

# REVIEW OF URDU PRESS

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## India-Pakistan Ceasefire in the Eyes of Urdu Press



- Action against those involved in spying for Pakistan
- US President Trump's visit to three Arab nations
- Ban on Sheikh Hasina's party Awami League in Bangladesh
- Ban on playing chess in Afghanistan

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## Summary

US President Donald Trump had announced all of a sudden on May 10 that his mediation had brought to an end the four-day-long conflict between India and Pakistan. Expressing disappointment through their editorials over the sudden ceasefire between India and Pakistan, the Urdu newspapers across the country asked whether it was the result of some pressure. The Urdu newspapers also stressed that Pakistan had been maintaining a hostile attitude towards India from the very outset and terrorist organisations have been creating havoc on Indian soil at their behest. Pakistan had assured India several times in the past that its soil would not be used to instigate terrorist activities in India. However, the assurances have proved hollow time and again. Pakistan has never made any sincere effort to restrain the terrorists. Some newspapers have even alleged that the Modi government was trying to gain political mileage from the valour and courage of the Indian armed forces in the current scenario.

Recently, Indian investigating agencies have taken stringent action against those spying for Pakistan. In this regard, more than two dozen people were arrested from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The police and investigating agencies are questioning the arrested people at length. Earlier, the Union government had ordered the expulsion of a staffer of Pakistan High Commission in Delhi, Ehsan-ur-Rahim alias Danish, on charges of spying.

During the recent conflict between India and Pakistan, Turkiye and Azerbaijan openly extended military assistance to Pakistan. The people of India are angry due to this action of these pro-Pakistan countries. Various organisations in India called for the boycott of trade and tourism with these two nations. The interesting thing is that the economy of both these nations is primarily dependent on tourism. If Indian tourists and business industries boycott these two nations, they would have to bear huge losses.

In his second stint as the US President, Donald Trump has started taking a renewed interest in various issues in the Middle-East. Very recently, he undertook a four-day visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE. During his visit, President Trump signed defence equipment-related trade deals worth billions of dollars with these countries. Interestingly, Trump did not take the US ally, Israel, into confidence before embarking on this tour.

The US stance on Syria, too, has changed significantly. Following a high-level summit in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh, the US President has announced that sanctions would not be imposed on the new regime in Syria in future.

The US President has assured the new Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa that he would extend financial aid towards reconstruction of his country. Significantly, Syria had been dependent on the support and assistance of Iran and Russia for the past five decades. For the past 15 years, Islamic terrorist outfit Al-Qaida had been trying to overthrow the Shia government of former president Bashar al-Assad through its Sunni offshoot, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS).

Bashar al-Assad's army joined hands with the Ahmed al-Sharaa-led HTS instead of fighting them, compelling Assad to flee to Russia to save his life. The way the US President has extended support to the newly appointed government of Syria confirms the suspicion that the rebellion against Bashar al-Assad had the indirect support of the US.

## India-Pakistan ceasefire in the eyes of Urdu Press



Most Urdu newspapers have welcomed the ceasefire between India and Pakistan in their editorials. However, these Urdu newspapers have also complained that India has failed at the diplomatic level. Some newspapers have also expressed doubts about the success of this ceasefire. They say that the Modi government has made a big mistake by trusting Pakistan.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 14), in its editorial, said the BJP tried to make India's 'Operation Sindoor' against Pakistan on the night of May 6 and 7 as a military victory and turn it into an election issue. However, this campaign had to be stalled owing to the ceasefire between the two countries on May 10 evening. Surprisingly, two days before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the nation on May 12, US President Donald Trump took credit for the ceasefire between India and Pakistan, saying it was the result of his mediation. While India's policy from the outset has been that there is no need for any third party mediation in the Kashmir or India-Pakistan dispute.

In such a situation, Prime Minister Modi should be asked why he agreed to a ceasefire so quickly if India had dominance on the battlefield? The Prime Minister has not given any clarification in his address. He neither mentioned the US, nor rejected Trump's statement, nor did he state what

India's strategy would be after Pakistan violated the ceasefire.

However, Prime Minister Modi said in his address that it was not the time for war, nor was it the time for terrorism. There was uncertainty in the tone in which Modi spoke and his voice was defensive. The fact is that Bharat has also failed to deliver a strong message to the world at large. The newspaper said that when an enemy country directly attacks your country and all international powers, including the United Nations, remain silent, then words and sentences don't matter, only action holds value. Strong opinions have been expressed over the Prime Minister's lack of interest in calling for a special Parliament session to discuss the terrorist attack in Pahalgam.

On the one hand, terrorism was being mentioned as a test for national unity, while on the other, the government did not make any effort to take the people's elected representatives into confidence. Wasn't the government action against democratic transparency? The BJP is trying to make this military action an electoral *Brahmastra* in the country's internal politics. The 10-day Tiranga Yatra, the conference of BJP chief ministers, and the regular statements in the media are proof that the government has not refrained from capitalising on partisan interests instead of national





interests even on sensitive occasions such as war. The sacrifices of the army and military successes are not the electoral legacy of any political party.

Prime Minister Modi said in his address that the world has seen the success of 'Make in India' weapons. But the question remains that if we had an advantage on the military front, then why is Pakistan still being stubborn? If we were strong on the diplomatic front, would the US threaten us with trade sanctions? Would China stand with Pakistan? Do people with business interests like Elon Musk confirm Pakistan's statements? If India has to project itself as a dignified, independent, and powerful country at the international level, then it cannot bank only on military power but has to show diplomatic maturity, internal unity and political reality. We must remember that nations hold their heads high not only at the strength of guns but also with honesty, truth and wisdom. When the *margadarshak* himself is in an illusory state, he cannot take the country to its destination but would get stuck midway.

**Sahafat** (May 14) said in its editorial that many questions are being raised owing to the sudden ceasefire between India and Pakistan. In this context, there is palpable disappointment among the public. The opposition parties are asking whether the decision of ceasefire was taken under the US pressure. It is noteworthy that the US President Trump first gave the information about the ceasefire between India and Pakistan on social media. He claimed that both sides had agreed to a ceasefire through

the US mediation. On the other hand, while addressing the nation, Prime Minister Modi said the action against terrorism and its patron Pakistan had only been suspended. Pakistan was given a befitting reply for its audacity to attack India and this ceasefire happened only on Pakistan's appeal. Earlier, the chiefs of the three

wings of Indian armed forces had claimed that the Indian aim was to target terrorist hideouts in which they had achieved success. However, Pakistan considered it an attack on itself and stood for terrorism. Now, both countries are ready for the next course of action after the directors-general of military operations (DGMO) agreed to the ceasefire.

The newspaper said Indian military did not want to make any comment that Pakistan could take advantage of.

India has always maintained that war is not a solution to problems in this era. As a responsible nation, India and its military are well aware that prolonged military tension is not in the national interest, so the focus should be on the root causes. Currently, India's goal is to destroy terrorist organisations taking refuge in Pakistan. The world is unlikely to object to India wanting a decisive battle against terrorism. This ceasefire should not be viewed through a political lens, as it negatively impacts military strategy.

In its editorial, **Inquilab** (May 15) stated that New Delhi has made it clear to Islamabad about the consequences if terrorist activities continue from its soil. Prime Minister Modi, while addressing the nation, also warned Islamabad not to assume that 'Operation Sindoor' had concluded. It has been temporarily suspended. The newspaper said that Pakistan should actively discourage those elements who have made terrorism their prime activity. If the rulers in Pakistan turn

a blind eye to terrorist activities emanating from its soil, then they should be ready for stricter action by India in future.

India has set an example through limited and precise action on how much and what kind of reaction should be taken in any matter. Keeping the war-like situation going on only for a few days and soon ending it was in the interest of both countries. The reason for this is that world politics does not allow war. On one hand, the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia has not stopped. On the other hand, the situation between Gaza and Israel is still the same as it was a year ago.

India and Pakistan are not in a position to bear the heavy expenses of war. New Delhi is facing slightly less and Islamabad is facing more economic and social problems. In such a situation, a huge economic burden and social crisis can arise owing to war. There is no need to say that war should not happen anywhere and anytime. The common man does not understand that war brings nothing but destruction. The one who loses the war, is certainly at a loss and the one who wins the war also loses a lot. In an article published in *Nagaland Post*, defence expert Shivaji Sarkar claimed that if India continued its mission against Pakistan, then it would have to suffer daily economic losses amounting to US dollars 17.8 billion (approximately Rs 1.34 lakh crore). According to a UAE-based foreign affairs forum, if India indulges even in a brief conflict with Pakistan, the former stands to face daily economic losses to the tune of Rs 1,460 crores to Rs 5,000 crores.

