

Headlines:

- **US Supreme Court Rules in Favor of Trump's Travel Ban**
- **Why Islam Must be Made Part of India's Foreign Policy**
- **Jordan's King Honored for Promoting a Peaceful Islam, Interfaith Harmony**

Details:

US Supreme Court Rules in Favor of Trump's Travel Ban

In a 5-4 decision (the court's liberals dissented), Roberts reversed the ruling of the 9th Circuit Court that had attempted to put the travel ban on hold — a ruling that the Supreme Court had already kept from going into effect while it reviewed the case — and sent the case back to the 9th Circuit to reconsider. The current version, which prevents some (or all) immigrants, refugees, and visa holders from Iran, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen from entering the US, has been in full effect since early December (thanks to an earlier Supreme Court ruling). The existing ban is much narrower than Trump's first attempts — thanks in part to early court defeats in 2017, it only applies to certain categories of visa applicants (depending on country) and theoretically allows for would-be immigrants to apply for waivers. But it's also designed to be permanent. In theory, the legal fight over the travel ban isn't over, since the Supreme Court is still instructing the 9th Circuit to rule on the merits of the ban. But by decreeing that the legal challenges to the ban aren't "likely to succeed" on the merits, the court has just made it extremely difficult for the ban to get struck down in future. The Trump administration argued that the third version of the travel ban was a well-thought-through process solely based on security concerns about information-sharing. The Supreme Court bought the argument. [Source: Vox News]

So much so for America's freedom of religion. Both the executive and the judiciary are unable to uphold the false ideal of freedom of religion and have enacted laws to openly discriminate against Muslims around the world. Under Trump, the veil regarding America's duplicity over freedom has been permanently lifted, and the world is openly questioning whether America is fast becoming the home of the bigots and the oppressed.

Why Islam Must be Made Part of India's Foreign Policy

Countries have been deploying soft power in the conduct of their foreign policy and diplomacy well before the term was coined by Joseph S Nye. "Soft power" consists of a whole range of tools: the use of medical facilities, education and language learning, food festivals, cinema and other art forms, diaspora, support for electoral procedures—and religion, a key component. States with a religious identity invoke it where required in their external engagements. Some countries have even forged regional groupings on this basis, such as the Organisation of Islamic Countries. Prime minister Narendra Modi has emphasised the cultural aspect of soft power in redefining India's foreign policy. The Modi government has used Hinduism and Buddhism effectively to promote national interest in the Indo-Pacific region and the immediate neighbourhood. New Delhi has been organising international Buddhist conferences since 2015, and proposed to build Hinduism- and Buddhism-related tourist circuits. Prime minister Modi has been to mosques, too, during visits to Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia (between 2015-16), countries where these are regarded national monuments: these are acts of courtesy by a visiting head of state. He has also inaugurated the World Sufi Forum, held in New Delhi on March 17, 2016, where he made a very thoughtful speech. He had graciously acknowledged then that Islam and Sufism are a part of Indian heritage. "Just as India became a principal centre of Islamic civilisation, our nation also emerged as one of the most vibrant hubs of Sufism. Sufism became the face of Islam in India, even as it remained deeply rooted in the Holy Quran and Hadis. Sufism blossomed in India's openness and pluralism. It engaged with her

spiritual tradition and evolved its own Indian ethos. And, it helped shape a distinct Islamic heritage of India. We see this heritage in the fields of art, architecture and culture that is part of the fabric of our nation and our collective daily lives. We see it in the spiritual and intellectual tradition of India.” No Indian government has highlighted Islam adequately, especially in its interactions with southeast Asia, where the majority of people are Muslim. Why? The usual answer is: while Hinduism and Buddhism had India as their birthplace, Islam came from outside, a religion of the invaders. Those on the quest for narrow political gains overlook the fact that India assimilated Islam and made it more positive compared to its Wahabi aspect. India’s Bareilvi and Deobandi theological schools and the Sufi variant of Islam’s teachings gave it a new and broader interpretation. India also played a key role in taking Islam to southeast Asia where it stands as a moderate faith compared to its radicalised version wreaking havoc in West Asia. India can take a lead in owning Islam and projecting its softer Sufi version in countering the radical Jihadi thrust that fuels terrorism ideologically. There is considerable potential for India to develop the Islamic tourism sector as well. [Source: Quartz]

India had honour and dignity when Islam ruled the continent. Today, India is struggling with poverty, bigotry and inequality on an unprecedented scale, and this due to a mixture of India’s secularism fuelled with Hindu nationalism. With so many problems, why would anyone trust India’s foreign policy even if it made Sufism part of its foreign policy.

Jordan’s King Honored for Promoting a Peaceful Islam, Interfaith Harmony

King Abdullah II of Jordan has been chosen as the 2018 Templeton Prize Laureate. He has “done more to seek religious harmony within Islam and between Islam and other religions than any other living political leader,” said a June 27 announcement on the award released by the John Templeton Foundation in West Conshohocken. The Templeton Prize, established in 1972 by Sir John Templeton, aims to recognize someone “who has made an exceptional contribution to affirming life’s spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery, or practical works.” King Abdullah will be formally awarded the Templeton Prize at a ceremony in Washington Nov. 13. The prize has a monetary value of about \$1.45 million. Jordan’s leader was recognized for his work to promote a peaceful Islam and bring an end to religious violence in the Middle East. After ascending to the throne of Jordan upon the 1999 death of his father, King Hussein, Abdullah has aggressively prodded Islamic leaders toward a uniform message reflecting the moderate beliefs of the vast majority of Muslims, as an antidote to the Islamic extremism associated with terrorism. Abdullah also has protected some of the most important religious sites in Jerusalem. The dynasty of which he has been a part has been the custodian of the Temple Mount since 1924, and in 2016 the king used his own money to assist in restoring the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. He also has supported legislation to restore and develop the site of the baptism of Jesus and given various Christians blocks of land to build churches there. In his videotaped acceptance of the Templeton Prize, King Abdullah said “Our world needs to confront challenges to our shared humanity and values. And this is why I feel it is so urgent to promote tolerance and mutual respect, support inclusion and hope, speak out against Islamophobia and other wrongs, and make our values a real force in the daily life of the modern world.” King Abdullah joins a group of 47 recipients of the Templeton Prize: recipients including Mother Teresa, who received the inaugural award in 1973; the Dalai Lama, 2012; Archbishop Desmond Tutu, 2013; and Jean Vanier, founder of L’Arche, 2015. [Source: Crux]

Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ ۗ وَلَئِنَّ آتِّبَعْتِ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٢٠﴾
“And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, “Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance.” If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper.” [TMQ: Al Baqara: 120]