



ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION

Political Affairs Department

Islamophobia Observatory

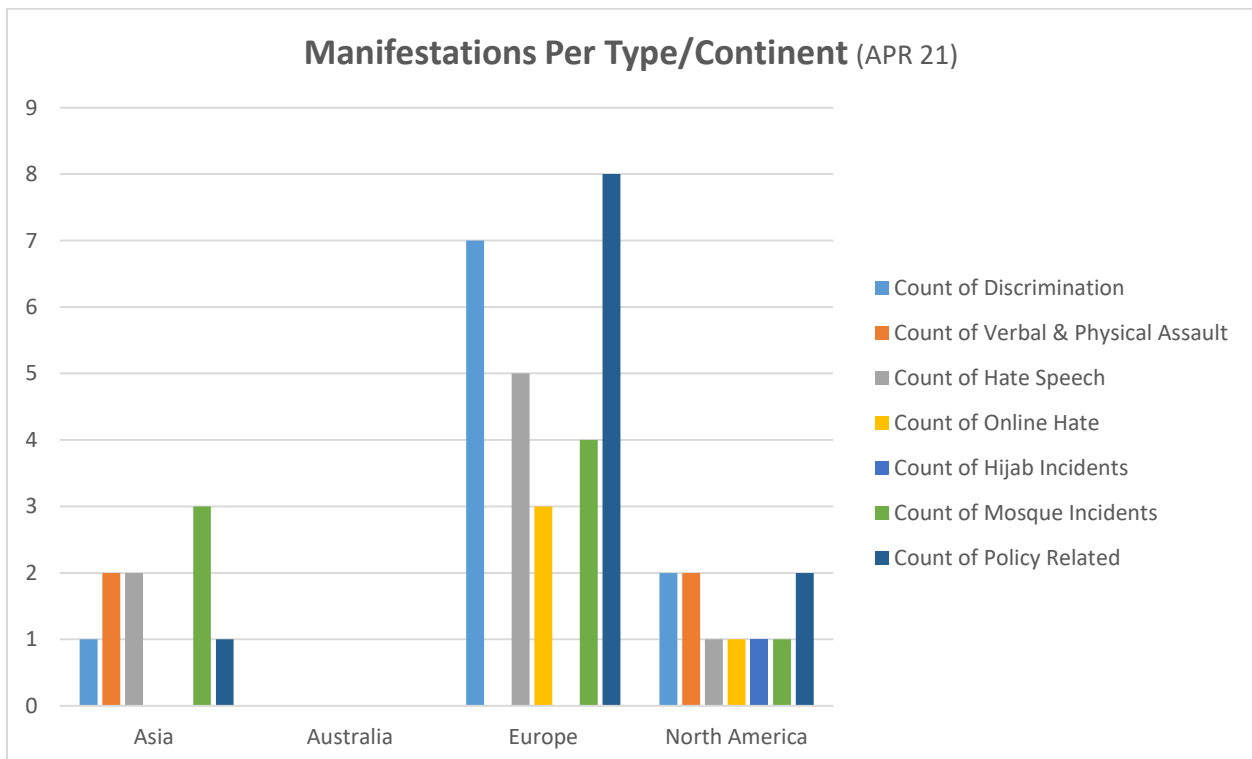
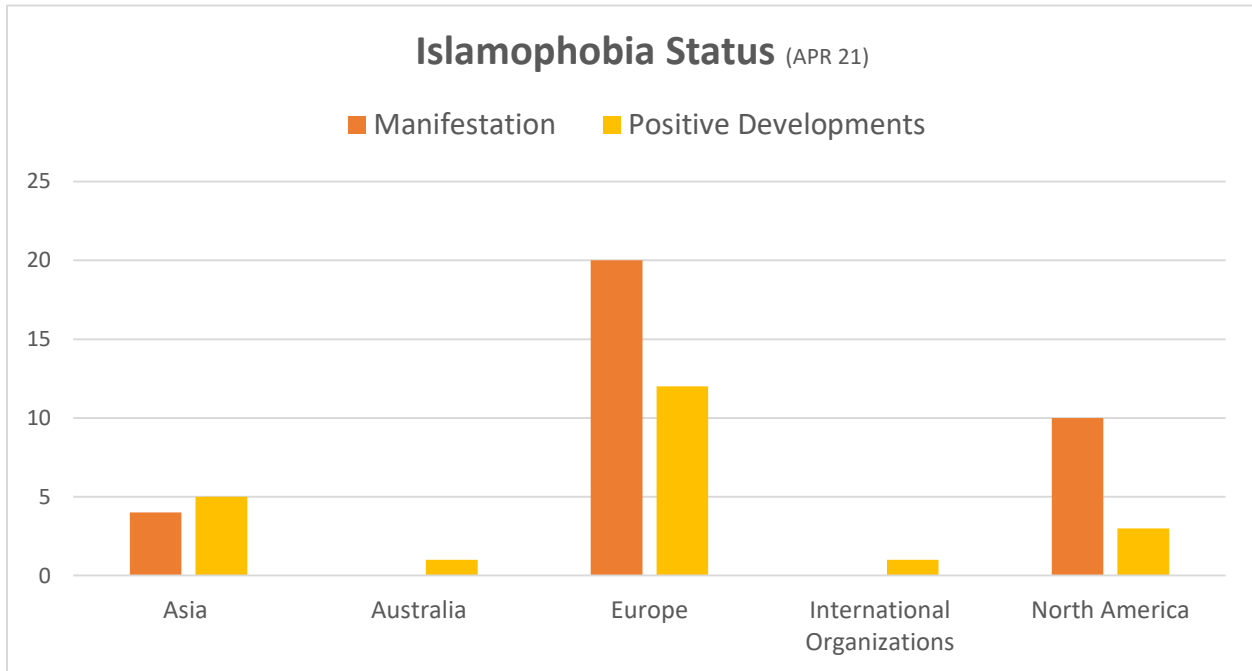
Islamophobia Monitoring

