

# REVIEW OF URDU PRESS

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## Madhya Pradesh High Court Orders Handing over of Bhojshala to Hindus



- Urdu Media's reaction to Assembly election results
- UAE announces investments worth 5 billion dollars in India
- Baloch Liberation Army attacks intensify in Pakistan
- Support for keeping channels of dialogue with Pakistan open

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## Summary

The Indore bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, while recognising the Bhojshala located at Dhar as the temple of Mata Saraswati (Vaghdevi), delivered a historical verdict to hand over the premises to Hindus. The court has also banned Muslims from offering namaz on its premises. Following this verdict, Hindu devotees have commenced regular worship within the Bhojshala complex. For the past several decades, the Hindu side has been demanding that this historical monument shall be handed over to Hindus. They claim that this historical building was constructed by Maharaja Bhoj in 11<sup>th</sup> century. The first major attack on Bhojshala was undertaken by Alauddin Khalji in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, who destroyed a major portion of its premises. Later the Muslim rulers of Malwa had given it the identity of masjid. It is noteworthy that during that period, an Islamic preacher, Maulana Kamaluddin (Kamal Maula) was active in Malwa region. When he died, he was buried on Bhojshala premises. Later, it came to be known as Kamal Maula mosque.

Recently, in an interview to PTI, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale said that India should not completely close the doors to dialogue with Pakistan. The two countries should issue visas to each other's citizens, and sports and commercial activities should also continue. However, terrorist attacks like the one in Pahalgam must be responded to with strength. He said that India's trust in Pakistan's political and military leadership has diminished. Therefore, the civil society there should initiate efforts in this regard. The Urdu media has welcomed this initiative of Hosabale. Similarly, a spokesperson of Pakistan's foreign affairs ministry also described it as a positive step.

In the Assembly elections held in five states, the BJP achieved huge success in three states. The party won 207 seats out of the total 294 seats in the West Bengal Assembly elections and formed its first government in the state. The Urdu newspapers have given the credit for BJP's massive victory in these elections to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. Some newspapers also say that the main credit for BJP's victory in West Bengal goes to the selfless volunteers of the RSS who had been engaged for years in strengthening the BJP's roots in the state.

Meanwhile, the BJP has succeeded in forming the government in Assam for the third time. This time, the BJP has registered victory in more seats than it had won in the 2021 Assembly elections. Among the 19 legislators of the Congress who won in Assam, 18 are Muslims. The BJP managed to open its account in Tamil Nadu as well. For the past 40 years, the power has been changing hands between DMK and AIADMK, but this time a new party named 'TVK' has succeeded in forming the government there. In Kerala, the Left Front had to face a shameful defeat and a Congress-led alliance has seized power. The BJP registered victory on three seats in Kerala.

Israel has implemented a new law, which permits awarding death sentence to those Palestinians who kill or conspire to kill Jewish citizens and soldiers. Muslim countries criticised this decision of Israel government. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has strongly condemned the manner in which Iran has been targeting United Arab Emirates (UAE) and other Gulf countries even after the announcement of a ceasefire in West Asia. Following the recent visit of Narendra Modi to UAE, it is hoped that a new era of friendship will begin between the two countries. This apart, the UAE has announced investments worth five billion dollars in India.

National

## Madhya Pradesh High Court orders handing over of Bhojshala to Hindus



**Inquilab** (May 16) reports that the Indore bench of Madhya Pradesh High Court has recognised the Bhojshala at Dhar as Saraswati Mandir based on archaeological and historical evidences, and the report of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The court in its verdict directed that the premises shall be handed over to Hindus and also banned Muslims from offering namaz within its premises. In compliance with the court's direction, the ASI handed over the management of the premises to Hindu side. Soon after this, the devotees started *puja-archana* and *aarati* of Maa Saraswati (Vaghdevi) on the premises. On the other hand, the Kamal Maula Management Committee and All India Muslim Personal Law Board decided to challenge the verdict of the high court in the Supreme Court.

The court also cancelled the directions issued by the ASI in 2003, as per which permissions were granted to Hindus to offer puja on every Tuesday and on the occasion of Vasant Panchami and also allowed Muslims to offer juma (Friday) namaz. The court told the Muslim side that they could seek alternative land from the government for the construction of new masjid. This apart, the court directed the

Union government to take necessary steps to bring back the murti of Vaghdevi (Saraswati) belonging to the temple which is at a museum in London and restore it at the historical place.

It is to be noted that in year 2022, the 'Hindu Front for Justice' had filed a petition in the high court seeking a determination of the religious nature of the Bhojshala, the granting of the right to regular worship to the Hindu community, and a ban on offering namaz within the premises. Later in year 2024, the ASI conducted a scientific survey for 98 days on the Bhojshala premises. Though 'Maulana Kamaluddin Welfare Society,' belonging to the Muslim side challenged the survey in the Supreme Court, the apex court refused to stop the same.

Commenting on this verdict of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, All India Muslim Personal Law Board said "this verdict of the court is not justified and it was delivered under political pressure. The ASI had submitted a one-sided report in the court due to pressure from the ruling party, completely ignoring the perspective of Muslims. What is particularly striking is that, in this context, the order issued in 1935 by the then Diwan of the Dhar

princely state—under which the complex was recognized as the Kamal Maula Mosque—was also disregarded.

On the other hand, the chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, Maulana Mahmoud Madani, claimed that the court has pronounced a one-sided verdict due to political pressure. He said that the court has completely flouted the law enacted in 1991 regarding the maintenance of the status quo of religious sites. Madani said that considering the way Muslims are being treated, it would be better if the government completely repeals this law.

The chairman of another group of Jamiat Ulema, Maulana Arshad Madani, described this verdict of the court as against the Constitution of the country and against the law passed by the Parliament. On the other hand, the chief of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) Asaduddin Owaisi said this verdict is a replica of the Babri Masjid verdict. He expressed hope that the Supreme Court will cancel this verdict and give justice to Muslims. However, Muslim lawyer Mahmood Pracha, while giving a different opinion, said Muslims should not expect justice from the Supreme Court, because he did not get justice even in one of the many petitions he had filed in the Supreme Court in the past.

Congress legislator Arif Masood alleged that the ASI had submitted a one-sided report in the high court due to political pressure, on the basis of which this verdict has come. The CPI (M) politburo issued a statement and described this verdict as a violation of the Places of Worship (Special Provision) Act, 1991 passed by the Parliament. BJP legislator Rameshwar Sharma, while welcoming the verdict of the court, said the atrocities committed against Hindus by invaders of a different faith have now been redressed, and we have regained this complex.

National spokesperson of BJP R P Singh said the high court has delivered this



verdict on the basis of the ASI report, which is entirely based on evidence. Member of 'Hindu Front for Justice' and petitioner in the case Ashish Goyal said the verdict of the court is justified and now the government has to bring back the statute of Vaghdevi from the museum in London.

**Etemaad** (May 17) in its editorial said that the court, while delivering its verdict, has overlooked the historical facts. The place where namaz was being offered for the past 700 years is being handed over to the majority community after recognising it as a mandir. According to the newspaper, a 'Wajud Khana' exists there, serving as evidence that it was constructed by Muslims as the residence of Kamal Maula. The newspaper said this verdict was not based on evidence, rather it was delivered on the basis of faith. Don't know on what basis the court had described it as Saraswati Mandir, when the entire historical record, inscriptions in Persian, the survey of the British government and the old report of the ASI had confirmed it as masjid or dargah. While delivering the verdict, the court has totally overlooked the Places of Worship Act passed by the Parliament. This court verdict has raised the likelihood of a new wave of disputes concerning religious sites across the country.

