani said that the talks held in Dubai between Afghanistan and India is a slap on the face of Pakistan. Due to this, all plans of Pakistan have been ruined. Pakistan's former high commissioner to India Abdul Basit said that Pakistan's Afghanistan policy has gone horribly wrong. Recently, the Pakistan air force carried out bombings in Afghanistan and destroyed the friendly relations between both the countries. Though Pakistan wants to improve its relationship with Afghanistan, it is helpless due to the increasing terrorist activities of TTP in Pakistan.

Qaumi Tanzeem (January 4) reports that the New York Times in its editorial has expressed concern over the increasing tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The newspaper said that now Pakistan has been realising that they made a big mistake by supporting Taliban initially. The newspaper said that the terrorist activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces in Pakistan are being operated from Afghanistan and the Afghan government has failed in stopping these activities. Due to this, feelings of distrust and hostility are increasing between both the countries.

Row over statement of Sangh chief

Inquilab (January 15) states that Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat had said that India got real independence on the day of Ram Mandir Pran Pratishtha at Ayodhya on January 22 last year. He said the day shall be celebrated as 'Pratishtha Dwadashi.' Bhagwat said the movement for the reconstruction of Ram Mandir wasn't against anyone, and its aim was to



awaken India and enable the country to function independently and guide the world. On this occasion, he presented the general secretary of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Nyas, Champat Rai, with 'Devi Ahilya Rashtriya Puraskar.' Champat Rai has made the movement for construction of Ram Mandir a symbol of national pride.

On the other hand, the Opposition described this statement of Mohan Bhagwat as an insult to all freedom fighters including Mahatma Gandhi. Congress leader Rashid Alvi said that earlier BJP MP Kangana Ranaut had also given a statement that the country got independence in 2014. That time her statement was dismissed as a joke. Now the RSS chief says that the country got real independence after the construction of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. Had the country not become independent on August 15, 1947, would the BJP have been able to build the Ram temple? asked Alvi. Shiv Sena (Uddhav group) leader Sanjay Raut said the Sangh chief is a respected person but he is not the maker of the Constitution. Respecting Ram Lalla is a matter of pride for the country and all people have contributed to the construction of Ram Mandir. Raut said it is wrong to say that this country was not free before the construction of Ram Mandir. He should not do politics in the name of Ram Lalla.

Akhbar-e-Mashriq (January 16) reports that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said this statement of Mohan Bhagwat is a

betrayal to the country. He said that had Mohan Bhagwat been in some other country, he would have been arrested.

Akhbar-e-Mashriq (January 16) said in its editorial that when the country got independence on August 15, 1947, the national flag was hoisted everywhere, but at the headquarters of RSS in Nagpur, the Bhagwa dwaj was hoisted instead of the national flag. The RSS hoisted the national flag for the first time at its headquarters in 2002. The newspaper said the RSS has no role in securing freedom for the country. However, the RSS actively took part in the Ram Mandir movement and their people describe the construction of Ram Mandir as a great success for Hindutva.

Akhbar-e-Mashriq (January 17) in its editorial said some people are hell bent on erasing the history of the country. The process of searching for temples inside every mosque in the country is going on. Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat tried to give an arbitrary twist to the history of the country. His claim is that the country got real independence on the day of the construction of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya on January 22, 2024. Mohan Bhagwat said that India attained political freedom on August 15, 1947 and the Constitution of the country also came into being in 1950, but these were not properly implemented so far. The newspaper said that communal organisations like Hindu Mahasabha had also alleged that this freedom was fake. Their claim was that the country would get



original freedom when India becomes a Hindu Rashtra. This dream of Mohan Bhagwat and Hindu communal elements will never come true. The wise and secular people of this country will never fall into their trap. This is a secular and democratic nation.

It is worth mentioning that Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat had claimed that the country got real independence on the day of the construction of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. He said that the day of construction of Ram Mandir should be celebrated as 'Pratishta Dwadashi.' However, the historical fact is that India got independence due to the non-violent movement of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, but this has no importance in the eyes of RSS. Leader of Rashtriya Janata Dal Tejaswi Yadav has alleged that RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has insulted the freedom fighters of the country. He said the RSS has no contribution in the freedom movement of the country. Tejaswi Yadav asked Mohan Bhagwat when will the Dalits and the backwards in the country get independence? He said the leader of 100-year old organisation RSS should tell why no person from the Dalit or backward class has become the chief of RSS.

The newspaper said BJP's stance on Rahul Gandhi's statement is quite aggressive. BJP national president J P Nadda said Rahul Gandhi has accepted that he is fighting against India. He has close relationship with Naxals and the 'deep state' who are conspiring to destroy the unity of the country.

Urdu Times (January 16) in its editorial claimed that Sangh chief Mohan

Bhagwat, while addressing a meeting in Indore in Madhya Pradesh, said the independence that we got on August 15, 1947 was not the real one, instead the real independence came on the day of Pran Pratishta of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. This statement by him is an insult to those thousands of freedom fighters who fought the British for 150 years and had kissed the noose of death. Rahul Gandhi is correct that had such a statement been made in some other country, he would have been arrested on treason charges. The newspaper said Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat has been giving strange statements for some time now. Sometimes he says something, sometimes another thing. Kangana Ranaut, who is famous as 'drama queen' in the country, has also taught the same lesson to the countrymen, which Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat has now remembered. He took two years to learn this lesson. That time this statement of Kangana Ranaut was made a butt of joke on social media and she was even declared as mentally ill. Now it is understood that the thinking capacity of the chief of biggest organisation of Hindutva is same as that of Kangana Ranaut. It looks like Mohan Bhagwat is so mentally disturbed that he is unable to decide what he should do and what should not.

Roznama Sahara (January 16) in its editorial has described the statement of Mohan Bhagwat as anti-Constitutional. It has been said in the editorial that a new debate has started over the statement of Rahul Gandhi. He said we are fighting BJP, RSS and the Indian state. The two organisations have seized control of all the institutions in the country. The investigation agencies in the country are being used against the Opposition. The BJP has strongly reacted to this statement of Rahul Gandhi. BJP president J P Nadda described this statement of Rahul Gandhi as a threat to the unity and integrity of the country. However, some people may say that the language used by Rahul Gandhi is offensive, but it is a common part of today's political language.

Akhbar-e-Mashriq (January 17) states that the Opposition leader in West Bengal Assembly **Suvendu Adhikari** Suvendu has already given the message of unity and solidarity to the Hindus of the state. Now RSS is also involved in the movement to unify the Hindus. Sangh chief **Mohan Bhagwat** is arriving in Kolkata on February 7 for a 10-day visit. He will address a massive public meeting in Bardhaman. The entire Sangh Parivar is involved in making this public meeting a success. It has been planned to bring together two lakh people for this public meeting. It is being said that Mohan



Bhagwat will arrive in Kolkata on February 7 and will remain there till February 13. After this, he will visit several places in West Bengal.