Month: April 2021



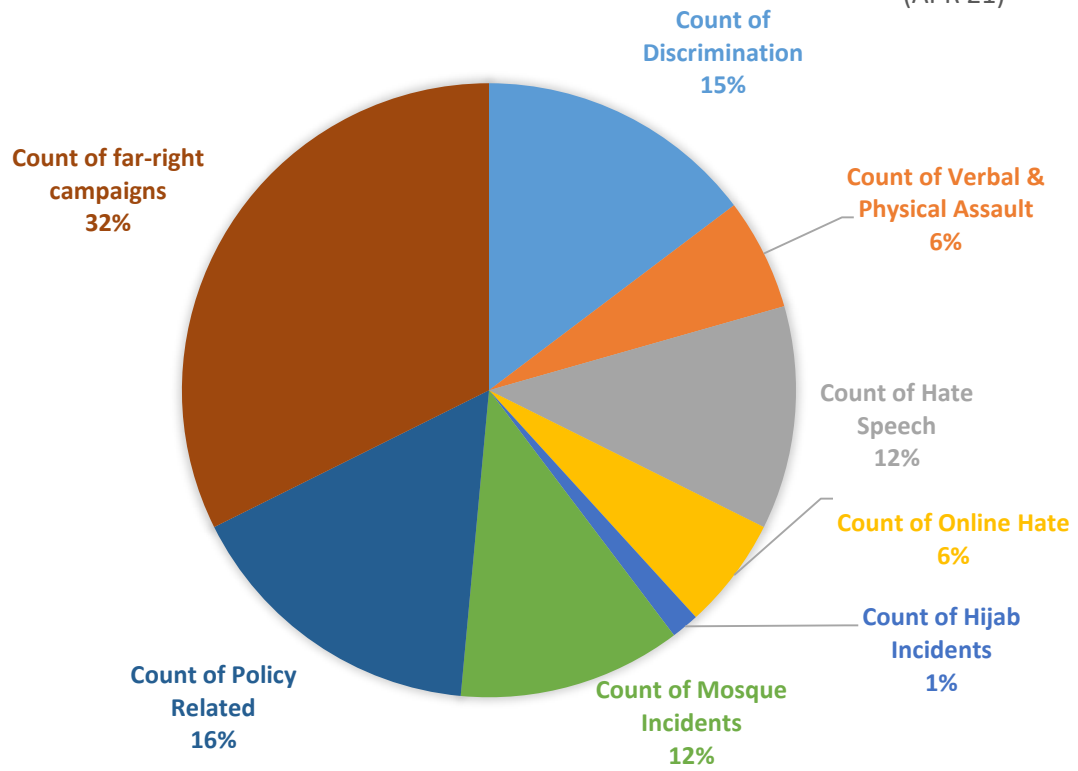
OIC Islamophobia Observatory

Issue: April 2021



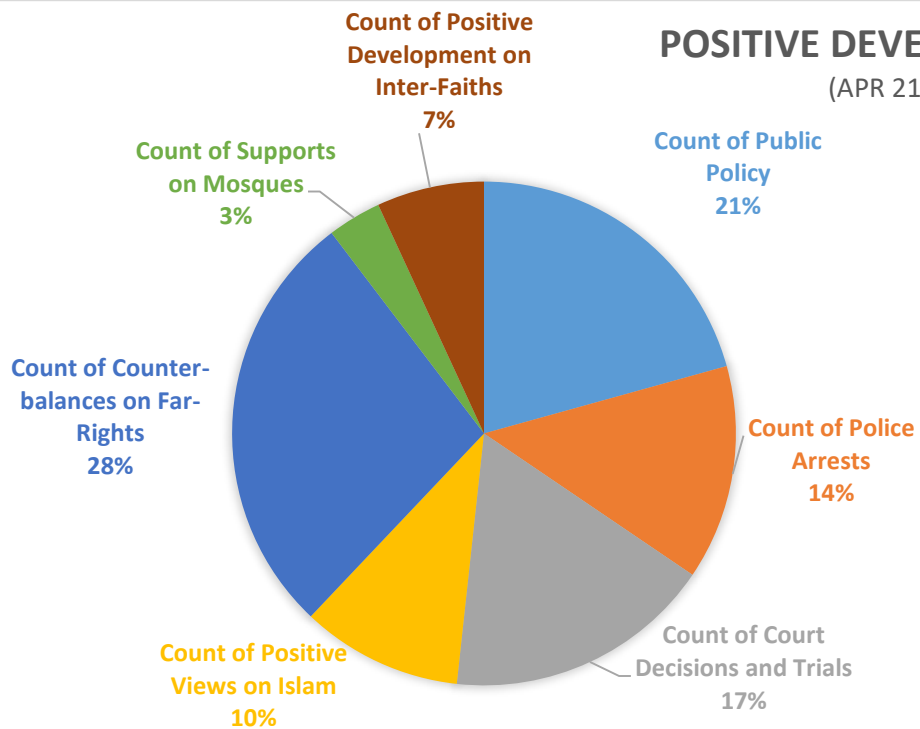
MANIFESTATION

(APR 21)



POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

(APR 21)



MANIFESTATIONS OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

NORTH AMERICA

IsP140186-US: Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg sued over anti-Muslim hate speech, violence—

On April 8, Muslim Advocates, a civil rights group, had sued Facebook and top executives, which included Mark Zuckerberg and Sheryl Sandberg, where they alleged that the company misled the public on the safety of the platform. The complaint filed in federal court in Washington, D.C., argued that Facebook dupes lawmakers, civil rights groups and the public at large when it made broad claims that it had removed content that spews hate or incites violence and yet it did not. "This failure has amplified the volume of anti-Muslim hate bombarding Facebook users. And the anti-Muslim hate that's pervasive on Facebook presents an enormous problem – both online and in real life," according to the lawsuit, which cites repeated comments made by former President Donald Trump and the role a militia group allegedly played in inciting a double murder in Kenosha, Wisconsin, on 2020. For example, the suit cited testimony from Sandberg, Facebook's chief operating officer, to the Senate Intelligence Committee in September 2018, when she said: "Senators, let me be clear. We are more determined than our opponents, and we will keep fighting. When bad actors try to use our site, we will block them. When content violates our policies, we will take it down." Yet months earlier, Megan Squire, a computer science professor at Elon University, reported a group called "Veterans Against Islamic Filth" for violating Facebook's rules on dehumanizing speech, including comparisons to filth. Facebook refused to remove the content, the lawsuit said. Facebook said on April 8, in an emailed statement, "We do not allow hate speech on Facebook and regularly work with experts, non-profits, and stakeholders to help make sure Facebook is a safe place for everyone, recognizing anti-Muslim rhetoric can take different forms. We have invested in AI technologies to take down hate speech, and we proactively detect 97 percent of what we remove."

See: USA Today News' entry, in: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2021/04/08/facebook-hate-speech-muslims-lawsuit-zuckerberg/4844524001/>, retrieved on 11.04.2021

IsP140187-US: Anti-Islamic ex-lawmaker named Oklahoma GOP chairman—

On April 11, a former state representative with a reputation for anti-Islamic rhetoric, Rep. John Bennett, had been elected as chairman of the Oklahoma Republican Party. Bennett won a first-ballot victory at the party convention at the Oklahoma City Convention Center, vice chairman Shane Jemison said. He succeeded David McLain, who chose not to seek a second term. In 2013, Bennett helped form the unofficial House counterterrorism caucus, citing concerns about a Muslim attempt to replace the U.S. Constitution with Islamic law. He also referred to Islam as a "cancer in our nation that needs to be cut out" and faced criticism for Facebook posts targeting Muslims.



See: AP News' entry, in: <https://apnews.com/article/oklahoma-veterans-oklahoma-city-b056685a2d5b89007342a8e2c634dae3>, Source of Picture: <https://kfor.com/news/anti-islamic-ex-lawmaker-named-oklahoma-gop-chairman/>, retrieved on 13.04.2021

IsP140188-US: Woman Goes on Anti-Muslim Rant in Fort Lauderdale Walgreens—

On March 31, a woman named, Luba Bozanich, was caught on camera making islamophobic and

rasics remark against a muslim couple at a Walgreens store, in Fort Lauderdale city of Florida. Nahla Ebaid and her husband and friends were on vacation in South Florida when Bozanich started hurling insults in the checkout line. Bozanich was heard saying in the video "God, you're ugly, no wonder people hate you ... I'm getting away from the Muslim." Ebaid pulled out her phone and started recording. The video had since gone viral. Ebaid said: "She was aggressive and she started insulting my clothes my hijab, my friends, my religion." Bozanich called the police, and told the dispatchers that she was the one been threatened. Police said this all started when Bozanich refused to put on a face mask even after employees asked her to do so. When officers arrived, they took Bozanich into custody and planned to charge her with battery for spitting on Ebaid's husband. But then the muslim couple changed their minds. "She apologized and we accept her apology ... This is from our religion, we have to forgive and give another chance." Ebaid said.

See: NBC Miami News' entry, in: <https://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/woman-goes-on-anti-muslim-rant-in-fort-lauderdale-walgreens/2426894/>, retrieved on 14.04.2021

IsP140189-US: FBI director says U.S. far-right extremists traveled to network in Europe—

On April 15, U.S. FBI director Christopher Wray told a House of Representatives Intelligence Committee hearing that racially motivated and far-right American extremists had engaged with like-minded activists overseas and traveled abroad to meet with them. He added that the agency considered right-wing militants in the United States to be the domestic extremists with the most extensive international ties and that they had established social media connectivity across borders. Wray said some U.S. far-right extremists had traveled to Europe to meet and possibly train with activists. But he also noted that a lot of violent extremist threats "do not fit into nice ideological buckets." Wray's comments about far-right U.S. extremists came after the reported findings in a non-public version of a report on domestic extremists published by U.S spy agencies. Reuters reported that the non-public report said Americans had traveled to Ukraine to fight with pro-Russian forces against the country's elected government. Wray did not specify who the racially-motivated extremists he mentioned were but the report said U.S. white supremacists were the "actors with the most persistent and concerning transnational connections."

See: WSAU radio station News' entry, in: <https://wsau.com/2021/04/15/fbi-director-says-u-s-far-right-extremists-traveled-to-network-in-europe/>, retrieved on 18.04.2021

IsP140190-US: CAIR-SFBA Urges Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office to Change Policy after Muslim Woman Complains of Being Stripped of Her Religious Headscarf —

On April 1, The San Francisco Bay Area office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-SFBA) urged the Santa Clara County (SCC) Sheriff's office to change policy after a Muslim woman was reportedly forced by deputies to remove her religious headscarf (hijab) while in custody. CAIR-SFBA had demanded an apology to the woman, a meeting with the officers involved, a mandated cultural and religious competency training, and an immediate change in official policy related to religious head coverings. In February, the woman called 9-1-1 in response to a domestic dispute. After SCC Sheriff's Deputies arrived at the scene, they arrested the woman and took her into custody to Elmwood Correctional facility in Milpitas. Once at the jail, SCC Sheriff's deputies forcibly removed her hijab during the process of obtaining booking photos. During the search and the hijab removal, the woman immediately informed officers that her headscarf was worn for religious purposes and that it should not be removed in the presence of men. She further requested that her hijab be replaced. She resorted to using her sweater to cover her head during the booking process since her hijab was not returned to her. After been booked at Elmwood, her were taken away and replaced with jail clothes. Been left without a head covering again, she had to request a second shirt to cover her head, which was later granted. In a statement, the woman said: "This degrading and discriminatory encounter has left me scarred. Now I will

have to reconsider before reaching out to law enforcement during times of danger out of fear of being targeted.”

See: CAIR News' entry, in: https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-sfba-urges-santa-clara-county-sheriffs-office-to-change-policy-after-muslim-woman-complains-of-being-stripped-of-her-religious-headscarf/, retrieved on 19.04.2021

IsP140191-US: Proud Boys and other far-right groups raise millions via Christian funding site— A data breach from Christian crowdfunding site [GiveSendGo](https://www.givesendgo.com/) had revealed that millions of dollars had been raised on the site for far-right causes and groups, many of whom were banned from raising funds on other platforms. It also identified previously anonymous high-dollar donors to far-right actors, some of whom enjoy positions of wealth, power or public responsibility. Some of the biggest beneficiaries had been members of groups such as the Proud Boys, designated as a terrorist group in Canada, many of whose fundraising efforts were directly related to the 6 January attack on the United States Capitol. The breach, shared with journalists by transparency group Distributed Denial of Secrets, showed that the site's permissive stance towards far-right actors meant groups who had been banned from other fundraising platforms and payment processors following episodes of hate speech and violence had used the platform. Across at least 11 crowdfunding campaigns associated with the Proud Boys, members of the group, raised over \$375,000. Some of these fundraisers netted large amounts of money in a short period. After the Proud Boys chairman, Enrique Tarrio, was arrested on 4 January on charges related to firearms and the vandalism of a black church at a previous rally, a fundraiser billed as a “defense fund” made \$113,000 in just four days. Following the Capitol riots, a fundraiser in the name of “Medical Assistance to DC Proud Boy victims” made \$106,107 on just 6 and 7 January.