**Hindustan** (May 16) in its editorial said that finally the Madhya Pradesh High Court has described the historical Kamal Maula Mosque as a temple. This latest verdict is not just a court verdict, rather,



this has cast a serious question mark over the country's constitutional framework, religious harmony, the Constitution, and justice—an impact that will be felt for centuries.

The newspaper said that the same old scene has been re-enacted, which was seen in the case of the Babri Masjid issue several years ago. The question is whether this formula will be used to capture every masjid? Recently, in the verdict regarding the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue in Ayodhya, the Supreme Court had made it clear that this verdict shall not be considered as an example for any other verdicts in the future, but the truth is that the court's help is being taken to deprive the Muslims of their dargahs, masjids and madrasas. If this situation continues, then it would not be difficult to assume what would be the results of the cases the communal elements had filed regarding the Gyanvapi in Varanasi, Shahi Edgah in Mathura, Qutub Minar and dozens of historical masjids in the country.

**Hindustan Express** (May 17) said the Madhya Pradesh High Court had also made faith as the basis for it like the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. This verdict was not unexpected. Muslims need to be prepared for similar and more such verdicts. In future, more such bad news will be heard. The newspaper has written that in the Ram Janmabhoomi-

Babri Masjid issue in Ayodhya, the Muslim leadership had said that we had faith in the judicial system of the country and whatever be the verdict of the court, we will accept it. Though the ordinary Muslims were never prepared to accept this verdict, they remained silent due to the surrender of the Muslim leadership. The Muslim leadership was under pressure from the RSS and the government. A deal had been struck with them even before the verdict was delivered. The result was that Ram Mandir was constructed in place of Babri Masjid. All the claims made in favour of masjids proved to be hollow.

The newspaper said that as long as the reins remain in the hands of others, the problems of Muslims will not be resolved. The Muslim community will have to wake up and hit the streets. If the Muslims remain in lethargy even after this verdict on Bhojshala, then the next generations will have to pay the price for the same. Muslims will have to become active from the legal point of view and will have to unite all the lawyers in Muslim community to protect their masjids, dargahs and Waqf. Finally, how long will they continue to search for temples beneath our places of worship? The majority community and the government in Bharat will have to remember that the development of our nation and its future depends on its secular identity. Searching for a temple beneath

every masjid will make the country neither progress, nor the community benefit from it.

**Urdu Times** (May 18) alleged that the court delivered this verdict due to the pressure of the ruling party. This is a mockery of history, the law, and the Constitution of India. The newspaper alleged that it is clear from the stand adopted by the courts in India in the past few years that they do not have any interest in historical facts, ASI records and the laws passed by Parliament. They are delivering arbitrary verdicts in order to please a few people. When judges declare a mosque to be a temple, it emboldens communal elements, and the country's secular fabric begins to unravel. Now the identity of Muslims and their religious places are under threat. This court verdict has posed a threat to the existence of mosques and dargahs across the country because the communal organisations had prepared a long list of masjids and dargahs which they wanted to take over. What is required is for the Supreme Court to immediately intervene to stop this fraud.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (May 16) in its editorial said that the most dangerous thing is that Muslims have lost their faith in the justice system and the Constitution of the country. Communal elements have continuously created an atmosphere of hatred against Muslims and they come to power using this. Hence it is necessary that the Supreme Court intervene in this serious issue so that the people's faith in the country remain on judiciary, Constitution and the democracy.

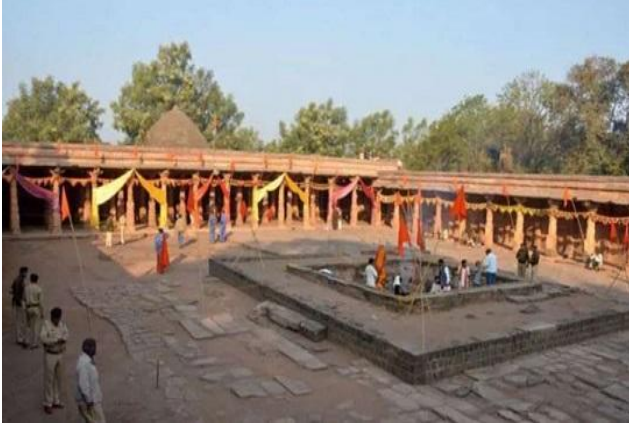
**Avadhnama** (May 18) in its editorial said that currently the country's Constitution and democracy are in danger. It is essential for rulers who assume power after swearing an oath to the Constitution to safeguard the constitutional rights of every citizen. The existence and identity of Muslims are under threat due to the verdict of Madhya Pradesh high court, hence it is necessary that the majority community



shall take this issue seriously. The newspaper said that had Muslims not accepted the court verdict in the Babri Masjid issue, today the religious places of Muslims would not have been in danger.

**Inquilab** (May 18) said the verdict given by the Supreme Court in the Babri Masjid case has now become an example to seize Islamic religious building. It is no longer within anyone's control to halt the decision that was made based on faith—under pressure from the Hindu side. The newspaper said that the recent verdict of the Madhya Pradesh high court has given tremendous encouragement to anti-Muslim and anti-Islam Hindutvavadi elements and they have launched an attack on Islamic religious buildings across the country. The sentiment that no historical mosque or building in the country should be allowed to retain its Islamic identity has taken hold of their hearts and minds. Lured by the offer of land at an alternative site, a new class of people has emerged within the Muslim community that engages in horse-trading in the name of mosques.

The canard floated by Humayun Kabir in Bengal regarding the construction of the Babri Masjid is a recent example of this. The newspaper alleged that the truth is that judges, too, are faced with the question of securing their own bright future, and the only way they see to safeguard it is to disregard justice and the Constitution and declare every mosque a temple. This trend is very dangerous for the unity of the country. If this is not stopped, the country's unity and integrity will be in trouble.



**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 17) in its editorial said that there were three sides before the high court in the Bhojshala issue. The first is Hindu side, whose claim was that it was a Saraswati Mandir and a Gurukul constructed by Raja Bhoj in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Their demand was that the entire premises shall be handed over to Hindus. The second was Muslim side, whose argument was that it was Kamal Maula Mosque for centuries and it was constructed by Muslims. The third side was Jain community, whose claim was that the premises was originally a Jain Gurukul and Mandir. They also said that the statue of Vaghdevi which was found there, was originally of Jain Yakshini (Shasan Devi) Ambika and this monument has nothing to do with Hinduism. It is strange that the court has delivered its verdict in favour of Hindu community, overlooking the claims of two other sides and argued that the ASI had described it as ancient temple.

**Urdu Times** (May 16) in its editorial complained that the high court even refused to acknowledge the ancient documents that the Muslim side had produced in the court related to the construction of this masjid. The question is not just about the Kamal Maula Masjid in Dhar, there are hundreds of such ancient masjids present in this country, on which the Hindu side is staking claim. In the present circumstances, Muslims are feeling helpless. Neither the court nor the government cares about their views or their side of the matter. Now, Muslims have no recourse left but to appeal to the Almighty, as they hold no hope of

receiving justice from any court in the current atmosphere.

