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Joint Defence Agreement among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye



- Urdu media's reaction to Sangh chief's statement on 'Gen Z'
- Thousands of African Muslims infiltrates Spain
- Balochis boycott Pakistan's Independence Day
- Muslims have right for polygamy until UCC is implemented

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Summary

The judicial inquiry commission constituted by the Uttar Pradesh government has handed over a detailed report on the violence that took place in Sambhal two years ago, and it has been presented in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly. In this report, it has been stated that the Sambhal violence was not just a random incident, instead it was a pre-conceived conspiracy, behind which the local leaders of Samajwadi Party were involved. In its report, the commission clarified that the four youths killed during the violence were not killed by police firing but by bullets fired by rioters. As per the report, in order to provoke the Muslim community, Samajwadi Party MP from Sambhal Ziaur Rahman Barq and the Jama Masjid management committee spread a misleading propaganda that the government wanted to snatch the mosque from them, due to which a conspiracy to attack the survey team has been hatched.

The Allahabad High Court recently delivered a shocking verdict on the conversion of two Hindu women. In its verdict, a single judge bench of Justice Sandeep Jain had stressed that the two adult sisters had adopted Islam on their own and their father had been forcibly keeping them in illegal custody. The court ordered the two sisters to be immediately freed from the control of their father and also ordered that the young women be given a compensation of Rs 25 lakh. This compensation amount shall be provided by the Uttar Pradesh government and the father of the women. On the other hand, it has been alleged in the report filed by the father before the police that a few people had forcibly converted his daughters into Islam on the pretext of marriage. The father demanded that action should be taken in the case under the anti-conversion law. However, the court did not accept this contention of the father as the young women were adults, but directed the police to go ahead with the legal investigation.

There has been increasing concern among the member-nations of European Union over the growing number of illegal infiltrators in Spain. A few member nations of European Union have closed their borders with Spain so that the infiltrators who had entered Spain would not infiltrate into their country. Recently, more than 72,000 illegal infiltrators from Morocco and other African countries illegally entered Cueta region in Spain. In view of this explosive situation, the Spanish government had to deploy army contingents to restore control on the border and had to take emergency steps in the affected regions. According to analysts, there are two main reasons for this sudden illegal infiltration. The first reason is the verdict of the Supreme Court of Spain, under which those who illegally entered Spain shall not be deported without due legal process. The second and the biggest reason was the recent decision of the Spanish government, which gives legal status and right to work to about five lakh foreign citizens living in the country without valid documents. It is said that this decision of the Spanish government was also a prominent reason for the sudden largescale infiltration.

A tripartite defence agreement among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye has been announced in Mecca in Saudi Arabia. This agreement has been named as 'Mecca defence agreement.' Analysts believe that this tripartite agreement has the indirect support of the US as well and US President Donald Trump has openly welcomed this agreement. In future, several other Muslim nations including Egypt are likely to be part of this deal. Under this agreement, there is a provision that if any nation attacks any of the three member nations, then it would be considered as an attack on all of them and the three nations would unitedly retaliate to the same. In this defence agreement, concern has been expressed on both Israel and India.

Judicial commission terms Sambhal violence as pre-planned conspiracy



Inquilab (August 6) states that the report of the judicial commission constituted to probe the violence that took place in Sambhal on November 24, 2024 has been tabled in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly. It has been claimed in this report that the violence was not a sudden flare-up, instead the result of a pre-planned conspiracy. As per the report, false rumours were spread among the Muslim community regarding the survey at the Jama Masjid located in Sambhal, due to which the mob became enraged. On November 24, 2024, people belonging to Muslim community gathered in large numbers outside the mosque, following which incidents of stone-pelting, firing and setting fire took place.

In its report, the commission alleged that Samajwadi Party leader and MP from Sambhal, Ziaur Rahman Barq, legislator Iqbal Mahmood's son Sohail Iqbal, chairman of Jama Masjid managing committee Zafar Ali, secretary Mashood Ali Farooqi, deputy chairman Laddan Khan and advocate Qasim Jamal and other members of masjid managing committee had played a significant role in inciting Muslim community. These people tried to stop the survey being conducted on the orders of the court and instigated the

Muslim community to violence to further their political interests.

In its report, the commission said that after the Juma namaz on November 22, 2024, MP Ziaur Rahman Barq, while addressing a crowd gathered near the mosque, delivered a provocative speech. His speech went viral on social media, due to which an atmosphere was created among ordinary Muslims that the government is taking over the mosque. It has been said in the report that on the morning of November 24, 2024, a large mob carrying weapons and stones gathered near the Jama Masjid. Their intention was to stop the survey and to attack the police-administration officials. During the violence, the police-administrative officials were pelted with stones and fired upon and government properties were damaged. A total of 28 police personnel were injured in this incident, out of which seven suffered gunshot wounds. The incited mob also tried to seize weapons from the police.

It has been said in the report of the judicial commission that the four persons who were killed in the violence did not die of police bullets. The commission has appreciated the action taken by the police and the administration. It has been said in



the report that the authorities handled the situation with restraint and caution. The mob was not allowed to reach the Hindu-majority localities, due to which a widespread communal riots were averted. Had the mob reached Hindu-majority localities, the situation could have been terrible.

It is to be noted that on November 28, 2024, the Uttar Pradesh government had constituted a three-member judicial inquiry commission under the chairmanship of former judge of Allahabad High Court Justice Devendra Kumar Arora. Retired IAS officer Amit Mohan Prasad and retired IPS officer Arvind Kumar Jain were made members of the commission. The commission recorded the statements of 199 witnesses. This apart, the investigation report was prepared on the basis of forensic report, video, documents and police records. The report also details the background of communal riots that have occurred in Sambhal in the past. The commission recommended that in order to stop such incidents in future, compliance with court orders should be made mandatory and mobs should not be allowed to challenge the law.

It is worth mentioning that two FIRs have been filed in connection with the Sambhal riots in which cases have been registered against 2,750 people including Zia Ur Rahman Barq and Sohail Iqbal, son

of Samajwadi Party legislator Iqbal Mahmood. On June 18, 2025, the SIT had submitted a 1,128-page chargesheet in the court. In this chargesheet, though a total of 23 people were named, Sohail Iqbal's name was not included. On the other hand, Samajwadi Party MP Ziaur Rahman Barq has claimed that the commission's report on Sambhal violence was submitted to the government long time ago, but now it has been tabled in the House with the intention of creating a political issue for the forthcoming Assembly elections. He described this report as unilateral and announced that he would question it in the court.

Background: This dispute started after five petitioners including Mahant Rishiraj Giri of Kaila Devi Mandir located in Sambhal filed a petition before the court of Civil Judge (Senior Division) in Chandausi describing the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal as ancient Harihar Mandir. In this petition, it had been demanded that a survey, photography and videography of this disputed premises shall be conducted. The petitioners and their lawyer Vishnu Shankar Jain claimed that this was an ancient Harihar Mandir, which was demolished in 1529 on the orders of then Mughal Emperor Babar and a Jama Masjid was constructed in its place. He also said it was a monument of national importance protected by the Archaeological



Survey of India (ASI). Despite this, Hindus were not allowed to do puja there and currently namaz is being offered there.

