

REVIEW OF URDU PRESS

Vol.: 7

Issue : 10

May 16-31, 2024

₹ 20/-

OBC Status of 77 Muslim Castes Scrapped in West Bengal



- Ban on entry of women at Darul Uloom Deoband
- Three European nations recognise State of Palestine

- Iran President and foreign affairs minister die in helicopter crash
- Ban on hijab in college in Mumbai

Editorial Advisor
Dr. Kuldeep Ratnoo

Editor
Manmohan Sharma

Translation from Hindi Edition
K.S. Kumar

Editorial Assistance
Shiv Kumar Singh

Office
D-51, First Floor,
Hauz Khas,
New Delhi-110016
Tel : 011-26524018

E-mail:
info@ipf.org.in
indiapolicy@gmail.com

Website:
www.ipf.org.in

Printed and Published by Manmohan Sharma on behalf of India Policy Foundation published at D-51, First Floor, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016. Printed at Sai Printo Pack Pvt. Ltd., A-102/4, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-II, New Delhi - 110020

Contents

Summary	03
<u>National</u>	
OBC status of 77 Muslim castes scrapped in West Bengal	04
Attack on students who raised 'Jai Shri Ram' slogan in Karnataka	07
Controversy surrounds Atala Masjid in Jaunpur	08
Ban on entry of women at Darul Uloom Deoband	09
Ban on hijab in college in Mumbai	10
<u>World</u>	
Three European nations recognise State of Palestine	13
Attack on Christians in Pakistan on the pretext of insult to Quran	14
Attack on Indian and Pakistani students in Kyrgyzstan	16
23 terrorists killed in Pakistan	18
Hands of ISIS behind the massacre in Moscow	20
Muslims migrate from France	21
<u>West Asia</u>	
Iran President and foreign affairs minister die in helicopter crash	22
Saudi Arabia enters into biggest deal to buy aircraft	26
Beer factory set up in Abu Dhabi	26
Rebel generals in Turkiye get pardon	27
Haj preparations in full swing in Saudi Arabia	28

Summary

A few days ago, violent clashes took place between students belonging to two different communities at Guru Nanak Dev Engineering College located at Bidar in Karnataka. It was said that Hindu students shouted the slogan of 'Jai Shri Ram' during a rehearsal of the cultural programme. On this, Muslim students attacked the Hindu students. Two Hindu students were injured in this attack. In this connection, the police registered a case against 17 Muslim students. It is worth mentioning that the communal elements are active in Bidar for the past several years. A few years ago also the local Muslims had attacked students studying in this college. Several dozen students were injured in this attack, majority of them being Punjabis.

The Calcutta High Court has cancelled an ordinance issued by the Trinamool Congress government for including some castes of Muslims in the OBC category. In this connection, a public interest petition has been filed at the Calcutta High Court on behalf of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. A division bench of the high court said in its verdict that the state government neither followed the law while issuing this ordinance nor is the list based on the recommendations of the state's backward classes commission. The court expressed the doubt that the state government took this decision with the intention of reaping political benefits. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee refused to accept this decision of the high court. She announced that the government would question the verdict in the Supreme Court.

Nine top Iranian officials including Iran President Syed Ebrahim Raisi and foreign affairs minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian were killed in a helicopter crash. It is being said that the Iran President had gone to Azerbaijan along with his colleagues to inaugurate a dam built on a river with the cooperation of neighbouring country Azerbaijan. While he was returning, his helicopter met with an accident due to inclement weather and all the passengers in the copter were killed. Iran's former foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has blamed the US for the accident. In reply to this, the US has claimed that the Iran government is fully responsible for the mishap because they sent their President in a 45-year-old helicopter to take part in that function. Though the Iran government has denied suspicion of any conspiracy behind this mishap, the media has been expressing doubts on the hands of US and Israel behind the death of Raisi. It is to be noted that Raisi was considered to be a radical. Raisi had been accused of playing a major role in hanging to death many of his opponents when he was a judge. Raisi was considered to be close to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The Iran government has announced voting in the country on June 28 to select a new President.

Three European nations—Spain, Ireland and Norway—have officially granted recognition to Palestine state. This decision by these countries has dealt a major blow to Israel, the US and their European allies. It is being said that due to this decision of Spain, Ireland and Norway, major differences have arisen among the European Union nations as well.

Russia has blamed Islamic terrorist organisation ISIS for the terrorist attack that took place in Crocus City Hall in Moscow in March. At least 150 Russian citizens were killed in this attack. Russia has expressed doubt about the hands of Ukraine and the US behind this terrorist attack. The two countries have rejected this allegation by Russia. There is no doubt that for the past few years, ISIS has become active again and they are playing with the blood of innocents in many countries including Afghanistan, Iran etc.

OBC status of 77 Muslim castes scrapped in West Bengal



Hindustan (May 24) states that amid the Lok Sabha elections, the Calcutta High Court has delivered a verdict which will have an effect on more than 5 lakh people in West Bengal. The Calcutta High Court has cancelled all the certificates issued by the West Bengal government after 2010 under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category. The court also cancelled the reservation given to 77 castes of Muslims under OBC category between April 2010 and September 2010 and also the categories created as per the law of 2012. In its verdict, the high court has clarified that the certificates which have been cancelled cannot be used for obtaining jobs.

A division bench comprising Justice Tapabrata Chakraborty and Justice Rajasekhhar Mantha has clarified that those candidates who had got the job opportunity through these certificates earlier itself will not be affected by this verdict. This verdict of the high court came in connection with a case filed in 2012. While hearing the case, the division bench said that all the certificates issued after 2010 under the OBC category were not in accordance with the law. The court clarified that the West

Bengal Backward Classes Welfare Department shall determine the list of OBCs after consulting the Backward Classes Commission, which shall be sent to the Legislative Assembly. Only the names of those castes which are accepted by the Assembly shall be given the OBC status in future. The court said that we understand that selection of 77 castes of Muslims as backward class is an insult to the entire Muslim community. The court also said that some sections of Muslims have been given reservation under OBC category for reaping political benefits.

Urdu Times (May 25) states that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, while addressing an election meeting at 24 Parganas district, said the verdict of the Calcutta High Court cancelling the OBC certificates will not be accepted by us and this decision of the court will be questioned in the Supreme Court. She said that it would not make any difference who had given this verdict but I will definitely say that this order is in favour of BJP and we will not accept this. She said that the OBC reservation for Muslims will continue. The newspaper said

that this decision of the Calcutta High Court has come at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been accusing Congress and other Opposition parties in his election meetings that in case they come to power, they remove the OBC reservation of Hindus and give it to Muslims.

Inquilab (May 29) states that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while addressing a public meeting in Kolkata, targeted the Trinamool Congress government in the state. He said that the Trinamool Congress had described 77 Muslim castes as OBCs in an unconstitutional manner, but when the verdict of the court came, their entire game got spoiled. Now they have to abide by the verdict of the high court. In order to appease Muslims, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has been announcing that she will not obey the verdict of the court. Modi said that Trinamool Congress is playing only vote bank politics.

Inquilab (May 26) states that the possibility of opposition to the reservation being given to backward class Muslims in Rajasthan has increased. Social justice minister of Rajasthan government Avinash Gehlot said the reservation given to Muslims by the previous government after reducing the OBC quota is wrong and it should be reconsidered. Gehlot said that 14 Muslim castes have been included in OBC category in Rajasthan from 1997 till 2013. The state government will reconsider this. A committee will be set up which will review the legal aspects of the issue. It is to be noted that currently 91 castes have been given reservation under OBC category in Rajasthan. The Muslim castes which have been included in this are Nagarchi, Damami, Rana, Baiti (Barot), Sindhi, Sipahi, Fakir, Dhobi, Mev, Kayamkhani, Nagauri, Bhishti, Manganiyar, Lakhera, Mirasi, Mehrat, Cheetah and Ghodat.

Akhbar-e-Mashriq (May 24) in its editorial said that the tussle between the Calcutta High Court and West Bengal government is not stopping. In the past days, the Calcutta High Court had cancelled the appointment of teachers and

non-teaching staff. Due to this, the atmosphere in the state has got heated up. Now the Calcutta High Court has decided to cancel those 5 lakh OBC certificates which were given by the government after 2010. In its verdict, the Calcutta High Court said that the state government has issued the OBC certificates in an illegal manner. However, the court also said that no interference will be made with the 66 communities which were included in the OBC category before 2010. Along with this, the Calcutta High Court has also cancelled the list of OBC castes created by the government under the West Bengal Backward Classes Act, 2012. Under this Act, the state government had included 37 new categories in the OBC. The court said that the government has been given the power in the 2012 law to include whichever community it wants to in the OBC category and declare them entitled to reservation.