### **Bhojshala dispute: Historical and legal developments**

As per the official records of Madhya Pradesh government, Maharaja Bhoj of Parmar dynasty established a temple dedicated to Maa Vaghdevi (Saraswati) and a Sanskrit University in the year 1034, which was a famous centre of universal learning at that time. In the year 1305, Alauddin Khalji

carried out the first major attack on the Bhojshala premises and damaged a major portion of the building. In the year 1401, the Governor of Malwa, Dilawar Khan Gouri tried to raze the temple completely and construct a masjid in its place, but he had to face huge resistance. In 1514, Mahmud Shah Khilji got the Kamal Maula Mosque and a dargah constructed here.

In the year 1875, Major General William Kincaid carried out excavations on the premises, during which the murti of Maa Vaghdevi was recovered. In the year 1903, the then Viceroy Lord Curzon sent this historical murti of Vaghdevi to the museum in London (British Museum). In 1904, Bhojshala was declared as an ancient monument and the responsibility for its management was handed over to ASI. In the year 1935, the then princely state of Dhar for the first time allowed Muslims to offer namaz on the premises. In 1962, Muslim activist Amiruddin filed a petition against the Indian Union and the Madhya Pradesh government, in which a demand was raised for total control over Kamal Maula Mosque and no interference in the namaz. However, this petition was rejected by the court. Later, Hindu Mahasabha leader Thakur Nihal Chandra got involved in this legal battle and he demanded that this entire historical monument shall be handed over to Hindus.

From 1995 to 1997, several violent clashes took place between the two communities on this premises regarding their rights. Later on May 12, 1997, on the

orders of the then Congress chief minister Digvijay Singh, the pujas being held on Tuesdays by the Hindus were stopped. In 1998, the ASI had imposed a ban on Hindus from entering the Bhojshala premises, while the Friday namaz of Muslims continued. In February 2003, the festival of Vasant Panchami was on Friday, and a huge clash erupted between the Hindus and Muslims over the time for the puja of Hindus and the namaz of Muslims, in which two persons were killed and

several were injured. In April 7, 2003, the ASI imposed a new system, as per which Muslims could offer namaz on Bhojshala premises from noon 2pm to 3pm on every Friday and Hindus were given permission to worship on every Tuesday and special puja on the day of Vasant Panchami. In the year 2006, when the Vasant Panchami and Friday came together on single day, clashes took place between the two communities again, in which several people were injured.

## Support for keeping channels of dialogue with Pakistan open



**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (May 13) states that in a special interview given to news agency PTI, the Sarkaryavah of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Dattatreya Hosabale said India should not fully shut the doors of dialogue with Pakistan. The two countries should issue visa to the citizens of the other country and sports and business activities should continue to take place. However, terrorist attacks like the one in Pulwama shall be strongly dealt with. Hosabale further said that “the cultural ties between India and Pakistan are very old and we have been one nation. Due to the declining trust in the political and military leadership, the Pakistani players, scientists and the civil society should now

come forward to improve relations with Bharat.”

Commenting on the statement made by Udayanidhi Stalin regarding eradication of Sanatan Dharma, Dattatreya Hosabale said that Sanatan Dharma is eternal. It will not disappear or cease to exist because somebody talks about eradicating it. Talking about the conflict in West Asia, he said this is not a clash of civilizations, but rather a dispute arising from the struggle for control over oil and natural resources. Most of the world's wars stem from greed, arrogance, and a mindset of dominating others. Wars have occurred throughout history, and there are apprehensions that future conflicts will arise over water.



PTI's chief executive officer and chief editor Vijay Joshi asked Dattatreya Hosabale how Muslims could be assured that they were safe in India and that they belonged to a Hindu nation. On this Hosabale replied, "We are not creating a Hindu Rashtra, instead Bharat is already a Hindu Rashtra. Even during the British rule, this was a Hindu Rashtra. The concept of a 'Hindu Rashtra' refers to cultural identity, not a religious state. The nationality of an individual does not change due to religious conversion. When our nationality is one, we do not consider anyone separate from ourselves. In Bharat, Muslims are not considered as second class citizens. The government benefits are reaching everyone and RSS, too, is continuously maintaining a dialogue with leaders and intellectuals from the minority community."

The journalist asked why there is such a major controversy over Love Jihad when the Sangh chief says that the DNA of everyone is the same. On this Hosabale clarified that the Love Jihad takes place when there is an agenda. If there is a deliberate conspiracy to lure Hindu girls away, we will not accept it. When it is one-sided, it is not love, but a deep conspiracy. The journalist also asked about Asaduddin

Owaisi's statement following the Bengal elections that Muslims should form a separate party. On this, Hosabale said that as per Constitution, everyone has a right to form a party. However, nationalist leadership is rarely seen among Muslims. It is a matter of serious concern that Muslim community supports those people who promotes separatist mentality.

The journalist asked how we should deal with Pakistan. On this, Hosabale said that if Pakistan engages in acts like Pulwama, India must deliver a stern response suited to the situation. However, we should not close the door to dialogue. We should always be prepared for talks. Trade relations and issuing of visa should not be stopped, because a window for dialogue should always remain open. This is the reason why India has maintained diplomatic relations with Pakistan till today.

**Etemaad** (May 15) states that the chairman of National Conference Farooq Abdullah, while supporting the statement of RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale advocating for the continuation of talks with Pakistan, said that war is not an option. No issue could be resolved through war. He said that talks should be held with Pakistan. I am happy that today somebody



the channels of dialogue with Pakistan open clearly suggests that his recent visit to the US has had a profound impact on both him and his organization, the RSS. Jairam Ramesh further said that this stance taken by Hosabale corroborates an earlier statement by another of his associates, Ram Madhav, in which he openly admitted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is doing exactly what

is thinking that war is not a solution to any problem, instead talks are necessary to resolve the problem.

According to **BBC**, the spokesperson of Pakistan's foreign affairs ministry Tahir Andrabi, while commenting on the statement of Hosabale, described it as a positive step. He said that it is worth noting that voices calling for talks with Pakistan have now started emerging from within India as well.

This is a positive development. We hope that understanding and wisdom regarding this matter will develop in India. We will definitely see whether there will be any official reaction from the Indian government or not on this opinion. On the other hand, Pakistan High Commissioner to India Abdul Basit said the Pakistan government should not give too much importance to such statements, because the current government's stance remains as aggressive as before.

India's former chief of army staff General M M Naravane, while supporting the statement of Dattatreya Hosabale, said that the disputes should be resolved through talks, but it does not mean we should not use military force against Pakistan if the situation demands so. India is a nation which stands for peace, but we will not hesitate to use force if it becomes necessary.

**Etemaad** (May 14) states that Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh, taking a swipe on the statement of RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale, said that the way Hosabale has advocated keeping

America wants.

**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (May 17) in its editorial, while welcoming the statement of Dattatreya Hosabale, said this statement of him is positive, and Pakistan should respond to it in the same manner. Continuing the tension is not in the interest of either country. The newspaper said that the opinion given by Hosabale regarding Muslims should be implemented by the government at the ground level.

