



Headlines:

- **Europe has Started to Enshrine Islamophobia into Law – History Tells us this can't End Well**
- **Trump's "America First" Budget may Cut Pakistan Military Aid**
- **China's Communist Party Hardens Rhetoric on Islam**

Details:

Europe has Started to Enshrine Islamophobia into Law – History Tells us this can't End Well

Islam and Muslims are no longer welcome in Europe. If that message wasn't already clear to most people it has been set in to law today by EU judges. The decision by the European Court of Justice to allow employers to ban staff from wearing the headscarf seems certain to only further marginalise and push Muslim women out of public life. What with France's ban on the niqab in 2010, and countries such as Germany wanting to follow suit, the trend of enshrining Islamophobia into law is becoming increasingly common. Proponents of such policies deceptively tell the public these decisions will emancipate Muslim women from the proposed shackles of Islam. Yet, what these laws represent is a discriminatory form of social engineering to try and enforce Muslim women to adopt a secular identity. Such discriminatory and openly xenophobic policies contradict Europe's inherent belief that it is a bastion of freedom in an otherwise barbaric and intolerant world. The hypocrisy is galling to say the least – the very European leaders that pit themselves against supposedly misogynistic and regressive societies in the Muslim world have no qualms in applying discriminatory and gendered Islamophobia towards Muslim women in their own countries. A report by the European Network Against Racism, which covered eight countries ranging from France to The Netherlands, suggests that the such discrimination in the workplace and it's negative impact on Muslim women is widespread across Europe. Economic marginalisation is of course not the only obstacle that women must face due to decisions like the one made today. There are much more dire consequences for the average woman on the streets of London or Paris. With reports of a woman in hijab being dragged along the streets of London and another woman attacked and bitten for wearing hijab in Vienna, what kind of message does this sends out to those people that find a piece of cloth offensive enough to attack a woman for it? Alarmingly, the decision the EU judges made is strikingly like the anti-Jewish legislation that was passed in Germany prior to the Second World War. The Nuremberg laws specifically targeted a social group by restricting them on an economic level. Jews were banned from professions such as midwifery and law, and state contracts were cancelled with Jewish owned businesses. That is not dissimilar to telling a woman that she is not welcome at a workplace if she decides to identify as a member of a given faith. [Source: The Independent]

Europe's centuries old enmity towards Islam is rolling back its ideological proclamation of being the bastion of liberty and justice. How long before King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella return to Europe?

Trump's "America First" Budget may Cut Pakistan Military Aid

Bloomberg in a latest analysis on Pakistan-US ties under Donald Trump has predicted 'aid cuts as top generals, officials and research groups mounting pressure for a policy review

on the South Asian nation'. Quoting a US diplomat, Bloomberg reported: "With relations between the long-term allies frayed, Pakistan should expect a reduction in aid under the new US government". General John W. Nicholson who is heading NATO forces in Afghanistan, in a recent hearing, had called for a "holistic review" of policy toward Pakistan. Last week, Trump's fiscal 2018 budget proposal — entitled "America First" — called for "deep cuts" to foreign assistance with a 28.5 percent funding reduction for international programs, including the State Department and the US Agency for International Development. Pakistan is the sixth largest recipient of American aid. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said in an interview that continuity of funding would be welcomed given the cost of a recent extension of anti-terrorism operations. Pakistan suffered a spate of bombings last month -- which Dar said was related to a renewed push against militants. Dar said he may travel to the US to meet Trump's team before a routine visit in April for meetings with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. "Defeating terrorism is a global responsibility and we are playing our due part," he said. [Source: Bloomberg]

Will Pakistani leaders continue to spill the blood of Muslims after America has cut their wages?

China's Communist Party Hardens Rhetoric on Islam

China's ruling Communist Party has hardened its rhetoric on Islam, with top officials making repeated warnings about the spectre of global religious "extremism" seeping into the country, and the need to protect traditional Chinese identity. Sharhat Ahan, a top party official in Xinjiang, on Sunday became the latest official from a predominantly Muslim region to warn political leaders gathered in Beijing that the "international anti-terror situation" is destabilising China. Officials from Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, which has an ethnic Hui population that is predominantly Muslim, warned similarly this past week about the perils of "Islamic extremism". Speaking at a regional meeting open to the media, Ningxia Communist Party secretary Li Jianguo drew comparisons to the policies of US President Donald Trump's administration to make his point. "What the Islamic State and extremists push is jihad, terror, violence," Li said. "This is why we see Trump targeting Muslims in a travel ban. "It doesn't matter whether anti-Muslim policy is in the interests of the US or it promotes stability, it's about preventing religious extremism from seeping into all of American culture." Over the past year, President Xi Jinping has directed the party to "Sinicise" the country's ethnic and religious minorities. Regional leaders in Xinjiang, home to the Muslim Uighur ethnic minority, have also ramped up surveillance measures, police patrols and demonstrations amid fear of violence blamed on Muslim groups. Although some scholars question whether global armed networks have penetrated China, top Chinese officials are increasingly echoing calls to counter "extremism". News of growing anti-Islam sentiment come as the South China Morning Post published a story about the growing popularity of similar anti-Islam expressions online targeting young Chinese Muslims. [Source: Al Jazeera]

China's overt hatred towards Islam and Muslims is not new. What is disappointing is the stance of Muslim countries like Pakistan that warmly welcome Chinese money and look the other way regarding the atrocities committed towards fellow Muslims. Is money from CPEC more important to Pakistan's rulers than the blood of Muslims?