

Headlines:

- **UK: Mayoral Candidate Described Islam as a Barbaric Cult in Posts about Halal Meat**
- **Mood in Sudan Shifts to Anger as the Army Prepares to Seize Power**
- **None of Pakistan's F-16 Fighter Jets Missing after US Count: Report**

Details:

UK: Mayoral Candidate Described Islam as a Barbaric Cult in Posts about Halal Meat

A Candidate in the race to become Middlesbrough's next mayor described Islam as a "barbaric 7th Century cult". Former English and maths lecturer Peter Longstaff has revealed he is an independent candidate in the running to be elected Middlesbrough Mayor on May 2. Announcing his candidacy on his Facebook page, the 62-year-old dad and grandad, described himself as a Christian who believes in Christian values. Opening with "Please Please Please let me work for you," Mr Longstaff said, if elected, he would take "a no nonsense approach to anti social behaviour, crime and law breaking, so people can go about their business without fear". After sharing one post urging a national supermarket to "stop pandering to Muslims" following a customer complaint regarding halal food, Mr Longstaff wrote: "I don't agree with it because it is cruel and barbaric and if a product (even Fairy liquid) has halal certificate on it, the shops/manufacturers pay a tax that funds mosques and the Muslim communities. "I don't want to support this barbaric, 7th Century cult in any way." Later he added: "Keep telling the wife to check what she buys and have told her if she brings anymore halal s**t I'll turn into a Muslim and then get another three wives!! lol." Mr Longstaff is one of four mayoral candidates. After sharing one post urging a national supermarket to "stop pandering to Muslims" following a customer complaint regarding halal food, Mr Longstaff wrote: "I don't agree with it because it is cruel and barbaric and if a product (even Fairy liquid) has halal certificate on it, the shops/manufacturers pay a tax that funds mosques and the Muslim communities. "I don't want to support this barbaric, 7th Century cult in any way." Later he added: "Keep telling the wife to check what she buys and have told her if she brings anymore halal s**t I'll turn into a Muslim and then get another three wives!! lol." Mr Longstaff is one of four mayoral candidates. [Source: The Northern Echo]

All major UK political parties have Islamophobia running through the veins and the Labour Party is no exception. Muslims in the UK must understand that joining UK political parties effectively endorses Islamophobia and makes it mainstream.

Mood in Sudan Shifts to Anger as the Army Prepares to Seize Power

As rumours spread that their long-time ruler was finally on his way out, the atmosphere on the streets of Khartoum was victorious. "The regime has fallen," people chanted. Flags waved, people danced and sang, and everyone's hands were up in victory signs. "Freedom, peace and justice," read one banner. On Wednesday morning, it seemed that the long-fought battle for these values might be on the point of being won. But when the army's announcement came, stating that President Omar al-Bashir was to be replaced by a military council that would govern for two years, the mood shifted. This, protesters who have risked their lives said, was not the democratic outcome they sought.

“We are waiting for a statement by the army. We will only accept a transitional civilian government composed of the forces of the Declaration of Freedom and Change. No other plan will be acceptable,” wrote Alaa Salah, the 22-year-old architecture student who became a symbol of the revolution when an image of her giving a speech to a crowd of demonstrators, dressed in traditional white toub, went viral. When defence minister and first vice-president Ahmed Awad Ibn Auf said that a military council would take over, Salah followed with another statement: “The people do not want a transitional military council. Change will not happen with Bashir’s entire regime hoodwinking Sudanese civilians through a military coup. We want a civilian council to head the transition.” Many protesters said that Auf, who is under US sanctions over alleged atrocities in Darfur, represented no change at all. “This is a farce. The regime did not fall. This is a reproduction of the same regime,” one demonstrator told AFP. “This man [Bashir] is a bloodthirsty leader and he is wanted, he brings us another regime. This is completely unacceptable,” added another. Security forces have used live ammunition and tear gas against protesters and 22 have died since Saturday alone. But this did not put them off: demonstrators who had long been out in the street without food or water prepared for a still longer wait. Buoyed by the resignation of Abdelaziz Bouteflika in neighbouring Algeria, tens of thousands of people launched a sit-in outside the military headquarters last week. After having faithfully served America for 30 years, Bashir was removed by Washington and replaced by a military council loyal to the US. In this way, the US retains control of Sudan, despite the opposition of the people. [Source: The Guardian]

None of Pakistan's F-16 Fighter Jets Missing after US Count: Report

A US count of the F-16s with Pakistan has found that none of them are missing, contradicting India's claim that one of its fighter jets shot down a Pakistani F-16 during an aerial dogfight on February 27, a leading American magazine reported Thursday. Two senior US defense officials with direct knowledge of the situation told the Foreign Policy magazine that American personnel recently counted Islamabad's F-16s and found none of the planes missing. "The findings directly contradict the account of Indian Air Force officials, who said that Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman managed to shoot down a Pakistani F-16 before his own plane was downed by a Pakistani missile," the report said. The report said that evidence also suggests that Pakistan's F-16s were involved in the aerial battle with the Indian Air Force and only the F-16 can shoot a US-made AIM-120 air-to-air missile. When the incident occurred, India asked the US government to investigate whether Pakistan's use of the F-16 against India violated the terms of the foreign military sale agreements. According to the magazine, Pakistan invited the US to physically count its F-16 planes after the incident as part of an end-user agreement signed when the foreign military sale was finalised. Some of the aircraft were not immediately available for inspection due to the conflict, so it took US personnel several weeks to account for all of the jets, one US official said. But now the count has been completed, and "all aircraft were present and accounted for," the official said. [Sources: The Economic Times]

At last, India’s flagrant lies against Pakistan have been exposed. However, what is more worrying is the amount of oversight the US has over the deployment of F-16s in combat. The civil and military leadership have failed to throw off the yoke of colonialism that still pervades much of Pakistani life.