**Etemaad** (May 13), in its editorial, welcoming the ceasefire, stated that if the war had continued, there would have been a huge inflation, leading to economic instability in the world. Supporting the statement of former Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane, the newspaper



said that India had succeeded in sending a message to Pakistan that India can go to any extent to protect its borders and people against terrorism. It is because of this strict stance of the Indian government that Pakistan had agreed to a ceasefire. It is absolutely correct that war is not a solution to any problem but it is a problem in itself.

**Munsif** (May 13) said the manner in which the US President Trump announced the ceasefire suggested that the US had not brokered a reconciliation between India and Pakistan, but ordered them for an immediate ceasefire. No one had any idea when the US started mediating and on what conditions it forced both countries to agree to a ceasefire. The newspaper said that India had attacked terrorist bases in Pakistan and PoK in reply to the Pahalgam attack. Moreover, India was successful in tackling the retaliatory action from across the border. The BJP and its allies are alleged to have tried to take advantage of the military successes for electoral gains. But why India quickly agreed to the ceasefire is a point worth pondering.

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) president Asaduddin Owaisi has said that he wished that the ceasefire announcement was made by our Prime Minister Narendra Modi instead of a foreign president. India has been against the intervention of any third party in the issue of Kashmir and Pakistan but why are we ready to accept mediation by a third party?

India has also realised why no country has supported India the way China has supported Pakistan? During the media



briefing, when asked whether Pakistan shot down any Rafale fighter planes during 'Operation Sindoor,' Air Marshal A. K. Bharti neither confirmed nor denied this claim, but he did indicate that there was loss in war-like incidents. Our disappointment has increased further due to this indication by Air Marshal Bharti. Owing to this war, the image of Indian dominance in this area has also been severely damaged.

**Urdu Times** (May 13), while commenting on the ceasefire announcement, said that it has brought the Modi government under intense scrutiny. It was awkward how US President Trump announced the ceasefire between India and Pakistan all of a sudden. Whereas, even after this announcement, there was conflict between the two warring sides in several places in which many people were killed. Opposition parties, especially the Congress, accused PM Modi of leading the country into an unnecessary conflict. The Congress demanded that PM Modi call a parliamentary session to clear the air over the alleged failures of 'Operation Sindoor'. Opposition leaders alleged that this operation was launched without solid preparations, as a result of which India had to suffer huge diplomatic and military setbacks.

The newspaper alleged that Prime Minister Modi had won several elections by using the 'Pakistan card' but his recent move (Operation Sindoor) had backfired and had caused heavy damage to the credibility of the Modi government. Now, the people of the country are questioning Modi as to why he started the war if he did

not have the courage to fight. This criticism could be a threat to Modi's political future because it will affect the upcoming elections.

**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (May 14) welcomed the ceasefire between India and Pakistan in its editorial. The newspaper said that despite the ceasefire, there had been no improvement in Pakistan's attitude towards India. Pakistan has not stopped patronising terrorists and are extending help to them. Pakistan has repeatedly promised that it would not allow its soil to be used for terrorist activities against India, but its claim is only on paper.

It is clear that Pakistan cannot be trusted. Then why did the Indian government agree to a ceasefire without setting any condition? The situation is not clear. We have no hope that Pakistan will refrain from its evil deeds, so there should be no leniency in India's policy towards Pakistan. Pakistan's activities are a threat to peace in this region.

**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (May 12) expressed surprise in its editorial that whenever India raises its voice against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, it is left alone in the world. No country stands with it. This time too, the US and other European countries condemned the Pahalgam terrorist attack but no country opened its mouth about the elimination of terrorists thriving in Pakistan. The truth is that the US has no interest in India's actions against terrorism. In its view, the Pahalgam terrorist attack is India's local problem. However, it is the same USA that has attacked many countries of the world under the guise of terrorism.

It is a bitter truth that the US has designated many of the terrorist organisations patronised by the Pakistan army and its government as terror outfits. Despite all this, the US continues to encourage terrorist organisations by providing aid to Pakistan. When India sought global support in its campaign against terrorism following the Pahalgam

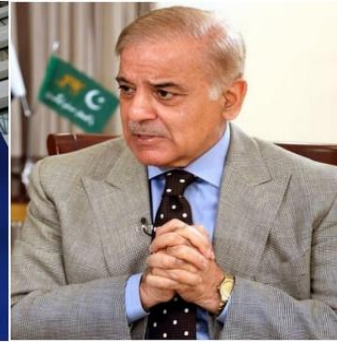


attack, no country took it seriously. When India and Pakistan were engaged in conflict, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), at the behest of the United States, granted a billion-dollar loan to Pakistan. This undoubtedly strengthened Pakistan's position, triggering an increased probability that Pakistan would use these funds to enhance the power of terrorist organisations and the Pakistani army.

The newspaper expressed surprise that the President of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has become like a servant of the United States. This is why Türkiye has openly provided arms assistance to Pakistan to make it stronger.

**Hindustan** (May 12) expressed surprise in its editorial over India's sudden announcement of a ceasefire without any conditions. All opposition parties and the public had offered wholehearted support to the Modi government in its operation against Pakistan.

The government had given full support for military action against Pakistan. Opposition parties and the public pressured



the government not to show any leniency or compromise with Pakistan on the issue of the country's unity, integrity, and independence.

However, surprisingly, the Modi government suddenly announced a ceasefire with Pakistan without taking the opposition and the people of the country into confidence. The question remains, was the announcement by the Modi government not a betrayal of India and the opposition? The Modi government should have taken the people and the opposition into confidence before starting the ceasefire talks and informed them what was the basis of this agreement. The saddest thing was that the ceasefire was announced by the US President Trump instead of Prime Minister Modi.

## Action against those spying for Pakistan



The National Investigation Agency (NIA), in coordination with the police and intelligence departments of various states, has launched a crackdown on those spying for Pakistan. So far, nearly two dozen spies have been arrested in this regard. It is said

that these arrested spies are linked to Pakistan's intelligence agency, ISI.

According to **Inquilab** (May 14), the ministry of external affairs expelled an official of the Pakistan High Commission in Delhi, Ehsan-ur-Rahim alias Danish, from India on charges of being involved in espionage activities. He was ordered to leave India within 24 hours.

According to **Inquilab** (May 18), Haryana police have arrested a YouTuber, Jyoti Malhotra, from Hisar on charges of spying for Pakistan. According to Haryana police, Malhotra had links with Ehsan-ur-Rahim alias Danish, an official of Pakistan High Commission in Delhi.



Malhotra was found to have visited Pakistan multiple times. The Indian government had previously declared Danish a persona non-grata and expelled him from India. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is conducting a detailed investigation into Jyoti Malhotra's activities, in addition to the Haryana police. The intelligence wing had been monitoring the YouTuber for long. The Haryana police claimed that Malhotra admitted to working for ISI for the past several years and provided it with information on India's military operations.



According to police, Jyoti visited the Pakistani High Commission office in Delhi in 2023 to obtain a visa for Pakistan. There, she met Danish, who arranged her entire trip to Pakistan. She met Ali Ahwan, an ISI officer, in Pakistan. Ahwan organised Jyoti's stay and travel in Pakistan and arranged for her to meet with various Pakistani intelligence agency officials. When she returned to India, she remained in constant touch with ISI officials through WhatsApp, Telegram, Snapchat etc. Jyoti had passed over several important information regarding Indian military cantonments and military activities to them. The court has sent her to police custody on a five-day remand. Intelligence Bureau, NIA and other investigating agencies have questioned Jyoti in detail. As per the interrogation, she has visited Pakistan three times, Bangladesh twice, and China once. She came in contact with spies in these countries and began working for them.

According to another story in the same newspaper, Haryana police and central investigating agencies have arrested a 22-year-old truck driver, Arman, from Rajaka village in the Nuh district of Haryana for allegedly spying for Pakistan. He is accused of sharing details about India's military operations with the ISI via WhatsApp. He has been charged with treason. The court has remanded him in police custody for six days.

According to sources, the NIA and other agencies, with the help of police from

three states, have arrested over 20 people spying for Pakistan. Police have said Jyoti Malhotra's questioning revealed that she obtained her passport in 2018, which is valid till 2028. Her passport shows that she visited Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Dubai, Thailand, Bhutan, Nepal and Indonesia.