**Avadhnama** (May 15) said that the BJP may be in power at the Centre, but its real strength and control is in the hands of RSS. The RSS is being run by Mohan Bhagwat and Dattatreya Hosabale in the same manner the BJP is being run by the duo of Narendra Modi and Amit Shah. The newspaper said that the RSS chief is called as 'Sarsanghchalak' while the general secretary of the organisation is referred to as 'Sarkaryavah.' This means that though the face of this organisation is Mohan Bhagwat, the real mind behind it is Dattatreya Hosabale. Hosabale has surprised 'Modi's Bhakts' by making a diplomatic statement regarding Pakistan. This statement holds special significance also because Hosabale is considered as close to Prime Minister Modi.

The newspaper claims that Dattatreya Hosabale said it is very important to have a 'people-to-people contact' in order to remove the cloud that has gathered over the relationship between India and Pakistan and hence the window for diplomatic and social dialogue between

the two countries must always remain open. The fact cannot be denied that every organisation works at two different levels. We have our ideological differences with RSS and this difference will remain until there is some remarkable change in their core policy. Despite this, this statement of Hosabale is a positive one.



Indirectly supporting Pakistan, the newspaper has accused the Modi government, citing Dattatreya Hosabale himself, of stating that Pakistan's military and political leadership has lost India's trust and now time has come for Pakistan's civil society to become active in this connection. The question is whether the Indian leadership still retains confidence? Doesn't the same accusation come back to haunt the Modi government—asking who coined the slogan about "entering the enemy's home to strike" following the 'surgical strike' in order to win the election? After 'Operation Sindoor', who raised the call that 'blood and water cannot flow together' and advocated 'answering a bullet with a bullet'? Where was Hosabale saheb then? And now he says that the security and honour of every country should be protected. Shouldn't the government have considered at that time that, instead of keeping the doors closed to Pakistan, it should have pursued the path of dialogue?

The newspaper said that the India-Pakistan talks started in 2003 when the then President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf visited India. In the meeting held with him, there were eight such issues, which were said to be controversial. The newspaper, while giving a clean chit to Pakistan for the terrorist attack that took place in Mumbai, said that this series of talks had fallen off the table following the terrorist attack that took place in Mumbai in 2008. It is clear from this that this attack was carried out at the behest of those world

powers who do not want friendship between India and Pakistan.

**Inquilab** (May 14) in its editorial said that the statement given by the second biggest leader of RSS Dattatreya Hosabale regarding improving relations with Pakistan is very important. India's foreign policy had always been to maintain friendly relations with neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan. During the time of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, General Zia-ul-Haq, Benazir Bhutto, Pervez Musharraf and Nawaz Sharif, India had repeatedly offered to initiate dialogue and cooperate.

In this connection, the biggest efforts were made during the period of Atal Behari Vajpayee. Vajpayee not only began the talks at the political level, but had opened the avenues for connecting with the people. But, unfortunately, there are such elements present in Pakistan, who are not ready to accept any kind of improvement in the relations between the two countries under any circumstance. To sabotage these efforts, the Pakistan Army attempted to seize Indian territory in Kargil. Following this, terrorism increased in Kashmir and terrorist attacks started in cities like Mumbai.

Against this backdrop, this statement by Hosabale offers a particularly new perspective. He stresses on the fact that India always wanted a better relation with Pakistan. He also made it clear that improvement in trade, sports, diplomatic relations and interaction between people will not only reduce enmity, but will also

lay the foundation for permanent peace. The newspaper said that India is counted among the world's biggest nations from the point of political stability, industrial development and military strength. While Pakistan is rich in natural resources, it lags

behind India in terms of technical expertise and administrative capabilities. If both these countries utilize their combined strength, it will not only bring peace and prosperity to the region but also enhance their global stature. ■

## Urdu Media's reaction to Assembly election results



**Urdu Times** (May 5) in its editorial said the recent election results from five states have made this clear that whatever the BJP wants, that will happen. Slogans regarding public sentiment, election campaigns, secularism, and saving the Constitution cannot stand in the way of their victory. The BJP has been eyeing West Bengal for a long time and it wanted to win the state at any cost. For this, the RSS workers were putting in tremendous effort at the grassroots level for more than two years. The government machinery was excessively used and the Election Commission and judiciary played a major role in ensuring the victory for BJP. This is the reason why the Trinamool Congress (TMC) got only 80 seats and the BJP planted saffron flags on 207 seats. Now, the BJP is no longer facing any threat for the next five years.

Exchange of allegations and counter-allegations are continuing across the country over the election results in West Bengal. Everyone has something to say, but

these debates are pointless now—because the winner takes it all. There is a talk in the political corridors that Muslims have also voted in large numbers for the BJP. However, this is something which cannot be swallowed easily. There is another truth besides this that Humayun Kabir, who raised the issue of construction of Babri Masjid, had contested the elections from two assembly seats in Murshidabad and he won from both the seats. It clearly means that the Muslim voters unilaterally voted for Humayun Kabir, which directly benefitted the BJP. In this way, the 'game' played out fully in West Bengal, and the BJP secured control over three of the five states.

Next year, Assembly elections will take place in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. The BJP is already in power in Uttar Pradesh and it has now started preparations to overthrow the Aam Aadmi Party government in Punjab. In such a situation, if the Congress does not make decisions very carefully, it will face the same plight



in other states as it did in West Bengal. Had Congress entered into an electoral alliance with Mamata Banerjee on the basis of her conditions, there may not have been such a shameful outcome in which the Congress contested on 294 seats and got elected from just two seats. This is truly a matter of utter shame, therefore, the Congress should tread very carefully in Uttar Pradesh as well.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 5) in its editorial has given Prime Minister Narendra Modi the credit for the BJP's victory in the Assembly elections. The newspaper said that due to Modi's active involvement, the BJP has achieved even greater success than expected in these elections. The newspaper said the manner in which Suwendu Adhikari has threatened the opposition is not in accordance with democratic principles. In Assam, Badruddin Ajmal and Asaduddin Owaisi had their special roles in dividing the Muslim votes, but despite it, Muslims have voted for the Congress in large numbers.

**Hindustan** (May 5) in its editorial said nobody had expected that the TMC will be defeated in West Bengal. For the first time, the BJP has come to power in West Bengal. The BJP had made this election a prestige issue and finally it managed to win the battle. It is a different matter altogether as to what tactics the BJP employed to win this battle. The way the vote counting was conducted is certainly not a good sign for democracy. The role of the Election Commission in this victory of

BJP cannot be denied. It is alleged that the commission had deprived nearly 27 lakh voters their right to vote in the elections. It is strange that the Supreme Court also stood with the Election Commission in this campaign.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (May 6) said that even the leaders of BJP did not expect such a landslide victory in West Bengal. The most regrettable aspect is that ever since the BJP came to power at the Centre, opposition-led

governments across the country appear to be crumbling. In the year 2014, the number of NDA-ruled states were just seven, which has increased to 22 now. After the BJP came to power at the Centre, a few such schemes were started, which are though beneficial to the common man, had increased the trouble for Muslims. The manner in which hate campaign has increased is a serious threat to the unity of the country.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (May 5) has given the credit for BJP's victory to its organisational strength. The newspaper said that for several years, selfless Sangh workers had been working to establish deep roots among the public, a move that directly benefited the BJP. In West Bengal, the BJP had not only run an election campaign, but created such a deliberate psychological atmosphere across the state, which had gone in its favour. The Opposition parties did not remain united in Bengal and the BJP got huge benefits due to the divisions among them. A huge change took place in the stand of the people due to the offer that the BJP has given to people regarding development and employment. It would not be wrong to say that this victory of the BJP will not be limited to one state, instead it would have nationwide implications. The BJP has proved that if any political party hits the election arena with a strong organisation and selfless workers, it would be able to change the course of the wind.