In this connection, the petitioners also mentioned about the 'Babarnama' written by Babar. It had been said in the Babarnama that in 1529, on the orders of Babar, one of his commanders, Mir Hindu Beg, demolished the Harihar Mandir located in Sambhal and constructed a masjid in its place. This was mentioned in the 'Ain-i-Akbari' written by Abul Fazal as well. During the hearing of the petition, the court directed that a survey of the disputed building shall be conducted. In order to

conduct the survey and videography, the court formed an advocate commission headed by Advocate Ramesh Singh Raghav, in which senior lawyer Harishankar Jain and his son Vishnu Shankar Jain represent the Hindu side.

The ASI informed the court that the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal was declared a protected monument in 1920. In the past 500 years, several changes and alterations were made in this building, due to which it has been difficult to make a clear decision about its original structure on the basis of archaeological evidence.

ASI had earlier argued that the mosque management committee had carried out structural changes to the premises, often in violation of rules, against which a complaint has been lodged with the police. In view of the situation, it had been demanded that complete control and management of this building should be ensured as per rules so that its historical character can be properly preserved.

Reaction of Urdu Media to Sangh chief's statement on 'Gen Z'

Inquilab (August 7) reports that while addressing a programme, the Sarsanghchalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Mohan Bhagwat, said that if I have to trust someone blindly, I would trust the 'Gen Z'. He also supported the argument that the students have the full right to hold protests to reform the system. However, he also said that he has no detailed information regarding the clashes that took place between the police and the protesters recently. Bhagwat said that in a democracy, protests are a basis for dialogue. The complaints of the students are justified and there is a lot of scope for improvement in the education system of our country, hence they should be talked to.

Mohan Bhagwat further said that the older generation used to listen to the elders without questioning them, but 'Gen-Z' and

'Gen-Alpha' want rational answers. He clarified that there should be a proper way for expression and protest in a democracy.

We have to see that if the young are raising their voices, then it would not be just for protest, but for reform. He admitted that there are some shortcomings in the education system and there is a need to improve them. In this connection, the students have all the democratic rights to raise their voice and seek improvement.

Reacting to the comments of Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat, **Inquilab** (August 7) in its editorial has written that the way the government was forced to accept the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan due to the student protest at Jantar Mantar has also increased the concern within the Sangh Parivar. A major cause for concern was the attitude of



the students participating in these protests, which clearly showed that they were not only against the BJP leadership but were also extremely angry with the RSS, the ideological guide of the BJP.

This is why, at an event organised in Mumbai to mark the 15th anniversary of "India's International Movement to the United Nations", a session of dialogue between students and Mohan Bhagwat was held to influence this new generation with the ideology of the Sangh and the agenda of Hindutva.

The newspaper has written that in reality, the event was part of the Sangh's efforts to woo the 'Gen-Z'. Perhaps this is because the Sangh sees the resentment of this new generation as a major threat to the ideology of radical Hindutva and is therefore worried. The way the country's new generation forced the government to bow down despite its adamant stance and demanded answers from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was avoiding questions, has sent a message to the entire world that India's young generation is uniting against the rulers.

If we look at the history of the world, we find that wherever the youth have stood up to the ruling party, the rulers there have ultimately had to give up their positions.

Abhijit Dipke, who played an active role in the agitation at Jantar Mantar, said the youth of this country have forced the government to such an extent that even

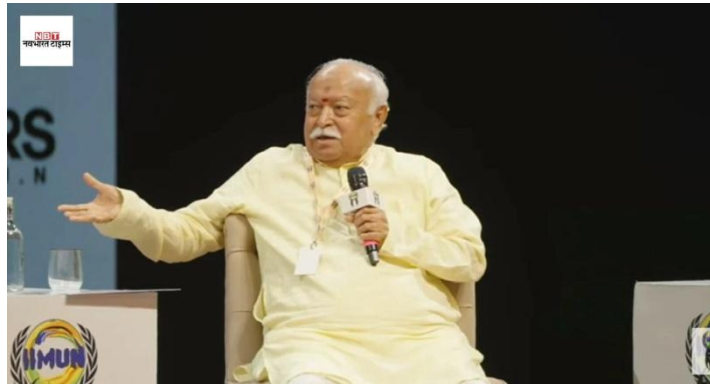
Prime Minister Modi had to post a video on Instagram at 11 O clock at night. This apart, RSS Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat also had to come forward to hold a debate with the youths. Even if late, these leaders realised that they would not be able to ignore the 'Gen Z.' The only way is to hold discussions with them, because these youths are the future of this country.

The newspaper claimed that whatever are done in different parts of the country by the Hindutvawadi elements, are not hidden from anyone. Mosques are being attacked, Muslims are being stopped from offering namaz at their homes and they are being made the target of mob violence. In all these, the allied organisations of Sangh—Bajrang Dal, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha—had a major role. Everyone knows that neither the RSS leadership, nor the Modi government, or the BJP state governments have taken any concrete action to stop such activities.

According to the newspaper, though the Sangh has succeeded in attracting the semi-literate and illiterate youths towards them and brainwashed them, the educated young generation has become disillusioned with the Sangh-BJP. This is the class the Sangh Parivar is trying to woo afresh.

Despite the earnest efforts of Hindutva elements to deprive youth of education, this group does not view every issue through the lens of 'Hindu-Muslim' or

'Hindutva versus secularism'. Majority of the youths among them are against the anti-people policies of the BJP. These youths also include many, whose elders, though agreeing with the ideology of the Sangh-BJP, are not ready to come to the field to bring about a change in the existing system and policies.



Avadhnama (August 13) has written that Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat's statement is appreciable that the complaints of 'Gen-Z' were appropriate and protest marches are a part of democracy. Hence the protesting youths cannot be called anti-nationals. However, along with this, a question also arises is this really an attempt to understand the youth or is the government looking for a new way to avoid basic questions?

In Jharkhand, the student protests against irregularities in the recruitment examinations of the Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) and the Jharkhand Staff Selection Commission (JSSC) have made this issue more important.

There has been a peaceful protest taking place there since July 25, but later other youth organisations linked to BJP including the Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarthi Parishad joined this agitation. Later when the protesters started marching towards the Assembly, the police used tear gas, water cannons and lathicharge to control the crowd.

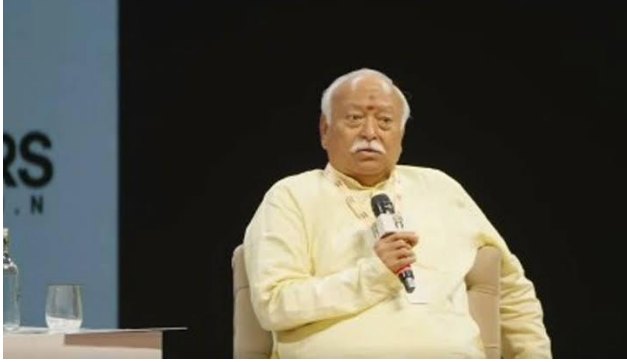
According to the editorial, the real question is not why the 'Gen-Z' is holding protests, instead the real question is who will reply to these basic questions raised by the youths? Today's youth is not just disappointed with the government, instead they are very much worried about their future. A youth attempts competitive examinations after making strenuous efforts for years. His family caters to his education, coaching, books and expenses on accommodation with their limited resources, but when the exam is postponed

or cancelled due to a sudden paper leak, then a serious question arises before him that what is the value of his hard work?