See: The Guardian Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/10/proud-boys-far-right-givesendgo-christian-fundraising-site>, retrieved on 20.04.2021

IsP140192-US: New evidence shines a light on the right-wing extremist threat— On April 12, an evidence compiled by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) revealed that the number of domestic terrorism incidents reached a modern high in 2020. According to the Washington Post's report “Domestic terrorism incidents have soared to new highs in the United States, driven chiefly by white-supremacist, anti-Muslim and anti-government extremists on the far right, according to a Washington Post analysis of data compiled by the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The surge reflects a growing threat from homegrown terrorism not seen in a quarter-century, with right-wing extremist attacks and plots greatly eclipsing those from the far left and causing more deaths, the analysis shows.” The newspaper report added, “Since 2015, right-wing extremists have been involved in 267 plots or attacks and 91 fatalities, the data shows. At the same time, attacks and plots ascribed to far-left views accounted for 66 incidents leading to 19 deaths.... More than a quarter of right-wing incidents and just under half of the deaths in those incidents were caused by people who showed support for white supremacy or claimed to belong to groups espousing that ideology, the analysis shows.” Among the most common targets in these domestic terror incidents were mosques, synagogues, Black churches, abortion clinics, and government buildings, which had been “threatened, burned, bombed and hit with gunfire over the past six years.”

See: MSNBC News' entry, in: <https://www.msnbc.com/rachel-maddow-show/new-evidence-shines-light-right-wing-extremist-threat-n1263923>, retrieved on 21.04.2021

IsP140193-US: Mississippi City Denies Site Approval for Proposed Mosque— the Horn Lake, a city in north Mississippi, had rejected Mr. Ray Elk's plan to build the first mosque in the area. The city's planning commission recommended that the site plan be denied, and the Board of Aldermen voted 5-1 to uphold that recommendation, the Commercial Appeal reported. Elk, a Muslim who lived in the DeSoto County for 20 years, had said “I raised all my six children in

DeSoto County, they all go to school there and they have a right to go to their mosque and pray and practice their faith like every Christian." The aldermen said they denied the application because of concerns about insufficient water supply for fire sprinklers and the possibility of traffic and noise. On April 21, Elk told the Commercial Appeal that it wasn't "rocket science" to see what was going on — that the aldermen would be willing to approve 400 homes that would cause traffic and noise, but not a mosque. "I think once a judge sees all the facts, I'm very confident this will be granted a permit," Elk said.

See: USNEWS entry, in: <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/mississippi/articles/2021-04-24/mississippi-city-denies-site-approval-for-proposed-mosque>, retrieved on 26.04.2021

IsP140194-US: NYC police on hunt after Muslim student targeted in acid attack — Police in New York City had been on the hunt for a suspect who threw acid into the face of a Muslim college student on March 17 as she walked into her home. A statement from the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-NY) said Ms. Nafiah Ikram spent 15 days in the hospital and was left blinded. Her face, chest and arms were also severely burned. Surveillance video from outside her home showed that Ikram was following her mother into the home on Long Island on the night of March 17. A slim man, appeared with a hoodie and gloves, raced up behind her from the sidewalk, and he thrown the acid, then raced away. CAIR-NY was demanding the attack be investigated as a possible "hate crime," although police had not yet made that determination. Hofstra University, where Ikram was a student, said the school was "shocked by this horrific attack." A GoFundMe campaign had so far raised over \$300,000 to help cover Ikram's medical expenses.

See: Daily Sabah News' entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/islamophobia/nyc-police-on-hunt-after-muslim-student-targeted-in-acid-attack>, retrieved on 27.04.2021



IsP140195-Canada: Man caught on video shooting at Montreal mosque; windows damaged, no injuries — On April 5, a masked person was caught on video shooting at a local mosque with an air gun, in which a total of eleven shots could clearly be heard in the video. No one was hurt, but pockmarks from the bullets were left in the glass of the Centre Communautaire Islamique Assahaba, in Eastern Montreal, the mosque said in a Facebook post. People chased after the person, who appeared to be a man, they wrote. "A masked individual fired several bullets from a compressed air gun into the windows of the [mosque]," they wrote. The Montreal police hate crimes unit had opened an investigating on the incident.

See: Montreal CTV news' entry, in: <https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/man-caught-on-video-shooting-at-montreal-mosque-windows-damaged-no-injuries-1.5376200>, retrieved on 12.04.2021

IsP140196-UK: Adviser in UK inquiry of Conservative Party dismisses Islamophobia— On April 1, a new report published by the Middle East Eye (MEE) newspaper said Wasiq Wasiq, an adviser who had been appointed to investigate anti-Muslim sentiments and other forms of prejudice within the British Conservative Party, had called for the idea of Islamophobia to be “junked.” According to the report, Wasiq, a Ph.D. student at King's College London, became part of a three-person team led by Swaran Singh, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Warwick. Singh was tasked to lead the probe in December 2019. In a column posted on the Spiked website titled “We need to get rid of the idea of 'Islamophobia,’” Wasiq wrote that the term was “an attempt to create a modern-day blasphemy law.” He also questioned whether Muslims should be seen as victims of racism because of their religion and beliefs. Wasiq's comments raised further questions about whether the inquiry into the party was independent and whether the investigation would tackle Islamophobia within the highest political structure in the country. The head of investigation Singh, who was former equality and human rights commissioner, had also been criticized for his views on the Kashmir conflict, which were also posted on Spiked. Singh argued that the conflict in Kashmir was portrayed as a tragedy affecting Muslims and that many Sikhs and Hindus “do not meet the criteria of victimhood.”

See: Daily Sabah Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/europe/adviser-in-uk-inquiry-of-conservative-party-dismisses-islamophobia>, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140197-UK: Far-right bigot Jayda Fransen to stand against Nicola Sturgeon at Holyrood election— [Jayda Fransen](#), a convicted racist who targeted Muslim Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) Humza Yousaf, had announced an attempt to become an MSP. [Fransen](#) would stand as an independent against both Nicola Sturgeon and Anas Sarwar in the Glasgow Southside constituency. The nomination papers confirming her candidacy were published on April 1. [Fransen](#) said in a statement: “I am going to be standing in the Scottish elections in May against these SNP commie, Marxists, naughty people.” Fransen, the former deputy leader of the alt-right Britain First organisation, formed the British Freedom Party but it had failed to gather momentum. Fransen had previously claimed that she was a “Christian -fundamentalist” and “extremist in every sense of the word”. She had also said Islam and the Koran should be banned in Britain and anti-monarchists should be hanged for treason. After one of Britain First’s “Christian patrols”, in Luton in November 2016, Fransen was convicted of religiously -aggravated harassment and ordered to pay a fine of £1000 after she targeted a Muslim mother of four who was wearing a hijab.

See: The Daily Record news' entry, in: <https://www.dailvrecord.co.uk/news/politics/far-right-bigot-jayda-fransen-23831178>, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140198-UK: TalkRADIO, the Daily Express, and Daily Star reported a false story about

mosque— Three UK mainstream media outlets had falsely reported that a gay paramedic was refused entry into a Manchester mosque to treat a heart attack patient. The Daily Express, The Daily Star and talkRADIO all ran with the story the week before after a caller called “Tom” told talkRADIO that he had been refused entry into a mosque because of his appearance. “Tom” went onto allege that he had been sent death threats by Muslims at work, been threatened with decapitation in the streets of Oldham, and that he felt scared going into “Muslim areas” without police protection. Since then, TalkRADIO, the Daily Express, and Daily Star had all removed content after the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) had confirmed that no such person work for them. Given the serious nature of the allegations, the North West Ambulance Service investigated the issue, and in a statement published on March 29,

the thorough investigation concluded that “the local management team have not been informed of any such exchange taking place...we therefore have no reason to believe that the allegations made by someone maintaining to be an NWAS member of staff are true,” adding that they had maintained good relations with faith leaders across the region and do not see the comments as ‘representative of the situation’ in their local communities. The TalkRADIO interview appeared on their Twitter account on March 27, before removal, and read: “Gay paramedic Tom says he was stopped from entering a mosque in Oldham to render assistance to a heart attack victim and lives in constant fear after death threats.” The original tweet had gained over 300 retweets before its removal. Various far-right websites and Facebook pages had shared the content or reposted it on their websites. A day later, the Express newspaper embedded a segment of the TalkRADIO interview under the headline, “Gay paramedic says he was ‘refused entry’ to a mosque” but did not expand the story further. That same day, however, a more detailed variation of the falsehood appeared on the Daily Star, headlined: “Gay paramedic says he was refused entry to a mosque to treat heart attack patient”.