Politics in the name of Waqf property



Avadhnama (January 6) states that a big statement of the national president of All India Muslim Jamaat, **Maulana Shahabuddin Rizvi Barelvi**, has come to the fore. He said the Mahakumbh is being organised on the land of Waqf board, but we do not have any objection on it. Muslims are displaying a big heart. On the other hand, the Akhara Parishad and other Sadhu-Sants have been imposing a ban on the entry of Muslims to the area. They should abandon their small heart and display a big heart like the Muslims. While addressing a press conference in Bareilly, Rizvi said a Muslim man named Sartaj who stays in Prayagraj has claimed that the land where the Mahakumbh is being organised is Waqf property. This land is

approximately 54 bigha, but no Muslim has objected to it.

Hindustan Express (January 11) states that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister **Yogi Adityanath** said that Kumbh Mela is being held on this land of Prayagraj for thousands of years. Despite that if someone says that this land belongs to Waqf Board, then I just want to ask whether it is Waqf board or the board of Bhoomafia? He said it is necessary to stop such activities and we will definitely stop this. Taking part in a television programme, Chief Minister Yogi said we have decided that whatever land that the Waqf board has seized, or is staking claim on it, its earlier records should be probed so that it could be identified in whose name the land was on. We will try to return the land to the person concerned. The land for public utility, whether it is a land of a holy place related to Hindu faith or that of the government, we will not allow any bhoomafia board to seize control over it.

The chief minister said that devotees from across the world are coming for this Mahakumbh in Prayagraj. If someone tries to hurt their sentiments by saying that this land is Waqf, then this will not be tolerated at all. Yogi said that no controversial structure should be called a masjid. The day we stop calling them as masjid, people will also stop going there. It is against



Islamic principles to build structures like masjids after hurting the sentiments of anyone. The prayers offered in such places will not be acceptable even to God. In Islam, it is not necessary to have structures to offer prayers. Whereas in Sanatan Dharma, it is necessary to have such structures. Chief Minister Yogi said that it is time to think about a new Bharat that can feel proud of its heritage. Talking about the entry of Muslims to Mahakumbh, the chief minister said that those who respect Hindustan and Hindutva should come here. We associate our Gotra with the names of the rishis of Bharat. There are many such people whose ancestors had adopted Islam due to some pressure, but if they feel proud about their Indian traditions, they should come to this Mahakumbh. If they take bath at the Sangam in the traditional manner, there is no harm in it.

Talking about the Jama Masjid in Sambhal, Yogi said there is mention of it in our Puranas five thousand years ago. It is being said in them that the tenth avatar of Srihari Vishnu will incarnate in Sambhal in the form of Bhagwan Kalki. Whatever one sees in Sambhal, those belong to Sanatan Dharma. Five thousand years, Islam did not exist on Earth. That time there was only Sanatan Dharma. In such a situation, how can Jama Masjid be mentioned? The chief minister said that it has been said in Ain-i-Akbari that this structure was built in 1526 after demolishing the ancient Harihar temple. Muslims should accept this mistake and they should return it to the Hindus. This country will not run with the mentality of Muslim League. This country will run on the faith of Bharat. Now there will be no discrimination with anyone. Talking about

the Places of Worship Act, 1991, Chief Minister Yogi said the case is being heard by the court. Hindu faith must be respected. Bharat is a religious nation. Mahakumbh is a symbol of this faith. Every person from the world and country will come here without any discrimination

Avadhnama (January 10) states that the chief of Jamiat Ulema, Maulana Mahmoud Madani, said the statement of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is misleading and it has nothing to do with truth. Madani said that it is the duty of the government to protect Waqf property, but the Chief Minister's statement makes it clear that this is the property of some enemy. By giving such a statement, Yogi has lowered the dignity of his Constitutional post. Maulana Madani said the purpose of Waqf property has always been social welfare and it is used for construction of masjids, educational institutions, hospitals and orphanages and to run them. The Waqf Board was established under the Waqf Act of 1954. On the basis of it, a Waqf board has been established in all the states in the country. The Waqf Board of Uttar Pradesh is functioning under the protection of Yogi government. This apart, there is also a Central Waqf Council, which functions under the supervision of the Central government. Maulana Madani said that describing Waqf Board as bhoomafia is against the law and Constitution of the country. The government and non-governmental institutions have forcibly occupied the Waqf land in the country. It has also been confirmed in the Parliament that more than 58,000 Waqf properties are under encroachment.

Siasat (January 6) states that the chief of All India Muslim Jamaat Maulana Shahabuddin Barelvi Rizvi urged that Muslims should not go to Mahakumbh. He said that the Akhara Parishad and Naga Sadhus have opposed Muslims setting up shops in Mahakumbh, hence Muslims should not go to Mahakumbh. Pandit Dharendra Krishna Shastri of Bagheshwar



Dham has also demanded a ban on the entry of Muslims in Mahakumbh. Legal advisor of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, Uttar Pradesh, Maulana Qab Rashidi said the demand being made to ban the entry of Muslims in Mahakumbh is against the sentiments of the Indian Constitution and it should be condemned. General Secretary of All India Shia Personal Law Board Maulana Yasooob Abbas said that if a Muslim goes to the Mahakumbh to improve his knowledge, then what is wrong in it? Islam is not so weak and light that going to a fair can endanger someone's faith.

Etemaad (January 10) in its editorial has alleged that in view of the forthcoming Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, the Mandir-Masjid issue is being reignited. A campaign to dig for Hindu mandirs in Muslim areas is being undertaken in all states. Is this being done to capture power for the third time? Despite clear directions from the Supreme Court, claims are being made almost every day in Uttar Pradesh about one masjid or the other being a temple. On the other hand, billions of rupees are being wasted on Kumbh Mela. Meanwhile, Muslims are being stopped from offering namaz outside the masjids. Police chowkis are set up on Waqf properties. The fact is that the BJP suffered a huge setback in Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh. Drums are beaten about investments, but no company is willing to make investments in the state. Factionalism is at its peak in BJP and there is strong pressure on Chief Minister Yogi to make the party win the next Assembly elections. This is the reason why the chief minister is running a hate campaign against Muslims in order to amass the votes of majority community.

Urdu Times (January 11) states that an investigation will be held into 100 Waqf properties in Bareilly district in Uttar Pradesh. It is to be noted that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had said in January 8 that stringent action will be taken against those who illegally seize land in the name of Waqf and each and every inch of

land will be taken back. Following this statement of the chief minister, the problems of those who have occupied these Waqf properties have increased. In Bareilly district, there is approximately 3,171 properties. Majority of them are dogged by controversies. National president of All India Muslim Jamaat Maulana Shahabuddin Rizvi said that lot of illegal encroachments have taken place in the name of Waqf. This apart, mafia gangs have also occupied Waqf properties. He said he agrees with the statement of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath that without the connivance of the Waqf Board, it would not be possible for illegal occupation of Waqf properties. Whenever the government investigates in this context, it should also keep this aspect in mind. National general secretary of Ettehad-e-Millet Council Dr Nafiz Khan has also supported the statement of Chief Minister Yogi. He said that it is necessary to free the Waqf properties from illegal occupation so that the income generated from them could be used for the welfare of Muslims.