This is the reason why the 'Gen-Z' is asking the government why the examination system is not transparent? If there is any glitch in the system, who is responsible for it? If these complaints are correct, when will action be taken against the guilty?

According to the editorial, the other aspect of Mohan Bhagwat's statement comes to the fore from here. If the problems of 'Gen-Z' are real, then it is necessary to get reply for these questions as well. If protests are part of democracy, then the stand of the government should also completely democratic. The protesting youths cannot be dismissed as anti-nationals or their demands cannot be rejected branding them as political conspiracy. It would be a grave mistake to dismiss Gen-Z as merely an angry generation.

The state-wide bandh call given by the BJP against the police action in Jharkhand has made the issue more serious. This situation is actually a testing time for the saffron brigade. On one hand, BJP is putting the state government in the dock, while on the other hand, the Sangh chief says that protests are an integral part of democracy and one should listen to the new generation. If both these things are correct, then why did the Central government itself is not adopting these principles? In a democracy, ideological principles should not be changed by seeing the political parties. When the youths protest against



suspicion and neither their protests shall be considered as a rebellion against the government. The newspaper said Bhagwat's reference was clearly towards the Modi government's approach, which often questions the mindset of those raising questions.

Munsif (August 13) in its editorial has written that voices have arisen across the world including the country against the RSS which

any Opposition government, then their demands become important, but when they replicate these demands before the Central government, how can they be called anti-nationals?

Hindustan (August 8) in its editorial, while discussing about the statement of Mohan Bhagwat, has written that he has drawn the attention of the ruling BJP to the fact that no government can force the new generation to obey its orders. Mohan Bhagwat has admitted that today's youth is not ready to accept anything that the government says without thinking. They can only be satisfied through reason and dialogue. They clearly tell parents, teachers and leaders that they do not impose their opinion on the youths. In order to understand them, there is a need to engage them in constant dialogue and seriously listen to them. Bhagwat specially stressed that the questions of the new generation should not be viewed with

Prime Minister Modi had described as the world's largest NGO. Several organisations in Canada have demanded that it should be declared as a terrorist organisation and a ban be imposed on it. This protest started over the proposed visit of Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat to Canada. He is supposed to go there in the beginning of next month, where his interaction with the Indian-origin people is prepared. Two Canada MPs have sent a letter to the government against this programme organised by the 'Global Outreach Wing' of RSS. They expressed their wish to impose a ban on the activities of the Sangh including the entry of Bhagwat to Canada. Over 200 public organisations or more than 40 human rights organisations have supported this demand. It has been alleged in the memorandum that the RSS and its leader spreads religious hatred and his speeches may pose a danger to the communal harmony in Canada.

Controversy over describing madrasas as 'factories of terrorism'

Inquilab (August 5) states that recently that after writer of Bangladesh origin Tasleema Nasreen and Deputy Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Keshav Prasad Maurya described madrasas as 'terror factories', Muslim organisations have launched a strong protest against it. Commenting on the decision to remove 'Kamil' and 'Fazil' degrees from the Madrasa Act, as per the directions of the Supreme Court, Keshav Prasad Maurya said that "whether the madrasa belongs to

Bharat, Pakistan or Bangladesh, these are factories that create terrorists and their main purpose is augment terrorism." Countering this statement, Samajwadi Party MLA Atul Pradhan said that Maurya has made this statement to divert public attention from the issue of theft of donations and offerings in the name of Ram Temple.

It is to be noted that following the directions of the Supreme Court, an amendment is supposed to be made in the



‘Uttar Pradesh Madrasa Education Act, 2004’ recently to remove the ‘Kamil’ and ‘Fazil’ degrees being given by the Uttar Pradesh government in madrasas. Ahead of the start of the Assembly session, when the media asked Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya about this, he launched a scathing attack on the education system of madrasas. He said that “whoever attends a madrasa, he never says ‘Bharat Mata Ki Jai’ nor ‘Vande Mataram.’ Their mentality becomes like that of a terrorist and madrasas have unofficially become factories for producing terrorists.

Chief of Jamiat Ulema Maulana Arshad Madani, while strongly criticising this statement regarding madrasas, described it as communalism and mental bankruptcy. He lamented that these statements were being made by people who had no knowledge of the glorious history of madrasas.

Avadhnama (August 5) states that All India Muslim Personal Law Board has criticised the statement of Taslima Nasreen. The board said that the statements given by this woman regarding the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and madrasa are strongly condemnable. No foreign citizen has the right to make such interferences in the internal affairs of India. Spokesperson of the board Syed Qasim Rasool Illyas said that it is totally wrong for Nasreen to say

that jihadis are made at madrasas. This statement by her has hurt the religious sentiments of crores of Muslims.

Siasat (August 4) states that national president of All India Muslim Jamaat Maulana Shahabuddin Rizvi Bareilvi, while condemning the statement of Taslima Nasreen, said that this statement was meant to spread hatred and such a person

has no right to stay in India. He criticised that a foreign citizen has also supported the implementation of UCC in the country and claimed that it is necessary to implement UCC in the country to end the discriminatory policy against women. Rizvi claimed that Islam is the only religion, which advocates equal rights for women.

This newspaper in its August 6 edition said that the chief of All India Milli Council Maulana Anisur Rahman Qasmi demanded that Taslima Nasreen should be expelled from the country and Keshav Prasad Maurya should be sacked from the cabinet. He also demanded that the Indian government should take stringent action against such mischievous elements.

Etemaad (August 6) states that the chief of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen and MP Asaduddin Owaisi said that this statement of Keshav Prasad Maurya is proof of his ignorance. These are members of those party, who never participated in the freedom movement of the country and were slaves of the British. He further said that these madrasas issued a fatwa for jihad against the British in 1857. This is the reason why the British hanged to death Maulana Syed Kifayat Ali Kafi. Owaisi demanded that Taslima Nasreen should be expelled from the country, because she is spreading communal poison in the country.

Allahabad High Court refuses to take action on conversion issue



Diya adopted Islam in 2021, after which their father illegally detained them in their ancestral house against their wishes. It is to be noted that the high court on July 30 ordered both the sisters to be produced in the court and the court directly talked to them on August 6.

The court made it clear that neither the government, nor their family can interfere with the decision taken by an adult on his or her own will, nor can any restriction be imposed on the movement or

Inquilab (August 12) states that the Allahabad High Court has refused to take any punitive action under the anti-conversion law in Uttar Pradesh on the issue of two adult sisters voluntarily converting to Islam. The court made it clear that it cannot interfere in this matter as the Constitution of India guarantees every adult citizen the fundamental right to freedom of religion, right to live at a place of his choice and the right to lead a private life. In its verdict, the court said these days, the sisters are held hostage by their family members in an illegal manner and therefore they are legally entitled to live a free life as per their wish. This apart, the court ordered the Uttar Pradesh government and the father of these sisters to jointly pay Rs 25 lakh as compensation.

livelihood of an adult as it is an open violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed in the Constitution. The state government counsel, while opposing this petition, argued that there is an anti-conversion law in place in the state. Therefore, no person can forcibly convert someone by giving inducements or by applying pressure and there is a provision of punishment in the law for anyone who does so.