See: Tell Mama UK News’ entry, in: <https://tellmamauk.org/talkradio-the-daily-express-and-daily-star-remove-false-story-about-mosque/>, retrieved on 01.04.2021



IsP140199-UK: UKIP leader rallies behind candidate who sent derogative tweets about

Muslims— UKIP’s Wales leader, Neil Hamilton, had defended an election candidate who sent offensive tweets about Muslims. Stan Robinson, who was running on the South Wales West list, sent several derogatory messages in the days before about Islam and Muslims. He had also retweeted a message labelling migrants “parasites” who should be “arrested” or “shot” to “stop the invasion”. One graphic image tweeted at the end of last month depicted the Prophet Muhammad and suggested child abuse. The Muslim Council of Wales said Stan Robinson’s Twitter account

was a "collection of hateful, bigoted and deeply worrying misinformation and conspiracies". But UKIP's leader Hamilton rejected that claim, in which he said, the Twitter account was "of no consequence" to the election. Muslim Council for Wales General Secretary, Dr Abdul Azim Ahmed, told Newyddion: "UKIP must justify why such an individual is representing their party, and we in Wales must also face the disturbing question of why such a candidate is able to stand in the first place."



See: The New European News' entry, in: <https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/brexit-news/westminster-news/neil-hamilton-defends-islamophobic-candidate-7895978>, Source of Picture: <https://www.bbc.com/cymrufyw/56697011>, retrieved on 18.04.2021

IsP140200-France: 'Islamic exorcism': This is how a French daily has branded cupping—

On April 4, The French newspaper Le Figaro, carried an article about cupping therapy, and described it as "hell of Islamic exorcism, which is spreading in France." Cupping therapy Also known as 'Hacamat' which was derived from the Arabic word "hacm", cupping was also one of the Sunnas (practices) of the Prophet Muhammad. Although it was a popular treatment in Muslim societies, its roots could be found in ancient East Asian cultures. The therapy method had been an integral part of many East Asian medical systems. According to historians, Ge Hong, a middle rung southern official who served the Jin dynasty, was one of the early pioneers of this technique. The Taoist alchemist and herbalist wrote about cupping around 300 AD and it had remained popular ever since. However, ignoring the main roots and truths about the therapy, the French daily in its article, "In the hell of Islamic exorcism spreading in France" called cupping a "Muslim prophetic medicine" that had been developed in the "strictest secrecy for several years." In the Le Figaro article, while referring to "migraines, depression, evil eye, witchcraft, the author said, "When the advice of friends and the love of a family are powerless, when reason has become the slave of passion or relationship problems multiply, roqya becomes necessary". The article called the practice a cause for concern for the French authorities, Le Figaro's debatable handling of the issue had sparked massive criticism, with the daily highlighting that the therapy was created "under the guise of severity". The European Union correspondent for the Financial Times, Mehreen Khan, said on Twitter, "Not a parody: apparently serious newspaper @lefigaro describes popular cupping therapy used by athletes and celebrities like Justin Bieber and Madonna as the "hell of Islamic exorcism which is spreading in France...under the guise of rigour".

See: TRT world news' entry, in: <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/islamic-exorcism-this-is-how-a-french-daily-has-branded-cupping-45691>, retrieved on 02.04.2021

IsP140201-France: For the government, the term "Islamophobia" is inappropriate—

On March 29, in a series of tweets, the General Secretariat of the Interministerial Committee for the Prevention of Crime and Radicalization (SG-CIPDR) distanced itself from the term "Islamophobia". The SG-CIPDR said it was "not allowed to call for hatred or discrimination against religious groups" but that, on the other hand, "it is authorized to criticize belief systems or philosophical conceptions" in the name of freedom of expression. It then considered that "to speak of hatred against Muslims, the term 'Islamophobia' is inappropriate since it confuses stigmatization of believers with criticism of Islam", and instead it specified that "the institutions use the

expression Anti-Muslim racism”. The body continued the criticism of the term "Islamophobia", in which they said that the concept "was imposed by the Islamists with the objective of prohibiting any form of criticism of radical Islam, under cover of defense of the Muslim religion" and even that it is used today for the Islamists "to introduce an offense of blasphemy". Since 2016, the inter-ministerial body, had been entrusted with a mission to fight against radicalization. The Organization’s Secretary General, Christian Gravel, had been a close friend of Manuel Valls - who had already declared in 2013 to L’Obs that "Islamophobia is the Trojan horse of the Islamists".

See: Lefigaro Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/pour-le-gouvernement-le-terme-islamophobie-est-inapproprié-20210330>, retrieved on 02.04.2021

IsP140202-France: French Senate Votes to Ban the Hijab for Muslim Women Under the Age of 18

— On March 30, as part of the ‘anti-separatism’ bill, the French Senate had voted for outlawing the headscarf for minors (under the age of 18) in public. The senate voted in favor of the “prohibition in the public space of any conspicuous religious sign by minors and of any dress or clothing which would signify an interiorization of women over men.” In addition, hijabi mothers would be prohibited from accompanying school field trips and burkinis would be banned at public swimming pools. These laws, which had not yet been in effect would first need to be confirmed by the National Assembly. Muslim women who had choosing to cover their hair for religious reasons would often do so from the age of puberty – which in most cases, was far earlier than the age of 18. Not only would this ruling impact young women among the population of 5.4 million Muslims who reside in France, but also, those who enjoy traveling to the country for holidays and shopping excursions.

See: Vogue Magazine News’ entry, in: <https://en.vogue.me/culture/french-senate-votes-hijab-ban/>, retrieved on 12.04.2021

IsP140203-France: French Senate adds ban on prayers at universities to anti-Muslim law

— On April 7, The French Senate approved the addition of a ban on religious practices in university corridors to the controversial bill “Islamist separatism,”. During the draft bill debate, the center-right Republicans (LR) party had proposed adding a clause prohibiting prayers in university corridors as well as banning religious activities that might hinder educational activities. Although Left Party senators and Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer objected to the proposal, it was accepted through the votes of the right-wing senators. For this law to be in effect, it would first need to be confirmed by the National Assembly.

See: Daily Sabah news’ entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/europe/french-senate-adds-ban-on-prayers-at-universities-to-anti-muslim-law>, retrieved on 12.04.2021



IsP140204-France: Mosque in western France defaced with Islamophobic graffiti ahead of start of Ramadan

— On April 11, The Muslim community in the city of Rennes had discovered an Islamophobic graffiti on the walls of the mosque and Islamic cultural center. It included tags insulting Islam and the Prophet Mohammed, references to restarting the Crusades and a call for Catholicism to be made the state religion. The prosecutor’s office in Rennes had opened an

investigation. Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin had condemned the incident, and tweeted a message of solidarity. The city's socialist mayor Nathalie Appere and its senator, Valerie Boyer, of the right-wing Republicans both denounced the incident. Abdallah Zekri, president of the National Observatory Against Islamophobia, denounced what he said was the current anti-Islam climate in France. "Unfortunately, the declarations of certain politicians are only making things worse," he told AFP.

See: Alarabiya English News' entry, in: <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2021/04/11/Mosque-in-western-France-defaced-with-Islamophobic-graffiti-ahead-of-start-of-Ramadan>, Source of Pictures: <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2021/04/339496/muslims-in-frances-rennes-condemn-offensive-tags-against-islam-prophet-muhammad/>, retrieved on 13.04.2021

IsP140205-France: the door of a mosque destroyed by a fire—the door of a mosque located in

the western French city of Nantes, was destroyed by fire overnight from Thursday to Friday, April 8-9. The perpetrators moved trash cans in front of one of the three doors of the mosque and set them on fire. The door was destroyed and the floor and wall of the mosque were blackened by the ensuing fire. Police said the fire was reported at 2:43 am and a "wooden double-leaf door" was destroyed, "but a closed (blackened) metal shutter was still blocking the entrance." Police added, that the fire



was caused by a "fire of containers filled with cardboard boxes placed in front of this door". "A judicial investigation is underway into this fire, the origin of which is for the moment unknown", explained the prefecture of Loire-Atlantique. In a tweet, the Minister of the Interior, Gérald Darmanin, had expressed his "full support for Muslims in Loire-Atlantique".

See: Teller Report News' entry, in: <https://www.tellerreport.com/tech/2021-04-10-nantes--the-door-of-a-mosque-destroyed-by-a-fire.rvGmxej0HO.html>, retrieved on 14.04.2021

IsP140206-France: Another mosque defaced with Islamophobic messages— Muslims

worshippers in the French city Bordeaux woke up on April 21 to discover a mosque construction site defaced with Islamophobic graffiti. The Muslim Association of Talence announced the attack on their official Facebook page calling the messages "racist, hateful and Islamophobic." In a message on social media, the President of the mosque, Mohamed Boulam, said, "Seeing these inscriptions and these drawings on a place of worship is very difficult to



overcome. Especially since it is a place of passage, with families and children. It is unacceptable." A local politician, Emmanuel Sallaberry, said in a Facebook post "The site of the Talence mosque has been tagged with Islamophobic and homophobic messages... I strongly condemn this act contrary to fundamental freedoms and the values of our Republic...I trust the police and the justice system to find and strongly condemn the perpetrators."

See: .TRT World News' entry, in: <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/france-another-mosque-defaced-with-islamophobic-messages-46119>, retrieved on 27.04.2021

IsP140207-France: Far-right leader Marine Le Pen ‘on course to BEAT Macron at next election as voters turn on ‘arrogant’ President’— MARINE Le Pen could BEAT Emmanuel Macron at the next French election as voters continue to turn on the ‘arrogant’ leader, According to the Jean-Jaurès Foundation. The foundation said, Le Pen, had succeeded in detoxifying her image enough to attract mainstream conservative voters, who see her as a preferable alternative to Macron. The foundation also concurred that traditional left-wing voters now see Macron, as arrogant and elitist. Half of them also claimed they would abstain in a run-off, rather than unite behind him. “A year from the next presidential election, we have reached the view that a final victory by Marine Le Pen is a clear risk,” said the foundation.