Those arrested in Punjab include Gujara, a resident of Malerkotla, Yamin Mohammad, Palak Sher Masih, Suraj Masih, Sunil Kumar, Rakib Khan, Sukhpreet Singh and Karanbir Singh. Those arrested in Haryana include Noman Ilahi, a security guard at a Panipat factory, Devendra Singh Dhillon, a postgraduate student from Kaithal and Arman, a truck driver from Nuh. Moreover, five persons from Uttar Pradesh have also been detained on espionage charges.

During interrogation, 31-year-old Gujara, arrested from Malerkotla, Punjab, admitted to being in contact with Danish, an expelled official from the Pakistan High Commission in Delhi. She provided the Pakistani intelligence agency with crucial information regarding military bases in Punjab. In return, Danish paid her Rs 30,000 through UPI. Yamin Mohammad also sent sensitive information to Pakistan and received online payments in return.

According to another report, the Special Task Force of Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, detained one Shehzad from Rampur. It is believed that he had visited Pakistan a dozen times and smuggled various goods across the border before coming into contact with the ISI. Shehzad had been providing military intelligence to ISI for a while. Shehzad's family told reporters that the accused had no



connection to espionage, claiming he used to bring clothes and other items from Pakistan to sell in Rampur.

During interrogation, Palak Sher Masih and Suraj Masih, residents of Ajnala, Amritsar, admitted to sending photos of military activities in Punjab, Border Security Force camps, airports, and other crucial military bases to the Pakistani intelligence agency ISI. Three mobile phones and Pakistan-made pistols were seized from Sukhpreet Singh and Karanbir Singh, who were arrested from Gurdaspur.

The accused were allegedly involved in espionage activities for Pakistan, providing sensitive information. They also received money in exchange for their services.

According to **Roznama Sahara** (May 20), investigating agencies have got incriminating evidence against Noman Ilahi. According to preliminary information, Noman also had a fake Facebook account. He used to provide information about the Indian Army's activities to the ISI through three different mobile numbers. After grilling him, the police have also arrested three other Muslims residing in Kairana on charges of spying for Pakistan. Devendra Singh Dhillon, a 25-year-old student from Kaithal, admitted during interrogation that he had made a religious trip to Nankana Sahib through the Kartarpur corridor last year. There he came into contact with Pakistani intelligence agencies. He

admitted that he had sent several photographs related to the Patiala cantonment to Pakistan.

Another person, Mohammad Tarif, has also been arrested from Nuh. He has admitted that he travelled to Pakistan at least thrice and was in contact with several officials of the intelligence agencies there. He also admitted that he had given SIM cards to two officials of the Pakistani High Commission in Delhi, Asif Baloch and Zafar. A police officer from Sirsa has confirmed that Mohammad Tarif

had provided information about Indian military bases located in Sirsa to the Pakistani military. Later, acting on the tip-off, Pakistan launched a missile attack on the Sirsa air base. India's air defence system foiled this attack.

Investigation agencies are also questioning Priyanka Senapati, a YouTuber residing in Puri, Odisha. However, she had not been taken into custody till reports last came in. Jyoti Malhotra reportedly stayed with Senapati several times and she had provided many photos related to the test-firing of Indian missiles to the ISI from there. Punjab Director-General of Police Gaurav Yadav told reporters that at least 10 suspected Pakistani spies had been arrested in the state so far and are being interrogated. These suspects have admitted that they have provided many important information related to Western Command of the Army and about the Strike Corps to the Pakistani military. Gaurav Yadav said it was possible that some more people spying for Pakistan could be arrested in this case from Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh based on information extracted from the arrested spies by intelligence agencies.

According to **Hindustan Express** (May 18), the NIA raided Mumbai airport and arrested two fugitive terrorists, Abdullah Fayaz Sheikh and Talha Khan. They are said to be associated with the Islamic terrorist organisation ISIS. In 2023, they carried out explosions at a dozen

locations in Pune, after which they were on the run. Meanwhile, a dozen other accused related to this gang are currently imprisoned. The NIA has arrested both these terrorists. NIA had announced a bounty of Rs 3 lakh on the arrest of each

but they had hoodwinked police and intelligence agencies and managed to flee to Indonesia. On their return, NIA arrested the duo from Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. Intelligence agencies are interrogating them. ■

## Campaign to boycott Turkiye and Azerbaijan



According to **Inquilab** (May 15), during the recent India-Pakistan conflict, Turkiye and Azerbaijan not only supported Pakistan but also provided them with drones and other military equipment. Hence, the campaign to boycott these two countries has been gaining momentum in India.

Various organisations have appealed to the citizens not to travel to these two countries. This apart, a decision has been taken to boycott Turkish goods. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi has cancelled its agreement with Inonu University of Turkiye. JNU has written on social media platform X that "We stand with our country". Five other universities in the country have also announced the cancellation of agreements with Turkiye.

Fruit traders of Azadpur Mandi in Delhi have decided not to import apples from Turkiye in future. Similarly, the Udaipur Marble Processors Committee has also decided not to import marble from Turkiye. It is noteworthy that Turkiye is the largest supplier of marble to India. The marble processors' committee chairman,

Kapil Surana, stated that they have written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi requesting a ban on importing marble from Turkiye. This decision will be a major setback for Turkiye from a business perspective.

On the other hand, many travel agencies, including MakeMyTrip, have appealed to Indian tourists to cancel their plans to travel to Azerbaijan and Turkiye. The company has claimed that due to its appeal, 60 per cent of people have cancelled their tickets.

The Federation of Western India Cine Employees has appealed to the Indian film industry not to shoot any films in Turkiye and Azerbaijan in the future. Industrialist Harsh Goenka, while supporting the boycott of Turkiye and Azerbaijan, wrote on X that if Indian tourists boycott Turkiye and Azerbaijan, those countries will suffer losses of more than Rs 4,000 crore per year.

According to **Sahafat** (May 19), traders in Navi Mumbai have stopped importing apples from Turkiye. A fruit



trader, Vijay Bhende, said apples worth more than Rs 1,000 crore were imported from Turkiye last year. Now, seeing Turkiye's anti-India stance, traders have decided that in the future, there will be no trade relations with Turkiye in any way. According to another news article, the Pune Dry Fruits Association has announced that dry fruits will not be imported from Turkiye in the future.

According to another news published in the same newspaper, the security clearance of Celebi, a Turkish company providing cargo and ground handling services at Indian airports, has been revoked.

According to **Urdu Times** (May 13), 20 per cent of the total income of Turkiye and Azerbaijan comes from tourism. Seventy per cent of tourists visiting Azerbaijan are Indians. Now, Indian tourists have started going to Thailand instead of these two countries. Many travel companies and airlines have also decided that those who cancel tickets to Turkiye and Azerbaijan will not be charged a cancellation fee.

Last year, more than 5.5 lakh people travelled to these two countries. In 2023-24, India's total trade with Turkiye was \$10.43 billion, including exports of \$6.65 billion and imports of \$3.78 billion.

According to **Chattan** (May 18), Turkiye had clearly declared that if there is a war between India and Pakistan, it will openly support Pakistan. Azerbaijan had condemned the air strikes being carried out by India on Pakistan. The demand for boycott gained momentum when the Indian Army claimed that Pakistan was using Turkish-made missiles and drones to attack India.

On the other hand, a dozen Indian universities, including Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jamia Millia Islamia and



Maulana Azad National Urdu University, have announced that they are severing ties with educational institutions in Turkiye. Various Indian companies have confirmed that 90 per cent of tourists going to Turkiye and Azerbaijan have cancelled their bookings.

According to **Inquilab** (May 19), IIT-Bombay has severed ties with Turkish institutions. Currently, IIT Bombay has several faculty exchange programmes with Turkish educational institutions. Earlier, IIT-Roorkee had also terminated its agreements with Turkish universities. Meanwhile, the University of Chandigarh has announced the severing of ties with 23 universities in Turkiye and Azerbaijan.

**Hindustan** (May 17) criticised Turkiye and Azerbaijan's anti-India stance in its editorial. The newspaper stated that when India was in conflict with Pakistan, Turkiye provided weapons and drones to Pakistan. Similarly, Azerbaijan openly supported Pakistan, disregarding its old ties with India.