The single bench of Justice Sandeep Jain has delivered this verdict in a habeas corpus petition filed on behalf of two adult sisters of Agra – Diya Bhatia alias Zia (20 years) and Anshu Bhatia alias Ameena (35 years). The two sisters declared before the court that they adopted Islam on their own free will, faith and for peace of mind without any pressure, deception, coercion or greed.

The state government counsel produced the FIR registered by the father of the sisters in the court, in which the father had alleged that some people lured these two sisters into converting to Islam. In this connection, a case has been registered under various sections of Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita. Later, during investigations, the police also added sections of 'Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Religious Conversion Act' in the case. The state government counsel argued in the court that conversion is a part of planned conspiracy, in which there is apprehension about foreign funding and the level of conversion will affect the sovereignty, integrity and unity of the nation. The government lawyer also argued that if these women are freed, then in it will

Elder sister Anshu said she adopted Islam in year 2020 while her younger sister



adversely affect the investigation into the case.

The court made it clear that the investigation into the case registered as per FIR will continue and the release of these two women will not affect this investigation. The court clearly stated that after the conversion by the two young women, their parents kept them at their house against their wishes and they were not given permission to go outside. This type of confinement is completely illegal, hence it is the responsibility of the court to restore the freedom of both the girls.

Urdu Times (August 4) in its editorial said that due to the propaganda unleashed by some communal forces regarding 'Love Jihad,' the Constitution, law and individual liberty are all in trouble. Due to this, inter-religious marriages between followers of different religions are viewed with suspicion. It is propagated that women have married non-believers out of love. Those who violate the traditions of society are killed by their own family members by making such marriages a matter of prestige.

In such an atmosphere, this verdict of Allahabad High Court was a historic one. The court, while delivering the

verdict, ignored the stand of the government and the fundamentalist religious institutions and protected the spirit of the Constitution. Although this seems very simple and common, it has great significance in the present times because the government and extremist organisations are opposing religious conversions. They are not ready to accept that using the rights given in the Constitution, any adult person can adopt the religion of his choice and can marry a person belonging to that religion.

The newspaper has written that the governments, influenced by a particular ideology, have formed the anti-conversion law, which is being arbitrarily used for political purposes. In this case, both the sisters told the court that they adopted Islam at their own will and they want to marry Muslim men as per their own wish. They said that neither has anyone put pressure on them nor has anyone cheated them. The newspaper said that as soon as the father-mother of the young women received information about their love marriage, they registered a case for kidnapping, forceful marriage and under the provisions of anti-conversion law so that they do not marry as per their own

wishes. A few organisations are trying to stop the conversion by raising the issue of 'Love Jihad.'

It is a matter of regret that in the past one decade, several such incidents had come to light, where the police have wrongly and arbitrarily misused the law against those who have married for love due to communal considerations.

Hindustan Express (August 10) in its editorial urged the Muslim community

that some communal organisations are trying to keep Muslim girls away from Islam by raising the issue of 'Love Jihad.' As per the editorial, in order to foil the intentions of these organisations, it is necessary for every Muslim family to provide religious education. This will ensure that the Muslim girls do not come under the influence of misleading and false propaganda of communal elements and will strongly stick to their religion. ■

Muslims have right for polygamy till implementation of UCC



Aurangabad Times (August 6) states that amid the political uproar over the rights of Muslim women and the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), the Patna High Court has delivered a very important verdict. The court clarified that until the UCC is implemented in the country, or any law is formulated to stop polygamy, Muslim men have the right for polygamy (more than one marriage) under the Muslim Personal Law and such marriages will also have legal sanctity. This verdict is considered very important from the point of view of protecting the social and economic rights of Muslim women. While hearing the issue, the court directed the Bihar government to provide legal rights to the second wife of the deceased Muslim employee and ensure provision for family pension to her.

This issue was that of Najma Khatoun, a resident of Lakhisarai in Bihar. She had sought family pension following

the death of her husband Mohammad Usman, who was a government employee. Mohammad Usman died on October 14, 2024. Najma told the court that she is the second legal wife of deceased employee under the Muslim Personal Law, hence she has the full right to get the family pension. On the other hand, the Bihar government's counsel argued in the court

that there is no record available for the employee obtaining permission from the government to marry for a second time. A single judge bench of Justice Purnendu Singh said that though Article 44 of the Constitution supports the implementation of UCC in the country, until the Parliament makes a law in this connection or ban polygamy, Muslims will have the right to marry as per Muslim Personal Law and the Shariah.

The court made it clear that the second wife cannot be denied family pension only because she is not the first wife. Because under Muslim personal law, the marriage conducted with a second wife is completely valid, hence she is entitled to pension. The court also cited an order issued by the finance department of Bihar government in 2011. It was clearly written in this government order that as per the Muslim personal law, the widows of the

government employee are entitled to family pension after his death. The court stressed that this government order is valid even now and it has not been cancelled, hence the government has to follow it. The court directed the officials to pay the pension amount to Najma Khatoon within two weeks.

Mumbai Urdu News (August 7) states that the Madhya Pradesh High Court, in an important verdict, said that any Qazi or a Shariah court has no legal right to issue a divorce decree between a Muslim husband-wife. A single bench of Justice Vivek Jain clearly refused to grant legal sanctity to a fatwa issued by Darul Ifta Masjid Committee in Bhopal and rejected the petition of the husband in this connection. The court, while clearly demarcating the role of Darul Ifta, said that a Darul Ifta (fatwa wing) can give advice or recommendation only on religious matters. It has no legal right to issue divorce or a talaq. The court said the marriage cannot be annulled through any fatwa nor any family court in the country could approve divorce on the basis of this fatwa.

Legally, only the courts of law in the country can grant a divorce. The court also made it clear that Muslim men have every right to file divorce petition in family court, after which only the court can issue a legal order to end the marriage as per the Muslim personal law.

The newspaper in the editorial of this edition said that if one looks at it from the Islamic point of view, divorce is not a legal process, instead it is a religious process. It



has been made clear in Quran that if a serious difference arises between the husband and wife, first an attempt should be made to reconcile them. If this effort fails, the husband can obtain talaq through the Qazi. Similarly, there is a clear law for 'Khula' (demand for divorce by wife) and to cancel the marriage in Shariah. It has been said in the editorial that the courts should not have the right to interfere in the Shariah issues of Muslims, because the courts deliver verdicts as per the law of the country, and not as per the Shariah. The newspaper said that Shariah courts and Muslim Ulema should see that the issue does not reach to divorce. In case this effort by them fails, they have the right to complete the process of talaq as per Shariah.

Hindustan Express (August 7) in its editorial alleged that the current government is interfering in the religious and Shariah matters of Muslims due to its anti-Muslim stand. The government is trying to deprive Muslims the right for polygamy, which is against the basic tenet of the Constitution of the country.