See: The Sun Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/worldnews/14742158/marine-le-pen-course-beat-macron-next-election/>, retrieved on 27.04.2021

IsP140208-France: Terrorism Fears Feed the Rise of France’s Extreme Right— The far-right leader Marine Le Pen had called for “hundreds of thousands of illegals” to be deported. Her message came after the fatal stabbing of a police officer on April 23 by a Tunisian immigrant who had been in France for a decade without legal status before securing authorization to stay in 2019 and a temporary residence permit on 2020. “Marine Le Pen does not have to say anything,” said Alain Frachon, a former editor of the French daily Le Monde. “Each time France is hit by terrorism, the extreme right benefits.” Ms. Le Pen, the leader of the far-right National Rally, told the BFM-TV news network that France needed “to expel hundreds of thousands of illegals in France. We need to return to reason. Support our police, expel the illegals, eradicate Islamism.” The success of Ms. Le Pen’s strenuous efforts to bring about what commentators in the country had called her “banalization” — the masking or softening of any rightist threat through a quiet tone and some more moderate policies — was expected to emerge. Certainly, if nothing else, her call after this latest stabbing for “hundreds of thousands of illegals” to be deported, summoning visions of mass repatriations and chaos, was a reminder of what endures behind her ever-blander persona.

See: NY Times Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/24/world/europe/france-terrorism-far-right.html>, retrieved on 28.04.2021

IsP140209-France: 20 ex-generals warn Macron of chaos, civil war— Former generals and military personnel warned President Emmanuel Macron in a letter to act against the looming dangers of hatred due to social tensions, religious extremism or face a civil war-like situation in the future. The open letter was an initiative of retired gendarmerie officer Jean-Pierre Fabre-Bernadac that was published on his Place Armes blog, an online community of military personnel. It was signed by 20 retired generals and more than 1,000 officials of different rank and files in the military, police and gendarmerie who claimed that they couldn’t remain “indifferent” and “passive spectators” in the current circumstances. The letter said Islamism in France had resulted in an attempt to create districts “where the laws of the Republic do not apply” and “transform them into territories subject to dogmas contrary to our constitution.” The letter was endorsed by far-right opposition leader Marine Le Pen on the right-wing news site Valeurs Actuelles.

See: Anadolu Agency News' entry, in: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/france-20-ex-generals-warn-macron-of-chaos-civil-war-/2218775>, retrieved on 29.04.2021

IsP140210-French: Senate approves toughened version of bill accused of stigmatising Islam— On April 12, The French Senate, dominated by right-wing opposition party Les Républicains, approved a new version of the so-called controversial "separatism" bill by 208 in favour, with 109 opposed. The new version expanded the measures already adopted by the

National Assembly, controlled by President Emmanuel Macron’s centrist Republic on the Move party (LREM).

The Senate-approved version included the following new measures:

- Expanded ban on symbols or clothing expressing religious faith in public. The new version proposed to expand bans on face coverings including for parents accompanying children on school outings, during national sport competitions and for minors in public places, as well as the full-body swimsuit, known as the burkini at swimming pools;
- Banned religion practices in public universities and other higher learning institutions.
- The text would ban political campaigning on platforms deemed contrary to “national sovereignty and democracy, as well as secularism” and forbids candidates with religious symbols on campaign material and “openly communitarian” platforms.
- Immigration authorities would have the right to refuse renewing resident cards of persons appeared to have rejected republican principles, social services would be able to withhold family benefits in the event of too many school absences, and mayors would have the right to forbid foreign flags during marriages or civil unions.
- Senators chose to soften measures regarding home schooling. The government argued homeschooling could be a cover for radicalisation and sought to introduce a system by which families wanting to home school would have to request authorization. However, Senators struck down this measure, in which they preferred to retain the current system of simply declaring home schooling.
- A number of articles had been included in the Senate version. One amendment would require state approval for foreign funding of religious sites and to oppose private schools financed by states deemed “hostile” to France.
- Concomitant with controversy over “non-mixed” meetings organised by left-wing student union UNEF, the right-wing senators introduced a clause that would allow the government to ban any group that restricts access to meetings on the basis of skin colour or origin.

See: Radio France Internationale News’ entry, in: <https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20210413-french-senate-approves-toughened-version-of-bill-accused-of-stigmatising-islam-religion-muslims>, retrieved on 29.04.2021



IsP140211-Netherlands: Threatening Letter Sent to Dutch Mosque— On April 8, a threatening letter was sent to Omar Ibn Al Khattab mosque in the central Netherlands, according to the mosque’s social media post. The threatening letter contained Islamophobic and racist threats targeting Turkish and Moroccan communities in the central city of Almere. The mosque had been attacked three times in the last six years, it added. Local media also reported that the police started a criminal investigation to locate the senders following number of complaints from community leaders.

See: USA Today News’ entry, in: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2021/04/08/facebook-hate-speech-muslims-lawsuit-zuckerberg/4844524001/>, retrieved on 11.04.2021

IsP140212-Netherlands: Geert Wilders Attacks Islam, Muslims' Holy Month of Ramadan—

On April 12, Geert Wilders, the leader of the far-right Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), posted a video on twitter attacking Islam and Ramadan, with the incendiary captions; “Ramadan, not our culture, not our history, not our future,” “Stop Islamization,” and “Islam does not belong in the Netherlands.” Many on Twitter were quick to express their disagreement. “Saying freedom, while not letting people believe in their religion,” one user replied. David Kaye, a clinical professor of law at the University of California and a former UN special rapporteur on freedom of expression said, “Geert Wilders is repulsive.”

See: Morocco World News entry, in: <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2021/04/339802/geert-wilders-attacks-islam-muslims-holy-month-of-ramadan/>, retrieved on 18.04.2021



IsP140213-Germany: German police suspected of supplying ammunition to anti-Muslim extremists— At least 20 German police officers had been suspected of stealing service-issue pistol, submachine gun and sniper rifle ammunition and giving it to a shooting range linked to a far-right extremist group. Nordkreuz, the group at the center of the investigation, was stockpiling weaponry, ammunition and other supplies in the belief that Germany would collapse into civil war amid an armed Muslim uprising. Its 50 or so members, thought to include army and police officers, had planned to exploit the chaos of civil war by seizing power through a military coup using weapons stashed in “safe houses” across the country, according to messages sent on an encrypted messaging app. A police raid on one of the group’s founders, a police officer known as Marko G, 50, uncovered 55,000 cartridges for various weapons. That stash included 90 sniper rifle bullets believed to have been stolen from a special forces armory in the south-eastern state of Bavaria. Prosecutors say the ammunition was handed to the Baltic Shooters range in the town of Gustrow, in the northeast of the country, in exchange for unauthorized firearms lessons. Petric Kleine, president of Saxony’s state police force, said: “These allegations feel like a slap in the face for my agency. I’m furious and disappointed that a whole special operations unit not only deliberately ignored their orders, but that some of them abused our trust for their criminal activities.”

See: Arabnews newspaper entry, in: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1841631/amp>, retrieved on 13.04.2021

IsP140214-Germany: Syrian refugee quits bid for German parliament seat over racism—

Tareq Alaows, a refugee who fled military conscription in Syria, had withdrawn his bid to win a seat in Germany's parliament due to security concerns after his candidacy prompted a wave of racist insults, his Greens party said on March 30. "The high level of threat to me, and especially to people close to me, is the most important reason for withdrawing my candidacy," Alaows said in a statement published by the Greens, adding he had faced a massive amount of racism. Alaows said on February that he planned to run for the Greens in a former coal-mining region of western Germany in a national election on September 26 pending the approval of his application for German citizenship prior to the election. The Greens said Alaows would had been the first refugee elected to the federal parliament.



See: Reuters News' entry, in: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-election-syrian-candidate-idUSKBN2AP1BR>, retrieved on 19.04.2021

IsP140215-Denmark: Denmark had gone far-right on refugees— the week before, Danish authorities ruled that the security situation around Damascus had improved, despite evidence of dire living conditions and continued persecution by the regime. As a result, they stripped 94 refugees of their right to stay in the country. Also a newly introduced proposal would move all asylum applicants outside Denmark. Denmark, the first country to sign the U.N. Refugee Convention in 1951, had now adopted an asylum policy that's less like that of its Scandinavian neighbors than of nationalist countries like Austria or Hungary. Thankfully, nobody was been sent back to Syria anytime soon. Under the new system, refugees should had lived in Denmark for at least 10 years for their attachment to the country to be considered strong enough for continued residence. However, it was impossible to deport anyone back to Syria because Denmark wouldn't negotiate with the regime and very few Syrians were willing to return voluntarily. So those who lose their residency permits would likely end up in Danish camps awaiting deportation or in other European countries. But the fact remains that Denmark was now passing laws with obviously discriminatory purposes, with politicians on both the left and right speaking about ethnic minorities and Muslims in terms that would be unimaginable in neighboring countries. The reason for this far right policy been introduced and pushed by a left-wing coalition government led by the Social Democrats party was due to the political war between the Social Democrats and the far-right Danish People's Party. Though the Danish People's Party had never been part of a government, its representatives had spent the past two decades using their mandates for a single purpose: They only vote for bills concerning other issues if they got restrictions on foreigners in return. Step by step, the Danish People's Party had dragged all the other parties in their direction. At the moment, Danish politicians were discussing a bill that was even more extreme than its predecessors: a loose and imprecise plan for a contract to transfer asylum seekers who arrive in Denmark to a non-European country (most likely in Africa), where their cases would be processed. If they were granted asylum, they would stay in that third country. The minister said it would make the asylum system more "humane and fair," but Danish human rights organizations and the UNHCR said it would do precisely the opposite. Fortunately, it seems like the right wing was so offended by the Social Democrats co-opting and expanding their policies that they would vote against it. But if it passes, the policy could have terrible consequences for collaboration within the European Union and on the international level.