Despite years of relations with India, Turkiye has continued to support Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. Public outrage against Turkiye and Azerbaijan is growing across India by the day. It is strange that the responsibility of managing the country's major airports was given to a Turkish company. Did any government agency oppose the awarding of this contract to this company earlier? Are such matters being overlooked? Aren't the intelligence agencies supposed to keep an eye on such things? Now, the central government has woken up and is

considering taking strict action against these two countries. However, even at this time, Turkish companies are working in many large states of the country like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Delhi. The surprising thing is that the agreements made with these companies have not been cancelled yet.

**Hamara Samaj** (May 16) has expressed surprise in its editorial that when the Indian Army was fully prepared to crush Pakistan, USA, a traditional friend of Pakistan, ordered a ceasefire to Prime Minister Modi and saved Pakistan. At such a time, the patriots of our country should have first launched a campaign against the US but all the anger of the RSS and its allied organisations is coming out on Turkiye instead of USA. Do Indian 'hate bugs' realise that by messing with Turkiye and Azerbaijan, who are helping Pakistan, they are putting their own government in trouble? It's a different thing to sit in television studios and comment on Turkiye. They should remember that Turkiye is a member of NATO and it openly helped Azerbaijan to



defeat Armenia. Though, Armenia is a Christian country and there is a majority of Christian countries in NATO.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 19) said in its editorial that earlier only Pakistan was targeted. Now, Turkiye is also on India's target since it supplied Pakistan with missiles and drones during the recent conflict. Moreover, Turkiye had sent a warship to Karachi to help Pakistan. Turkiye could not have guessed that it would have to pay such a high price for helping Pakistan. Turkiye was looking forward to earning a lot from Indian tourists and shoots of Indian films but now that seems a lost chance.

## Action against over 350 illegal places of worship in Uttar Pradesh

According to **Hindustan** (May 14), the Uttar Pradesh government has launched a massive campaign against illegal constructions in districts bordering Nepal.

Sources said more than 350 madrasas, mosques, dargahs and idgahs have been sealed and demolished so far. A government spokesperson stated that the state government is taking action against illegal constructions that have been built by encroaching upon government land. He said this action is necessary in view of national security, as foreign spies and terrorists take shelter in these illegal buildings.

The spokesperson said that this action has been taken in Pilibhit, Shravasti, Balrampur, Bahraich, Siddharthnagar,

Maharajganj and Lakhimpur Kheri. The spokesperson claimed that the administration had sought title deeds and other property-related documents from those who made the illegal constructions but they could not produce any such papers whatsoever. The spokesperson clarified that the state government's campaign was against illegal constructions only and was in no way directed at any religion or community.

**Etemaad** (May 5) states that a massive campaign has been launched in Uttar Pradesh against madrasas, mosques and buildings related to Islamic faith. Within two days, about 100 unrecognised madrasas have been sealed. While more than 250 madrasas, dargahs, idgahs and



mosques have been declared illegal and demolished with bulldozers. This action has been taken in the districts bordering Nepal. A senior Uttar Pradesh official said that a high-level meeting was held a few days ago under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. In this meeting, a decision was taken to remove illegal encroachments on government land in border areas.

In this campaign, the cooperation of the district administration, local police, and Sashastra Seema Bal has been taken. Neeraj Kumar Agarwal, district minority welfare officer of Maharajganj, informed that more than 300 cases of encroachment on government land have come to light in Maharajganj.

An investigation is on to determine the legality of these constructions. He said that several dozen madrasas were built by encroachment, and hence action has been taken against them. These madrasas were built several decades ago and they did not have ownership-related documents. He said that cases have been registered against the encroachers in the police so that action can be taken against them.

According to **Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 17), after 'Operation Sindoor', strict surveillance is being maintained on the activities of foreign elements on the India-Nepal border. Specifically, people staying in madrasas, mosques and dargahs are being thoroughly checked. This action is

being taken in Maharajganj, Siddharthnagar, Balrampur, Shravasti, Bahraich, Lakhimpur Kheri and Pilibhit. The intelligence department of Uttar Pradesh police has been instructed to keep a close watch on the activities of foreign spies and terrorists. So far, 250 madrasas, 40 mosques, 25 mazaars, and six idgahs have been freed from encroachment. This campaign is being conducted in a 100-kilometre area of the India-Nepal border.

According to **Etemaad** (May 15), the Uttar Pradesh government is considering reorganising the Madarsa Education Board and trying to restructure the madrasa syllabus by including subjects like English, science, mathematics and computer education apart from keeping the traditional curriculum intact.

The social welfare department and the minority welfare department are in contact with experts to prepare a new curriculum. According to government sources, there are currently 13,329 recognised madrasas in Uttar Pradesh, where 12.35 lakh children study. Of these, 10,000 madrasas are at the primary level, and the remaining are at the secondary level. A total of 561 madrasas are given government grants under the Modern Madrasa Scheme.

**Munsif** (May 14), in its editorial, has accused the Yogi government of Uttar Pradesh of adopting anti-Islam policies. The newspaper said that centuries-old





madrasas of the state in collusion with the minority welfare department and the managers of the madrasas. Allegations have also been levelled that the management of many madrasas in Uttar Pradesh are colluding with corrupt government officials to procure state grants. However, these so-called madrasas do not have their own buildings and other basic facilities in place.

madrasas are being wiped out on the pretext of demolishing illegal constructions. It further appealed to every Muslim to come out openly to protect these Islamic madrasas, considered forts of religion. To stop government intervention, it is necessary that these madrasas should be run traditionally on donations from the society and should not take any kind of grant from the government.

**Inquilab** (May 21) has alleged that the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), on the instructions of the Central government, has also joined the campaign against madrasas. Following the commission's instructions, the economic offences wing (EOW) of the Uttar Pradesh police has started investigating the accounts of madrasas in Barabanki district.

A resident of Kasba Zaidpur in Barabanki district had complained to the NCPCR that hundreds of teachers who are not trained have been appointed in 588

Commenting on this matter, Maulana Tariq Shamsi, vice-president of the All India Teachers' Association Madaris-e-Arabia, has alleged that the state government was harassing the managers of madrasas on one pretext or the other since 2017 so that they get fed up and close all the madrasas in the state.

Another news article said that the Uttar Pradesh government has banned the appointment of employees in the recognised madrasas of the state. The government has directed that the educational certificates of the teachers working in these madrasas should be checked and if found ineligible, they should be dismissed from their jobs. A government spokesperson said the Supreme Court has declared the degrees of *Kamil* and *Fazil* as 'unconstitutional' so it becomes necessary to check the educational certificates of the teachers working in these madrasas.

## Controversy surrounds Ghazi Miyan's Urs

**Roznama Sahara** (May 18), states that the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court has overturned the ban imposed by the Uttar Pradesh government on the Urs fair of Dargah Syed Salar Masood Ghazi in Bahraich. Now, there will be no restrictions on devotees visiting the dargah. The court has stated that the district administration should cooperate with the dargah committee and that there should be no

restrictions on people attending the Urs fair. Additionally, permission has been granted to organise religious and traditional ceremonies at the dargah. A special bench of Justices AR Masoodi and Subhash Vidyarthi has given a clear direction to the administration that devotees coming to the dargah of Ghazi Miyan should not be stopped on the roads. This order has been issued as an interim measure. Later, a final



decision will be taken in this regard. The court heard the arguments of the lawyers of both the parties.

Thereafter, the court reserved the judgment but gave an interim order that the rituals and other activities in the dargah could continue. It is noteworthy that the district administration had not given permission for organising the historical 'Jeth Mela' on May 7. Thereafter, the dargah management committee approached the high court.

Earlier, according to **Roznama Sahara** (May 4), city magistrate and sub divisional officer in Bahraich district in Uttar Pradesh Shalini Prabhakar had made it clear that the fair was not recommended to be held at the dargah of Hazrat Salar Masood Ghazi and the dargah managers had been informed in this regard. These officials had said that the intelligence department had sent a secret report about the historical fair held at the dargah to commissioner Shashi Bhushan Lal Sushil and DIG Amit Pathak of Devipatan division.

The report recommends against holding such fairs considering the recent acts of terrorism in the country. The local intelligence unit (of UP police) has

mentioned in its report that the annual fair that is held at the Dargah Ghazi Miyan continues for a month. More than 15 lakh Hindus and Muslims take part in the fair.

It is noteworthy that this time, the Dargah Ghazi Miyan Management Committee had sought permission to start the fair from May 15. The Bahraich district administration had refused permission, citing national security.