Thousands of African Muslims infiltrate into Spain



Sahafat (August 1) reports that Spain has deployed its army to protect its borders after a sudden infiltration by more than 70,000 Muslim immigrants from Morocco and other African nations, and also declared an Emergency in the affected regions. The European Union called an emergency meeting of home ministers of member nations to discuss this explosive situation. A few countries of European Union announced their decision to seal their borders with Spain. According to police sources, more than 70,000 Muslim infiltrators from Morocco and other African nations infiltrated Spanish territory—specifically Ceuta and its surrounding areas on the northern coast of Africa—by swimming across the sea and crossing the border.

These intruders breached the border fences and security barriers, leading to heavy clashes with security forces. It has been confirmed that more than 90 people died in a massive stampede while trying to control the unexpected crowd and by drowning in the sea.

The Spanish interior minister told correspondents that the situation was quite serious. He said that all possible steps would be taken to ensure the protection of

the country's citizens and its borders. This is the reason why Emergency has been declared in the country. A spokesperson of Spain's civil guard said that a large number of people have infiltrated Spain across its coastal borders, majority of whom are citizens of Morocco, Sierra Leone and Gambia.

The Spanish foreign affairs minister sought the cooperation of the Moroccan government to bring this unexpected situation under control. It is to be noted that the misinterpretation of a Spanish Supreme Court ruling and rumours spread on social media are considered the primary reasons behind this entire sequence of events.

Recently, the Supreme Court of Spain had directed that immigrants who reach via the sea cannot be sent back without a due legal process. The gangs involved in human trafficking distorted this verdict and made it viral on social media. Due to this, the immigrants thought that if they reach Spain via sea in any manner, they would not be expelled from there and they would get permission to stay there.

Inquilab (August 1) states that the mayor of Cueta confirmed that in the past two days, more than 72,000 people have entered Cueta and the nearby regions.



Seeing this crisis, Prime Minister of Italy Giorgia Meloni decided to make stringent security arrangements on its border so that the African infiltrators do not enter Italy.

Inquilab (August 2) states that Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said the hands of human trafficking gangs were behind this illegal infiltration. He alleged that some countries are deliberately violating the regional sovereignty of Spain. The Prime Minister said the local police confirmed that nearly 50,000 of those people who illegally entered Spain have returned to their country.

Sahafat (August 3) states that the members of European Union are holding each other responsible for this situation. France has sealed its border with Spain and deployed army there so that no infiltrator enters France from Spain. On the other hand, Finland, Norway and Denmark extended support to the decision of European Union member nations to seal their borders. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz demanded Spain to send back all these infiltrators and stop them from moving further. Similarly, France and Britain announced that they are ready to extend every possible help to Spain to deal with this explosive situation.

The Prime Minister of Portugal announced that it has tightened monitoring along its borders. However, it opposed the demand to deprive Spain of European Union membership. Commenting on this situation, US President Donald Trump this is like an attack on a nation by lakhs of infiltrators. He warned that if the Republican Party is not re-elected in the US elections, this situation will arise in the

US as well, hence the people of US should remain alert on this issue.

Etemaad (August 3) in its editorial said that people from Africa are entering European nations with the hope of a bright future due to uncertain economic situation and unemployment in their own countries. This is a serious humanitarian crisis.

During this crisis, thousands of people entered Spanish border in a span of few days. This situation is much worse than what happened in May 2021, because that time only some 12,000 people had entered Spain from Africa. The newspaper has written that the role of Moroccan government was also considered suspicious in this matter, which did not make any effort to stop them. However, the entire matter should be viewed from a humanitarian angle.

It is to be noted that ever since Morocco became independent in 1956, it has been claiming that Ceuta and Melilla are their integral parts and hence Spain should hand over these areas to them. On the other hand, Spain has never accepted this claim by Morocco. Observers say that Morocco often employs the tactic of giving migrants a free run at the border to pressure Spain into returning these territories.

Due to this crisis, there has been a huge political upheaval in Spain. Right wing organisations in Spain have alleged that the government has completely failed to ensure security of the country's borders. Meanwhile, Italy has stressed that the European nations should cancel their agreement with Spain under which citizens of Spain could enter other European Union countries without visa. Currently, more than five lakh illegal immigrants are staying in Spain. The Spanish government has started the process to allow these foreign immigrants to settle in the country and get employment. This decision will be applicable to only those immigrants who had entered Spain before 2023 and who had no past criminal records.

Bangladesh Prime Minister's visit to India postponed



Aurangabad Times (August 17) states that Bangladesh's new Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has postponed his proposed visit to India. He was supposed to be on an official visit to India from August 21. While issuing a statement in this connection, the spokesperson of Bangladesh's foreign affairs ministry said that India should first send back the deposed Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, and this could be discussed later.

It is to be noted that earlier, Sheikh Hasina had held a press conference in New Delhi on August 5, where she had delivered several political statements. This has resulted in escalating the tension between the two countries. Spokesperson of Bangladesh's foreign affairs ministry A K M Shahidul Karim said that before the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman to India, there is a need to improve the relationship between the two countries. It is worth mentioning that the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) established by Bangladesh has sentenced Sheikh Hasina to death for crimes against humanity.

The spokesperson of National Citizen Party said that until India hands over Sheikh Hasina to Bangladesh, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman should not visit India. The spokesperson alleged that

Sheikh Hasina's press conference in Delhi was allegedly organised at the behest of Indian government and it cannot be considered as Sheikh Hasina's personal opinion. On the other hand, the spokesperson of India's external affairs ministry Randhir Jaiswal has clarified that Indian government has nothing to do with this issue. Sheikh Hasina organised this press conference on her individual capacity. The spokesperson also said that there is freedom of speech in India and any individual can give his opinion.

It is to be noted that when Tarique Rahman took oath of office as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh in February, the Speaker of Lok Sabha Om Birla officially took part in the function. On this occasion, he had extended an invitation to Tarique Rahman on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit India, which he had accepted.

Urdu Times (August 17) states that till now the tradition was that whoever becomes the Prime Minister in Bangladesh, he visits India first. However, instead of upholding this tradition, Tarique Rahman visited Malaysia and China first.

Mumbai Urdu News (August 6) states that the deposed Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina said that she wanted to return to her country in December. She said, "I will not be able to stay in India forever. I want the people of Bangladesh to get the atmosphere of a democratic nation." She demanded the Bangladesh government to remove the ban imposed on Awami League, release all political prisoners and establish full democracy in the country. She further said she knew it very well that if she returned to Bangladesh, the government there would

arrest her, but the fear of such an arrest cannot stop her from her decision to return to the people of her country.

As per another news, the former captain of Bangladesh cricket team Shakib Al Hasan was also present during the virtual conversation that Sheikh Hasina had held with the media. Following this incident, a huge mob attacked the ancestral house of Shakib Al Hasan located in Bangladesh. The miscreants pelted stones and also set fire to the house.

Urdu Times (August 10) in its editorial has demanded that the Indian government should act with foresight in this matter. It is a different thing to give refuge to Sheikh Hasina on humanitarian grounds, but allowing her to take part in political activities could prove fatal to the friendly relations between India and Bangladesh. The Government of India's 'love for Sheikh Hasina' will push it down a path that Bangladesh does not like.

