

Headlines:

- **Burkini Beach Row Puts French Values to Test**
- **Iraq Opens Airspace to Russia after Iran Deployment**
- **US Wants Greater Dialogue between Pakistan, India**

Details:

Burkini Beach Row Puts French Values to Test

The town of Cannes was the first to pass the summer ban, which was confirmed by the courts on 13 August. And Cannes was soon followed by the towns of Villeneuve-Loubet, near Nice, and Sisco in Corsica. Even the mayor of the northern seaside resort of Le Touquet is said to be about to pass a similar ban: no burkini will be tolerated on public beaches. So far a small number of women have been fined (€38 in Cannes - £33; \$43) for wearing a burkini on the beach at Cannes. And the mayor's decision has triggered a heated debate. Cannes mayor David Lisnard has tried to explain his decision in these terms: "The burkini is like a uniform, a symbol of Islamist extremism. This is why I am banning it for the summer." His view surprised the Cannes Muslim community, as David Lisnard is known locally for having allowed a large plot of land in his city to be used to build the Iqraa Mosque, financed by a Saudi donor.[Source: BBC]

Cannes famous for artistic freedom leads the charge to ban the Burkini. What is increasingly noticeable in France is that any form of legitimate expression by Muslims is immediately frowned by the French. The intolerance of French secularism knows no bounds, and underscores the duplicity of Western freedoms when applied to Muslims.

Iraq Opens Airspace to Russia after Iran Deployment

Iraq has allowed the Russian air force to use its airspace if needed during airstrikes on Syria, following Russia's decision to deploy aircraft to Iraq's neighbors, Iran, on Tuesday. Russian government officials have previously not ruled out expanding the bombing campaign on militants from jihadist group Islamic State (ISIS) and others, from Syria to Iraq, though Russia's Foreign Ministry has said this would require Iraq to ask for the airstrikes first. U.S. allies are supporting Iraqi forces with airstrikes already and, Russia's deployment in Iran's Hamedan base increases Moscow's options, should wish to embark on any such operations on its own in future. Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi held a press conference on Tuesday to explain his country's role will be to allow passage of Russian aircraft to Syria, albeit with restrictions. "We opened our skies to the Russians under some conditions," al Abadi told Iranian state news channel, Press TV. "We have not received an official request from Russia about the passage of any types of rockets across our skies." According to the Iraqi leader the Russian air force will pass through border corridors and not be allowed to fly over Iraqi cities. "I allowed the bombers to fly over because we received clear information about them. They make precise strikes, avoid casualties among civilians. So, we will consider all the requests concerning security of civilians in Syria," Abadi added. Russia's decision to deploy more jets for Syrian operations, to a country that shares no borders with Syria, may be an attempt to strengthen capabilities in the region - a move the U.S. branded "unfortunate but not

surprising." Moscow has already boasted results from its new deployment, announcing on the day it made the decision official that a formation of aircraft had already completed a series of airstrikes killing "a large number" of militants in Syria. [Source: Newsweek]

Following hot on the footsteps of Iran, Iraq has allowed Russia to use its airspace to conduct strikes in Syria. Across the Muslim world, foreign powers are using the resources of Muslims to slaughter fellow Muslims. Have not the leaders heard the following words of Allah:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ثُلُفُونَ إِلَيْهِمْ بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ الْحَقِّ يُخْرِجُونَ الرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ﴾

"Oh you who have believed, do not take My enemies and your enemies as allies, extending to them affection while they have disbelieved in what came to you of the truth, having driven out the Prophet and yourselves [only] because you believe in Allah, your Lord." [TMQ: 60:1]

US Wants Greater Dialogue between Pakistan, India

The United States is urging 'greater dialogue' between Pakistan and India as relations between the two nuclear neighbours continue to deteriorate. At a news briefing, a State Department official urged Pakistan to act against all terrorist groups, including those involved in cross-border operations in the region. "We would encourage greater dialogue and counterterrorism cooperation between Pakistan and India," said Mark Toner, the State Department's deputy spokesman, when asked what the US would suggest to reduce tensions between the two countries. "We've said that many times. It's for the good of both countries; it's for the good of the region. Frankly, it's for the benefit of the United States," he added. Reports in the Indian and US media, quoting Indian officials, claimed that New Delhi wanted to talk about the alleged "troubles" in Azad Kashmir and not about the popular uprising in the India-held valley. On Monday, Foreign Secretary Aizaz Chaudhry invited his Indian counterpart to Pakistan for dialogue on the Kashmir dispute in a letter that "highlighted the international obligations of Pakistan and India with regard to resolving the Kashmir dispute in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions". Recently, India's Home Minister Rajnath Singh visited Islamabad for a meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation but refused to hold bilateral talks with Pakistani officials. And last week, India's Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj said that there would be no bilateral talks until Pakistan "stops terrorism against India". Asked to comment on her statement, Mr Toner said: "It's important that Pakistan do the utmost to prevent terrorists from carrying out acts of terror — not just in Pakistan, but elsewhere in the region." But he also emphasised the need for both countries to resume dialogue. "It's important that there's greater collaboration, greater dialogue. And we would encourage any effort in that regard," he said. [Source: Pakistan Tribune]

As Obama's tenure in office comes to an end, the US State Department is laying the grounds for the next US President to normalize relations between India and Pakistan. This normalization is central to America's plan to stabilize India's Western borders with Pakistan and use the country to counter China.