According to **Inquilab** (May 18), after the hearing in the high court, Syed Akram Azad stated that the court had accepted these petitions and directed that no restriction of any kind be imposed on religious and traditional rituals taking place at the dargah. Devotees would have full freedom to come and go. He said that the high court's decision had once again proved that respect for religious freedom and traditions was the basic foundation of the Indian Constitution.

**Inquilab** (May 14) said the district administration of Jaunpur had granted permission for the Ghazi Miyan fair. According to another news article, the Prayagraj district administration also granted similar permission to the said fair.

**Inquilab** (May 10), states that the Uttar Pradesh government, while clarifying

in the high court about the fair held at the dargah of Syed Salar Masood Ghazi in Bahraich, said that the government had not imposed any kind of restrictions on the religious rituals held at the dargah. This restriction has been imposed on the fair organised outside the dargah premises, which is basically commercial.

The court was also told that the district administration is not in a position to guarantee the provision of necessary basic facilities or maintain a safe environment for the month-long fair. If permission is granted to organise the fair, it could trigger a law-and-order problem.

On the other hand, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav has criticised the state's BJP government for imposing a ban on the fair. He said that the ban had been imposed on the fair to divert attention from the basic problems of the public. Yadav said that the fair was a huge meeting place for people.

It is noteworthy that the dargah of Ghazi Mian located in Bahraich has been in the eye of storm right from the beginning. Before this Urs, 'Neja Mela' is organised at various places in Uttar Pradesh. On March 18, a ban was imposed on this fair in Sambhal. The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) of Sambhal had said that the 'Neja Mela', which is held every year in memory of a person who was a looter and murderer, would not be held this year.

Thereafter, Hindu organisations from Moradabad to Bahraich had started a



campaign to stop the fair. Congress MP Imran Masood from Saharanpur had described Syed Salar Gazi as a 'Sufi saint'. Whereas, on the website of the tourism department of the Uttar Pradesh government, Salar Masood Ghazi has been described as a famous 'Islamic saint' of the 11th century. It is also claimed that the present dargah was built by Firoz Shah Tughlaq.

According to historians, Syed Salar Masood Ghazi was the nephew of the notorious invader Mahmud Ghaznavi. He had started a series of attacks from Lahore to Bahraich in 1034 AD. On the way, he looted and destroyed many cities. Among these, districts like Meerut and Badaun are prominent. He was the first Muslim invader who attacked Ayodhya, destroyed the temples there and brutally killed thousands of Hindu pilgrims. When he advanced towards Bahraich, Raja Suheldev, along with 21 other kings, confronted him near the Chittora lake. Salar Ghazi was killed in this war. Later, after winning Bahraich, Firoz Shah Tughlaq built his tomb.



## Sheikh Hasina's party Awami League banned in Bangladesh



**Urdu Times** (May 13), states that the Bangladesh government has announced a ban on the Awami League, the party of ousted Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, under the Anti-Terrorism Act. The Bangladesh Election Commission has also cancelled the registration of the Awami League. The Awami League will now not be able to participate in the elections in Bangladesh.

According to this government order, online propaganda by the Awami League has also been banned. The order states that in the future, no leader of the Awami League would be able to address party workers or hold public gatherings online or through video conferencing. According to the government order, this ban will remain in effect until the trial of the cases against the leaders of the Awami League is completed in the special tribunal.

A government spokesperson said this decision was taken in a special cabinet meeting chaired by Muhammad Yunus. The aim of this decision is to maintain the security and sovereignty of the country. The meeting also decided that Yunus would continue as the chief adviser of the interim government in Bangladesh.

However, in March, the Yunus government had announced that it would

not ban the Awami League party of deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Following this announcement, students had launched a series of fierce protests. Their demand was that Sheikh Hasina's party be banned and that a case be filed against her in a special tribunal. The students' wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Chhatra Shibir, had also actively participated in these protests. Praising the ban on Awami League, National Citizen Party president Nahid Islam said now permanent peace could be established in Bangladesh.

According to media reports, the advisory council has also approved amendments to the International Criminal Tribunal Act in the special meeting. This tribunal can prosecute any political party, its associates or supporters in the national interest of the country.

Earlier, nearly a dozen students' organisations, including the National Citizen Party, Islami Chhatra Shibir, Islami Andolan and United People's Party, had staged a sit-in at the Shahbagh intersection to demand a ban on the Awami League.

After the announcement of the ban on the Awami League, students celebrated in Dhaka. Seeing the fierce protests, former president of Bangladesh and Awami League leader Mohammad Abdul Hamid

had to flee Bangladesh and take refuge in Thailand. Earlier, students had staged a sit-in outside the residence of Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser of the interim government, which has now ended following the announcement of the ban on the Awami League.

In its notification, the home ministry said that during the students' movement that started on July 15, 2024, leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League attacked protesting students and the general public, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of innocent people. Due to the spreading violence and rising terrorism in the country, the Awami League, its allied organisations Yuva League and Chhatra League have also been banned.

**Siasat** (May 8) states that former Prime Minister of Bangladesh and chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, Khaleda Zia, has arrived in Dhaka from London after four months of treatment. She travelled from London to Dhaka on a special air ambulance provided by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. Sheikh Tamim had also arranged for Khaleda Zia's stay and treatment in London. Moreover, Zia's son Tareq Rehman, who was leading an exiled life in London, is also back in Bangladesh.

It is expected that they would actively participate in the politics of Bangladesh. Rahman, while speaking to reporters, demanded that democracy be restored in the country and that national elections be formally announced by December. Meanwhile, Muhammad Yunus said that fresh elections could only be held after the announcement of a new Constitution. It would not be possible to conduct elections before that.

According to **Hindustan** (May 11), during Muhammad Yunus's interim government, there has been a sharp rise in political instability and religious extremism in Bangladesh. After the ousting of former



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the activities of the Islamic terrorist organisation ISIS (Bangladesh chapter) have increased significantly in Bangladesh.

The Yunus government has also lifted the ban imposed on the Pakistan-backed Jamaat-e-Islami. Therefore, the activities of its extremist students' organisation Islami Chhatra Shibir and Bangladesh Tablighi Jamaat have increased significantly. Recently, the activities of the terrorist organisation Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, active in Bangladesh at the behest of Pakistan, have also increased manifold.

These organisations are targeting minorities and their places of worship in Bangladesh. Muhammad Yunus has also included leaders of several terrorist organisations in his government. Nasimul Ghani, a founding member of the terrorist organisation Hizb ut-Tahrir, has been appointed as the new home secretary of Bangladesh. Similarly, Mohammad Mahfuz Alam, a hardline leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, has also been made a minister. The new government has also released many notorious terrorists imprisoned in Bangladesh jails. This includes Jasimuddin Rahmani, the head of the Ansarullah Bangla team. Rahmani was facing a case involving murder of a dozen Hindu bloggers. The new government has dropped the case. The new government's legal adviser and spokesperson, Asif Nazrul, has also met Harun Izhar, the head of Lashkar-e-Taiba in Bangladesh.

## Seven Iranians arrested on terror charges in Britain

**Roznama Sahara** (May 6), British police have arrested eight persons, including seven Iranian nationals, on charges of terrorism. Britain's home secretary Yvette Cooper said these Iranian nationals were planning to carry out explosions in many places in the country. These arrests were made in West London, Swindon, Stockport and Manchester under the National Security Act.

Police have claimed that the arrested people were preparing to carry out terrorist attacks in some places in the country. They had gathered explosive materials and firearms to carry out these attacks. They are accused of espionage and involvement in terrorist activities in the country. Cooper has said that this matter is very sensitive, so it is not possible to give detailed

information in this regard at the moment. The arrested accused are still being interrogated. Cooper said that according to the information so far, the connection of the seven Iranian citizens who have been arrested with terrorist activities has been confirmed.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 20), Iran has expressed concern over the arrest of its citizens. Iran expressed serious objections after summoning the British Ambassador posted in Tehran. According to Iran's state news agency, IRNA, the British government has arrested these Iranian citizens on false charges for political reasons, whereas the British home ministry has claimed the arrested men had illegally infiltrated the United Kingdom in August 2024.

## Ban on playing chess in Afghanistan

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 13), the Taliban government of Afghanistan has banned playing chess throughout the country. A government spokesperson said the game promotes belief in luck and is against Islamic Shariah, so the government has decided to ban it.