The newspaper said that in 2010, the West Bengal government had announced 10 percent reservation to Pasmanda Muslims. After six months, the Backward Classes Commission had recommended that 42 backward castes shall be included in the OBC category, out of which 41 belonged to Pasmanda Muslims. The state government immediately accepted the recommendation of the commission and 41 castes of Muslims were included in the list of Pasmanda Muslims. Later the state government in May 2012 included 9 in OBC A category and 26 in OBC B category, that is, a total of 35 castes in the category of backward castes. The West Bengal government had urged the court to keep its order suspended, but the court did not accept it. It is to be noted that Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh had filed a petition in the court in which it was demanded that only those castes should be given reservation which were included in the OBC category till 2010. The court has now delivered its verdict in this public interest litigation. The court had also directed that a new list shall be prepared on the basis of the West Bengal Backward Classes



Commission, Act 1993, and only those castes which were in the OBC castes till 2010 shall be included in the list. After this, the list of OBC castes after 2010 should be passed by the Legislative Assembly. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has announced that the matter will be questioned in the Supreme Court. Now what needs to be seen is whether the West Bengal government will get relief from the Supreme Court or not.

Hindustan (May 26) in its editorial said the decision of the Calcutta High Court to cancel the reservation given to 77 castes of Muslims under the OBC category during the Lok Sabha elections is definitely a matter of happiness for BJP and the saffron organisations. The BJP wants to make Muslims second-class citizens right from the beginning itself. The growing feeling against Muslims in their hearts and minds for the past several years has been fulfilled by the high court. After the verdict of the Calcutta High Court, the BJP and RSS have fully come out in the field and in whichever states the Pasmanda Muslims are getting the benefits of reservation, they have started openly talking about cancelling them. It cannot be denied that the work done by Mamata Banerjee to improve the financial, social and educational condition of Muslims by giving reservation to the backward castes of Muslims are not at all liked by the RSS and BJP. This is the reason why the BJP has come out in the field against giving reservation to Pasmanda Muslims. On the

reservations being given to Muslims in West Bengal and Karnataka, they have been trying to provoke the people by saying that Muslims are given reservation by reducing the reservation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Hindustan Express (May 25) in its editorial said among those Muslim castes which have been included in the OBC category, 42 were given OBC status by the Communist party

government in 2010. Whereas the rest of the castes were included in the category during the regime of Mamata Banerjee. The newspaper said that the political comments made by the court during its verdict cannot be overlooked. The division bench of the court said that it is an insult to democracy and all the Muslims that a few communities of Muslims were given reservation under OBC to achieve political objectives. Currently, this issue has become beneficial for the BJP, because the court also said almost the same stand of the BJP.

Mumbai Urdu News (May 26) in its editorial said that reservation was not given to Muslims anyway, because they demand reservation on the basis of being Muslim. The government and the political leaders in the country flatly deny that reservation can be given on the basis of religion, because it is against the Constitution. As for the issue of reservation for Muslims on the basis of backwardness, that too is not easy. It is said about them that reservation cannot be given to those Dalits who have become Muslims because there is no system of caste-creed in Islam. Whatever little reservation that the Muslims are getting today, that itself the current rulers and Sanghis are not liking. They are trying to close this window also for Muslims in one way or the other.

The newspaper said that the example of West Bengal is before all of us. While hearing a petition, the Calcutta High Court has cancelled the reservation being given under OBC category to 77 castes of Muslims in government jobs and in

education. Its direct meaning is that those backward castes among Muslims will further become backward. One can't say anything about the verdict of the court, because the law is blindfolded. The verdict of the court has thrown cold water on the work done by the chief minister of West Bengal to improve the financial condition of backward Muslims. This issue is not limited to West Bengal, now preparations are being made to implement it across the country. The chief minister of Uttar

Pradesh Yogi Adityanath is the biggest patient of Islamophobia. He has announced that the reservation being given to Muslims in the state will be reviewed. A similar announcement was also made by the chief minister of Rajasthan Bhajan Lal Sharma. If one goes by Yogi, he will take out all jobs from Muslims. Now, due to this decision of the Calcutta High Court, he has got a new weapon. The reservation being given to backward Muslims in Uttar Pradesh will also be cancelled now. ■

Attack on students who raised 'Jai Shri Ram' slogan in Karnataka

Inquilab (May 31) states that Muslim students attacked a group of students who raised Jai Shri Ram slogan in a college in Bidar in Karnataka. According to the newspaper, the Hindu students registered an FIR against 17 Muslim students after the attack. Deputy Commissioner of Bidar, Govind Reddy, said that annual celebrations were



scheduled at Guru Nanak Dev Engineering College in Bidar where rehearsals were going on for the music programme. During this rehearsal on May 29, some students raised the slogan of Jai Shri Ram. Muslim students objected to it and they attacked the students who raised the slogan of Jai Shri Ram. Later other students also joined the issue. Following this, a clash took place between the two groups. They said that now the situation is under control and the police have been deployed in the college. In view of the incident, the college administration decided to cancel the annual celebrations.

Hamara Samaj (May 31) states that the Superintendent of Police, Bidar, Chennabasavanna Langoti said that a youth festival was supposed to take place in connection with the annual celebrations of

Guru Nanak Dev Engineering College. During a drama rehearsal, some students were performing on the stage while raising the slogan of Jai Shri Ram. The Muslim students opposed this. Following this, the two groups clashed. Two students who raised the slogan of Jai Shri Ram got injured in this clash. The principal of the college telephoned Gandhiganj police station and informed about the incident. The police reached the spot and sent the injured students to hospital for treatment. On the basis of the complaint of injured students, a case has been registered against 17 Muslim students. The Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarti Parishad took out a rally and protested against the incident and demanded the Karnataka government to take stringent action against mischievous elements. The name of the student who

registered the FIR is Natraj. Meanwhile, a case has been registered against Bashir Khan, Gufran, Anis, Sheikh Pasha, Bilal and other Muslim students. There is anger among the Muslims of Bidar against this incident. The complaint of the Muslims is that the Hindu students did not make any

effort to resolve the issue through talks. Union Minister and BJP MP from Bidar Bhagwant Khube accused the Congress government in Karnataka of Muslim appeasement and demanded the management of the college to expel the mischievous students from the college.

Controversy surrounds Atala Masjid in Jaunpur



Worship Act (Special Provision), 1991, in which it has been clearly stated that whichever place of worship was in whatever position at the time of independence, it shall be maintained as such. Despite this, due to pressure from fundamentalists, the courts have granted permission to conduct survey at the Gyanvapi masjid in Varanasi and at the Bhojshala-cum Kamal Maula Mosque situated in Dhar. The fundamentalists have staked claim on an old masjid in

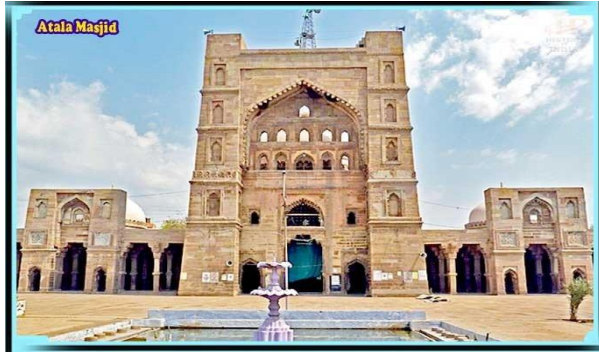
Mumbai Urdu News (May 22) reports that the dispute over describing the Atala Masjid in Jaunpur in Uttar Pradesh as a temple has now reached the court. An Agra lawyer, Ajay Pratap Singh, has filed a petition in the court against Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board and the Atala Masjid Management Committee. It has been said in this petition that the Raja Jaichand of Kannauj had constructed the Atala Devi Mandir in Jaunpur which was demolished on the orders of Ibrahim Shah Sharqi in 14th century and a masjid was constructed on its place. He claimed that a number of sacred symbols of the mandir are present in this masjid even today. He demanded that a survey of the masjid shall be done by the experts of Archaeological Survey of India.

Siasat (May 20) has complained that after the court verdict in the Babri dispute, the morale of Hindu radicals has gone up. They are claiming every historical masjid to be an ancient temple. However, the Parliament has passed the Places of

Badaun earlier itself. They say that it was the ancient temple of Neelkanth Mahadev, which was converted as Jama Masjid during the reign of Iltutmish. Now, the Atala Masjid built during the regime of Sharqi Sultans of Jaunpur has also been claimed to be a mandir. A lawyer in Agra claimed that the Archaeological Survey of India has written in its report that the order to demolish the Atala Mata Mandir was given by Sultan Feroz Shah Tughlak of the Tughlak dynasty but the temple could not be destroyed due to public anger. Later Sharqi Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi captured this temple and converted it into Jama Masjid. It is to be noted that this masjid in Jaunpur is counted among the most beautiful masjids of the country.