**Akhbar-e-Mashriq** (May 6) in its editorial said that the role of Election Commission, Central armed forces and other Central agencies in the victory of BJP in West Bengal cannot be denied, who had played a special role in changing the course of the wind towards the BJP. This apart, officials who favour BJP and police personnel were deployed in huge numbers before the elections in the state, who worked to keep non-BJP voters away from the polling booths. This has definitely provided electoral benefits to the BJP. It is worth mentioning that in the states where the elections were held, the number of Muslim voters were high in Assam, Bengal and Kerala.



**Siasat** (May 7), while analysing the election results, said that no one had imagined the manner in which Mamata Banerjee was ousted from power in West Bengal. Meanwhile, the BJP adopted every tactic to win the elections and the Election Commission, judiciary and Central agencies played an important role in its victory. In Assam, the BJP made Muslim enmity as its main point for the election campaign and due to it not only it emerged victorious for the third time but its seats also increased.

**Hamara Samaj** (May 6) in its editorial claimed that the country is progressing towards an elected dictatorship, and now the judiciary, too, has begun to look for cues from the current government and is delivering verdicts accordingly. The elections in the five states and their results have proved that the election results will be exactly what the ruling party at the Centre wants. The newspaper alleged that the Election Commission has now come out with a toolkit named Special Intensive Revision (SIR) for which no one has a counter. The question is, is democracy merely about winning elections? Is democracy the name for a government that has come to power on the strength of the judiciary, the

Election Commission, and central agencies?

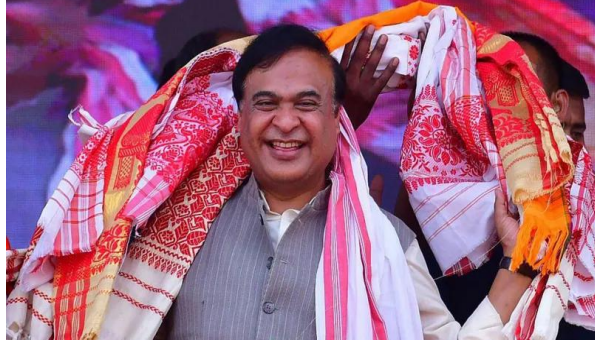
Today, an atmosphere is being created in the country where the law and justice appear to falter in the face of power.

Constitution is the soul of any democracy. Its purpose is not just to form the government, instead to protect the citizens from the arbitrariness of the power, but even the courts have now started saying that there is nothing wrong with depriving lakhs of citizens of their right to vote, because they can cast their vote in the next election.

**Hindustan Express** (May 6) in its editorial said that the bastion of secularism in the country, West Bengal, has also crumbled and the BJP has not only succeeded in hoisting the saffron flag but has also achieved record-breaking success. This apart, the BJP has also succeeded in opening its account in Tamil Nadu and it got three seats in Kerala as well. In Kerala, the Congress-led United Democratic Front seized power after giving a crushing blow to the Left Democratic Front. Meanwhile, among the 126 seats in Assam Assembly, the BJP alone registered victory in 82 seats and the Congress had to face a shameful defeat because it got only 19 seats. The heartening thing is that among its 19 MLAs, 18 are Muslims. Similarly, the Bodoland People's Front registered victory in 10 seats and the Assam Gana Parishad also registered victory in 10 seats. The performance of Badruddin Ajmal's party All India United Democratic Front

(AIDUF) was quite shameful and it has managed to secure only two seats.

**Qaumi Bharat** (May 7), while commenting on the election results, said that except in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the outcome of the elections in all the other three states was as per the wishes of the BJP. Meanwhile, in Tamil Nadu, it happened for the first time in the past six decades that both the DMK and the AIADMK are out of power. In Tamil Nadu, since 1967 till now, DMK governments were in power six times and AIADMK governments were in power eight times. In the 2026 elections, this traditional sequence was broken and the party of film actor C Joseph Vijay, TVK, seized power. He has cited Periyar as the ideal for his politics.



**Munsif** (May 12) in its editorial said that the Opposition parties are losing their ground and the regional parties are slowly being marginalised. The retaining of power in Assam, the massive victory in West Bengal, formation of new political alliances in south India and the appearance of cracks in the strongholds of regional parties are proof of the fact that the BJP is now not a party of North India or East India, in fact, it

has come to dominate the politics of the entire country.

In 2014, as soon as coming to power, the Modi government by tightening the legal noose around corrupt yet powerful opposition leaders, not only compelled them to join its ranks but also dealt a severe blow to the public image of opposition parties. The role of media also cannot be overlooked in making the BJP and Modi all-powerful. When a party becomes immensely organized, acquires vast financial resources, and establishes its dominance over all organs of democracy, the democratic framework gradually begins to weaken. Today, electoral politics no longer maintains the same balance as before.

## 107 Muslim candidates win in Assembly elections

**Sahafat** (May 7) states that in the Assembly elections held recently in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam and Puducherry, Muslim candidates won in 107 seats out of the total 824 seats in these states, which is 14.4 percent of the total elected MLAs. However, the BJP does not have even one Muslim legislator among them, because it did not give ticket to any Muslim candidate. In the elections held for 294 seats in West Bengal, 40 Muslim candidates registered victory, whereas in the 2021 Assembly elections, this number was 44. The number of Muslim MLAs of TMC has come down from 43 to 34. Meanwhile, the number of non-TMC and non-BJP Muslim legislators increased from one to six. This includes two of Congress,

two of Aam Janata Unnayan Party, and one each of CPI-M and ISF each.

On the other hand, in the 140-seat Kerala Assembly, 35 Muslim candidates won the elections, which is 25 percent of the total legislators. The ruling UDF has 30 Muslim legislators, which includes eight of Congress and 22 of Indian Union Muslim League. The Opposition CPM's four and CPI's one Muslim candidate also managed to win the elections. In the elections held to 126 Assembly seats in Assam, 22 Muslim candidates got elected, whereas in the previous Assembly, this number was 31. The most surprising thing is that among the total 19 legislators of Congress, 18 are Muslims. This apart, two Muslim candidates of Badruddin Ajmal's AIUDF,



one of Rajgor Party and one TMC Muslim candidate managed to enter the Assembly.

In the 234-member Tamil Nadu Assembly, nine Muslim candidates have won this time. This includes three legislators of DMK, two of Indian Union Muslim League, one of Congress and three of TVK. Among the total population of the state, six percent are Muslims, whereas their representation in the Assembly is only three percent. In the 30-member Assembly in the Union Territory of Puducherry, just one Muslim candidate won the elections this time. DMK candidate A M H Nazeem has become the lone Muslim legislator. In Puducherry also, the Muslim population is six percent.

**Radiance** (May 7) states that there has been a rapid decline in the number of Muslim legislators in the state Assemblies in the entire country after 2014. This signals the changes taking place in the country's political landscape. In 2013, the number of Muslim legislators in the country was 339, which has now come down to 282. The interesting thing is that the highest number of decline in the number of Muslim legislators took place in those states where the population of Muslims is more. In Uttar Pradesh, the Muslim population is 19 percent. In the 403-member Uttar Pradesh Assembly, there are only 31 Muslim legislators, which was 63 earlier. In West Bengal Assembly,

the number of Muslim legislators has come down to 40 from 59. In Bihar, the number of Muslim legislators has come down to 11 from 19 and in Rajasthan it has come down to six from 11. In West Bengal, the population of Muslims is 27 percent, whereas their representation in the Assembly is only 13 percent. In Assam, the population of Muslims is 35 percent, but their representation in the Assembly is only 17 percent. Currently, the highest number of Muslim legislators belong to Congress, whose number is 61. This is followed by National Conference, TMC, Samajwadi Party and Muslim League respectively.