Inquilab (January 15) states that the administration has started an investigation into Waqf properties in Bijnor district. There are more than 4,000 Waqf properties in Bijnor district. This includes 626 Waqf properties in Bijnor tehsil, 1,206 in Dhampur, 730 in Chandpur, 929 in Nazibabad and 517 in Nagina. Muslim leader Khurshid Mohsin Zaidi has welcomed this decision of the state government. He said that due to this the Muslim properties could be freed from illegal occupation. Bijnor ADM Arvind Kumar Singh said the district administration is investigating into Waqf properties on the directions of the government so that the state government could get a clear information regarding these properties.

Campaign against BJP-ruled states



The Urdu media has once again stepped up its campaign against BJP-ruled state governments over Mandir-Masjid controversy and on charges of erasing the identity of Muslims.

Inquilab (January 14) has alleged that a massive campaign is being run against the food habits and identity of Muslims in BJP-ruled states. Following Uttar Pradesh government, now the Madhya Pradesh government has also jumped into this race. The Muslim settlements are being demolished in the name of Mahakal corridor in Ujjain. Masjids are being demolished and despite stringent directions of the Supreme Court, a sense of fear and insecurity feeling is being created among Muslims using bulldozers. On the other hand, the names of villages with Muslim identity are being changed. Last week, the name of Maulana village in Ujjain district has been changed to Vikram Nagar, Jahangirpur's name has been changed to Jagadishpur and Gajnikhedi's name has been changed to Chamunda Mata Nagar. Now Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav has issued orders to change the names of 11 other villages. This campaign is being run for quite some time. Earlier, the Habibganj railway station's name was changed to Rani Kamalapati and Hoshangabad's name was changed to Narmadapuram.

The newspaper said that Chief Minister Mohan Yadav is giving weird arguments to change these Muslim names. He claimed that when no Muslim stays in Mohammadpur why should its name be

Mohammadpur? He said he is not doing anything wrong by doing this. Recently, the name of one village Nipaniya Hisamuddin has been given a new name Nipaniya Dev. Whereas the name of Dabla Hussainpur's has been changed to Dabla Ram. The new name of Mohammadpur Pawadiya is Rampur Pawadiya. This apart, the name Khajuri Alahdad has been changed to Khajuri Ram. Similarly, Hajipur's name has been changed to Haripur, Mohammadpur Machnai as Mohanpur, Richhadi Muradabad as Richhadi, Khalilpur as Rampur, Ghatti Mukhtiyarpur as Ghatti, Shekhpur Bongi as Awadhपुरi and Unchod's name has been changed as Unchavad. However, in the villages whose names were changed, Muslims too stay there. Despite this, government is keen on ending the identity of Muslims.

Siasat (January 8) states that claims are being made that the Uparkot Jama Masjid located in Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh is a Shiv Mandir. In this connection, the head of an organisation, Anti-Corruption Army, Pandit Keshav Dev Gautam has filed a petition in the court. In his petition, he has claimed that there has been a fort of Hindu kings in Uparkot. Later the Shiv Mandir located in it was converted into Jama Masjid. The surprising thing is that the court has fixed February 15 as the date for hearing the case.

Hindustan (January 8) states that the construction of Jama Masjid in Aligarh was undertaken by Aligarh governor Sabit Khan during the period of Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah. According to



Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), seven quintal gold has been used on its dome. No other masjid in Asia has used so much gold. This masjid has 17 domes. It is being said that Uparkot is a Muslim-majority area.

Hindustan (January 11) states that the Supreme Court has stopped the puja on a well located on the entrance of the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal. The court has also directed that the report of the ASI regarding this masjid should not be presented in the court. The same newspaper in an edition on January 10 said the Allahabad High Court has stayed the further hearing of the case going on in the district court on the Jama Masjid dispute of Sambhal.

Hindustan (December 29) said in its editorial that a new controversy has erupted in Madhya Pradesh over removing a mandir. Objections have been raised over the shifting of a mandir located near to the official residence of the Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court, Justice Suresh Kumar Kait. The Madhya Pradesh High Court Bar Association alleged that the chief justice has insulted Sanatan Dharma by removing the Hanuman Mandir from his

official residence. The Association said that the chief justice has taken this step because he belongs to Buddhist religion. In this connection, the Association has also written a letter to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. It has been said in the letter that the house where the chief justice of Madhya Pradesh stays is a

government accommodation, hence he has no right to remove the temple.

Akhbar-e-Mashriq (January 10) in its editorial expressed concern that the masjids across the country are on the target of communal elements. It has been claimed about the Gyanvapi in Varanasi, Shahi Idgah Masjid in Mathura, Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal and the dargah of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti located in Ajmer that all these religious places were constructed after demolishing the temples. Especially in the Muslim dominated areas of Uttar Pradesh, the campaign to search for temples is going on at a rapid pace.

Urdu Times (January 5) states that campaign is on by the enemies to capture mosques across the country. The surprising thing is that the Places of Worship Act, 1991 is being thrown to winds and claims are being made about the possibility of temples beneath several masjids. The courts are also accepting the petitions of communal elements in a planned manner. It is clear from it that the Sangh Parivar is running this campaign to achieve its goal to change the country into a Hindu Rashtra and the country's judiciary is also extending indirect cooperation to it. ■

Agreement between India and Saudi Arabia for Haj



Inquilab (January 14) states that India and Saudi Arabia have signed an agreement for the Haj in 2025. As per this agreement, 1,75,025 people from India will go to Saudi Arabia for Haj this year. This was announced by Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijju following an agreement signed with Saudi Arabia's Minister for Haj Affairs Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah. Kiren Rijju is currently on a visit to Saudi Arabia. He said we are determined to provide all facilities to the Haj yatris. Prime Minister Modi has welcomed this agreement. He said it is very good news for the Haj yatris from Bharat. Our government will try to provide all kinds of facilities to those who are going for Haj.

Kiren Rijju said that in order to provide facilities to the Haj pilgrims, we have started preparations much in advance this year, which is a record. In this, we are also getting the full cooperation of the Saudi government. Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijju also visited the Haj terminals in Jeddah and Medina airports. He also expressed satisfaction over the arrangements made by the Saudi government for the

facilities of Haj yatris. On this occasion, Rijju also held a discussion with the General Secretary of Muslim World League, Dr Mohammad bin Abdul Karim al-Issa.