It is said that a lawyer, Ajay Pratap Singh, has filed a petition at the civil court in Jaunpur, which cited a report of the Archaeological Survey of India. This report has confirmed this masjid to be a mandir. He also said the Principal of Kolkata

School of Arts E B Havell had written in his book that this masjid was originally a Hindu temple. The Archaeological department in its report has confirmed the recovery of symbols of Trishul, flowers etc from this mandir. In a report in 1865, Asiatic Society of Bengal has displayed several pictures of this masjid where it had been clearly mentioned that this masjid was built on the ruins of a Hindu temple.



Sahafat (May 23) states that while commenting on the controversy regarding the Atala Masjid, chief of All India Muslim Jamaat, Maulana Shahabuddin Rizvi, has alleged that Hindu fundamentalists are making baseless claims in courts in order to destroy the mosques. He said that the construction of Atala Masjid was started by the ruler of Tughlak dynasty, Feroz Shah Tughlak in 1393. Later the ruler of Sharqi dynasty Ibrahim Shah Sharqi completed it. It took 15 years for the construction of this masjid. This masjid is more than 100 feet high and it is a great example of Islamic architecture. He said the claim that this masjid was earlier a temple was totally wrong. He said that the Sharqi Sultans had constructed an Islamic madrasa along with this masjid which is present even today.

Maulana Rizvi said that in the records of Archaeological Survey of India, several ancient records belonging to this masjid is available. Despite that, some communal people are deliberately making claims that these historical masjids are temples. He said that after the court verdict in the Babri Masjid case, the morale of such communal elements has increased. Initially they make this claim that several evidence for the temple were present in the masjids. After this, they take the help of the court. He said that the surprising thing is that the courts also overlook the law passed by the Parliament, where there is a provision that the status of the places of worship as on August 15, 1947 cannot be changed now. He said that the Central government should immediately ban such mischievous elements.

Ban on entry of women in Darul Uloom Deoband

Aurangabad Times (May 18) states that a ban has been imposed on the entry of women and girls on the premises of country's prominent Islamic educational institution Darul Uloom Deoband. The managers of the institution say that the practice of women taking selfie and the trend of making videos on the premises of this Islamic educational institution are increasing rapidly. This has created lot of controversies which are against the sentiments of Islam and Sharia. Manager of Darul Uloom Deoband Maulana Mufti Qasim Nomani said that several controversial video, which have been made on the premises of this Islamic educational institution recently, have become viral on

social media. Such videos distract the focus of students studying in this educational institution. This apart, some of the videos are objectionable, which hurt the sentiments of those who keep their faith on Islam and Sharia. He said that there is a ban on the entry of women and girls on the premises of Rashidiya Masjid located on the premises right from the beginning itself. Now this ban has been extended to the entire premises. The security personnel deployed on the entry of Darul Uloom have been directed not to allow women to enter the premises of this educational institution and turn them back.

Supreme Court lawyer Farha Faiz said that such a ban has been there in



several Hindu temples as well and women are not permitted to enter them. In this connection, she cited the example of a Shani Mandir in Maharashtra. In some temples in Kerala also there is a ban on entry of women. She said that it would be wrong to say that these videos were made only by women. It is necessary that there should be a total ban on shooting of reels on the premises of this educational institution. It would be better to ban mobile phones in this institution. In Saharanpur, the chief of a women's organisation, Rehana Adeb, said that this directive is anti-women. Because in Islam, women and men have equal rights. She said that she and many other women used to visit the fatwa cell and library of Darul Uloom Deoband and have been taking advice from scholars on issues related to Sharia. Now after this ban, how will women go to this madrasa? This is against the basic tenets of

Islam. She said that the managers of this educational institute can ban shooting of videos and carrying mobiles, but banning the entry of women on the pretext of it is totally wrong.

As per another news, at the two-day executive council meeting of Darul Uloom Deoband, condolences have been offered on the passing away of many Muslim leaders. In this meeting, Maulana Mufti Abdul Qasim Nomani, Maulana Arshad Madani, Member of Parliament Maulana Badaruddin Ajmal, Mufti Mohammad Ismail, Maulana Rahmatullah Kashmiri, Maulana Anwarul Rahman Bijnori, Maulana Mahmood Rajasthani and others took part. In this meeting, discussions were also held on appointing more number of teachers and provide more facilities to students. This apart, it was also discussed that medical education shall also be started in this institution. ■

Ban on hijab in college in Mumbai

Urdu Times (May 18) reports that a ban has been imposed on *hijab* and *burqa* at Acharya Marathe College in Chembur in Mumbai. This college belongs to a politician of the Uddhav Thackeray group of Shiv Sena. General Secretary of the managing committee of Acharya Marathe College, Subodh Acharya said that this

decision has been taken on the basis of the receipt of some complaints. We want more and more students to get higher education. There is no need for students to cut off their relationship with the society by wearing *naqab* and by covering with *burqa*. They should live in Indian society and behave accordingly. Only then will the



synergy between different sections of society increase. When he was asked whether this kind of a ban is there in any other college in Mumbai, he said that our students come from lower and middle class families, and hence this decision has been taken. He said that there is a dress code for boy and girl students at bachelor level in their college, which has been implemented equally for all communities in the society. We cannot grant permission to students belonging to any particular religion to wear a separate uniform. He said that last year we had imposed a ban on hijab in our junior college and it has been made mandatory for all students to wear a particular uniform. The Muslim students protested against this decision of the college and said that this is an attack on their individual and religious freedom, which is totally against the basic tenets of Indian Constitution. They urged the principal of the college to reconsider this decision of the management committee.

Students and various Muslim organisations have also complained to the minorities commission of the state and in this connection, an institution has also sent a legal notice to the college. Commenting on this controversy, general secretary of the managing committee of the college Subodh Acharya said that this issue should not be given a religious colour. Parents of many

students supported this decision of the college. Acharya said that forcing students to wear *hijab* or *burqa* is a violation of their basic rights. This is a fundamentalist ideology and I am against this. Opposing this, a teacher of this college, Atiq Ahmad Khan, said the Constitution has given full freedom to the students to behave as per their religion and faith. Whereas a lawyer, Saif Alam, asked who has given the power to the managers of the college to impose a ban on wearing *burqa* and *hijab* while hurting the religious sentiments of a section of students.

Hindustan (May 17) states there is huge anger among the Muslims in Mumbai against this decision. The college, which has imposed a ban on *hijab* and *burqa* and declared them as obscene dress, belongs to a leader of Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena. The Acharya Marathe College has posted a message on the WhatsApp group of girls in which they have been directed not to come to college wearing *hijab*, *naqab* or *burqa*. The students of the college held a massive protest outside the college and raised slogans like 'dictatorship will not work, withdraw new order.' The chief of a Muslim organisation in Mumbai Salim Sarang Foundation shared a video on social media in which it has been written that Acharya Marathe College is being run by a companion of Uddhav Thackeray, Subodh



Acharya. The anti-Muslim policy of this group is well-known and hence they are deliberately interfering in the religious affairs of Muslims. Muslims are being kept away from their religious faith. The so-called secular parties want just Muslim votes, not the Muslims. Renowned Muslim leader Maulana Ashrafi demanded from the college managers that they withdraw this decision, because it hurts the religious sentiments of Muslims. A few students of this college said they met the principal and opposed the decision, but he has refused to withdraw the decision. They said they would lodge a complaint with minorities commission and the women's commission in this connection. A Muslim leader named Ali Shah said that people are not irritated with hijab, but with Muslims. College principal Vidyagauri Lele said that nobody should have any objection on all students having same uniform. This decision has been taken for the security of the students. Before entering the college premises, the students have to remove the *burqa*, *hijab* and scarf. When they go home from the college, they can wear it again, but they have to wear the prescribed uniform within the college premises.