**Hindustan Express** (May 17) in its editorial said that the greatest tragedy of Indian democracy is that a large section has been pushed to the political margins. Today, the crores of Muslims are standing at such crossroad that though their votes have value, their representation has become meaningless in the democratic setup. In the Assembly elections in five states recently, it has been proved that whatever be the number of Muslims, their political position is precarious. Now in Indian politics, they have become just machines that cast votes.

According to the newspaper, there was a time when the Muslims were capable of bringing to power any government or remove it from power, hence all political parties used to knock at the doors of Muslims. The situation today is such that

while votes are solicited from Muslims, including them in power is viewed as a political risk. What kind of democracy is this where even after casting 70-80 percent votes, Muslims are able to get two-three percent representation in the Assemblies and in Parliament? What kind of secularism is this where politics is conducted in the name of Muslims, yet political parties'

hands tremble at the thought of giving Muslims a place in politics? The truth is that today the different political parties in the country are using Muslims as just electoral fuel and they are being subjected to a systematic boycott in politics. The most distressing aspect is that the Muslim leadership itself is unwilling to reflect on the political plight of Muslims. ■

## Ban on Hijab lifted in Karnataka



**Inquilab** (May 14) states that the Congress government in Karnataka has withdrawn the order issued during the BJP regime, in which a ban was imposed on students from wearing hijab in educational institutions. It has been said in the new order issued by Karnataka's Siddaramaiah government that the boy and girl students of government, aided, private schools and pre-university colleges can wear religious symbols like hijab, scarf, turban, kalawa, rudraksh and janeu. This apart, they have to wear the prescribed uniform as well. Karnataka's education minister Madhu Bangarappa said that no girl or boy student will be stopped from entering the class, exam hall or institution premises on the basis of religious or traditional identity.

It is to be noted that after a controversy erupted over hijab in Udupi in 2021, the then BJP government in the state imposed a ban on scarf, hijab etc in educational institutions in the state in

February 2022. The Muslim side questioned this government decision in the court, but the Karnataka High Court in March 2022, while upholding the government order, said that wearing hijab is not an essential religious practice in Islam. Later this issue reached the Supreme Court, but there were differences of opinion between the judges and the matter has been sent to a larger bench for hearing.

**Mumbai Urdu News** (May 12) states that Muslim organisations have announced that state-wide protests will be organised against the Congress government in Karnataka on May 16. The complaint of Muslims was that the ruling party has not fulfilled the 10 promises that were made to them in the election manifesto. These promises include issues like lifting the ban on hijab, repealing the anti-cow slaughter law, restoration of Muslim reservation, special allocation for Muslims in the budget, political representation, protection

of Waqf properties and withdrawal of anti-conversion law. It is being said that the Congress government in the state, after seeing the anger of Muslims, has announced the lifting of the ban on hijab.

**Hindustan Express** (May 17) in its editorial has welcomed the decision to withdraw the ban on hijab in Karnataka. The newspaper said this was not just a decision, but an indication of the changing politics in the state and the increasing influence of Muslims. The biggest question is if the ban on hijab was wrong, then why it continued for three long years? Had Congress been against the ban, then why it did not lift the ban as soon as it came to power? To view this matter solely through the lens of limited religious freedom would be to turn a blind eye to the truth. The real reason for this is the growing resentment among Muslim and Brahmin voters in the state.

The newspaper claimed that many Muslim students had to leave their studies midway due to the hijab controversy. The BJP has presented this case as a threat to the Hindus due to political reasons and also linked it to Uniform Civil Code. The surprising thing is that the BJP never had the courage to impose such a ban on the turban of the Sikhs. Due to this ban, a major population of Muslims voted in favour of Congress, but after coming to power, the Congress dumped all the promises they made to Muslims in the cold storage. Now, after the defeat of the Congress candidate in the by-elections, the eyes of the government have opened and it had to take a decision to lift the ban on hijab. It is worth mentioning that in the recently held CET examinations, the Brahmin students were forced to remove



their janeu. Due to this, the anger among Brahmins against Congress had also gone up, hence the government had to withdraw this decision.

**Munsif** (May 15) in its editorial said the Congress government took three years to lift the ban imposed on hijab by the then BJP government. However, the Congress in its election manifesto for the Assembly elections in 2023 had promised to withdraw the decision, but after coming to power, it put the issue in cold storage saying that the matter is before the court. Now due to pressure from Muslims, the Congress government had to take a decision to lift the ban on hijab.

**Aurangabad Times** (May 15) states that this decision of the Karnataka government is worth welcoming because due to this, a chapter of injustice towards Muslims has closed. The newspaper wrote that this decision was taken by the then BJP government due to its anti-Muslim sentiments. The newspaper said there is almost a daily growth in the anti-Muslim stance of the BJP.

## Baloch Liberation Front attacks intensify in Pakistan



**Hamara Samaj** (May 14) reports that in a statement issued to the media, the spokesperson of Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) Gwahram Baloch claimed that the fighters of BLF attacked seven military camps of Pakistan last week. Several Pakistani soldiers were killed in these attacks. It has been said in the statement that in the first action, the fighters of BLF targeted a convoy of vehicles of Pakistan Army using rocket launchers and machine guns in Surab area on May 10. Two military vehicles were totally destroyed in this attack, in which five soldiers were killed and several others were injured. It was also claimed that an attack took place on a military outpost and weapons were looted on the same night. The BLF also claimed that an attack was carried out on a camp of the Frontier Corps at Kharan region on May 11 in which two persons were killed on the spot itself and several others were injured. This apart, on May 7, an attack was carried out on a communication tower equipped with surveillance equipment at Mallar Dhamb region in Kolwah and destroyed it, resulting in huge losses to the Pakistan

army. Again, on May 6, an attack was carried out on a camp of Pakistan army in Mastung and several soldiers were taken as hostage. The Pakistan army has confirmed these attacks and said that military operations have been stepped up against the Baloch rebels in the entire Balochistan.

**Chattan** (February 5) states that as per a report published in US newspaper 'The New York Times' it looks like the agreement signed between the US and Pakistan for extraction of minerals has landed in trouble due to the consistent attacks by Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). It is noteworthy that Pakistan's army chief Asim Munir had held a meeting with US President Donald Trump in this connection a few days ago. Following it, the Trump administration has announced investments worth billions of dollars for mining of copper in Balochistan. It is to be noted that till now Chinese companies dominate in the mining of gold and copper in Balochistan, but now Pakistan has opened the doors for mining of minerals in Balochistan to the US as well. According to New York Times, in the past one month, the BLA carried out more than 14 attacks in 12 different regions

in which nearly 58 people were killed. There are few US citizens also among the dead. Due to these attacks, the US engineers have totally refused to go to Balochistan and work there.