Now the Indian government has to decide whether it wants to save its old relationship with Bangladesh or to invite new enmity by supporting an exiled leader.

Avadhnama (August 11) in its editorial expressed surprise that the son of Bangladesh's deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Sajeeb Wazed, claimed that another Pakistan has emerged on India's eastern border. According to the



newspaper, if this thing is considered as true, then the historical feat achieved by Indira Gandhi in 1971 has been undone. It shows that India's foreign policy is failing day-by-day. After 'Operation Sindoor,' while adopting a stringent stand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that 'blood and water cannot flow together.' It means that he has undermined the Indus Water Treaty. In retaliation, Pakistan had threatened to cancel the Shimla agreement. It clearly means that the historic decision to resolve the Kashmir dispute through bilateral talks has failed.

The newspaper claimed that the number of Pakistani supporters at international level are rapidly increasing. If they present the Kashmir issue once again at United Nations, it could create a new crisis for Bharat. Given the changing global equations, it is highly unlikely that Russia will blindly resort to a veto to block any proposal related to Kashmir, as it used to do in the past.

Three lakh Rohingya Muslims return to Myanmar from Bangladesh

Urdu Times (August 16) states that the Myanmar government has decided to bring back Rohingya Muslims from Bangladesh. A government spokesperson has claimed that the more than three lakh Rohingya refugees staying in Bangladesh's refugee camps will now be given permission to return to their country. The spokesperson of Myanmar's foreign ministry said that the refugees are originally the residents of Rakhine province. He further said that the

security situation there has improved, so allowing them to return to their home country is being considered. These refugees have been staying in the refugee camps in Bangladesh for the past nine years in extremely difficult circumstances.

It is to be noted that the Myanmar army launched a military action against rebels in the Rakhine region in August 2017, after which Rohingya Muslims fled from Myanmar in large numbers and left



for Bangladesh. In this connection, the Bangladesh government has sent a list of more than 8.28 lakh Rohingya refugees staying in their country to Myanmar government. The Myanmar government recently completed the verification process of 3.09 lakh people, while the identification process of the rest of the refugees is still on. In this list, 4,241 people were found to be involved in terrorist activities, hence the Myanmar government has flatly refused to take them back. The Myanmar government

rejected the claims of international media in which it had been stated that 15 lakh Rohingya Muslims have fled from Myanmar following the military operation.

It is to be noted that the Myanmar government does not recognise these Rohingya Muslims as citizens of their country or as a minority community. The government there says that these Rohingya Muslims are originally Bangladeshis, who had illegally entered Myanmar and have been staying there ever since.

Balochis boycott independence day of Pakistan

Chattan (August 5) states that on a call by different Baloch organisations, an announcement has been made this time to completely boycott the Independence Day of Pakistan in the entire Balochistan region and to observe the day as a black day. Earlier, these organisations had announced that they would celebrate the formation day of Independent Balochistan on August 11. On this occasion, an appeal has been made to unfurl the flag of Balochistan Democratic Republic in all the small and major cities and towns of Balochistan. This apart, an appeal has been made to all the countries in the world to announce recognition to Balochistan Democratic Republic at international level.

In an official statement issued by Baloch organisations, serious charges have

been levelled against the Pakistan government. It has been said in the statement that Pakistan's military rulers have consistently attempted to suppress the independent voice of the Baloch people through the use of force. Due to this crackdown of the Pakistan army, the fundamental rights of the Balochi citizens have been completely violated, due to which there is widespread anger among the local residents.

Hamara Samaj (August 9) reports that an indefinite curfew has been imposed in several districts in Balochistan even as the control of Quetta and Turbat cities have been totally handed over to the army. All the borders of Balochistan adjoining the nearby provinces have been sealed and tanks have been deployed in nook and



corner of provincial capital Quetta. The army has directed all the citizens of Balochistan that they do not venture out of their homes and do not take part in any protests, violation of which stringent action will be taken. The army also closed the Quetta-Karachi highway and dug trenches where armed soldiers were deployed. The army took this action in an effort to foil the events organised as part of Azad Balochistan formation day.

Chattan (August 15) reports that in a statement, Baloch leader Mehrang Baloch had alleged that the Pakistan army has adopted repressive measures against Baloch citizens observing black day and have resorted to their massive arrests. She said the Pakistan military's fighter planes have resorted to indiscriminate bombing in seven places in Balochistan in which more than 200 people were killed. In protest against this violent action of Pakistan army,

Baloch citizens blocked all prominent roads and highways and started a dharna.

Urdu Times (August 17) states that the public relations department of Pakistan army (ISPR) said that the security forces raided 10 bases of terrorists and killed 27 terrorists. According to Radio Pakistan, 30 terrorists were killed in another military operation at Khuzdar district in Balochistan, who were said to be members of Balochistan Liberation Army. This apart, seven terrorists belonging to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan were killed in another military operation that took place in Kharan district. A huge cache of ammunition and modern weapons were seized from the bases of the terrorists. On the other hand, Inspector General of Police in Balochistan said the terrorists killed seven Pakistan soldiers during the clashes while 11 other soldiers were also killed in these attacks.

606 killed in terrorist attacks in Pakistan

Hindustan Express (August 3) reports that 'Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies' has claimed that a large number of citizens and security personnel were killed in terrorist attacks that took place in July in Pakistan. As per this report released in Islamabad, 606 people were killed and 232 others were injured in terrorist attacks that

took place in July. A total of 112 security personnel of Pakistan were also killed in the same month, which is the highest number of casualty since January 2023. Meanwhile, 401 terrorists—the highest number in the last decade—have been killed in retaliatory action by the army. In the same period, 74 ordinary citizens and

19 officials of peace committees had to sacrifice their lives in the clashes between the terrorists and the security forces.

Compared to June, a massive increase of 195 percent in the deaths of security personnel and 109 percent in the rate of terrorists killed has been recorded in July, while there is a 21 percent increase in the killings of ordinary citizens as well. In this month, the terrorists carried out 21 attacks on Pakistan army's outposts, in which the most affected region was Balochistan province. The death toll in Balochistan rose from 109 in June to 372 in July, marking a nine-fold increase in fatalities among security personnel.

It has been claimed in the report that a total of 2,786 people were killed in terrorist attacks in the first seven months of this year in Pakistan. This included 1,857 terrorists, 463 citizens and 424 security personnel.

Urdu Times (August 5) reports that an organisation named 'Pakistan Watch'



claimed that 232 citizens were killed in firing by the police and the army in Pakistan-Occupied Jammu-Kashmir while the protesters killed 24 security personnel and set fire to seven police stations in which 12 policemen were burnt alive.

According to the Pakistan media, in order to wipe out the increasing terrorist activities, the Pakistan government is giving training in the use of weapons to the local residents. Pakistani rulers are now launching a dangerous campaign to eliminate their political opponents by creating 'private militias,' a move that will push the country straight towards civil war.

Joint defence agreement among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye



Hindustan (August 8) reports that Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye have signed a major tripartite defence agreement, which has been named the 'Mecca Joint Defence Agreement'. A spokesperson for the Pakistan government claimed that the main objective of this agreement is to strengthen military cooperation among the three nations to counter growing threats to regional security.