Roznama Sahara (January 12) states that during his five-day visit to Saudi Arabia, Kiren Rijju said his visit has helped further strengthen the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Bharat. He also met the transport minister of Saudi Arabia Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser. During this meeting, detailed talks were held over the flight services, bus and train services for the Haj pilgrims. The Indian government has decided to establish a special office in Saudi Arabia. This office will provide necessary facilities to the Hajis. Rijju said we have been demanding the Saudi government that the Haj quota for India should be increased. Rijju also visited Medina. He also met Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's advisor Saud bin Khaled Al-Faisal and the Governor of Medina Salman bin Sultan. The Indian government is also trying to provide special health facilities to the Haj pilgrims in Mecca this year.

Campaign in Bangladesh to erase the name of Mujibur Rahman



Avadhnama (January 1) reports that a campaign is going on at a rapid pace in Bangladesh to erase the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Recently, the Bangladesh government decided to remove the images of Sheikh Mujib from currency notes. This apart, a decision was also taken to remove the statues of Mujib from different places in Bangladesh. The government has also directed various municipalities to take necessary steps in this direction. Recently, the caretaker prime minister of Bangladesh Muhammad Yunus had announced to revise the textbooks in the country. In the new syllabus, General Zia Ur Rahman is being given the status of the Father of Nation instead of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. It is to be noted that pro-Pakistan soldiers, under the leadership of General Zia Ur Rahman, had killed Mujib and his entire family. Among them, only the two daughters of Sheikh Mujib namely Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana had survived as both were abroad at that time.

Siasat (January 4) states that the chairperson of Bangladesh National Textbook Board claimed that the announcement regarding the independence of Bangladesh was made by General Zia Ur Rahman through Bangladesh Radio in 1971. In view of this, the government has decided to make General Zia Ur Rahman as

the Father of the Nation of Bangladesh instead of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The new textbooks will be supplied in schools from this year so that the students can read and understand the history of Bangladesh from the right perspective. It is worth mentioning that earlier the status of the founder and Father of Nation of Bangladesh had been given to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The chairman of the board constituted to revise the syllabus, Rakhil Raha, told correspondents that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family had given a deceptive twist to the history of the country and took the full credit for the independence themselves. Hence it is necessary that the new generation is given information about the true history of the country.

It is to be noted that during the regime of Sheikh Hasina, it was mentioned in the textbooks from Class I to X that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had announced the independence of Bangladesh before his arrest. He had said that "today is the independence day of Bangladesh. Whoever you are, wherever you are, fight for your freedom." Towards the end of his speech, he raised the slogan of 'Jai Bangla, Jai Swatantra Bangladesh.' Rakhil Raha also announced that other changes have also been made in the textbooks for classes V to X. All the portions related to Sheikh



Mujibur Rahman have been removed from all the textbooks. The photos of the wife of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Fazilatunnesa Mujib and the references related to her had

also been removed from the text books. This apart, the chapters related to Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani have also been removed. In place of it, A K Fazlul Huq, who was famous as Sher-e-Bangla, has been given lot of importance. The movement held under the leadership Maulana Bhashani to recognise

Bangla language as the national language of the country has been given special importance in the new textbooks.

Tension in India – Bangladesh relationship

Roznama Sahara (January 10) states that a court in Dhaka has once against issued an arrest warrant against deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina while cancelling her passport. This apart, the Bangladesh government asked the Indian government to hand over Sheikh Hasina to Bangladesh government so that cases could be filed against her on charges of genocide and corruption.



Inquilab (January 12) states that the Indian government, while ignoring the request of the Bangladesh government, extended the visa of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

As per media reports, the fundamentalists had targeted six Hindu temples within a week in Bangladesh. On January 8, four temples were targeted in Hathazari in Chatgaon and they were set on fire after destroying the murtis in them. On January 9, a temple was targeted in Cox Bazar and on January 10, a temple located in Lalmonirhat was looted. In Hathazari locality in Chatgaon, gold jewellery and the donation box were looted from Maa Vishweshwari Kali Mandir. Similarly, Satyanarayan Seva Ashram, Maa Magadeshwari Mandir and Jagatbandhu Ashram were also attacked. This apart, the radicals murdered a 70-year-old former teacher of a college, Dilip Kumar Rai. Another trader, 28-year-old Sudeb Halder,

was also killed by slitting his throat. Till now the Bangladesh government has not arrested any offender. It is to be noted that it has been claimed in a report published by Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Unity Council that in the past six months, 1,769 attacks were carried out on the minorities and more than 2,000 incidents of looting their properties have taken place.

Etemaad (January 13) states that the foreign ministry of Bangladesh has summoned the Dhaka-based Indian High Commissioner Pranay Kumar Varma in view of the increasing tension on the Indo-Bangladesh border. Bangladesh has alleged that India has been trying to erect fence on five places on India-Bangladesh border violating the bilateral agreement. The Indian High Commission has confirmed the meeting and said that this fence have been erected on the basis of the agreement between the two nations to stop smuggling and illegal infiltration. Earlier, advisor on



countries in 1975, neither any kind of construction nor a fence could be erected within 150 yards of the zero line on the border. Jahangir Chaudhary said that BSF had killed a Bangladeshi citizen. In this connection, a protest has been launched with the Indian government and it has been warned that such incidents should be stopped in future.

home affairs in Bangladesh, Lt General Jahangir Alam Chaudhary (retired) has opposed the laying of fence on the border. Talking to media, he said that during the administration of the previous government, some agreements were signed between the two countries, which were not in the interest of Bangladesh. Various kinds of problems have arisen due to this on the India-Bangladesh border. Due to opposition from our border security personnel, India may have halted the work to erect the fence. He said that India has erected a 3,271-kilometre-long fence on the Bangladesh border. Whereas, as per the agreement signed between the two

Roznama Sahara (January 14) states that India had summoned the Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh Nurul Islam to the external affairs ministry. The Indian government had told the Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh that the fence had been erected on the border on the basis of the bilateral agreement between the two countries. India has expressed hope that Bangladesh will honour the agreement signed between the two countries like in the past and it will fully cooperate with India in stopping illegal infiltration and criminal elements. India's foreign secretary told correspondents that India will hold talks with the elected government of Bangladesh in future in this connection.

Campaign against Balochis in Pakistan



There is a rapid increase in the activities of rebels in Pakistan. The Pakistan government has directed the army to launch a special operation to crush these rebels. Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been handed over to Army. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif told correspondents that this campaign against

the terrorists will continue until terrorism is finished in Pakistan.

According to Pakistani newspaper **Jung** (January 12), Pakistani army has launched an operation against Balochi rebels in Kacchi district in Balochistan. Nearly 27 Baloch rebels were killed in this operation. Whereas, it has been confirmed that 10 Pakistani soldiers were also killed.

Qaumi Tanzeem (January 11) states that the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) has carried out an attack on a government office in Balochistan. This apart, a bank was looted and a police station was set on fire after looting weapons from it. The BLA has taken responsibility for this attack.