**Chattan** (May 15) states that four persons including the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor of Gwadar University situated in Balochistan have been kidnapped. According to official sources, the abducted persons include Chancellor Dr Abdul Razzaq Sabir, Vice-Chancellor Dr Mansoor Ahmad and their two colleagues, who were on their way from Gwadar to Quetta for an official



meeting. A few unidentified attackers kidnapped them on the way. It is to be noted that the Balochistan government had appointed Dr Abdul Razzaq Sabir as the first Chancellor of newly established Gwadar University in 2021.

## Infiltration of Rohingya Muslims stopped in Nepal

**Urdu Times** (May 12) states that the Nepal government has decided to take stringent measures to stop the illegal infiltration of Rohingya Muslims into the country. This decision was taken because there is an apprehension that a large number of Rohingya Muslims residing illegally in West Bengal might enter Nepal after the BJP comes to

power there. Assistant Chief District Officer of Merang district Saroj Koirala said now every person who enters Nepal will have to show his identity card. The Government of Nepal has ordered border guard outposts to strictly prevent illegal infiltration into the country.

As per the news published in Nepal media, Rohingya infiltrators are trying to infiltrate Nepal in huge numbers. The security forces have been given strict orders to intensify the checking on roads and trains arriving in Nepal and thoroughly check the identity card of every passenger. The Nepal government has also started



using trained dogs to patrol the border alongside border security personnel to stop these infiltrators.

Government sources confirmed that the Nepal government has decided to make a huge increase in the number of border security personnel deployed along the Indian border in order to stop the possible infiltration of Rohingya Muslims. According to Nepali media, the number of border guards has been doubled. Nepal's foreign ministry urged India's external affairs ministry that they cooperate with the Nepal government to stop illegal infiltration in their country.

## Huge financial crisis in Bangladesh



**Aurangabad Times** (May 10) states that the total government debt of Bangladesh has crossed Rs 22 lakh crore till the end of December 2025. As per Bangladesh finance ministry's latest quarterly bulletin, out of the total debt, Rs 3 lakh crore were borrowed during the tenure of the interim government. Exactly a month before the interim government was formed, the

government debt was Rs 18.9 lakh crore whereas this figure was Rs 13.44 lakh crore at the end of June 2022. By December 2025, the domestic debt in the country increased to Rs 12.5 lakh crore while the foreign debt increased to Rs 9.59 lakh crore. To reduce this debt burden and mitigate foreign currency risk, the new government is adopting the policy of depending more on domestic loans.

According to the newspaper, during the period from July to December 2025, the government's net debt increased by Rs 62,428 crore, representing a 13 percent rise in the total debt target compared to the previous year. In the year 2025, there has been a 59 percent decline in foreign borrowing, whereas domestic debt has seen a massive increase of 70 percent, reaching Rs 52,298 crore.

## Pakistan PM's daughter and son-in-law acquitted on corruption charges



**Qaumi Bharat** (May 8) states that Pakistan's anti-corruption court has acquitted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's daughter Rabia Imran and son-in-law Ali Imran Yousaf on corruption charges. The anti-corruption wing had accused them of committing fraud worth Rs 180 crore under Water Supply Project. The judge of the special court said the department has failed to find any credible evidence on the role of the duo in this so-called scam. The

investigation report that the department has produced in the court has also confirmed this. The court said that it had acquitted the rest of the accused in this case on January 31, 2022.

According to the court, when the National Anti-Corruption Bureau registered this case in the year 2020, it claimed misappropriation of government funds worth Rs 350 crore in this scam. The accused had shown fake tender and false data of incomplete project to the government. They extracted money from government treasury in the name of fake projects, but later the department failed to produce any credible evidence against them in the court. The court also directed that stringent action shall be taken against those officials who conducted investigation in this case so that in future trapping of innocent people in such cases shall be stopped.

## Threat to kill namazis in mosque in Australia



**Aurangabad Times** (May 12) reports that a man entered 'Masjid Taqwa' located at Bald Hills in Brisbane in Australia and attempted to scare and threaten the namazis. He claimed that an AK-47 rifle was kept in his vehicle. The namazis present there showed presence of mind and drove him out of the mosque premises. Later the police arrested this 33-year-old person. He has been accused of charges like creating hurdles in places of worship, spreading fear among public and disturbing peace. Following this incident, there is an atmosphere of serious concern and insecurity feeling among the Muslim community in Australia. Local MP Bisma

Asif, while strongly condemning this incident, said that the government should take immediate and strong legal action to stop the rising flames of hatred against Muslims and Islam in a peaceful nation like Australia.

**Hindustan** (May 6) reports that a suspected offender rammed a car into a crowd in Leipzig city in Eastern Germany in which two persons were killed on the spot and several were injured. Leipzig Mayor Burkhard Jung said the 33-year-old offender has been arrested. The two deceased are a 77-year-old man and a 63-year-old woman. This apart, the condition of several injured is serious. ■

## UAE announces investment worth US \$5 billion in India



**Etemaad** (May 15) reports that the UAE has announced investments worth \$5 billion in India. This apart, both countries signed agreements related to energy, defence, shipping, and in supercomputer sectors.

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi reached Abu Dhabi as part of his UAE tour, he was given a grand welcome. As soon as the Prime Minister's special aircraft 'Air India One' entered Abu Dhabi's airspace, it was welcomed by the UAE's advanced F-16 Falcon fighter jets which escorted it.

The spokesperson for India's ministry of external affairs stated that Prime Minister Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan discussed the situation in West Asia. Modi strongly condemned the recent attacks on the UAE and the attempts to violate its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Both leaders pledged to work together for regional stability, peace, and prosperity.

**Hindustan Express** (May 19) expressed hope in its editorial that Prime Minister Modi's UAE visit would mark the

beginning of a new era of partnership between the two countries. A significant point is that the Prime Minister openly condemned the missile and drone attacks on the UAE.

Narendra Modi stated in clear terms that the way the UAE is being targeted cannot be accepted. The Prime Minister also expressed concern over the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz. This makes it clear that India is now keeping UAE's interests and security among its international priorities. India has also signed a major agreement with the UAE to purchase LPG. This agreement is between Indian Oil Corporation and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC).

Indian ambassador to the UAE, Deepak Mittal, said this agreement would greatly help India meet its energy needs. Currently, India is receiving 55 lakh barrels of crude oil from the UAE, with the possibility of increasing this to 30 million barrels in the future. There are 35 lakh Indian citizens living in the UAE, which is a big sign of the strong economic and cultural ties between the two countries.

## Drone attack on UAE's nuclear power plant



**Etemaad** (May 18) reports that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) government has confirmed that a drone attack occurred at the Barakah Nuclear Power Plant located in Abu Dhabi. Due to this attack, a fire broke out in the outer part of the plant. According to Abu Dhabi's media office, there has been no loss of life or property in this incident. Along with this, the safety of the plant and the radiation protection level have also not been affected.

The Abu Dhabi government has appealed to the public not to believe rumours and not to be afraid. They should only trust official government reports. The government has issued a strict warning that anyone who spreads rumours on social media or through any other medium, or spreads misleading news related to this, stringent action will be taken against them.

As per the report of **Al Jazeera**, despite a ceasefire agreement between the US and Iran, Iranian attacks on the UAE continue. Iran had previously announced that it would continue its series of attacks on US bases in Gulf countries and would not target any civilian establishments. Despite this, locations in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the UAE are continuously being targeted by Iranian drone and missile attacks. This has led to increasing daily

tensions in relations between the two countries.