See: Politico News' entry, in: <https://www.politico.eu/article/denmark-has-gone-far-right-on-refugees/>, retrieved on 21.04.2021

IsP140216-India: Imam attacked in Karnataka mosque, assailants caught on CCTV— On March 30, An Imam named Mushtaq was attacked at a mosque in the Farangipete area in Mangalore city, state of Karnataka, police said. According to the Mangalore Police, three people attacked the Imam, while he was sleeping inside the mosque. The cause of the attack was being ascertained. Police said: "Three assailants caught on CCTV camera; investigation underway." The Imam had been admitted to the hospital for medical assistance.

See: Asian News International news' entry, in: <https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/imam-attacked-in-karnataka-mosque-assailants-caught-on-cctv20210331163106/>, retrieved on 05.04.2021



IsP140217-India: Hindu nationalists tear down Delhi temple statue of Indian spiritual teacher, claiming he is a Muslim— Delhi Police had initiated an investigation over the removal of a statue depicting the spiritual leader Sai Baba from a temple in the city's south, after several videos emerged online which had shown a group of men demolishing the idol and declaring him a "Muslim". According to a police report, the idol was removed, on March 25, from the Purana Shiv temple in the neighbourhood of Shahpur Jat. It had since been replaced by a statue of the Hindu deity Ganesh. A wall sticker with the saint's popular preaching "sabka malik ek" or "everyone's Lord is one" had also been taken down. Appearing in several of the videos was the high-profile Hindu priest Yati Narsinghanand, who had been described as "one of the shrillest voices in the Hindutva ecosystem". Saraswati had been under investigation by Delhi police for stoking religious tensions with an inflammatory speech against the Prophet Muhammad, in which he called for a "war on Islam". He also publicly praised the beating of a 14-year-old Muslim boy, who was seriously injured on March 12 for drinking water from a Hindu temple in the northern city of Dasna, Uttar Pradesh.

See: The Art Newspaper entry, in: <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/jihadi-statue-removed-from-delhi-temple>, retrieved on 25.04.2021

IsP140218-Palestine: Israel criticized for silencing call to prayer from Al-Aqsa Mosque— On April 13, Israeli police had broken the locks and cut the electric lines to the loudspeakers at four minarets in Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque, where they silenced evening calls to prayer on the first day of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, which coincided with the Israeli national remembrance

for its fallen soldiers at the nearby Western Wall. The move reportedly came after officials of the Jerusalem Islamic Waqf, a Jordanian agency that oversees Jerusalem's holy sites, refused to voluntarily turn off loudspeakers. They said the Israelis had wanted quiet while new soldiers prayed at the Western Wall. According to Wasfi Kailani, the executive director of the Hashemite Fund for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and a newly appointed member of the Jerusalem Islamic Waqf Council, said "this is the first time since 1967 that Israeli occupiers have sabotaged locks in order to enter the minarets and physically cut off the electricity to the loudspeakers." Hanna Issa, head of the Islamic-Christian Committee for Jerusalem, told RNS that the Israeli action is a violation of the 1998 Rome Convention and called on the international community to hold Israel to account. UNESCO's executive board had unanimously slammed the Israeli action during its 211th session of its plenary meeting on April 15, in which they issued a resolution stating that all Israeli activities aiming to change the character and legal status of the Old City of Jerusalem, were considered null and void.

See: Religion News web entry, in: <https://religionnews.com/2021/04/16/israel-criticized-for-silencing-call-to-prayer-from-al-aqsa-mosque/>, retrieved on 18.04.2021

IsP140219-Palestine: Middle East Police arrest dozens in Jerusalem clashes; Israeli nationalists chant 'Death to Arabs'— After a night of violence in Jerusalem, Israeli police made over 50 arrests and Palestinian medics said 100 were injured during Ramadan clashes in the contested city at the core of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On Thursday April 22 night, police in riot gear and on horseback fought to keep apart two groups of protesters - Palestinian and ultra-nationalist Israelis chanting anti-Arab slogans. Palestinians said police had tried to prevent them from holding their usual Ramadan evening gatherings outside Damascus Gate, an historic landmark on the north side of the Old City and adjacent to several Palestinian neighbourhoods. On the same night, hundreds of ultra-nationalist Israelis - many of them young and religious - marched through central Jerusalem towards the Damascus Gate, which police had barricaded as a precaution. As they marched, many chanted "Death to Arabs" and some waved banners reading: "Death to terrorists".

See: Reuters News' entry, in: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/police-arrest-dozens-jerusalem-clashes-israeli-nationalists-chant-death-arabs-2021-04-23/>, retrieved on 29.04.2021

AUSTRALIA

IsP140220-Australia: New analysis reveals Islamophobia is still alive in Australia— Western Sydney University researchers had published an analysis of a national survey into the racist attitudes and experiences in Australia, in which they offered a new insights into attitudes towards the nation's Muslim population, the study included strategies to counteract Islamophobia. The research team, included Lead author Professor Kevin Dunn, from the University's School of Social Sciences and Challenging Racism Project, Dr Thierno Diallo and Dr Rachel Sharples from Western Sydney University's School of Social Sciences. Professor Dunn said: "The new analysis found that just over one-in-ten Australians are overtly and intentionally Islamophobic. This group in our society do not welcome cultural diversity and do not agree with racial equality. They have negative views about refugees and people from Middle-Eastern backgrounds." The analysis assessed data from the Face Up to Racism: 2015-16 National Survey which attracted 6001 adult respondents. It found participants fell into four broad groups based on their perception of Islam: (a) Islamophobes: 13%; (b) Those who were unsure about diversity and had some concerns about Muslims: 24 %; (c) Those with progressive attitudes about diversity but with concerns about Muslims: 50%; and (d) Progressives who had no concerns about Muslims: 13%. In addition, the

analysis found the different manifestations of Islamophobia in Australia required a diversity of anti-racist efforts. It also found a clear link between Islamophobia and anti-refugee discourses and politics. The research team, called for a renewed and more diversified approach to countering Islamophobia. “More support is needed for people working day-to-day in our schools, workplaces, community and recreation venues who come face to face with the many levels and forms of Islamophobia.” said Dr Sharples.

See: Mirage News entry, in: <https://www.miragenews.com/new-analysis-reveals-islamophobia-is-still-538241/>, Also: See: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1468796821989819>, retrieved on 02.04.2021

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

IsP140221-UNAOC: Press Statement on the Anti-Muslim Attacks in Western France— On April 13, The High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, had issued a press statement in which he strongly condemned acts of anti-Muslim hatred that took place in Nantes and Rennes, Western France. The High-Representative denounced the graffiti found on the walls of the Avicenne Islamic cultural center in the western French city of Rennes, which were discovered on April 11 and the arson attack on the door of the Arrahma mosque in Nantes city. The High Representative stated that such despicable acts were an affront to international human rights laws and the values and principles the United Nations uphold, particularly the freedom of religion or belief. He added that now more than ever, unity and solidarity should be guiding our actions as we stand firmly against the surge in anti-Muslim hatred, stigma, ethnonationalism as well as hate speech targeting vulnerable populations based on their religion or belief.

See: UNAOC News' entry, in: <https://www.unaoc.org/2021/04/press-statement-on-the-anti-muslim-attacks-in-western-france/>, retrieved on 18.04.2021

NORTH AMERICA

IsP140222-US: New prayer stickers in Hennepin Healthcare are a welcome message for Muslim patients— On April 6, The Hennepin Healthcare in Minnesota and Muslim leaders had installed stickers in 60 rooms around the emergency department indicating qibla, the direction they should face when praying. Hennepin Healthcare also made a commitment to put prayer stickers throughout the hospital as a nod of support for their growing caseload of Muslim patients. At least 150,000 Muslims live in Minnesota. The Hennepin Healthcare's emergency department had been serving more than 210 patients on average a day, and many were of the Muslim faith.



"This is a historical moment for both Hennepin Healthcare and our Muslim community in Minnesota," said imam Sharif Abdirahman of Dar Al-Hijrah mosque, which donated about 250 qibla stickers to the hospital. "When patients come to HCMC, a level one trauma hospital, they may experience emotional distress so we want to make sure the environment is welcoming and inclusive." Hennepin Healthcare physicians were the first to notice the importance of prayers to their Muslim patients and the additional stress it caused them when they struggled to tell which direction to face when praying. The doctors suggested to the Emergency Management Diversity Committee that it should place qibla indicators in their exam rooms. Attending Tuesday's event with local imams was Mike Van Keulen, executive director of Open Path Resources, said "It's having accurate information about which way to pray, but the bigger thing is, when you walk in the hospital and there's the qibla sign there, the hospital is saying, 'We knew you would be here and you're welcome here and this is your hospital too... It's important for Minnesota to take note that we can make progress."