Atal Mashwani, spokesperson of the sports department in Afghanistan, said that chess is considered gambling according to Shariah law, and the Taliban government is committed to strictly following Shariah. Mashwani said that according to the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice Law announced last year, gambling of any kind is prohibited in the country. On the other hand, Azizullah Gulzada, owner of a cafe in Kabul, told the French news agency AFP that he was not satisfied with the reason given by the government for banning chess. He said that chess was commonly practised in Islamic countries all over the world and in no country has it been considered against Islam or Shariah. Gulzada said that there



was no tradition of betting money in the game of chess. People play chess for fun. He said the Afghan residents have been disappointed by this decision of the government.

It is noteworthy that after coming to power in 2021, the Taliban had started strictly enforcing Shariah laws. Recently, 14 people have been arrested in northern Afghanistan on charges of playing musical instruments and singing. Confirming these arrests, the government spokesperson said music and musical instruments are against



Islamic Shariah. Hence, the sale and playing of instruments are not permitted in Afghanistan.

Last year, the Taliban government had also banned the holding of martial arts

and related competitions. Restrictions have also been imposed on women's employment and higher education. Moreover, they are not allowed to go to parks and travel alone in vehicles.

## Fight for independence of Balochistan intensifies in Pakistan



**Urdu Times** (May 10) states that the demand for independence for Balochis is growing stronger in Pakistan. The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) claims to have seized a dozen Pakistani army outposts, killing more than 70 Pakistani soldiers in the process. Baloch leader Mir Yar Baloch has requested the Indian government to recognise independent Balochistan and allow the opening of a Baloch embassy in New Delhi.

**Urdu Times** (May 9), reports that the BLA has carried out several bombings in Karachi after Lahore. Three explosions were heard near Sharafi Goth in Karachi. The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) of Malir district stated that police confirmed the explosions were carried out via remote control.

Earlier, the BLA attacked a military vehicle at Lahore airport, killing 12 police officers. According to **Geo News**, the BLA had used improvised explosive device (IED) in attacking a Pakistani army vehicle.

According to **Chattan** (May 7), Balochis have been staging a protest on the road from Quetta to Lahore for the past nine days. A leader of the protesters, Shagufta Baloch, said that they had to protest because the Pakistani army had abducted 10 Balochis and held them hostage. During a talk with the BBC, she

said they believe that commuters are facing problems due to their protest, but they are helpless. Their sons and brothers have been missing for many years. The Pakistani army has also arrested Dr Mehrang Baloch and several members of Baloch Yakjehti Committee before sending them off to undisclosed locations.

**Chattan** (May 8), states that a Pakistani army spokesman confirmed that the BLA attacked a Pakistani army vehicle in the Kachi district of Balochistan, killing seven soldiers. The deceased included Subedar Umar Farooq (Karachi), Naik Asif Khan (Karak), Sepoy Tariq Nawaz (Lakki Marwat), Naik Mashkoo Ali (Orakzai), Sepoy Wajid Ahmed Faiz (Bagh), Sepoy Muhammad Asim (Karak) and Sepoy Muhammad Kashif Khan (Kohat). Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the incident, stating that elements inciting terrorism at the behest of a neighbouring country would not be spared.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 13), states that a police vehicle was attacked on Ring Road under the jurisdiction of Chamkani police station in Peshawar. Some active terrorists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are believed to be behind the attack. Two policemen were killed in the attack, while three were injured. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur condemned the attack.

**Urdu Times** (May 6), reports that imams of a dozen mosques in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have declared that no Pashtun should cooperate with the Pakistani army because the Pakistani army is bombing its own Muslims.

## Indian researcher imprisoned in the US released



**Inquilab** (May 16), reports that a US court has ordered the release of Indian-origin researcher Badar Khan Suri from the Texas immigration detention centre. Badar Khan Suri was taken into custody on March 17, 2025, on charges of campaigning in favour of Hamas. Suri hails from Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh. A lawyer, challenging his detention, told the court that the US administration had illegally cancelled Badar Khan Suri's visa.

The US court, in its decision, stated that the decision to detain Suri and cancel his visa and expel him from the US violates freedom of expression, hence the decision to expel him from USA should be revoked. According to *Fox News*, the department of homeland security had alleged in court that Suri was campaigning in favour of Hamas and inciting hatred against Jews. In addition, Suri has close ties with several Hamas leaders. The US government had declared Hamas a terrorist organisation.

Suri's lawyer, Hasan Ahmed, has alleged that the US administration is targeting Badar Khan because his wife is

of Palestinian origin. However, he is now a US citizen, and the couple are accused of trying to form public opinion against the US policies towards Israel. The US department of justice had accused Badar Khan's wife, Mafeez Saleh, in court of having direct contact with Hamas but the government could not produce any solid evidence in court to prove this allegation.

Badar Khan Suri is a post-doctoral fellow at the Alwaleed Centre for Muslim-Christian Understanding (ACMCU) at Georgetown University. Badar Khan completed his PhD from Jamia Millia Islamia University, Delhi in 2020. The US administration took action against Suri under the US immigration law. This law stipulates that if the administration feels that the presence of any foreign citizen in the US is against the foreign policy of the country, then he can be deported from the US. Under this policy, it was decided to deport Mahmoud Khalil, a student and Palestinian activist at Columbia University, from the US. He was accused of organising a demonstration in favour of Palestinians at Columbia University.

## US President Trump's visit to three Arab nations



US President Donald Trump has started taking an interest in West Asia and Arab nations in the beginning of his second term itself. He signed agreements on military equipment worth billions of dollars during his visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and United Arab Emirates. Ministers of several US departments accompanied him during his visit.

**Aurangabad Times** (May 19) states that a group of US Congress members criticised the agreements signed by the US for sale of weapons to Arab nations. They say that these agreements were signed for the monetary benefits of President Donald Trump and his family members. It is worth mentioning that several Democratic Congressmen moved two resolutions in the US Congress on May 15. The resolutions stressed that the supply of weapons to Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Qatar should be cancelled. An Opposition Congressman Chris Murphy said Donald Trump is behaving like the kings of the old times, and hence foreign governments have given luxury aircraft worth billions of dollars as gift. It is worth mentioning that Qatar has given a Boeing 747-8 plane worth Rs 3,400 crore as a gift to Trump. This was the most expensive gift ever given by a foreign government to the US President or a US official.

**Urdu Times** (May 14) states that defence agreements worth 142 billion dollars have been signed between the Saudi

Arabia and the United States. This was the biggest defence cooperation agreement signed by the US till now. Under this agreement, Saudi Arabia will be given C-130 transport aircraft, most modern missiles, radar system and other weapons. According to the White House, as part of this agreement, the US will provide arms and technical assistance to Saudi Arabia in five areas. US President Donald Trump and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman also signed agreements for cooperation in energy, defence, mining and other sectors. The US will provide air defence system to Saudi Arabia to protect itself from aerial and missile attacks. This apart, the US is equipping the Saudi Arabia's navy with most modern weapons and stringent security arrangements are being provided in border areas. The US President said there would be huge increase in job opportunities in Saudi Arabia due to his visit.

**Inquilab** (May 16) states that US President Trump has arrived in Qatar after his visit to Saudi Arabia. The US President Trump and Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani signed on a deal worth 1.2 trillion dollars. Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani expressed hope that this visit of Trump will take the relationship between Qatar and the US to new heights. The two leaders also announced financial agreements worth more than 243.5 billion dollars. This





includes the historical sale of Boeing aircraft to Qatar Airways and the GE Aerospace engine. This apart, the US will provide Qatar MQ-9B drones as well.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 17) states that defence deals worth more than 200 billion dollars have been signed between the US and the United Arab Emirates. The Etihad Airways of the United Arab Emirates has expressed interest in buying 28 Boeing 787 and 777X planes from the US. These planes are worth 14.5 billion dollars. In this occasion, the US President also visited the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi.

**Etemaad** (May 15) in its editorial expressed hope that this visit of Trump would also help in resolving the Gaza issue. It is worth mentioning that Trump had visited Saudi Arabia in 2017 as well. Trump has expressed hope that Saudi Arabia would also grant recognition to Israel under the 'Abraham Accord.' The newspaper has written that Israel had established diplomatic relationship with four Arab and two African nations due to the efforts of Trump. United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco had given recognition to Israel in the past itself. Saudi Arabia has not established diplomatic relationship with Israel till now. However, the US has been exerting pressure on it. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman has made it clear that if Israel accepts an independent Palestine state, then Saudi Arabia will also think about establishing diplomatic

relationship with Israel. The newspaper said that Saudi Arabia now feels that it will not be able to depend on an economy based on oil for a long time and hence it is taking special interest in promoting foreign investments.