Chattan (January 13) states that banned Islamic terrorist organisation Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) had kidnapped 17 employees of Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) in Lakki Marwat district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. According to Pakistani media, there is possibility of the Pakistani nuclear programme suffering a huge setback due to the kidnapping of these employees. Later the Pakistani Army attacked the bases of TTP and released eight employees from their custody. Nearly 20 terrorists and 10 Pakistanis soldiers were killed in this clash. As per a press release of the public relations department of Pakistani Army, a massive search has been launched to free the rest of the employees.



Chattan (January 8) states that at least six passengers were killed and 36 were injured in an explosion that took place in a bus in Turbat locality in Balochistan. The BLA has taken responsibility for this attack. A local police officer in Turbat, Rashid-ur Rahman, told journalists that the terrorists triggered the explosion using remote control and several vehicles were damaged in the explosion. Fire spread in the area following the blast. The fire was controlled with lot of difficulty. The vehicle of Senior Superintendent of Police Zohaib Mohsin was also caught in the explosion in which he and his driver were also injured. It has been said in a press release issued by the BLA that this explosion was carried out by its Majeed Brigade. The BLA has claimed that at least a dozen Pakistani soldiers were killed. It has also been said in the statement that the Pakistan Army is killing innocent Balochis. This attack was carried out in retaliation for it. Such attacks will continue in future as well.

Hindustan Express (January 11) states that the terrorists carried out an attack on a convoy of Pakistan Army in Balochistan. One vehicle was destroyed in this attack. The Pakistan government has confirmed the death of five soldiers in this blast. Whereas BLA spokesperson Jeeyand

Baloch said that at least a dozen Pakistani soldiers were killed in this attack. The spokesperson also said that the fighters of their Majeed Brigade had attacked an outpost of Pakistani Army a day earlier and killed 47 Pakistani soldiers, which included three senior officers as well.

Chattan (January 1) states that it has been claimed in a report of Pakistan's defence ministry that the two provinces in Pakistan namely Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were the most affected in the terrorist attacks in the year 2024. In Pakistan, there is a 119 percent increase in terrorist incidents in 2024 compared to 2023. Last year, 444 terrorist attacks took place in Pakistan. A total of 685 Pakistani soldiers were killed in these attacks. This apart, the terrorists had also targeted nearly 1,000 police personnel. In retaliatory action, the Pakistan Army killed 934 terrorists. Compared to 2023, there is an 87 percent increase in the murder of security personnel and ordinary people last year. It is said that this was the highest figure in the past one decade. In 2024, the terrorists had on an average killed seven Pakistanis per day. The highest damages took place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, nearly 2,000 people were killed. Whereas in Balochistan, more than 1,000 people were killed. More than 4,000 soldiers and citizens were injured in these attacks. Whereas in 2023, the number of injured were 1,462. Earlier in 2016, a total of 2,432 people were killed. Whereas in 2015, the number of those who were killed were 4,336.

As per the report of the defence ministry, there was reduction the activities of terrorists by 2020, but after 2021, there was once again a spurt and a continuous rise in such attacks. In 2021, there was a 38 percent increase in the attacks by terrorists, 15 percent increase in 2022, 56 percent increase in 2023 and there was a 66

percent increase in 2024. The districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were the highest number of terrorists were active include Kurram, North Waziristan, Khyber, Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu and Lakki Marwat. Whereas the parts of Balochistan which are on the target of terrorists include Quetta, Kacchi, Kalat, Musakhel etc.

Buddhist monk sentenced on charges of insulting Islam in Sri Lanka



Inquillab (January 10) states that a court in Colombo has awarded a nine-month imprisonment to a radical Buddhist monk Galagoda Aththe Gnanasara on charges of insulting Islam and spreading hatred against Muslims. During a press conference in 2016, Gnanasara had made strong comments against Islam and the Muslims staying in Sri Lanka. He was awarded punishment on the basis of this statement. Generally, there is no tradition of sentencing Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka, but this is the second time that Gnanasara has been awarded a jail term. It is worth mentioning that a court in 2019 had awarded him a punishment of six years in jail. Later, the then President of Sri Lanka Maitripala Sirisena had pardoned him and he was released from jail.

The court said that the Constitution of Sri Lanka allows all citizens to live without religious discrimination. A fine of 1,500 Sri Lankan Rupee was also imposed on Gnanasara. If the fine is not paid, then he has to spend an extra one month in jail. Though the lawyer of Gnanasara urged the court that he shall be released on bail until the high court delivers its verdict on his appeal, the court rejected his request

and sent Gnanasara to jail.

It is said that Gnanasara is considered to be a close associate of former President of Sri Lanka Gotabaya Rajapaksa. Rajapaksa had to resign and flee abroad following the economic crisis in Sri Lanka, because there were massive protests against him across the country. When Rajapaksa was the Sri Lankan President, he had constituted a committee to amend the laws in the country. Gnanasara was made the head of this committee. After Rajapaksa was deposed from power, the court had in another case awarded a four-year imprisonment to Gnanasara on charges of spreading hatred against Islam, which he had questioned in the high court. Now this case is pending.

Ban on burqa in Switzerland



Urdu Times (January 3) reports that the Switzerland government has imposed a ban on wearing burqa, naqab or veil covering the face from this year. Those who violate this law will have to pay a fine of 1,000 Swiss Franc. Generally, burqa is worn by Muslim women, and hence this law will mostly affect Muslims. Aeroplanes and embassies have been kept out of the purview of this ban. This apart, the ban will not be applicable on women going to masjids. There is also no ban on covering the face during entertainment and educational purposes as well. It has also been stated in this law that if there is any need to cover the face for freedom of expression or for personal security during any meeting, then permission shall be granted for the same, but for this permission shall be taken in advance from the official concerned.

It is to be noted that the ban on burqa was being considered in Switzerland for a long time. Some political parties were of the opinion that Switzerland was a secular nation, hence it has no right to interfere in any religious rites and rituals. Whereas

other people demanded that it is necessary to implement the burqa law for personal security and to stop terrorist activities. The decision to impose ban on burqa was taken on the basis of a referendum held in 2021. In this referendum, there was 51.2 percent votes in favour of a law on burqa ban and 48.8 percent vote against it. In Switzerland, if there is any controversy on implementing any law, it is mandatory to hold a referendum to decide on it.

The resolution to impose a ban on burqa was moved by the right-wing party of Switzerland, Swiss People's Party. This party has argued that they are supporting this law from the security point of view of the country. Its aim is not to target the followers of any particular religion. The interesting thing is that the government of Switzerland had also opposed a ban on burqa in the country. They said that it was not the duty of the state to tell the people, especially women, what they should wear. However, due to pressure from the Swiss People's Party, a referendum was held in the country, in which the public supported the ban on burqa by majority.

Row over map of Greater Israel



Etemaad (January 10) reports that the Israel government has released a map of Greater Israel. The map depicts places in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Palestine and Saudi Arabia as parts of Israel. Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Jordan and Palestine have condemned this map released by the Israel government. These countries have described it as solid evidence for the expansionist policy of Israel. According to Arab News, Saudi Arabia said they would never accept this action of Israel. It is a solid proof of the expansionist policy of Israel, which wants to occupy other countries. It is clear from it that Israel has no interest in following the laws and principles. We will strongly oppose their aggressive intentions.