The agreement states that if any of these three countries is attacked by a foreign nation, it would be considered an attack on all three countries, and they would respond to the attack jointly.

Chattan (August 9) reports that a spokesperson for the Pakistan foreign ministry stated that this agreement was signed by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Prior to this, Shehbaz Sharif had met Mohammed bin Salman in Mecca, a meeting that also included Pakistan's Field Marshal Asim Munir and other top-ranking officials of Pakistan army.

Mumbai Urdu News (August 9) reports that following this historic

agreement, grand celebrations were held in the Saudi capital, Riyadh. The national flags of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Turkiye were hoisted on Riyadh's tallest building, the Kingdom Tower.

Qaumi Tanzeem (August 9) reports that the official sources in Saudi Arabia clarified that the purpose of this agreement is not to build a nuclear bomb or increase the arms race. Its purpose is only to create such a strong system so that no country dares to attack them.

Urdu Times (August 11) reports that Turkiye's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has expressed hope that Egypt would also join this agreement soon.

Siasat (August 12) reports that the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement is not limited to military cooperation. In future, it can become a guarantee for the security of western Asia, which is expected to bring a major change in the security system of this entire region. Turkiye's foreign minister Hakan Fidan has compared this agreement to Article 5 of NATO, under which an attack on any one-member country is considered an attack on all member countries. However, defence experts believe that it would not be right to call it an alternative to NATO right now. The



the foreign minister of Bahrain. It is reported that the foreign minister of Bahrain, while expressing satisfaction over this agreement, expressed his desire to visit Pakistan next month. Along with this, Ishaq Dar held extensive talks with Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi. To address Iran's concerns

reason for this is that at present, no joint military command or permanent joint security force system of three countries has been arranged in this agreement. Along with this, it is also not fully clear yet that if any of these countries is attacked, how would they jointly face it? According to the newspaper, there is every possibility that under this agreement, a permanent secretariat of the joint military command would be established in Saudi Arabia.

Apart from this, arrangements can also be made for the exchange of intelligence, setting up weapons factories with the help of modern technology, and joint training of armies. Saudi Arabia can fully utilise its financial resources and diplomatic influence to make this agreement successful, while Turkiye can play an important role due to its experience of being in NATO, having a large army, its extensive war experience, and its rapidly developing defence production capacity.

On the other hand, Saudi Arabia has old military relations with Pakistan, under which two brigades of the Pakistani army have been deployed there since the beginning. Even today, the responsibility of the security system of the ruling family of Saudi Arabia is largely in the hands of the Pakistani army, and it also enjoys the special privilege that it can recruit soldiers from Pakistan for its army.

Aurangabad Times (August 13) reports that diplomatic and political activities have increased significantly in this entire region after the Mecca Defence Agreement. Pakistan's foreign minister Ishaq Dar held a phone conversation with

and apprehensions, Pakistan specifically sent its Shia interior minister Mohsin Naqvi to Tehran so that he could fully clarify the situation before Iran's responsible leaders and officials.

Etemaad (August 10) reports that Turkish foreign minister Hakan Fidan clarified that this agreement is not against Iran. He stated that if any country joins this defence agreement, it will not be targeted unless it attacks these three nations. A spokesperson for the Saudi Arabian foreign ministry clarified that the relationship among the three nations is built on historic and strategic ties spanning several decades. He said, "Our main goal is to strengthen the defence capabilities of the three nations and increase strategic security. The purpose of this agreement is not to form any new aggressive military alliance or create a group against Sunni countries. We only want to make the security system of this region stronger so that no country dares to attack our countries."

Etemaad (August 9) reports that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has welcomed the agreement and said that this agreement will prove to be highly effective for security and stability in the Muslim world. Meanwhile, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that the three 'brotherly nations' have united with a focus on faith, friendship, peace, and safety. He expressed confidence that this historic agreement would prove to be a strong foundation of peace for future generations, thereby advancing the welfare and prosperity of the Ummah-e-Islamia (Islamic world).



On the other hand, Israel has expressed deep concern over this agreement, stating that this new defence pact increases security threats for Israel and other peaceful nations in the region.

Avadhnama (August 12) reports that the main objective of this agreement is to foil the designs of 'Greater Israel'. These three countries were connected to the Ottoman Empire, either as part of it or under its influence. The newspaper stated that all Muslim nations worldwide should unite on the lines of the European Union. However, it is a matter of regret that despite believing in Islam and the Quran, many Muslim countries are currently engaged in preparing for war against each other.

The newspaper appealed for all Muslim nations to unite and face the enemies of Islam and the Prophet.

The newspaper also noted that this agreement is highly significant from another perspective: Pakistan is the only nuclear-armed nation in the entire Muslim world. If Saudi Arabia's strong economic resources, Pakistan's skilled military capability, and Turkiye's modern defence production capacity are properly synchronised, it can challenge opposing global powers and can emerge as a new superpower at the level.

Hamara Samaj (August 9) has written in its editorial that a new threat has emerged for Iran due to the Mecca defence agreement. The newspaper wrote that Saudi

Arabia should understand that it would not be able to get security through paper agreements with Pakistan and Turkiye alone.

The way it failed to ensure its security despite depending on the US for decades, in the similar way, how effective this new alliance will be on the ground remains a question. The newspaper also appealed that Pakistan should make efforts to ensure that friendly relations are maintained between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the two important nations of the Muslim world. However, Pakistan has always tried to maintain friendly relations with both Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Etemaad (August 10) has written in its editorial that this agreement remains a topic of discussion in India as well. Questions are being raised in Indian strategic circles about whether Turkiye and Saudi Arabia would side with Pakistan against India in the event of a dispute between India and Pakistan. On the other hand, the son of the Prime Minister of Israel has also taken a dig at this agreement, asking on social media that next time when Iran, Houthi rebels, or militants from Iraq attack Saudi Arabia, would Turkiye and Pakistan together launch a retaliatory attack on Iran, Iraq, and Yemen?

Urdu Times (August 8) has said that this agreement is a big strategic blow for India and Israel. India's relations with Pakistan have been adversarial since the

very beginning. However, Pakistan is diplomatically presenting this new agreement by linking it to collective security and regional peace, but global strategic analysts view this equation from a different perspective. The whole world knows that these three Islamic countries have been patrons of terrorism. Saudi Arabia is the biggest country that promotes terrorism, while Pakistan's role is also not hidden from anyone. There, the influence of extremist Islamic politics has also rapidly grown in Turkiye. Naturally, India and Israel are bound to be concerned about this trilateral agreement.

Inquilab (August 18) has said that Pakistani defence minister Khawaja Asif

has already given a statement that all Muslim countries should unite against Israel. However, the ground reality is that, except for Iran, most Muslim countries have indirect diplomatic or commercial relations established with Israel. Analysts believe that the US is behind this entire sequence of events. Under the guise of this agreement, it wants other Muslim countries to officially recognise Israel under the Abraham Accord.

According to the newspaper, the fact is that no Gulf country is currently in a position to face Israel directly on the military and technical front. History shows that even in past Arab-Israel wars, Gulf countries had to suffer heavy losses.