Urdu Times (May 20) states that the erstwhile BJP government in Karnataka

had imposed a ban on Muslim students from wearing burqa in the educational institutions in Karnataka. However, the Muslim students there refused to follow this rule. When they were given this condition that they should not come to college wearing burqa, a huge number of Muslim students even stopped going to the college as a mark of protest. Well, the Muslims of Karnataka

held on and waited for the Vidhan Sabha elections. In this elections, the Muslims voted against the BJP and the power slipped from the hands of the BJP. When the Congress formed the government, they announced that there would not be any ban on the *burqa*. Now, there is a BJP government in Maharashtra and till now there is no such ban, but now this ban on *burqa* has started from the Acharya Marathe College. It is totally wrong to link *burqa* with the job. Even today hundreds of Muslim girls work in private and government companies wearing *burqa* and *hijab*. What was the compulsion for the managers of the college to take this decision during the election? We do not feel any major conspiracy by the government in this. It looks like the BJP has put pressure on the college administration and got this circular issued banning the burqa so that the anger among Muslims increase and unhappy about this decision, the Muslims do not vote for the Shiv Sena of Uddhav Thackeray. This decision is hugely condemnable. Now, Muslims need to unite for the forthcoming Vidhan Sabha elections in Maharashtra like in Karnataka and give their vote against the BJP and remove them from power. ■

Three European nations recognise Palestine as a state



Sahafat (May 29) reports that Spain, Ireland and Norway have officially granted recognition to Palestine as a sovereign country. The three countries have also announced establishment of bilateral relations with Palestine. Israel strongly protested this decision. Israel's foreign affairs minister Israel Katz said Spain has encouraged terrorism by granting recognition to Palestine. Due to their decision, the other nations in European Union may also grant recognition to Palestine. It is to be noted that some time ago, 140 countries had supported a resolution moved in the United Nations General Assembly seeking recognition to Palestine as an independent nation. Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Malta, Poland and Romania had earlier itself granted recognition to Palestine as an independent nation. There has also been an indication that Slovenia is also thinking about granting recognition to Palestine as an independent country.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, while addressing his cabinet, said Spain has done historical justice by granting recognition to Palestine as an independent nation. This decision will help establish peace in the Middle-East. He said

we are supporters of the two-nation theory. We are hopeful that this decision will also help ensure security and stability to Israel. The Prime Minister of Spain said we would not grant recognition to Hamas as they are against the principle of two nations and also because they carried out an attack against Israel on October 7 due to that the war started in Gaza. It is said that serious differences have arisen among the 27 nations of European Union on the issue of granting recognition to Palestine as an independent nation. Whereas the US and West European nations say that until the status of Jerusalem is clear, we will not grant recognition to Palestine as an independent nation. France said that time has not come to grant recognition to Palestine as an independent nation. Whereas Germany said that its government will take a decision in this connection only after the two sides reach on an agreement. After these three European nations granted recognition to Palestine as a sovereign nation, now the number of its supporting countries increased to 145, while the number of member nations of United Nations is 193. Meanwhile, the Palestinian national flag has been unfurled in Ireland's capital Dublin and an announcement has



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said we will not remain silent on the decision of the three European nations, because this decision by them is an indication of their enmity towards Israel.

Aurangabad Times (May 23) states that Israel has announced calling back its Ambassadors from Spain, Norway and Ireland. Israel's

foreign affairs ministry said the countries which grant recognition to the enemies of Israel harm the sovereignty and security of Israel. Israel will take strict action against such countries. He said that by granting recognition to Palestine, the three European nations have rewarded Hamas and Iran for their terrorism.

Akhbar-e-Mashriq (May 28) states that the Palestine's foreign affairs minister, PLO and Hamas have welcomed the decision of Ireland, Spain and Norway. According to Palestinian sources, Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Barbados had granted recognition to the Palestinian nation earlier itself. It is to be noted that on November 15, 1988, the chairman of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Yasser Arafat had declared Palestine as an independent country in Algeria and had made Jerusalem as its capital. According to informed sources, Norway has been trying to expand its trade relationship with Saudi Arabia and granting recognition to Palestine as a nation is an indication of its policy in that direction.

been made that Ireland will soon send its Ambassador to Palestine.

As per another news, Saudi Arabia has declared that until Israel announces recognition to Palestine, its existence will remain in danger. Saudi Arabia's foreign affairs minister Faisal bin Farhan, while talking to journalists in Belgium, said it would be in its best interest if Israel grants recognition to Palestine. Whereas Norway has announced that it would soon establish its Embassy in Palestine.

Mumbai Urdu News (May 24) states that the White House spokesperson said US President Joe Biden is strongly opposed to the decision of three European nations to grant recognition to Palestine as an independent nation. The spokesperson said that until an agreement is reached between Israel and Palestine through talks, any nation in the world should avoid recognising Palestine. Israel had summoned the Ambassadors of Ireland and Norway to Israeli foreign affairs ministry and threatened that if they do not clarify on their policy in granting recognition to Palestine, Israel will think of cutting off diplomatic relationship with them. Israel

Attack on Christians in Pakistan on the pretext of insult to Quran

Hindustan (May 27) states that a huge mob has attacked the houses of Christians after an incident of so-called desecration of Quran in Mujahid Colony in Sargodha Nagar in Pakistan's Punjab province. Several Christians were injured in this attack, whom the police admitted to

hospital. It is being said that the houses and godowns of the so-called accused in the desecration of Quran, Nasir Masih and his son, were set on fire after looting them. The police have arrested 25 people in connection with the attack. The residents of Mujahid Colony said that a Christian man

named Nasir Masih took out pages of Quran kept in a garbage bin and set fire to them. When this news spread in the town, a huge mob of Muslims attacked his house. Nasir Masih claimed he had nothing to do with the issue. He said the garbage bin was kept there by some religious organisation. The people in the mohalla dump their garbage in



them, which the cleaning staff take away from there. He does not know who kept the old torn pieces of Quran in the street and set fire to them. He said that due to the increasing influence of fundamentalists in Pakistan, minorities are finding it difficult to live there. He said the mob first thrashed him and after looting all the items in the house, set fire to the house. He said when the police rescued him from the mob and took him to hospital, some youths attacked the police as well in which several policemen were also injured. Pakistan's human rights commission has expressed concern over the hate campaign against religious minorities in Pakistan and demanded the district administration that it immediately take steps to provide security to Christians. Punjab chief minister Maryam Nawaz directed the director general of police to visit the spot immediately and take stringent action against the accused. Christian legislator in Punjab Assembly Immanuel Athar Julius met the chief minister of Punjab and urged her to take stringent action against the accused.

Taasir (May 28) states that the Sargodha district administration has imposed Section 144 in the entire town. This apart, the security setup around Christian colonies and churches has been tightened. The police have registered two cases in this connection. Superintendent of Police of Sargodha, Ziaullah, said the armed police have conducted flag march in the town. Minister for minority affairs in Punjab, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, claimed there is special provision in the

Constitution of Pakistan for the protection of minorities and the minorities are staying in a peaceful atmosphere in Pakistan.

Comment: The British government had brought in a law in Punjab in 1860 itself against hurting the religious sentiments of any community. In 1927, this law was amended and Section 295 was added to it. It is to be noted that in 1927, Mahashay Rajpal, had published a book titled 'Rangeela Rasool' in which so-called objectionable comments were made on the life of Prophet Mohammad. In protest against this, Punjabi Muslims held rallies in different places and Muslim leader Mohammad Iqbal during his speeches provoked Muslims to take revenge against those who insulted Hazrat Mohammad. Following this, a Muslim carpenter, Alimuddin, had killed the publisher of this book Mahashay Rajpal with a knife. In order to save the murderer from the gallows, Mohammad Iqbal and Mohammad Ali Jinnah had argued for free, but the high court upheld the death sentence of Alimuddin and he was hanged to death. Ever since, Alimuddin has been considered as 'Protector of Islam' and 'Shaheed.'

After the founding of Pakistan, when General Zia ul Haq came to power, he had issued an ordinance awarding life-term and death sentence to those who insult Islam, Quran and the Prophet. Ever since, on the pretext of insult to Islam, Quran and the Prophet, the minorities are regularly targeted. In the past 15 years, approximately 2,000 cases have been registered in this connection. During this period, huge mobs of Muslims, on the

pretext of so-called insult to Quran, killed 89 people, which included 18 women as well. The interesting thing is that 70 percent of the incidents took place in Pakistani Punjab. A few years ago, when a Christian woman, Asiya Bibi, was awarded death sentence on charges of blasphemy, the then Governor of Pakistani Punjab Salman Taseer met her in the jail and talked about urging the President to pardon her. Along with it, he had also described the blasphemy law as a black law.

Following this, Taseer started getting threats regularly. In 2011, Salman Taseer was shot dead by his own bodyguard Mumtaz Qadri. Later, the fundamentalists launched a massive campaign in the entire Pakistan to save Qadri from the gallows. Asiya Bibi had to take refuge abroad in order to escape from the gallows. The minority leaders in Pakistan allege that to convert non-Muslims forcefully into Islam, often fake charges of insult to Islam and Quran are being used. ■

Attack on Indian and Pakistani students in Kyrgyzstan



Hamara Samaj (May 19) states that it has been confirmed that at least 29 students were injured after rioters launched an attack on Indian and Pakistani students in Kyrgyzstan capital Bishkek. The local police have arrested four persons in this connection. The attacks started when local citizens clashed with Egyptian students on May 13. When a video went viral in this connection on social media, violence erupted in the town. A huge mob in Kyrgyzstan started attacking those hotels and residential colonies where foreign students stay. When the situation deteriorated further, Indian and Pakistani embassies directed their respective citizens not to step out of their accommodation until the situation improves. According to Kyrgyzstan authorities, four foreign

students were arrested on charges of so-called attack on local people. Kyrgyzstan government has not clarified to which country the arrested people belong to.