Spokesperson of Saudi's foreign ministry said this is an opportunity for all the countries in the world to get united and oppose the aggressive and expansionist stand of Israel. Saudi Arabia is committed to stopping the expansionist policy of Israel which is against the countries in this region and the people. The spokesperson of Palestinian Authority also, while rejecting this map of Israel, said it has become clear from this that Israel has no interest in following the resolutions adopted by international organisations or the

international law. It wants to capture all Muslim nations through force. The spokesperson said that Israel is following the policy of occupying Arab nations. For this, they have settled Jews from across the world in an illegal manner in the region. Israel wants to capture holy places like Masjid Al-Aqsa. The United Nations should immediately intervene to stop the Palestinian people from becoming victims of war and destruction.

Jordan's foreign ministry said the map of Greater Israel has no basis. The regions on which Israel is trying to stake claim have no relations with Israel or the Jews. Israel has no right to undermine the sovereignty of Jordan. It is being said in the statement that the Israel government needs to come out of such expansionist efforts, because it creates disturbance, tension and instability in the region. Jordan's foreign ministry said that in the past also Israel's finance minister had been threatening to annex West Bank and establish illegal Jewish settlements in Gaza. The Arab people will not tolerate this under any circumstance. The foreign ministry of Qatar has described this Israeli map as a violation of international laws. The ministry said Israel has been making efforts for the past several years to annex Gaza

Strip through war. This map has confirmed its expansionist and offensive intentions.

The foreign ministry of United Arab Emirates said that Israel has illegally occupied the Palestinian territories and now they want to annex several parts of Arab countries. All the countries in the world should get united and oppose the aggressive intentions of Israel. It is clear from the publication of this map that Israel wants to spoil the atmosphere of peace and stability by spreading the flames of war. It is to be noted that the map of Greater Israel was presented at a function in Paris in



March 2023. When this step of Israel was condemned across the world, they remained silent.

New government formed in Lebanon



Roznama Sahara (January 10) reports that the Army chief of Lebanon, General Joseph Aoun, has been elected as the new President of the country. In the second phase of elections, 99 members out of the total 128 members of the Lebanese Parliament voted in favour of General Joseph Aoun. He had failed to get two-thirds majority in the first phase of voting. It is worth mentioning that the term of the outgoing President Michael Aoun had ended in October 2022. Later the

Presidential elections were held 12 times, but no candidate managed to get two-thirds majority. Since then, the post of Lebanon's President was lying vacant. Earlier, pro-Hezbollah leader Suleiman Franjeh withdrew his name from the candidature for presidentship. Sixty-year-old General Joseph Aoun took over the leadership of Lebanese Army in 2017. After being elected President, while addressing the Parliament, he said he would try to improve relations with Arab countries. He said the economy of Lebanon has been ruined due to the war. He said he will try to improve it and establish diplomatic relationship with Syria. Aoun said people should hand over whatever weapons they have to the government. Until the people are totally disarmed, and the weapons are limited only to the Army and the police, there won't be any hope on improving the peace in Lebanon.

According to **Urdu Times** (January 15), Lebanese President Joseph Aoun has

appointed the chairman of International Court of Justice Nawaf Salam as the prime minister of the country. Nearly 84 members out of the total 128 members of Lebanese Parliament supported Nawaf. Meanwhile, nine members voted in favour of making caretaker prime minister Najib Makati as the Prime Minister. Nearly 35 members did not vote for either of the candidates. Currently, Nawaf Salam is working as a judge of Hague-based International Court of Justice. He is arriving in Lebanon to assume charge as the Prime Minister. Later he will form the government. It is to be noted that a caretaker government under the leadership of Najib Makati is in power in Lebanon for the past two years. The economy of Lebanon is ruined due to political instability and Israeli attacks.



Hindustan (January 10) states that Lebanon's caretaker prime minister Najib Makati said that we need to adopt a new strategy to save Lebanon. For this, it is necessary that the people of Lebanon are disarmed so that peace is restored in the country. The election of Joseph Aoun as President is a setback to Hezbollah. The Hezbollah was opposing his candidature for the post of president for the past two years. Now, seeing the direction of the wind, Hezbollah has stopped opposing him and removed their candidate from the electoral field.

Hindustan (January 15) states that French President Emmanuel Macron has described the victory of Joseph Aoun as a new ray of hope. He expressed hope that the new government will serve the people of Lebanon and will provide peace and security to the country. He said that due to the disputes with neighbouring countries, the economy of Lebanon has got completely destroyed. Macron said we are ready to fully cooperate with the reconstruction of Lebanon. As per the Constitution of Lebanon, the new prime minister has to win the vote of confidence in the Parliament within 30 days of the

constitution of the cabinet. As per the Constitution, the new government cannot exercise its power without winning the vote of confidence.

Avadhnama (January 11) states that Iran President Masoud Pezeshkian has sent congratulatory message to General Joseph Aoun for becoming the President of Lebanon. Iran said the election of Aoun as President of Lebanon took place due to an agreement reached with Hezbollah. It is hoped that the new government will take steps for political stability and economic development in Lebanon. Iran is ready to extend all possible help to Lebanese government. The Iran President also said the conspiracy hatched by Israel to seize Lebanon has been foiled.

Siasat (January 10) states that former finance minister Jihad Azour and the chief of general security agency of Lebanon Elias Bayssari were also candidates in the Presidential elections. Following an agreement with Hezbollah, these two candidates withdrew from the electoral field.

It is to be noted that Lebanon is called as the Switzerland of Middle-East. It borders with Syria and Israel. It is one such country in the Arab world where followers of no religion has a majority. People belonging to Shia Muslim, Sunni Muslim, Christian and Druze communities stay in Lebanon. As per the Lebanese Constitution, Muslims and Christians become the President and the Prime Minister by turns. It is mandatory that if the country's President is Christian, then the Prime Minister should be Muslim. Joseph

Aoun has the support of the US, France and Saudi Arabia. Whereas the links of Shia Muslims' organisation Hezbollah extends to Iran. It is worth mentioning that in the past two years, the presidential elections were held 12 times in Lebanon, but no candidate could secure two-thirds majority in the Parliament, and hence the issue remained



complicated. In order to resolve the fight between Christians and Muslims, the Christians have now reached an agreement with Hezbollah. The government of caretaker prime minister of Lebanon Najib Makati also failed to get the support in the Parliament. Najib Makati is Lebanon's wealthiest person. He has been functioning as the caretaker prime minister of Lebanon since September 2021. Earlier also he was twice the Prime Minister of Lebanon.