The UAE also made a serious allegation last week that Iran attacked Fujairah Port with missiles and drones. Many people were injured due to this attack, including three Indian citizens. These attacks caused a massive fire in oil refineries located in the Fujairah Petroleum Industry Zone.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 19) states that the secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Jasem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi, has strongly condemned the ongoing attacks by Iran. He stated that these attacks have endangered regional peace and increased political instability. He appealed to all Gulf nations to provide their full support to the countries being targeted by these Iranian attacks.

**Etemaad** (May 6) reports that the UAE strongly condemned the Iranian attacks. A spokesperson for the UAE ministry of foreign affairs alleged that Iran is targeting civilian locations and other important sites with missiles and drones.

The attacks are a major threat to the country's sovereignty, security, stability, and territorial integrity. The UAE has made it clear that it will not compromise on its security and sovereignty in any way and

will respond to these attacks under international laws.

On the other hand, the Iranian military has denied that Iran is targeting the UAE with its attacks. An Iranian military spokesperson stated on state television that Iran has absolutely no intention of targeting the citizens or petroleum facilities of neighbouring countries.

They claimed they are merely responding to the way the US is targeting the Iranian Navy in the Strait of Hormuz region.

Meanwhile, a UAE spokesperson dismissed Iran's claim, stating it is completely false that Iran is not targeting their citizens or petroleum industry-related plants.

**Urdu Times** (May 14) reports that Kuwait has levelled serious allegations that Iranian military personnel entered its



territory, leading to violent clashes with the Kuwaiti army. After the UAE, Kuwait is becoming the second-largest victim of Iranian attacks in the Gulf region.

Recently, Iran sent their armed soldiers to take control of Bubiyan Island. It is noteworthy that Bubiyan is considered the largest island in Kuwait, situated in the Persian Gulf. Its total area is 860 sq km. Iran claims that the US has established a military base on this island, which is why the Iranian army had to take action against it.

## Death penalty for Palestinian prisoners in Israel

**Etemaad** (May 19) reports that Israel has implemented a new law. Under this, if any Palestinian kills a Jew or an Israeli soldier, or participates in any conspiracy related to it, they will be given the death penalty.

According to this new law, a person sentenced to death by the court will not be able to appeal to the high court against it and will be hanged within three months.

According to a news report published in the Israeli Newspaper *The Times of Israel*, Major General Avi Bluth, head of the Israeli Army's central command, has signed the necessary military orders to implement this law in the West Bank. It is noteworthy that the Israeli Parliament passed a law on March 30, 2026. Under this, provisions have been



made to mandatorily give the death penalty to Palestinians participating in terrorist attacks. This law was also challenged in the High Court, but the court dismissed it.

Eight Muslim countries — Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Pakistan, Turkey, and Egypt — have condemned it. Many have strongly opposed this law. These countries



allege that the Israeli government wants to suppress the voice of dissent in a dictatorial manner.

According to another news report, the Palestinian terrorist organisation, Hamas, has termed this law dangerous and against international rules and human rights. Hamas stated, “The Israeli government wants to suppress our people who are struggling against Israel’s illegal occupation. Our campaign for the end of Israel will continue continuously.” The

statement also claimed that at least 10,000 Palestinians are held in Israeli jails, for whom this ‘black law’ has opened the way to be put to death.

Another report states that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel controls 60 per cent of Gaza. Recently, the Israel army also killed a prominent leader of Hamas’s military wing. According to the French news agency AFP, 1,221 citizens were killed in the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023. In retaliatory action, 72,763 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza so far.

**Chattan** (May 19) says that this new law of Israel is a mockery of the judicial system, and it is surprising that the United Nations has also refused to intervene in this matter.

## Israel’s attacks on Hezbollah bases

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 18) reports that the Israeli army claimed that over the past two days, it attacked more than 100 Hezbollah locations in Lebanon. Israel stated that Hezbollah was continuously attacking Israel from these sites. Therefore, it was necessary to target them for national security. On the other hand, the Lebanese government alleged that more than 3,000 Lebanese citizens have been killed and over 10,000 injured due to Israeli attacks.

It is noteworthy that a ceasefire was announced between the two countries following talks mediated by the United Arab Emirates. However, despite this, the Israeli army continues to attack Lebanon. It has entered Lebanon and occupied a 10-kilometre area.

Lebanon’s official news agency claimed that the Israeli army is attacking areas more than 50 kilometres away from



the border. Due to these attacks, more than 10 lakh people have been displaced, and 21 Lebanese soldiers have also been killed.

**Urdu Times** (May 13) reports that Hezbollah secretary-general Naim Qassem claimed that Hezbollah would not surrender its weapons to any organisation at any cost, and will instead continue its military action against Israel. He stated that Lebanon is currently facing a joint Israeli-US plan, the goal of which is to include Lebanon in ‘Greater Israel’. Hezbollah’s

chief announced that his organisation has nothing to do with the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel and it will step up its series of attacks on Israel military using most modern weapons.

**Qaumi Tanzeem** (May 15) states that for the first time, Lebanon has sent an official complaint to the United Nations Security Council, in which it had been alleged that Iran had been interfering in the internal affairs of Lebanon. It is dragging Lebanon into a war with Israel against its will. The Lebanon government said that along with Hezbollah, Iranian milita

Pasdaran-e-Inqilab (IRGC) is also carrying out continuous attack on Israel. Due to this, despite the ceasefire agreement between the two countries, Israel is getting an opportunity to carry out retaliatory attacks on Lebanon. Lebanon has clarified that due to the continuous interference by Iran in the internal affairs of Lebanon, it has expelled the Iranian Ambassador based in Lebanon Mohammad Reza Shibani. Lebanon also alleged that Iran has been illegally extending huge financial aid to Hezbollah apart from supplying Iranian arms to them.

## Criticism of the Greater Israel plan



**Etemaad** (May 12) reports that the former Prime Minister of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim Al Thani, stated in an interview with *Al Jazeera* that the ongoing conflict involving the United States and Israel against Iran is not a sudden tension. Instead, it is part of the Israeli Government's Greater Israel plan. He mentioned that this plan has the support of the US.

He further expressed surprise that the Gulf nations have failed to unite to understand and confront this dangerous plan. To thwart Israel's dangerous scheme, it is essential for all countries in the Gulf region to set aside their mutual differences and unite.

Al Thani warned that if they do not unite, the existence of many Arab countries in this region will be at risk due to Israel's expansionist policy. He claimed that he had

also warned all Arab countries about this potential threat a year ago. He emphasised that Gulf nations should attempt to resolve their disputes with Iran at a diplomatic level to protect their existence, so that enemy forces do not exploit internal conflicts among Islamic nations for their own interests. However, his warning was not taken seriously.

The former Prime Minister of Qatar also claimed that a fundamentalist Jewish group in Israel is becoming more powerful by the day, committed to realizing its vision of 'Greater Israel' at any cost.

Since the 1990s, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been trying to push America into a war between Iran and Israel under the pretext of Iran's nuclear programme. Initially, the US was not in favour of starting a war with Iran, but the active Jewish lobby in the US assured the US administration that it would be a brief war and Iran would surrender.

However, like Venezuela, Iran refused to bow down to the US and is continuously resisting. He stated that the political benefit of this entire confrontation has gone to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. He has succeeded in pushing the US into this war and making it a partner in the 'Greater Israel' plan.

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