It has been said in a press release issued by Pakistan Embassy that no Pakistani died in these attacks but there is information about more than a dozen Pakistani students being injured. The Kyrgyzstan government has claimed that the situation is under control and action is being taken against mischievous elements. Pakistani students claim that a few drunken Kyrgyzstan students entered the hostels of Egyptian students and misbehaved with them which the Egyptian students opposed. During this time, news spread that the youths who attacked local students were Pakistanis. After this rumour spread, a huge

mob started attacking the accommodations of Indian and Pakistani students. Though the Kyrgyzstan government claimed that police and military have been deployed in violence-affected regions to control the situation, the Indian and Pakistani students claimed that police and the Army have failed to stop the rioters. It has been claimed officially that 29 students were injured in these attacks. But on social media, it is being said that the number of injured is between 100 and 150. It is to be noted that hundreds of students from many countries including Pakistan, Bharat, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are studying in different universities of Kyrgyzstan.



Hindustan (May 31) states that the Kyrgyzstan Ambassador in Pakistan told correspondents that the hands of a radical group were behind the attack on foreign students in Bishkek. He said that the Kyrgyzstan government has suspended nine higher officials including the chief of the intelligence wing in connection with the attacks. He said that initially clashes took place between two groups of students in the hostel for foreign students in the city. After a video of the clashes went viral, an incited mob of local people started attacking the accommodation facilities of foreign students. More than 20 foreign students were injured in these attacks. He alleged that the foreign agencies had deliberately presented the news related to these clashes before the people of those nations whose students are studying in Kyrgyzstan. This was an effort to spoil the friendly relationship between Kyrgyzstan and those nations.

Mumbai Urdu News (May 19) states that Pakistan Prime Minister Mohammad Shahbaz Sharif has directed Pakistan Ambassador in Kyrgyzstan Hassan Ali Zaigham to make special arrangements of flights to bring Pakistani

students back from Kyrgyzstan. The Pakistan government has also announced measures to bring back Pakistani students who are injured in this attack and also for their treatment.

Hindustan Express (May 23) states that foreign students have got badly stuck in Kyrgyzstan. Flights could not be arranged to take them back to their native countries. The special plane that Pakistan had sent to bring back 125 students was not given permission by the government there to fly. Pakistan's foreign minister Ishaq Dar has announced the constitution of a high-level committee to probe the attack on students in Kyrgyzstan.

Avadhnama (May 23) states that till now no satisfactory arrangement could be made to bring foreign students back to their native places from Kyrgyzstan. In view of the seriousness of the situation, Pakistan's foreign affairs minister Ishaq Dar visited Bishkek. Pakistani students alleged that foreign students are now camping in airports and no satisfactory arrangements could be made for their return to native places.

Etemaad (May 22) in its editorial has expressed concern over the situation in Kyrgyzstan and said that earlier in 2010 also violence took place against foreign students in Kyrgyzstan and then also hundreds of students had to return to their native place from there. According to the newspaper, more than 15,000 Indian students are studying medicine in different



70 lakhs. After Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan is the second poorest country in Central Asia.

According to the newspaper, the chief of Ittehadul Muslimeen, Asaduddin Owaisi urged India's external affairs minister S Jaishankar that immediate arrangements should be made to bring back Indian students trapped in Kyrgyzstan. He said that Indian Embassy has

universities of Kyrgyzstan. The medical colleges there have the recognition from World Health Organisation. Till now, no satisfactory arrangements could be made for the return of these Indian students to the native country. It is to be noted that earlier also during the Russia-Ukraine war, thousands of Indian students studying in Ukraine had to return to the country leaving their education midway. Later, since there were no alternative arrangements for their education, the Indian government send them back to Ukraine so that they could complete their medical education there itself. Now, due to the riots that has spread in Kyrgyzstan, a serious situation has arisen for the students studying there. It is to be noted that Kyrgyzstan is a Central Asian country. It borders Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and China. Nearly 80 percent population of Kyrgyzstan are Muslims. The rest 15 percent are Russian Orthodox Christians. As per government data, the population of Kyrgyzstan is approximately

been unable to make any arrangements to bring back these students. Due to financial crisis, majority of Indian students have become victims of starvation. The Indian Embassy located in Bishkek claimed that all the students studying there are safe. Spokesperson of foreign ministry Randhir Jaiswal said that Indian government is in constant touch with Kyrgyzstan government and the situation is being closely monitored.

Siasat (May 19) states that Indian students studying in foreign countries are facing lot of difficulties. Recently, there is a huge increase in incidents of attack on Indian students in many countries like US, Canada and Kyrgyzstan. Due to this, many students had to leave their studies midway and had to return to the country. It is the duty of Indian government that it makes arrangements for the security of Indian students studying in foreign countries. This issue should not be taken casually. The Central government should take this matter seriously. ■

23 terrorists killed in Pakistan

Sahafat (May 28) states that the Pakistan Army has killed 23 terrorists in a campaign launched against terrorists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Whereas at least five Pakistani soldiers were killed in shots fired by terrorists. As per a press release issued by the public relations department of Pakistan Army, on the basis of information received from intelligence sources, the Pakistani army attacked the bases of terrorists in Tank district and killed 10

terrorists. The other clash took place in Bagh region in Khyber district where seven terrorists were killed. Meanwhile, two terrorists were arrested in an injured condition. Six terrorists were killed in another action in Dera Ismail Khan. The Army claimed that these terrorists belonged to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and ISIS. These terrorists were involved in terror activities in Pakistan for a long time now. The government claimed that these



terrorists were given training in terror camps located in Afghanistan and they were provided with weapons and explosive substances there. Yet another action was carried out in Hasan Khel region in Peshawar district in which seven terrorists were killed. Whereas a captain and a sepoy of Pakistani Army were also killed in the firing by the terrorists.

As per a news published in Pakistani newspaper **Mashriq** (May 23), a few terrorists shot dead a Sunni scholar in Bannu, while one of his colleagues, Maulavi Amir Ullah, was injured. As per the statement of police, Maulana Irfan Ullah Khatib, after offering namaz at the Jama Masjid, was returning home along with his colleagues when a few unidentified terrorists riding a motorcycle surrounded him. They opened indiscriminate fire on the maulavi. Later the assailants fled from the spot. It is said that these terrorists belonged to some Shia terrorist organisation. The police have intensified a search operation in the entire area for the terrorists.

Mumbai Urdu News (May 27) states that Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi claimed that the conspiracy for the terrorist attack in Besham was done at a terror camp located in Afghanistan. Five Chinese experts and one Pakistani driver were killed in this attack. He claimed that the way the foreign powers are doing targeted killing of Chinese citizens in order to sabotage the increasing friendship

between China and Pakistan is very serious. Our security agencies have found out the elements targeting the Chinese, and so far six accused have been arrested in this connection. They have accepted during police interrogation that they were given training in Afghanistan for these attacks. These attackers belong to banned terrorist organisation TTP. In this connection, we have registered our protest with Afghanistan government, but they have overlooked our protest in this connection.

Taasir (May 19) states that terrorists have attacked a girls' school in Pakistan and destroyed it. This attack took place in South Waziristan district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Earlier also the terrorists of TTP had destroyed a girls' school using a bomb. A spokesperson of TTP said that in Islam, there is a ban on debauchery and education of women, hence we took this decision to destroy these schools. Though TTP is another terrorist group, it has strong relationship with the ruling Taliban in Afghanistan.

As per another news, at least a dozen people were killed in clashes between Afghanistan army and Pakistani Rangers on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Those who were killed included a woman and two youths. This clash took place on the Afghanistan border in Dand Wa Patan district. This fighting continued for five days. It is being said that the reason for this clash was that the Pakistani Army trespassed into Afghanistan border and



established their outpost on Afghanistan border. During this clash, many villages were targeted using missiles. Later, the fleeing of citizens from the area started. After the clashes, the Kharlachi Crossing on the Dand Wa Patan district was closed. This crossing was being using for trade between the two nations. The Pakistani Army has confirmed that their three soldiers and four citizens were killed in these clashes. Though Pakistan government has claimed that more than a dozen Afghan soldiers were killed, the Afghan government has not confirmed this.