**Chattan** (May 15) has criticised that in order to make Trump happy, UAE has presented a traditional hair-flipping dance of girls. The newspaper said that it is against Islamic tradition. There is no doubt that the Gulf countries are throwing every tradition to the winds in order to make Trump happy.

**Hindustan** (May 14) in its editorial expressed satisfaction that Trump, by visiting Arab nations, has proved that in his view Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and Jordan have more importance than Israel. This is the reason why Trump has totally overlooked Israel in his recent visit. A few days ago, Trump had threatened Israel that if it doesn't reach an agreement with Hamas, the US will leave Israel alone. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would have never thought that the US would insult Israel like this. It looks like the new President of United States wants to start fresh relations with Arab nations after sidelining Israel. The most interesting thing is that the US President has started a serious effort to enter into a deal with Iran after overlooking the policy of the previous President.

**Siasat** (May 15) in its editorial has expressed happiness over the growing economic relationship between Saudi Arabia and the US. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman has given the indication of making investments worth 600 billion dollars in the US. The US President has also suggested that now Saudi Arabia should look for alternatives to an economy based on petrol and should specially focus on energy and mineral development. This is a unique opportunity for Saudi Arabia to give its economy a new shape with the cooperation of the US.

## Quest for reconstruction of Syria begins

**Hindustan** (May 17) states that US President Donald Trump has announced that the US has decided to lift all sanctions imposed on Syria following a request by Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammad bin Salman. Following this, Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa, while delivering a speech on television, said that the bright future of Syria has begun. Now, Syria will not become a battlefield. We will not allow our nation to get divided.



Syria belongs to all the citizens of the country, irrespective of the sect they belong to. He said that the Arabian people are now with us. We have succeeded in opening the closed door and our strategic alliance with the Arab world and the Western nations has started. We want foreign investments in our country.

According to Saudi Press Agency, a high-level meeting was held in Riyadh. US President Trump and Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa took part in this meeting. In this meeting, apart from Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, Turkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdogan also took part through video conferencing. Before leaving for Qatar from Saudi Arabia, Trump said that there would be stability in the Middle-East following the lifting of the US sanctions on Syria and the people there would get the opportunity to live as per their choice. Trump said that his meeting with Ahmed Al-Sharaa was quite good and that he was a powerful personality.

**Avadhnama** (May 15) states that the lifting of US sanctions on Syria was widely welcomed in Syrian capital Damascus and celebrations were held. While addressing a meeting on investments in Riyadh, Trump said that we would like to see more and more US investments in Syria so that Syria moves forward towards development.

**Hindustan** (May 15) states that Syria's foreign affairs minister Asaad al-Shaibani told 'Arab News' that we were

relieved following the announcement of the US President. While thanking Turkiye President Erdogan, he said the Turkiye President has an important role in lifting these sanctions. He said this decision of the US President is an important turning point in the history of Syria. Qatar also welcomed this announcement of US President. This apart, Lebanese President Joseph Aoun also expressed the hope that due to this decision of the US, a new chapter of rebuilding Syria will begin.

**Avadhnama** (May 13) states that there has been a new turning point in the politics of Turkiye. Banned organisation Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) announced that it is ending its armed struggle against Turkiye. It is worth mentioning that the population of Kurds is more than three crores. They were a part of the Ottoman Empire at some point of time, but after the First World War, the way Britain redrew the boundaries of this region, the Kurds got divided between Turkiye, Iraq, Syria and Iran. Kurds mostly belong to the Sunni sect. For the past 50 years, they have been fighting for the formation of an independent Kurdistan country. PKK was constituted in 1978. In 1990, this organisation announced that it would fight for the establishment of an independent Kurdistan within Turkiye. Following this, bloody clashes erupted between Turkiye Army and the Kurds. In 1999, Turkiye arrested the prominent leader of this



organisation Abdullah Ocalan and made him a prisoner in an island. Recently, Ocalan announced a permanent ceasefire with Turkiye. Apart from Turkiye, the US and European Union have also declared PKK as a terrorist organisation. It is being said that Kurd fighters had been getting indirect support of Bashar Al-Assad and Russia. As per a press release issued by Kurd news agency 'ANF', the PKK has decided in its meeting that the Kurds will now abjure the path of war and adopt the path of peace and talks will be held with Turkish government in this connection.

**Hindustan Express** (May 18) in its editorial expressed satisfaction that the US has announced to lift all the sanctions imposed on Syria. The US has imposed these sanctions on Syria when Syria's power was dependent on Russian support. It is being said that due to pressure from Saudi Arabia, the US has decided to lift all the sanctions imposed on Syria. The interesting thing is that the US President has put pressure on Syria to grant recognition to Israel.

**Munsif** (May 17) in its editorial expressed surprise that celebrations are taking place in Syria after the sanctions imposed by the US on Syria have been lifted. Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa said that now there would be new beginning for the reconstruction of Syria. However, this is the same USA which adopted every method to overthrow the Bashar Al-Assad government.

It is worth mentioning that 54 years ago, Shia leader Hafiz Al-Assad had seized power after overthrowing the elected

government in Syria with the help of the Army. Following his death, his son Bashar Al-Assad took over the reins of the power. The current President of Syria, Abu Mohammad Al-Julani alias Ahmed Al-Sharaa was born in Saudi Arabia in 1982. His father was working as a petroleum engineer in Saudi Arabia. His family arrived in Syria in 1989. In 2003, Ahmed Al-Sharaa left for Iraq and there he joined Al-

Qaida. In 2006, the US Army had arrested him. After spending five years in US jail, he was released from the jail. Later he came in contact with the chief of notorious terrorist organisation Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi. Later he formed his new organisation Al-Nushra Front.

In 2013, Ahmed Al-Sharaa had announced that he had no relations with ISIS. Towards the end of the year 2016, he had formed his own new organisation Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS). He had announced that he had been starting an armed struggle to overthrow the puppet of Iran and Russia namely Bashad Al-Assad government. It is being said that the hands of the US and Turkiye were behind this organisation. The surprising thing is that instead of taking on the forces of Sunni organisation HTS, the soldiers of Bashar Al-Assad joined them. This entire turn of events dealt a huge blow to Russia and Iran, because the power of Bashar-Al-Assad was dependent on the help extended by these two nations. Bashar Al-Assad fled Syria and left for Russia and he is currently staying there.

The most interesting fact is that only five months ago, Ahmed Al-Sharaa, the chief of the organisation HTS, which overthrew the Bashar Al-Assad government, was declared a terrorist by the US and a bounty of 10 million dollars was declared on him. After Ahmed Al-Sharaa came to power, the US has also changed its colours and has extended hands to Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa.



## Saudi Arabia and Qatar payoff Syrian debt

**Inquilab** (May 18) states that the World Bank has announced that Saudi Arabia and Qatar have paid off \$15.5 million in debt owed by Syria. Now Syria can once again take loan from World Bank. After a gap of 14 years, Syria could once again restart its development programmes with the help of World Bank. This change in the stand of the World Bank came after the announcement by the US President Trump. Trump had announced in Saudi Arabia that the US has decided to lift all the sanctions imposed on Syria. It is worth mentioning that after the end of civil war in Syria, electricity production has not taken place so far.

In a statement, the United Nations said that 90 percent of the people of Syria are living even below the poverty level. In

the country, electricity is supplied approximately for one to one-and-a-half hours. Crores of Syrians are not capable of buying individual generators or solar panels. As per another news, US President Trump said he did not hold any discussions with Israel with regards to granting recognition to the new government of Syria and lift the sanctions imposed on them. US website 'Exclusive' claimed that Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged Trump not to make an announcement lifting the sanctions imposed on Syria. Despite this, neither Trump took Israel into confidence, nor informed them that he would be meeting Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa in Saudi Arabia before making the announcement on lifting the sanctions on Syria.

## Preparations on to divide Gaza into three parts

**Inquilab** (May 20) states that there has been an increase in Israeli attacks in Gaza recently. Israel is putting pressure on Hamas that it should get ready for disarmament. Israel is preparing to divide Gaza into three parts. There will be three bases of Israeli Army near to the three parts. Israel will closely monitor the Palestinians

residing in these places and impose restrictions on their movement. As per a news published in British newspaper 'The Sunday Times,' Israeli military cantonments will be there in the north, central and southern parts of Gaza so that the Palestinians there could be closely monitored. In these three regions, those interested in moving around would have to take special permissions. In these regions, food and other relief items will be allowed only after strict examination by the Israeli



Army. With this aim, a military corridor will be constructed between the south and central Gaza. This apart, a buffer zone will also be created.