See: Star Tribune news' entry, in: <https://www.startribune.com/new-prayer-stickers-in-hennepin-healthcare-are-a-welcome-message-for-muslim-patients/600043191/>, retrieved on 02.04.2021

IsP140223-US: California police fire officer who was a Proud Boy, saying they have no tolerance for 'hate groups'— On April 9, A police department in California had fired an officer named, Rick Fitzgerald, after they had investigated his ties with the far right group, Proud Boys. The officer, rallied with the Proud Boys in November 2020 at a pro-Trump demonstration that devolved into violence — captured in video clips that resurfaced in March as online sleuths dug into Fitzgerald's history. In a statement, Fresno Police Chief Paco Balderrama said he disapproves of “any police officer” who had affiliated themselves with violent or hateful groups. “Such ideology, behavior and affiliations have no place in law enforcement and will not be tolerated within the ranks of the Fresno Police Department,” Balderrama said.

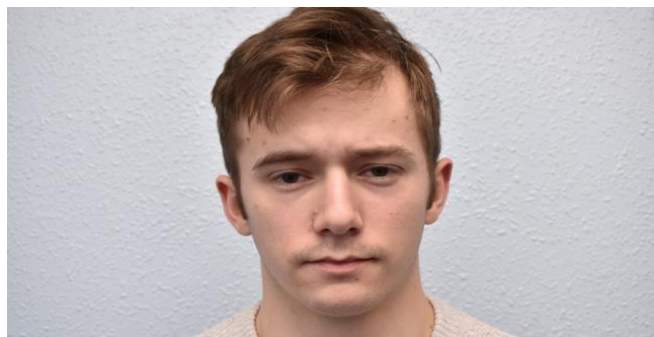
See: The Washington Post Newspaper' entry, in: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/04/11/fresno-rick-fitzgerald-proud-boys/>, retrieved on 20.04.2021

IsP140224-US: US House approves bill to restrict future 'Muslim ban'— On April 21, The United States House of Representatives passed legislation restricting the ability of any U.S. president to implement a travel ban based on religion, a move that was warmly welcomed by civil rights groups that asserted that the bill is "a major step forward." The law was presented as a response to former President Donald Trump's controversial “Muslim ban” that banned residents from several Muslim-majority countries from traveling to the U.S. The bill, informally known as the NO BAN Act, was approved by a 218-208 vote in the House and will go to U.S. Senate to be voted into law.

See: Daily Sabah News' entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/americas/us-house-approves-bill-to-restrict-future-muslim-ban>, retrieved on 26.04.2021

EUROPE

IsP140225-UK: Met Police officer Benjamin Hannam faces jail for belonging to neo-Nazi terrorist group National Action— On April 1, a Metropolitan Police officer, PC Benjamin Hannam, had been convicted of belonging to a banned neo-Nazi terrorist group. Hannam, from Edmonton, north London, was believed to be the first British officer convicted of a terrorism offence. He was found guilty of membership of banned right-wing extremist group National Action (NA) following a trial at the Old Bailey. Hannam was also convicted on two counts of fraud for lying on his application and vetting forms to join the Metropolitan Police, and two counts of having terror documents detailing “knife combat” and making explosive devices. Hannam, who denied been a member of NA, worked as a probationary officer for nearly two years before he was found on a leaked database of users of extreme right-wing



forum Iron March. He signed up to the forum when he joined the London branch of neo-Nazi group NA in March 2016. Members venerated Adolf Hitler as a “divine figure” and celebrated violence, including war and genocide, the court heard.

See: inews entry, in: <https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/met-police-officer-benjamin-hannam-national-action-neo-nazi-group-jail-938870>, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140226-UK: Islamophobia in the workplace: recommendations for employers—On March 2, Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) had published a report which provided a detailed analysis of Islamophobia, how it was defined and how it could be identified, and therefore how it could be tackled across various aspects of British society. Of importance to employers was the report’s section on Islamophobia in the workplace and its suggestions for building a more wholly inclusive working environment for Muslim employees. The report had identified that Muslim men were up to 76% less likely to be employed compared with white male British Christians of the same age and with the same qualifications. The report found that a job seeker with an English name was likely to be offered three times more interviews than someone with a Muslim name. The report recommended that existing HR protocols should be adapted to help address Islamophobia in the workplace. To achieve this, the report suggested that employers should: (a) Ensure that employee relations protocols were revised to include specific references to Islamophobia and consult an employee relations specialist and Muslim-led organisations when doing so; (b) Ensure an HR or employee relations member of staff had undergone faith and race based trainings; (c) Revise ethnic diversity and inclusion protocols and strategies to be conducive to a faith-friendly organisation culture; (d) Make unconscious and conscious bias training compulsory for leadership staff and line managers involved in recruitment and career progression; and (e) Foster a culture of dialogue in the workplace that encourages open conversations between leadership staff and employees and encourages employees from minority communities to actively be involved in that culture.

See: Stevens-Bolton News’ entry, in: <https://www.stevens-bolton.com/site/insights/articles/islamophobia-in-the-workplace-recommendations-for-employers>, Also See: Full Report, in: full report: https://mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/FULL-SPREAD-IslamophobiaReport_020321_compressed.pdf, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140227-UK: Probe launched into UK school’s use of Prophet Muhammad cartoon—The Batley Grammar School in West Yorkshire which was at the center of a row after pupils were shown a cartoon of the Prophet Muhammad in class on March 22 would be subject to an independent investigation. Batley Multi Academy Trust, which was in charge of the Grammar School, said it was launching a probe to review the “offensive” material used in the class. It added that the school’s religious studies curriculum as a whole would also be assessed by the independent panel, expected to start on April 12.

See: Arabnews newspaper entry, in: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1835126/world>, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140228-UK: Two more staff suspended at school at centre of Prophet Muhammad cartoon row—two more members of staff at Batley Grammar School had been suspended, it had been reported. The school had apologised and suspended a teacher pending an investigation following a protest over the cartoon of the Prophet Muhammad been shown in a class on March 22. It had since emerged that two other teachers had also been suspended although this information was not made available to the public. According to Mail Online newspaper, one 'school source' said: "Two other teachers are also being investigated but the school has been trying to keep it secret because they don't want attention being drawn to the fact that this went beyond the actions of one person." It was understood they were aware the material was going to be used, but were not in class when it was shown.

See: LBC News’ entry, in: <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/two-more-staff-suspended-at-school-at-centre-of-prophet-muhammad-cartoon-row/>, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140229-UK: White supremacist who targeted Jess Philips sentenced to two years in prison—

On April 9, Tony Eckersley, A white supremacist from Salford, Greater Manchester, was sentenced to 28 months in prison at Manchester crown court, after pleading guilty to racially aggravated harassment of Labour MP Jess Phillips between May 2019 and February 2020. Eckersley, had sent the MP more than 300 violent, misogynistic and racist messages which contained extreme racist language, aimed predominantly towards those from an Asian or Muslim background. Judge Hilary Manley, who delivered the sentencing, said the “ranting, hate-filled and threatening messages contained repeated and vile slurs directed at Muslim and Arab people, repulsive language and calculated and spiteful misogyny towards a serving MP”, and that targeting a serving MP and seeking to intimidate and silence her “strikes at the heart of democracy”.



repeated and vile slurs directed at Muslim and Arab people, repulsive language and calculated and spiteful misogyny towards a serving MP”, and that targeting a serving MP and seeking to intimidate and silence her “strikes at the heart of democracy”.

See: The Guardian Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/apr/09/white-supremacist-who-targeted-jess-phillips-sentenced-for-two-years>, Also See: Source of the Picture, in:

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/tony-eckersley-jess-phillips-mp-20355551>, retrieved on 11.04.2021

IsP140230-UK: County Durham Tory candidates suspended over racist and Islamophobic social media posts—

The UK Conservative Party had suspended and initiated an investigation against Durham County Council local election’s candidates, Terry Batson and Laura Rides over racist and Islamophobic social media posts, which anti-racism campaigners had described as an “outrageous attack on Muslim and BAME communities.” Batson, shared an image of a golliwog on Facebook, while another post launched an offensive diatribe at a black Labour activist, referring to “coloured citizens.” On the other hand, Rides, admitted to been Islamophobic in a Twitter post in January 2020, claiming that she did not hate Islam but was “to a degree fearful” of the religion. Both individuals had now been referred to Tory headquarters for investigation. Alex Mayer of Stand Up to Racism North East said: “The Islamophobic and racist comments that had been made by two candidates for the Tory Party in County Durham are an outrageous attack on Muslim and BAME communities.

See: Reuters News’ entry, in: <https://morningstaronline.co.uk/article/b/countv-durham-tory-candidates-suspended-over-racist-and-islamophobic-social-media-posts>, retrieved on 20.04.2021

IsP140231-UK: Tory candidate apologises for misjudgement tweeting support for far-right activist Tommy Robinson—

Stephen Chadwick, the Conservative party’s candidate in the forthcoming Warrington Borough Council Local Elections had apologised for tweeting support for far-right activist Tommy Robinson, which he said was a misjudgement. Chadwick, put out a tweet in May 2019 promoting Robinson’s campaign website, in which he said he had become a registered supporter, much to the dismay of a Lymm resident, who questioned whether the local Conservative Party was condoning far-right politics by selecting a supporter of Tommy Robinson, a far-right and anti-Islam activist who was the co-founder and former leader of the English Defence League. Chadwick said: “Everybody who knows me, knows that I do not share the views of far-right political groups. My post was a misjudgement on my part and one which I now regret and apologise for.”