Hamara Samaj (May 19) states that a few terrorists in Afghanistan opened indiscriminate firing on foreign tourists at Bamiyan, where three citizens of Spain and their Afghan guide were killed. There were two women among those who were killed. Spokesperson of Afghanistan's Interior

Ministry Mufti Abdul Mateen Qani claimed that the hands of ISIS were behind this attack. The Afghanistan police have arrested four suspected persons linked to this attack and they are being interrogated. The spokesperson claimed that the planning for this attack was made at Gwadar region in Pakistan. It is to be noted that recently Pakistan and Iran have announced to close their borders with Afghanistan.

Hindustan (May 16) states that the commander of US Central Command, Michael Erik Kurilla, visited Pakistan all of a sudden and held lengthy talks with the Army chief Asim Munir. It is being said that the chief of the Anti-Terrorism Cell of the US Elizabeth Richard and the Pakistani representative at OIC Syed Haider Shah also took part in this meeting. The media was not given any official information regarding the agenda of the meeting. It is being said that the US expressed concern over the increasing terrorist activities especially regrouping of Islamic terrorism. The US claimed that on the directions of Taliban, anti-US Islamic terrorist groups like Al Qaida are being activated again in Afghanistan. This could pose danger to Pakistan in future.

ISIS hand behind the massacre in Moscow



Urdu Times (May 25) states that Russia has for the first time officially blamed Islamic terrorist organisation ISIS for the massacre that took place at Crocus City

Hall in March. At least 140 citizens were killed in this attack. Though the Khorasan chapter of ISIS immediately took responsibility for this attack, the Russian

administration had claimed that the hands of US and Ukraine were behind the attack. The Russian government had also claimed that those who carried out the attack had made this condition that the attackers would be given refuge in Ukraine.

The Russian intelligence wing had expressed doubt that the planning for the attack was made by the military intelligence wing of Ukraine with the cooperation of the US. Both Ukraine and the US rejected this allegation of Russia.

Soon after this attack, the Russian intelligence wing took into custody four injured attackers from the spot. After their interrogation, three dozen other people were also arrested. The Russian officials have claimed that all those arrested Islamic terrorists belong to Tajikistan, which is located on the northern border of Afghanistan. Secondly, the US has claimed that it had given prior information regarding this attack long time ago, but it did not take any step to stop the attack.

Migration of Muslims from France



Urdu Times (May 18) states that due to the atmosphere of hatred against Islam and Muslims that has been growing daily in France, Muslims who got higher education are migrating from France to settle down in London, New York, Canada and Dubai. As per a survey, in the past six months, more than 1,000 French-origin people had migrated from France. These people are the children of those Muslims who had arrived in France from former French colonial regions in search of a bright future. Since 2015, the atmosphere against Islam is increasing day by day in France. Recently, a ban has been imposed on *hijab* and *abaya* in France. There is a huge increase in the number of mob attacks against those

women who violate this ban. Muslim organisations claim that there is a hostile stand of police and the administration against Muslims in the country. They are being deliberately harassed on different pretexts. Due to this, the sense of insecurity among them has increased.

There is a 1978 law in France, as per which there is a ban on collecting data on the basis of race and religion. Due to this law, it is not possible to collect data on the incidents of discrimination against Muslims. Meanwhile, the French government says that this claim of Muslim organisations is totally wrong. They are deliberately trying to blackmail the French government.

Iran President, Foreign Affairs Minister die in helicopter crash



Urdu Times (May 21) states that nine top officials of Iran including President Syed Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Affairs Minister Amir Hossein Abdollahian were killed in a helicopter crash. The relief team took two days to reach the crash site due to inclement weather. Iran's official news agency 'IRNA' said that among those killed include the imam of Tabriz, Seyyed Mohammad Ali Ale-Hashem and Governor General of East Azerbaijan, Malek Rahmati, apart from security officials and bodyguards. It is being said that the accident took place when Ebrahim Raisi was returning to the country after inaugurating a dam in the neighbouring country of Azerbaijan which was built with the cooperation of both the countries. It is said that Raisi had arrived to inaugurate the dam along with Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev. This was the third dam which has been jointly constructed by the two countries on Aras river.

Mumbai Urdu News (May 21) states that Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah

Ali Khamenei has announced a five-day national mourning across the country. Iran's Vice-President Mohammad Mokhber has been appointed as the acting president. He has to conduct presidential elections in the country within 50 days. As per Section 131 of Iran's Constitution, it is necessary to constitute a council to make arrangements for the election of a new President. In this high-level council, apart from the acting President, the Speaker of Iranian parliament and the chief of Iran's Supreme Court will be members. Vice-President Mohammad Mokhber was born on September 1, 1955. He is considered to be close to the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ali Khamenei. In 2021, when Ebrahim Raisi was elected as the President of Iran, Mohammad Mokhber was given the responsibility of Vice-President. Recently, Vice-President Mokhber went to Moscow with a delegation to purchase weapons from Russia. After this, Iran had purchased drones and missiles in huge numbers from Russia. In 2010, the European Union had



the presidential elections and was elected as the eighth president of Iran. During the regime of Raisi, after the death of a 22-year-old Kurd woman, Mahsa Amini in police custody, nationwide protests erupted in Iran. Raisi was considered as a radical leader.

Ebrahim Raisi had visited China in 2023 and the two countries signed 20 agreements. Raisi had strongly condemned the Israeli aggression during the Gaza war and had alleged that Israel

imposed different kinds of sanctions on Mohammad Mokhber. It was alleged that Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile development programmes were being run under his supervision.

As per another news, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep condolences on the death of Iran President Raisi and also announced a one-day national mourning across the country. Similarly, Lebanon has announced a three-day national mourning. Ali Bagheri Kani has been appointed as the acting foreign minister of Iran. Iran's former foreign minister Javad Zarif has blamed the US for the helicopter accident of Ebrahim Raisi. He said that due to the sanctions the US had imposed on Iran, the aviation industry in Iran has been facing challenges. We are not getting spare parts, modern aircraft and helicopters due to this situation.

Urdu Times (May 21) states that the late President Ebrahim Raisi was born in a city named Mashhad in Iran in 1960. He received religious education on Islam from a madrasa of the community. He joined Iran's judicial system at the age of 20 and became the prosecutor general of Hamadan and Tehran. In 2014, he was appointed as the Prosecutor General of Iran. Raisi was also included in the judicial committee constituted in 1988, under whose orders thousands of Iranian citizens were awarded death sentence. Later this committee was also referred to as the 'death committee.' In the presidential elections in 2017, Raisi was defeated by liberal leader Hasan Rouhani. In 2021, he defeated Rouhani in

had been committing genocide of Palestinians in Gaza with the help of the Americans. Israel and Western countries have been making this allegation that Hamas and other militia organisations have been getting support from Iran and Iran have been providing weapons to Hamas and Houthi rebels. In April, Raisi visited Pakistan as well. During this visit, the two countries signed on several agreements to improve the trade between the two countries.

Urdu Times (May 23) states that Raisi was buried on the premises of the dargah of Imam Ali Raza located in Mashhad. Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei offered his *namaz-e-janaza*. Lakhs of people took part in the *janaza*. On this occasion, representatives from 40 countries were present. They included Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh, Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and India's Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar. According to Iranian media, the heads of states of 10 countries and ministers from 30 countries took part in the *janaza* of Raisi.

Mumbai Urdu News (May 22) states that Iran's acting President has announced that the election of the new president will take place on June 28. The election campaign will begin on June 12 and end on June 27. Iran's Army chief Major General Mohammad Bagheri has constituted a high-level committee to probe the helicopter accident.

Sahafat (May 31) states that this investigation committee has rejected the

possibility of the hands of any foreign powers behind the accident. However, it has also been said that nearly one hour before the accident, a problem had occurred, which shut down the signal transmission of the helicopter.

Spokesperson of US State Department Mathew Miller has termed the allegation of the former foreign minister of Iran Javad Zarif as baseless in which he had alleged that the hands of the US were behind this accident. He said that the main reason behind this disaster is using a 45-year-old helicopter for the President despite an inclement weather. Iran itself is responsible for it. He said that after this helicopter disaster, Iran has urged the US to cooperate in the investigation but we could not accept this request from Iran due to logistical reasons. It is to be noted that the relationship between Iran and the US is extremely stressful. The diplomatic relationship between the two countries had ended earlier itself. The US has imposed all kinds of sanctions on Iran on the pretext of the latter developing nuclear energy.

Hindustan (May 25) states that a spokesperson of Israel said that neither Israel nor any of its agencies had any hand in this accident.