It is being said that this plan has the support of the US as well. The spokesperson of Israeli military has refused to comment on this news. On the other hand, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that Israeli military is committed to taking full control of Gaza. According to news agency 'Al Arabia' a



launched a massive military campaign against Hamas. Its aim is to fully seize the Gaza Strip. The newspaper alleged that US President Trump operates on a dual policy. At one level he is trying to tell the world that he wants permanent peace in Gaza. On the other hand, it is indirectly motivating Israel to take full control of Gaza. Till late, Hamas is not ready to surrender before Israel. Israel's plan is to push the residents of Gaza towards further south and cut off their

special team of Israeli army in women's attire had entered Gaza's Khan Yunus city. The aim of this team was to free Israeli hostages from the custody of Hamas, but they did not succeed in their plan. Some tunnels were searched but no hostages were present there.

**Etemaad** (May 15) states that the Houthi rebels in Yemen have once again started attacks on Israel. Houthi spokesperson Yahya Saari claimed that they targeted the Ben Gurion airport near Tel Aviv using hypersonic ballistic missiles. He said this attack was carried out in retaliation against the Israeli attacks on Gaza.

**Hindustan Express** (May 17) states that while addressing a business round table conference in Qatar, US President Trump announced that the US is ready to make Gaza Strip a 'liberated zone', because there is nothing left to save in Gaza now. The US President said that he had seen the photos of Gaza. No building is left there. People are living beneath the debris and this cannot be accepted. I want Gaza to be made a 'liberated zone.' In this connection, we are even talking to Hamas.

**Etemaad** (May 9) in its editorial said the Palestinian people are deeply troubled by Israel's plan to occupy Gaza and take it under its full control. Israel has

connections with Hamas. Israel is trying to ensure that relief teams do not reach the people of Gaza so that tired of hunger and thirst, Hamas and the people of Gaza surrender to Israel.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 16) states that a spokesperson of US State Department claimed that talks are on in Doha for a ceasefire in Gaza. Talking to 'Al Arabia,' a spokesperson of foreign ministry said that it is in the interest of the US that the war ends in Gaza. We are using all our resources to put pressure on Israel and Hamas so that the war comes to an end. He said that our doors are open for Israel, but even Israel has no importance before our national interest. On the other hand, Qatar Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, while giving an interview to US television channel 'CNN' said that the way in which Israel has started attacks on Gaza recently, it looks like Israel has no interest in ceasefire talks. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed displeasure on the statement of Qatar Prime Minister in which he had stated that Israel had no interest in a ceasefire. He has described this statement as provocative and irresponsible. Netanyahu said that Qatar is deliberately trying to complicate the matter further.

## US efforts to reach an agreement with Iran

**Inquilab** (May 16) states that US President Donald Trump said in Qatar capital Doha that the US has lost the Middle-East due to the wrong policies of Biden administration, hence we have decided to reconsider those policies. We will protect the US interests in the Middle-East. He said that we believe that we have reached very near to an agreement with Iran. Trump said that due to his visit there is a new beginning in the relationship between the US and Saudi Arabia. Talking about Iran, Trump said that the US is very serious for an agreement with Iran for a permanent peace deal. He said that Iran has agreed to the terms of the proposed agreement to some extent, and that's why we want to solve Iran's problem in a non-violent and wise manner.

Talking about the bombing of the bases of Houthi rebels in Yemen, the US President said that if the Houthis continue with their attacks on Israel, then we will also be forced to take military action against them. Reacting to the comment of the US President, Ali Shamkhani, the advisor to Iran's supreme religious leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said if the US lifts all the economic sanctions imposed on Iran, then Iran will not only think of abandoning its plan to make nuclear bombs, but will also postpone its nuclear programme forever. He said that Iran is ready to allow international agencies to inspect its nuclear development centres. He clarified that Iran is never in favour of making nuclear weapons. We are for uranium enrichment only for civilian purposes. According to the newspaper, at one level, the US President has given the indication of an agreement with Iran. On

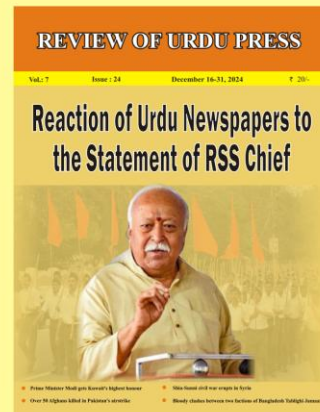
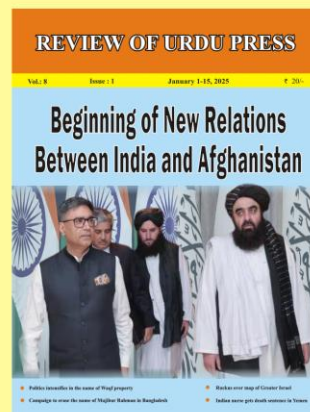
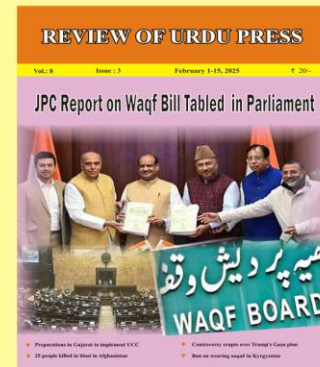
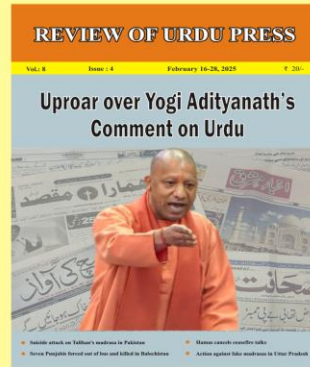
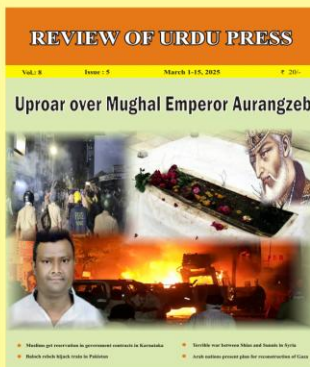
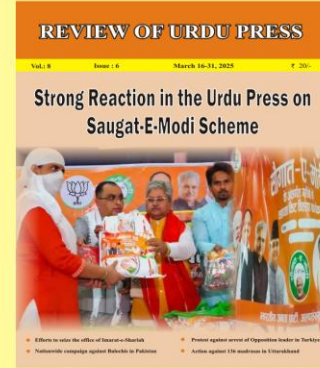
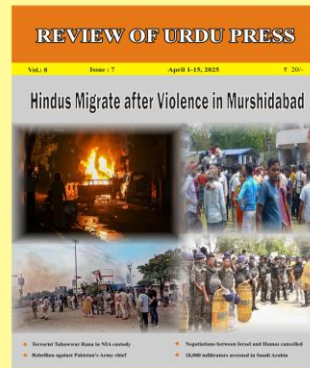
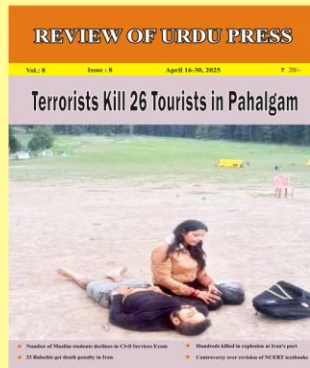


the other hand, the US has imposed several fresh sanctions as well on Iran. These sanctions have been imposed on 12 institutions, which are involved in activities related to ballistic missile technology. These are related to Iran and China.

**Roznama Sahara** (May 14) states that tension has been rising between Iran and the US. The US has imposed sanctions on three Iranian citizens and one institution. The Iranian nuclear programme is known as 'FPND' in Persian acronym. It is also known as 'AMAD Project.' In a statement, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that those institutions against whom the ban has been imposed have been actively taking part in the development of weapons with mass destruction. On the other hand, Iran President Masoud Pezeshkian rejected the US demand to dismantle the nuclear system of Iran.

As per another news, Iran has threatened that if any kind of aggression is made on its land, a befitting reply will be given. All the bases of the US are on the target of Iranian missiles. Iranian military chief Major General Mohammed Bagheri said if any power tries to attack Iran, they will be given a befitting reply. He said we are not scared of any power and our nuclear enrichment programme will continue.





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