Law passed in Turkiye's parliament for disarmament of Kurdish rebels



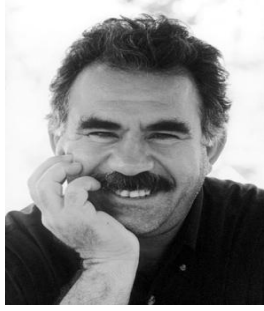
Etemaad (August 12) reports that the parliament of Turkiye has passed a historic law under which fighters of the banned organisation, Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) would be given a conditional pardon, and they would be released from prison by being exempted from prison sentences.

According to Turkiye's official television channel, TRT World, this decision was taken under a peace agreement between the Turkish

government and the PKK. A total of 468 MPs voted in favour of this bill, while 88 voted against it, and six MPs remained absent during the voting. MPs from the opposition party, Good Party, strongly opposed this bill.

Under this law, a provision has been made to grant pardon in most of the cases registered against the arrested members of the PKK. However, there is no provision for pardon for serious crimes and terrorist activities committed before the year 2005.

Those who are found guilty of crimes during this period and are in jail will not be released. This directly means that PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan, who is jailed, would not get relief and he would have to spend his remaining life in jail.



Apart from this, top leaders of the active organisation in Northern Iraq would also not get any benefit from this law. It is worth noting that the PKK, formed in 1978, has been engaged in an armed conflict against the Turkish government for the last 42 years.

Following an appeal by prominent leader Abdullah Ocalan, who is in prison, the organisation announced that they would disband their armed wing and surrender to the government. For decades, the PKK had been a major headache for the Turkish government.

At present, Kurds are living in at least four countries, including Turkiye, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. Kurds allege that after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the British government destroyed their power and divided them into several countries so that they could not launch a major rebellion against the British in the future. In 1984, Kurdish fighters, with the help of Russia (then Soviet Union), launched an armed rebellion against the Turkish government.

According to an estimate, the Kurdish population worldwide is around 4 core. After Arabs, Iranians, and Turks, they are considered the fourth largest ethnic group in West Asia. Historically, they have not had their own independent nation. However, over the past 80 years, they have made several attempts to establish their independent country, but have not yet achieved success.

Kurds make up about 15 to 20 per cent of Turkiye's total population. In the 1920s and 1930s, the contemporary rulers of Turkiye imposed a strict ban on naming children with Kurdish names, wearing their traditional attire, and speaking the Kurdish language in order to erase the distinct

Kurdish identity. Religiously, most Kurds are Sunni Muslims.

The Kurds also argue that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkiye, started a well-planned campaign against the Kurds at the behest of Britain under the policy of creating a unified Turkish nation, which put their cultural identity into crisis. In 1978, Abdullah Ocalan, with the support of the Soviet Union, established the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and later, with the help of foreign weapons, started an armed conflict against the Turkish government. Since then, more than 40,000 people have been killed in this conflict so far. In the 1990s, due to strong military action by the Turkish government and strong opposition by US, the PKK had to back down from its demand for an independent country.

In 2016, Jamil Bayik, the head of the military wing of the PKK, clarified in an interview with the BBC that they do not want the division of Turkiye, but rather want their rights peacefully within the borders of the country. On the other hand, the stance of the Turkish government has always been that such statements by PKK leaders are merely a part of their war strategy.

According to media reports, the possibilities of an end to the decades-old violent conflict in the region have increased significantly after the implementation of this law. However, the executive committee of the PKK has demanded that the Turkish government also release the organization's 78-year-old chief, Abdullah Ocalan. Abdullah Ocalan has been imprisoned on an island in Turkiye for the last 27 years.

Reorganisation of the Iranian army

Urdu Times (August 12) reports that Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei has reorganised the Iranian army to strengthen the country's defence system. Under this reorganisation, six high-ranking officials have been appointed to the military command.

According to Iran's official news agency, Mehr News, in this major reshuffle, Major General Ali Abdollahi has been appointed as the new chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces, while Brigadier General Kiumars Haidari has been given the responsibilities of the deputy chief of staff.

Along with this, Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi has been appointed as the new commander-in-chief of the Pasdaran-e-Inqilab (IRGC), and Major General Mustafa Izadi has been appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC. Rear Admiral Ali Azmai has been made the new chief of the IRGC Navy. He will replace former Commander Ali Reza Tangsiri, who died in recent days during an Israeli airstrike. On the other hand, Hossein Taeb has been appointed as the new chief of the IRGC's Basij force. He will succeed Brigadier General Gholam Reza Soleimani, who died in recent days during a joint strike by the US and Israel.

In this reshuffle, the most important appointment has been that of Mohsen Rezaei. Rezaei has previously served as the commander-in-chief of the IRGC (Islamic



Revolutionary Guard Corps) and has now been appointed as the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council. He is considered to be the most trusted and closest confidant of the Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei. Significantly, Mohsen Rezaei is considered a major opponent of agreements or talks with the US. On several occasions, he has openly opposed the nuclear deal talks between the US and Iran.

His appointment is a clear indication that Iran's Supreme Leader now wants to adopt a very strict stance on the fronts of national security and foreign policy. This major shift also signals that the hardline faction now dominates the Iranian government, which stands against any kind of agreement with the US. This significant shift is being seen as a major political blow to the position of Iran's current President, Masoud Pezeshkian, who is counted among Iran's moderate leaders.

Death penalty abolished in Lebanon

Urdu Times (August 13) reports that the parliament of Lebanon has approved a historic law to completely abolish the death penalty in the country. With this decision, Lebanon has become the first country in West Asia to legally abolish capital punishment. Under the provisions of the new law, a provision for life imprisonment has now been made in place of the death

penalty. In the parliament, after the bill was passed, Lebanon's justice minister, Adel Naser, spoke to journalists and said this is a historic decision, but it should absolutely not mean that there has been any softening in the government's stance toward criminals.

According to the human rights organisation Amnesty International, at this



time, in the prisons of Lebanon, 85 such prisoners are being detained who had been sentenced to death by the court and are

waiting for their execution. With the implementation of this new law, the lives of all those prisoners have now been saved.

Significantly, the last time a criminal was hanged in Lebanon was on January 17, 2004. Welcoming this step by the Lebanese government, the European Union's representative for foreign affairs, Kaja Kallas, stated that other countries in West Asia should also follow Lebanon's decision.

Umrah pilgrim count sees huge increase

Etemaad (August 5) reports that the Saudi Arabian government released official figures for last year's Haj and Umrah. According to this report, there has been a massive increase of 114 per cent in the number of people performing Umrah over the last five years. In 2025, 1.95 crore foreign nationals arrived in Saudi Arabia. Out of these, 1.83 crore people performed Umrah, while 15 lakh people participated in the Haj pilgrimage.

According to this annual report, citizens of Pakistan performed the most Umrah, followed by Indonesia in second place and Egypt in the third place. This year, 1.6 crore people visited the Roza (tomb) of Prophet-e-Islam. A total of 1.5



crore visas were issued throughout the year, out of which 85 per cent visas were specifically for pilgrims performing Umrah.

The Saudi government has already started preparations for next year's Haj. It is expected that more than 20 lakh people would visit Saudi Arabia for Haj next year.