Hindustan (May 22) states that though the US has expressed condolences over the death of the Iran President, it also said Raisi was a person who had the blood of innocents in his hands. Raisi was responsible for crushing the protests by Iranian people and also violating human rights. He has been extending all kinds of help to various terrorist organisations like Hamas. The US spokesperson said that in 2019, the then president of US Donald Trump had imposed sanctions on Ebrahim Raisi because under his supervision even minors were hanged to death. Raisi was also responsible for the system of torture of prisoners and the stringent punishment given to them in Iran as he had served as the head of the judiciary.

Sahafat (May 22) in its editorial said that in the past few years, many important personalities of Iran were either killed or

had died in some accident. For example, in 2020, the commander of Quds Force and a hero in Iran, General Qassem Soleimani, was killed by the US in a missile attack in Baghdad. In 2020 itself Iran's prominent nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh was murdered. The hands of the US and Israel were suspected to be behind the several terrorist attacks that took place in Iran. It is natural to suspect a conspiracy behind the death of Raisi in a helicopter crash recently. It has also been said that the helicopter in which Raisi was travelling was 45 years old and several helicopters of the same model had met with accidents. According to Iran's news agency, the helicopter of Raisi that met with accident was sold to Iran by the US in 1979. The question that arises here is had Raisi's helicopter been met with accident due to inclement weather, how come two other helicopters which were part of the convoy reached their destination safely? Some people are pointing towards Israel's intelligence agency Mossad, but the real reason for the accident will come to the fore only after the investigation.

Hamara Samaj (May 22) said in its editorial that due to the stressful relations that Iran has been having with Israel and the US, the possibility of any conspiracy behind this accident cannot be overlooked. The second question is that had there been inclement weather, on whose advice did the Iran president went to Azerbaijan? It is a well-known fact that the relationship between Iran and Azerbaijan were not friendly for a long time and Azerbaijan's friendship with Israel is not hidden from anyone. Some time ago, an attack took place on Azerbaijan Embassy in Tehran. In this connection, the name of Iran's Pasdaran-e-Inqilab came to the fore. Similarly, the relationship between Iran and Pakistan are also tense these days. However, Raisi visited Pakistan and tried to improve the relationship. It is being said that recently, due to the efforts of OIC, the relations between Azerbaijan and Iran have improved. The people of Iran are also divided into two groups. On one side there



are fundamentalists and on the other side there are liberals. In Iran, the presidential elections were supposed to take place next year and it was believed that Raisi would win the elections once again. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is 85 years old, hence Raisi's name was also discussed as a possible successor. During the war in Gaza, Israel had alleged that Hamas has been getting support from Iran. When it comes to targeted killing of one's enemies, Israel's intelligence agency Mossad had always been in news and hence there is this possibility that something of that kind might have happened with the helicopter of Raisi. Or some explosives might have been kept in it, the way it was kept in the plane of General Zia ul Haq. In Iran, several incidents of terrorism took place in which lot of people were killed. It was due to the efforts of Raisi that an important agreement was signed between Bharat and Iran on Chabahar issue. It is hoped that the death of Raisi would not have any effect on the friendly relationship between the two countries.

Etemaad (May 23) in its editorial said that the hands of Israel and the US behind this accident cannot be denied altogether. The people of Iran are divided into two groups and a possibility has been

talked about that Raisi would take over the place of Ali Khamenei as his successor. When Hamas launched an attack on Israel in October 2023, it was alleged that Iran had provoked Hamas into launching an attack on Israel. In April this year, Israel launched an attack on Iranian embassy located in Damascus and killed several top Iranian

officials. Hence the hands of Mossad behind the death of Raisi in helicopter accident cannot be ruled out.

Urdu Times (May 22) in its editorial said that Iran has been helping Hamas fight against Israeli attack on Gaza and Ebrahim Raisi had never made any effort to hide his relationship with Hamas. In such a situation, the death of Raisi has raised several questions. The first is how did the helicopter lose contact with the air traffic control? After this accident, in the beginning itself Israel's intelligence agency Mossad clarified that it has no hand in this accident. However, when this clarification was put forward, nobody had any indication that Ebrahim Raisi had died. It looks like that this clarification was deliberately given so that Mossad could escape from the charge of conspiracy. In case if this accident was part of any conspiracy, then it is an indication of a big threat for Iran.

Hindustan Express (May 21) in its editorial said that Ebrahim Raisi had become an eyesore for foreign powers. This apart, there is no shortage for enemies in his own country as well. Informed sources said that during the decade of 1980, thousands of opponents were hanged to death at the behest of Raisi, who belonged to the Leftist groups.

Saudi Arabia inks biggest deal to purchase aircraft



Urdu Times (May 23) states that for the first time in the history of Saudi Arabia, the biggest deal to purchase civilian aircraft has been signed with the US company, Airbus. This deal was signed at the King Abdul Aziz International Airport in Riyadh. Before this, no other country in the Middle East or Africa had signed such a major deal. On behalf of Saudi Arabia, Director General of Saudi Aviation Group, Ibrahim al-Umar, signed on the deal. As per this agreement, Saudi Arabia will purchase 54 aircraft of A 321neo model. This apart, 51 aircraft of A 320neo model will also be purchased. This will be used by Saudi Airlines. It is said that Saudi Arabia has prepared a Tourism Vision for 2030. As per this vision, 33 crore passengers would travel by Saudi Airlines by the year

2030. They include the pilgrims who arrive for Umrah and Haj. These aircraft are of most modern models, whose fuel consumption is 20 percent less.

Hindustan (May 28) states that the US has decided to lift the ban imposed on Saudi Arabia in connection with supply of weapons. This decision has been taken by the US

government in order to improve its relations with Saudi Arabia. The US effort is to curtail the rapidly growing friendship between Saudi Arabia and China. Though the US State Department has refused to make any official comment on this issue, sources in the White House have given the indication that President Biden is making important changes in his policy towards Saudi Arabia. It is to be noted that Biden had declared the Houthi rebels in Yemen as terrorists, but later due to pressure from Arab nations, he cancelled this policy. According to sources in Saudi government, it is an important step in the direction of improving relations with the US, the efforts for which were being made by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

Beer factory set up in Abu Dhabi

Sahafat (May 20) states that the United Arab Emirates government, in an effort to promote tourism, has decided to set up a huge plant in Abu Dhabi to make beer with the cooperation of a US company. As of now, there is a ban on liquor in Muslim countries because drinking liquor is considered as *haram* in Sharia. Looking at the changing situation of the world, the Arab nations have started adopting a more liberal policy towards liquor. Recently, a liquor shop was opened in the most radical Muslim nation Saudi Arabia, where

foreigners will have the permission to buy liquor. Saudi Arabia's tourism minister Ahmad Al Khatib said that the ban on Muslims from drinking liquor may continue as earlier. US liquor manufacturer Chad McGehee has decided to take advantage of this liberal policy of Arab nations.

It is to be noted that there are strict restrictions in place over sale of liquor in Oman and Qatar. Whereas Kuwait and Sharjah have given the indication of adopting a liberal policy in this connection.



US liquor manufacturer McGehee told news agency 'AFP' that we are hopeful that the tourists will come to Abu Dhabi as well to enjoy different types of liquor like they go to Germany, New York and San

Diego. It is to be noted that since last year, the Dubai government has been adopting a liberal policy. Last year, the Dubai government abolished an excise tax of 30 per cent imposed on import of liquor. This apart, the government has also decided to make liquor permits free for non-Muslims so that foreigners could use liquor.

Out of the 1 crore population of United Arab Emirates, 90 lakh are foreigners who have been recently given permission to consume liquor.

Rebel generals in Turkiye get pardon



Sahafat (May 20) states that Turkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has announced to cancel the life-term punishment awarded to seven accused former top military officers involved in the failed military coup of 1997. The government has claimed that they were given this exemption in view of their increasing age and deteriorating health. It is to be noted that in the local elections held in Turkiye recently Erdogan's party had to face defeat and Opposition party, Republican People's Party, (CHP) registered huge victory. The Opposition party has been demanding for a long time that veteran military officers should be released from jail. The former military

officers who have been given pardon include Cevik Bir. He is considered as the mastermind of the rebellion. Two months ago, he was released from the jail all of a sudden. It is said that a court in Turkiye in 2018 had awarded life-term to 21 top military officers including the former Army chief on charges of staging a military coup against the Islamic rule in 1997.