Lebanon was formed in 1920 on the directions of the League of Nations. Before that, it was part of the Ottoman Empire. Following the directions of the League of Nations, France formed a Greater Lebanon by bringing together Mount Lebanon, North Lebanon, South Lebanon and Beqaa provinces. In 1944, France had agreed to transfer power to Lebanese government. In 1958, civil war broke out in the country. In 1967, the Palestinians started attacking Israel by making Lebanon as their base. In 1975, civil war started between Christians and Muslims and it continued till 1990. In 1982, when the Palestinian terrorists tried to assassinate Israeli Ambassador in Britain Shlomo Argov, Israel attacked Lebanon. That year, Lebanon's pro-Israel President Bachir Gemayel was killed. In 1983, a suicide attack was carried out on the US Embassy located in Beirut in which 63 people were killed. In the same year, in another attack on the headquarters of peacekeeping forces, 241 US soldiers including 58 French soldiers were killed.

Following this, the US withdrew its soldiers from Lebanon.

In 1991, the National Assembly of Lebanon had directed all armed groups that they hand over their weapons to the government, but Hezbollah refused to accept it. After 1972, the first elections were held in 1992, after which a wealthy businessman in Lebanon, Rafiq Hariri, became the Prime Minister. In 2005, Rafiq Hariri was assassinated in a car bomb explosion in Beirut. In 2006, Hezbollah had kidnapped two Israeli soldiers. Following this, Israel attacked Lebanon. After the war that continued for 34 days, the United Nations brokered a peace deal between the two countries. In 2011, civil war started in Syria. Later, clashes started between Shias and Sunnis in Lebanon as well. Due to the civil war in Syria, more than 10 lakh refugees had taken refuge in Lebanon. In 2023, after the attack on Israel by Hamas, Israel attacked Lebanon with the aim of crushing Hezbollah. Later Israel killed several top commanders of Hezbollah including its chief Hasan Nasrallah.

Roznama Sahara (January 8) states that US President Joe Biden announced a ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel on November 26, 2024. Despite this, Israel kept carrying out attacks on Lebanon.

As per another news, the United Nations has appealed to countries across the world that they extend 371 million dollars as aid to revive the destroyed economy of Lebanon so that arrangements could be made for the rehabilitation of

lakhs of Lebanese who became homeless in Israeli bombings. It is worth mentioning that the United Nations had appealed to nations across the world in October 2024 as well that they make arrangements for 426 million dollars for the help of Lebanon. Despite the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Lebanon, more than two lakh people are homeless even today. Chief of

the United Nations's rehabilitation department, Imran Riza, said 10 lakh people have been affected due to the Israel-Palestine war. He said that 15 lakh people of Lebanon left for neighbouring countries due to the war. Out of them, eight lakh have returned, but the United Nations does not have enough money for their rehabilitation.

901 people hanged to death in Iran last year



Hindustan (January 9) states that the United Nations has said in its report that last year, after China, the highest number of 901 people were hanged to death in Iran. The highest number of 40 people were hanged to death in December. It is to be noted that in the US and other European nations, the offenders are generally not given death sentence. However, Iran is among the countries where the system of awarding death sentence still prevails. The United Nations has expressed concern over the increasing incidents of hanging to death in Iran. It is being said in the report that despite opposition from world organisations there is a constant increase in the number of people getting death sentence in Iran. It is to be noted that in Iran, those accused of murder, drug-trafficking and rape are given death sentence. It has been said in this report of United Nations that the highest number of death sentences are awarded in China, but no official data is available in this connection. It has also been claimed in the

report that there is a constant increase in the incidents of awarding death sentence to women in Iran.

Chattan (January 3) states that the Saudi Arabian government has awarded death sentence to six Iranian citizens on charges of smuggling drugs. According to official sources, these accused were caught red-handed in Dammam while trying to secretly bring drugs from abroad. Iran's foreign ministry summoned the Saudi Ambassador based in Tehran and lodged its protest in awarding death sentence to these Iranian citizens. It is worth mentioning that as per official records, 338 people were awarded death sentence in Saudi Arabia last year. Compared to 2023, this was double the number.

Human rights organisation Amnesty International claimed that in Saudi Arabia, 196 people were given death sentence in 2022 while 192 were given death sentence in 1995. It is worth mentioning that earlier there was a ban on awarding death sentence in Saudi Arabia, but two years ago the system of awarding death sentence started again. The Saudi government is very much worried about the increased smuggling of narcotic substances. Especially the new generation is falling into the trap of drugs. According to official sources, out of the 338 who were awarded death sentence in 2024, 129 were foreigners. They included 25 Yemenis, 24 Pakistanis, 17 Egyptians, 16 Syrians, 14 Nigerians 13 Jordanian and seven Ethiopian citizens.

Indian nurse awarded death sentence in Yemen



Taasir (January 9) states that Nimisha Priya, a resident of Kerala, is in jail in Yemen since 2017. She was awarded death sentence on charges of murder. Yemen President Rashad Al-Alimi has approved the death sentence of Nimisha Priya. India's external affairs ministry is trying to save Nimisha from the gallows. As per Yemeni law, if the family members of the murderer offer 'blood money,' it is then handed over to the family members of the deceased. Blood money is generally given to save the life of the murder accused. The family members of this nurse are hopeful that the manner in which the eight former Indian naval officers were saved from death sentence in Qatar, this nurse could also be saved from the gallows. The interesting thing is that the family members of Nimisha are not in a position to make arrangements for the blood money in order to save her, and hence Nimisha's mother Prema Kumari has appealed to the Indian government to save her life.

As per media reports, 37-year-old Nimisha Priya went to Yemen from Kerala in 2008 in search of a job. Later she started working at a government hospital in Yemen's capital Sanaa. In 2011, she married an Indian citizen, Tomy Thomas and in 2012 she also became the mother of a girl. In 2014, when civil war broke out in Yemen, Nimisha's husband returned to India with his minor child. Whereas

Nimisha decided to stay back in Yemen. Nimisha decided to open a clinic in Yemen. As per Yemeni law, no foreigner has permission to do business there and hence she partnered with a local person, Talal Abdo Mehdi, to run the clinic. Nimisha opened a clinic after collecting Rs 50 lakh from her friends and relatives, but Mehdi betrayed her. In order to grab the clinic, he claimed to be Nimisha's husband and for this he also created fake documents. Following this, he started misbehaving with this woman. Mehdi took away the passport of Nimisha so that she should not return to her native country from Yemen. Nimisha has filed a complaint with police. In 2016, the police arrested Mehdi. Later due to the collusion of government officials, he got released from jail. Following this, he once again started harassing Nimisha.

In 2017, Nimisha gave him an injection to make him unconscious in order to take back her passport. As per official report, Mehdi was given more drugs than what was prescribed, hence he died. After his death, Nimisha cut the body of Mehdi into several pieces with the help of her Yemeni colleague Hannan and threw it into the water tank. When the police investigated the incident, they arrested Nimisha and Hannan. The court identified both as the murderers. In 2018, a court in Yemen awarded death sentence to Nimisha and life-term in jail to Hannan. Since then, Nimisha is behind the bars in Yemen and her family are trying to get her released.

