

Nizamuddin Markaz Mosque

April 14, 2021

In News: Recently, Centre told the Delhi High Court that the Nizamuddin Markaz mosque can be made operational for devotees to offer prayers during the month of Ramzan which is expected to begin from April 14.

About Nizamuddin Markaz Mosque

- Also called Banglewali Masjid, is a mosque located in Nizamuddin West in South Delhi, India.
- It is the birthplace and the global headquarters of the Tablighi Jamaat network, the missionary and reformist movement started by Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlawi in 1926.
- Since 2015, friction has developed within the group over the leadership of the organisation, and factions have developed.
- The mosque continues to serve as the headquarters of the Nizamuddin faction of Tablighi Jamaat.

Early History

- The Banglewali Masjid was built in Nizamuddin by Mirza Ilahi Baksh
- Mawlana Muhammad Ismail, the father of Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlawi, established a madrasa in its premises under the name Kashif al-Ulum.
- After the death of Mawlana Ismail and his elder son, Muammad Ilyas took up the task of teaching at the madrasa.
- He too was concerned with educating the Meos of Mewat. Noticing that his own direct teaching would be inadequate to the task, in time, he evolved the practices of tabligh that form the foundation of Tablighi Jamaat.
- This involved turning ordinary Muslims into preachers.

Training them in the preaching work became the main activity of the madrasa, gradually turning the Banglewali Masjid into a markaz.

- By the end of Ilyas's life, Tablighi Jamaat emerged as a national organisation with transnational potential.

COVID-19 pandemic

- The mosque organised a large congregation in March 2020, from 13 to 15 March, participants got stuck in the Markaz Building due to the sudden and surprise announcement of nationwide lockdown in India by the government.
- Although prior information was furnished with the Nizamuddin Police station, and parallel functions were also held near the same dates, some right wing media outlets made a big propaganda of this event as a reason for Corona spreading in the state.

Tablighi Jamaat

- Literally means a society for spreading the faith.
- Is a Sunni Islamic missionary movement, the proselytising movement.
- **Aims** to reach out to ordinary Muslims and revive their faith, particularly in matters of ritual, dress, and personal behavior

Beginning of the movement

- Its roots lie in the Deobandi version of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence.
- It was launched by Deoband cleric and prominent Islamic scholar Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Khandhalaw in 1927 in Mewat.
- Its emergence also coincided with Hindu proselytising movements.
- While Maulana Ilyaz taught at the Mazharul Uloom in Saharanpur in the mid-1920s, a few hundred kilometers

away were the economically and educationally backward Meo peasants, mostly Muslims who were largely practicing Hindu traditions.

- Maulana Ilyaz began bringing Meo Muslims back into the fold of traditional Islam; he trained several young men from Deoband and Saharanpur and sent them to Mewat, where the Tablighi Jamaat established a network of madrasas and Mosque.

Reach Of The Movement

- In two decades after its launch, the Tablighi Jamaat had spread beyond the Mewat region. In the first Tablighi conference held in 1941, approximately 25,000 people from across North India attended.
- After Partition in 1947, a Pakistan chapter was started in the town of Raiwind, Lahore. Currently, Bangladesh has one of the largest chapters.
- The Tablighi Jamaat also has a significant base in the United States and Britain, which has a large Indian subcontinent diaspora. It also has a presence in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.

The Tablighi Jamaat is based on six principles:

1. **Kalimah**, an article of faith in which the Tabligh accepts that there is no God but Allah and that Prophet Muhammad is his messenger.
2. **Salaat**, or prayer five times daily.
3. **Ilm and dhikr**, the knowledge and remembrance of Allah conducted in sessions in which the congregation listens to preaching by the imam, performs prayers, recites the Quran and reads the Hadith; the congregation also uses these sessions to dine together, thus fostering a sense of community and identity.
4. **Ikram-i-Muslim**, the treatment of fellow Muslims with honour.
5. **Ikhlas-i-niyat**, or sincerity of intention.

Dawat-o-tabligh, or proselytisation.

Additional Link: <https://journalsofindia.com/tablighi-jamaat/>