Avadhnama (May 18) reports that the political opponent of President Erdogan and a prominent Kurd leader of Turkiye, Selahattin Demirtaş, has been awarded a jail term of 42 years by a court in Turkiye. He has been accused of sparking riots in Turkiye after an attack by terrorist organisation ISIS in Kobani city in Syria in 2014. He has also been accused of organising a violent demonstration in order to overthrow the Erdogan government. Demirtaş had also served as the president of Kurd-supported People's Democratic Party (HDP). Another prominent leader of this party, Figen Yüksekdağ was also given a 30-year jail term. Following this rebellion, a case was registered against 29

persons. All these leaders belonged to Erdogan's opponents and Kurd-supported party HDP. They have been accused of murder and treason. Among them, nearly a dozen leaders were released by the court. All the accused are lodged in jails on charges of terrorism ever since 2018.

It is to be noted that an armed clash took place between government forces and Kurd rebels for three days in Syria's border town of Kobani. At least 37 people were killed in these clashes and hundreds were

injured. The Turkiye government's allegation is that the Syria-supported Kurd rebels' links are with US intelligence agency CIA and they organised this massive protest in order to overthrow the Turkiye government. Commenting on the court verdict, a spokesperson of HDP said that this decision was motivated by revenge and they will question this decision in the higher court. The spokesperson said that there is not even a single evidence against our leaders.

Haj preparations in full swing in Saudi Arabia

Haj pilgrims from across the world have started arriving in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government is hopeful that approximately 24 lakh Haj yatriis will take part in Haj this year.

Aurangabad Times (May 15) states that the Haj ministry of Saudi government has convened a high level meeting of the heads of Haj related departments from across the world in Riyadh for the preparations of Haj. In this meeting, it has been decided that in order to welcome the guests of Allah and in order to provide all possible facilities to them, the Saudi government will form a high-level committee. Senior officials of different departments will be included in this committee.

Mumbai Urdu News (May 24) states that in connection with the preparations for Haj, the cloth that is draped over Ka'aba (Ghilaf-e-Ka'aba) was raised by three metres. The emptying area was covered from all sides with a two-metre-wide white cotton cloth. Many high officials including the Imam of Ka'aba, Abdul Rahman Al-Sudais, were present on the occasion of raising the cover of Ka'aba. In order to raise the *Ghilaf-e-Ka'aba*, the help of 10 cranes were taken. More than 50 experts supervised the event. As per



tradition, as soon as the Haj begins, the *Ghilaf-e-Ka'aba* is raised so that damages of any kind do not occur to the *Ghilaf-e-Ka'aba* during its circumambulation by the Hajjis.

Siasat (May 3) states that the Saudi government has announced that only those people will be allowed to enter the country for Haj who have the permit for Haj. The holders of permit issued for tourism and Umrah will not be allowed to enter Saudi Arabia during Haj.

Aurangabad Times (May 8) states that the Saudi government has changed the laws for those interested in doing Haj. Now, only those people will be allowed to enter the border of Mecca, who have the permit with them to do Haj. Those who come without permit will be forcefully sent back. The government has decided to take the help of private agencies as well, apart from government departments, for arranging facilities for Hajjis. Minister for



Haj and Umrah department Dr Taufiq Al Rabia said that special cards will be issued to Hajis so that they could enter places linked to the Haj pilgrimage. The card will be in digital format and it will have all the information regarding the Haj yatri concerned. Every Haji has to keep this card with him for 24 hours so that security agencies could identify them. Any individual who does not have this digital card with him will not be allowed to enter any place linked to the Haj pilgrimage.

According to **Urdu Times** (May 17), the Saudi government has announced that four crore bottles of Ab-e-Zamzam will be made available to those pilgrims who arrive for Haj. The government's effort is to ensure that an average of 22 bottles of Ab-e-Zamzam be provided to every Haj pilgrim. Most modern equipment will be used for this.

Hamara Samaj (May 30) reports that so far more than seven lakh Haj pilgrims have arrived in Saudi Arabia. More than 500 counters have been opened at the airport where employees who know other languages apart from Arabic are deployed on duty. The Saudi railway has decided to run special trains to provide transportation facilities to Haj pilgrims to commute between Mecca, Medina and Jeddah. Over 20 lakh Haj pilgrims could travel with these trains. This train will be the world's fastest speed train. Its speed is 300 km per hour.

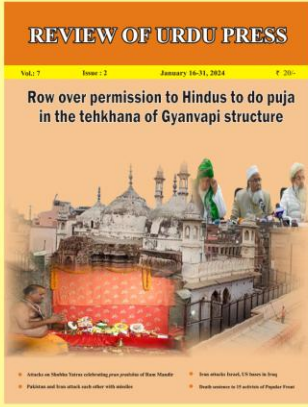
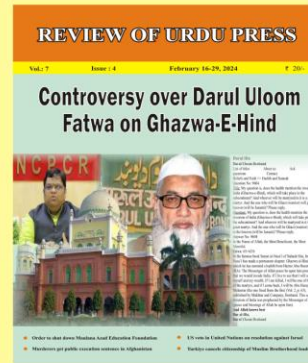
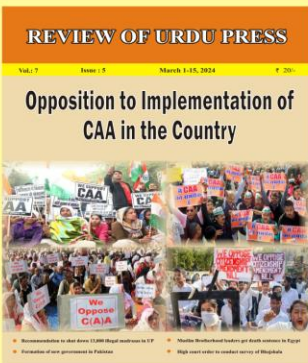
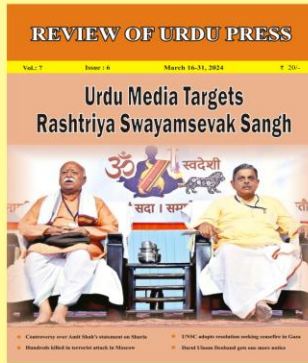
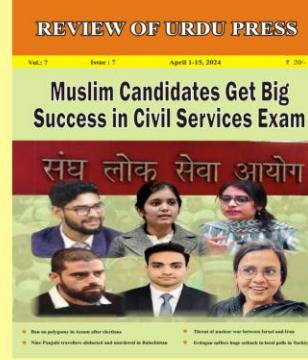
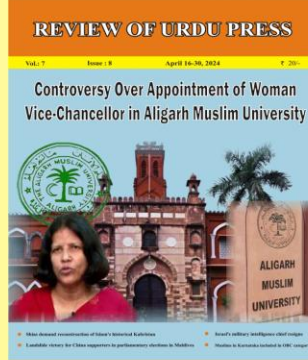
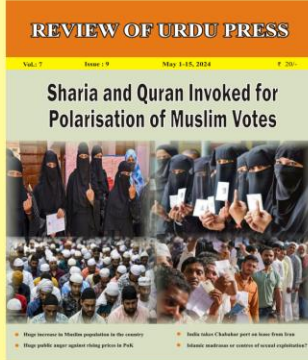
As per another news, for the first time in ten years, 270 Haj pilgrims have arrived in Mecca from Syrian capital Damascus in a special aircraft. It is to be noted that the Arab League had cut-off its relationship with Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad in 2012 and Syria was expelled from the membership of Arab League. Along with this, the Saudi government had

banned the entry of Haj pilgrims from Syria from entering the country.

Hamara Samaj (May 31) states that during the Haj season, a fine of 10,000 Riyal will be imposed on those who enter Mecca without special permit and the person will be banned from entering Saudi Arabia for ever. If any vehicle brings people to the Mecca border without permission, then its driver will be given a jail term of six months and has to pay a fine of 50,000 Riyals. Along with this, his vehicle will be impounded. This ban will remain in force from June 2 to June 20.

Inquilab (May 30) reports that the King of Saudi Arabia, Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, has extended a special invitation to 2,300 important personalities from 88 countries on behalf of the Saudi government to offer Haj. This apart, the Saudi government has extended invitation to nearly 1,000 relatives of those Palestinians killed in Gaza to do Haj on its expense as royal guests. The Haj ministry of Saudi Arabia has warned the Hajis not to eat stale food, because it may lead to food poisoning among them.

Etemaad (May 25) reports that after a gap of several years, this time the Iranian Haj pilgrims have arrived in Mecca to do Haj. Before this, since there was no diplomatic relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the Iranians did not get permission to do Haj pilgrimage. The Iranian Hajis said that as soon as they arrived at Mecca airport, they were welcomed in Persian language. They were happy to hear it. The Saudi government said that during this year's Haj season, a warning has been received about extreme heat conditions and hence the government has made special arrangements to save Hajis from the heat. All the camps of Hajis have been provided with air condition facilities. This apart, arrangements have been made for making food items and provide the same to Hajis. The government has claimed that in Ramzan month this year, more than 3 crore people had done Umrah. This year, 26-27 lakh Haj pilgrims are likely to do Haj.



भारत नीति प्रतिष्ठान
India Policy Foundation

D-51, First Floor, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016
 Tel : 011-26524018
 E-mail : info@ipf.org.in, indiapolity@gmail.com
 Website : www.ipf.org.in