An appeal was filed in the Supreme Court of Yemen on behalf of the mother of Nimisha, but the court rejected this appeal in 2023. Nimisha's mother went to Yemen in April 2024 and she also met her daughter lodged in the jail. Since then, she has been trying for the release of her daughter. Due to her efforts, the family members of the

deceased got ready to accept blood money and offer pardon to Nimisha. The people of Kerala have so far collected Rs 3 crore, but the blood money is much higher than this.

Recently, Iran had also offered to pay the remaining amount of the blood money. Iran had written a letter to the President of Yemen on January 2. It had been stated in the letter that it wants to provide its assistance on humanitarian basis to save the life of Nimisha. Earlier on December 31, spokesperson of India's foreign ministry Randhir Jaiswal told correspondents that we were aware of the issue of nurse from Kerala and are trying to find some solution to the issue.

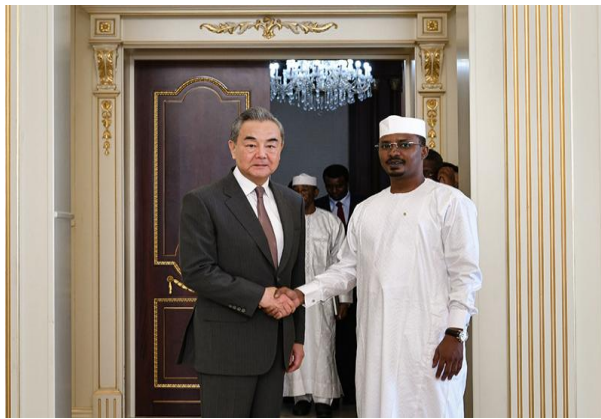
It is to be noted that a resident of Punjab, Balwinder Singh, had gone to Saudi Arabia in search of a job in 2008. He was arrested on charges of killing a Saudi Arabian citizen in 2013. The court had awarded him death sentence, but the family



members of Balwinder Singh reached an agreement with the family of the deceased to pay a blood money of Rs 2 crore. Several organisations in Punjab raised this amount by collecting donations. Later Balwinder Singh returned to India. What turn Nimisha's case takes largely depends on the efforts of the Indian government.

Hindustan Express (January 1) states that Yemen President Rashad Al-Alimi said if the blood money is not arranged within a month, Nimisha will be given death sentence.

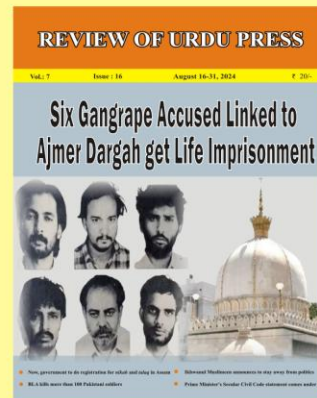
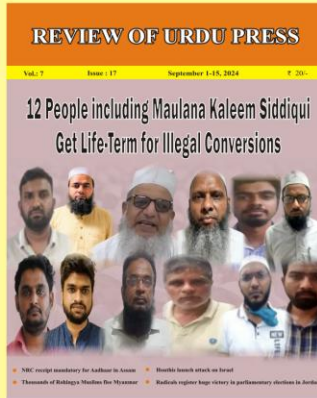
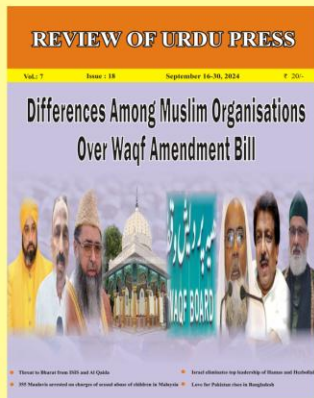
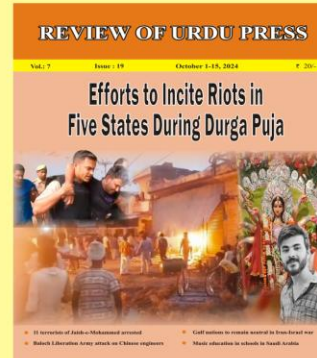
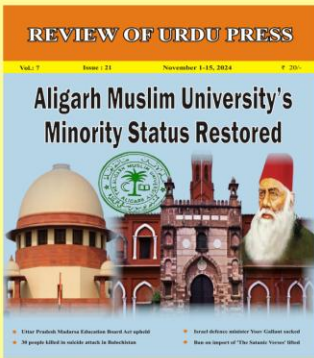
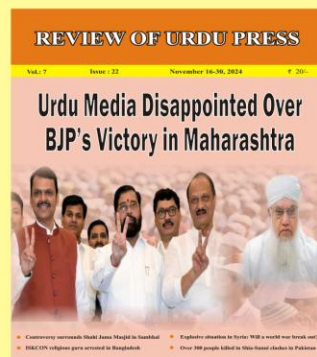
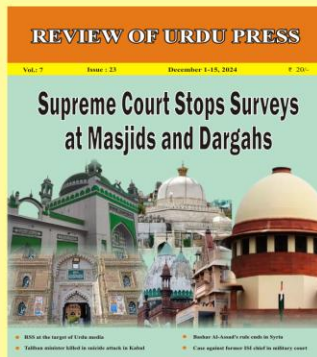
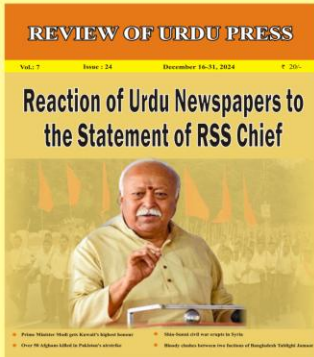
Attack on President's House in Chad



Aurangabad Times (January 10) reports that terrorists belonging to Islamic terrorist organisation Boko Haram attacked the President's House in the African nation of Chad. At least 18 terrorists were killed in retaliatory attack by the army and six were taken into custody. Though it was said that a few government soldiers were killed, their number is not revealed. According to official sources, at least 50 people were

injured in this clash, out of which the condition of 30 were said to be serious. As per the report of Al Jazeera, Chad President Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno was present at the President's House. A few hours earlier, he had a meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

According to Chad's foreign minister Abderaman Koulamallah, Boko Haram carried out this attack in order to break the friendship between China and Chad. The terrorists' plan was to kill the foreign minister of China and the President of Chad. The government soldiers foiled their attempt. It is to be noted that Boko Haram is active in Chad and many other African nations for the past one decade. It is said that this terrorist organisation is linked to Islamic terrorist organisation Al Qaida. So far, Boko Haram has killed at least 20,000 people in Chad, Algeria, Nigeria and Niger.



भारत नीति प्रतिष्ठान
India Policy Foundation

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