See: Warrington-Worldwide News’ entry, in: <https://www.warrington-worldwide.co.uk/2021/04/20/tory-candidate-apologises-for-misjudgement-tweeting-support-for-far-right-activist-tommy-robinson/>, retrieved on 25.04.2021

IsP140232-Hungary: Study casts doubt on possible far-right MEP alliance— On March 31,

Researcher Matthias Diermeier, from the German Economic Institute and the University Duisburg-Essen along with Hannah Frohwein and Aljoscha Nau, from the same institute, had drafted a 45-page study report titled “One for one and none for all – The Radical Right in the European”. The study followed the Budapest talks, organised by Hungary’s prime minister Viktor Orbán, in which he was seeking to create a new populist alliance after his Fidesz MEPs were removed from the dominant centre-right group, the European People’s Party (EPP).



Italy’s Matteo Salvini, also attended the meetings. However, Diermeier, had poured cold water on that ever happening, and said economic and political nativism, further divided by East-West perspectives, made such an alliance a remote possibility. “Our conclusion would be it is very unlikely that these differences can be overcome in an alliance, or the alliance would be so weak that it literally makes no sense,” he said. Researchers found that nativist ideologies tend to divide far-right MEPs, often pitting eastern and western counterparts against one another. These divides were further aggravated by historical grievances over Russia, for instance. Although most of the far-right were drawn towards authoritarianism, deep divisions remain over how they view Russia and China. Nau said the Western far-right tend to admire Russian strength while their eastern colleagues cringe at Moscow. A similar geographic split on China also emerged, said Nau. The researchers drew their conclusions based, in part, by digging into European Parliament voting records spanning 2014 to 2019.

See: News of the World entry, in: <https://newsoftheworld.live/2021/04/02/study-casts-doubt-on-possible-far-right-mep-alliance/>, Also: See: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/european-institute/Assets/Documents/LEQS-Discussion-Papers/LEOSPaper167.pdf>, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140233-Italy: Salvini sent to trial on migrant kidnapping charge — Matteo Salvini, leader

of Italy’s right-wing League party, would stand trial on charges of kidnapping over his decision to prevent more than 100 migrants from landing in the country in 2019, a judge ordered on April 17. Salvini, who was interior minister at that time, left the migrants stranded at sea until prosecutors ordered the seizure of the ship and the evacuation of the people on board. The trial should begin in the Sicilian capital of Palermo on September 15. Salvini, who had built much of his political fortune on an anti-immigration campaign, could face up to 15 years in prison if found guilty at the end of a tortuous, three-stage judicial process. A definitive conviction could bar him from government office.

See: Elpais News’ entry, in: <https://english.elpais.com/politics/2021-04-21/spanish-prosecutors-probe-far-right-campaign-billboard-over-hate-crime-allegations.html>, retrieved on 25.04.2021

IsP140234-France: Minister calls for security at mosques after attack — France’s Interior

Minister, Gérald Darmanin, had called for greater security for Muslim places of worship after vandals defaced the walls of a mosque days before the start of Ramadan. On April 11, a caretaker and members of the local Muslim community discovered graffiti on a mosque and Muslim cultural centre in the western city of Rennes. The graffiti included tags insulting Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. Darmanin said, during a visit to the site, “The anti-Muslim inscriptions that have been inscribed on this cultural and religious centre are unacceptable...Freedom of worship in France is a fundamental freedom.” The Minister said he had asked French police and the

gendarmérie, which was responsible for policing smaller towns rural areas, to “strengthen vigilance around Muslim places of worship ... at the dawn of Ramadan”.

See: Aljazeera News’ entry, in: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/12/french-interior-minister-tightens-mosque-security-after-attack>, retrieved on 14.04.2021

IsP140235-Spain: Spanish prosecutors probe far-right campaign billboard over hate crime allegations— Spanish leftist parties, including the governing Socialist Party (PSOE), took legal action against the far-right Vox party for what they described as an attack on migrant minors on a campaign billboard ahead of a regional election in Madrid on May 4. The message on the Vox billboard used the term mena, the Spanish acronym for an unaccompanied foreign migrant minor, which was often employed to negatively portray children and teenagers who had arrived in Spain without their families. The sign read “€4,700 a month for a mena. €426 a month for your grandmother’s pension,” and featured the images of an elderly woman and a young man wearing a bandana over his face. “Protect Madrid” was written in smaller print at the bottom. The billboard was put up on April 21 in the busy Madrid train station of Puerta del Sol, where tourists, locals, families and thousands of workers pass through every day. It was part of Vox’s aggressive campaign to win over voters ahead of the Madrid election on May 4.

See: Reuters News’ entry, in: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-election-syrian-candidate-idUSKBN2AP1BR>, retrieved on 25.04.2021

IsP140236-Germany: Far-right suspects accused of plotting attacks on Muslims— On April

13, Twelve Germans went on trial suspected of plotting deadly attacks on Muslims, asylum-seekers and political enemies with the alleged aim of fueling civil unrest and overthrowing Germany's government. Federal prosecutors in the southwestern German city of Stuttgart accused eight alleged members of the so-called "Group S" of founding a "terrorist organization" in September 2019. The far-right group was allegedly led by two suspects identified only as Werner S. and Tony E. Prosecutors said several members of the group sought to "rock and ultimately overturn the state and social order of the Federal Republic of Germany" with plans to spark "a civil-war-like situation ... via as-yet undefined attacks on politicians, asylum seekers and people of Muslim faith."



See: DW News’ entry, in: <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-far-right-suspects-accused-of-plotting-attacks-on-muslims/a-57183921>, retrieved on 18.04.2021

ASIA

IsP140237-India: Books with Prophet's image withdrawn after uproar— A prominent publisher of school textbooks and examination guides in Uttar Pradesh had tendered an unconditional apology and had agreed to recall all the copies carrying imaginary photographs of Prophet Muhammad after objection from Islamic seminary DarulUloom in Deoband. The managing director of the publishing house had written a letter to Saharanpur MP Fazlur Rehman in which he said that it was an 'inadvertent error and the books had been recalled from the market. This came a day after the Islamic seminary raised objection to the imaginary photograph and

demanded action against the publisher. MP Fazlur Rehman said, "We have received an apology letter from the publishing house. They have assured us that all books have been removed from the market and destroyed. I think the controversy ends now".

See: Times of India News' entry, in: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/meerut/publisher-in-up-apologizes-recalls-all-textbooks-carrying-imaginary-photo-of-prophet/articleshow/81877085.cms>, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140238-India: Dasna temple priest's inflammatory comments on the Prophet go viral, Delhi police file FIR—

On April 3, the Delhi Police had registered a police report against Yati Narsinghanand Saraswati, head priest of Dasna Devi temple in Ghaziabad city in the state of Uttar Pradesh, for allegedly hurting religious sentiments with his remarks on the Prophet during a press conference in Delhi. Narsinghanand was speaking during a press conference organised by Akhil Bharatiya Sant Parishad (Ghaziabad) on April 2 at the Press Club of India. According to the receipt of the booking, he was the chief guest. In the video of the event, which had gone viral, Narsinghanand could be heard using insulting remarks against the Prophet and Islam. "If Muslims come to know about Mohammed's reality, they will be ashamed to call themselves Muslims," Narsinghanand could be heard saying. On April 3, Amanatullah Khan, AAP MLA and chairman of the Delhi Waqf Board, also filed a complaint against Narsinghanand at the Jamia Nagar police station. The complaint said, "Yati Narsinghanand Saraswati who happens to be the chief priest of Devi mandir, Dasna, leader of hindutva organization, Hindu Swabhimani and president of Akhil Bhartiya Sant Parishad with all his knowledge and intention, had hurt the religious sentiments of the Muslim community, not only in India but all over the world who love and idolize Prophet Muhammad.



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See: The Print News' entry, in: <https://theprint.in/india/dasna-temple-priests-inflammatory-comments-on-the-prophet-go-viral-delhi-police-file-fir/633724/>, retrieved on 01.04.2021

IsP140239-India: 4 arrested for stabbing Muslim man travelling with Hindu woman —

On April 3, Mangaluru police had arrested four people, believed to be right-wing activists, who allegedly stabbed a Muslim man, identified as Anwar, for travelling with a Hindu woman in a bus in coastal Karnataka's Dakshina Kannada district on April 1. The suspects had been identified as Balachandra, Dhanush Bhandary, Jayaprashanth and Anil Kumar. Dhanush was already facing four cases of murder, said police. A senior police official familiar with the case said that the four men were associated with a right-wing organisation. Mohammed, had been admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) of a hospital in Mangaluru. After the attack, a WhatsApp message claimed Bajrang Dal activists stopped the duo from travelling. "Ongoing Operation by Bajrang Dal Today (Thursday). A Hindu young woman who was fleeing with a Muslim man was travelling from Mangaluru to Bengaluru. Bajrang Dal activists stopped the couple near Pumpwell," read a message. Separately, Vishwa Hindu Parishad's (VHP) leader Sharan Pumpwell claimed on April 2 the group's men intercepted the couple as it was a case of "love jihad", but that a mob gathered and turned violent.

See: Hindustan Times News' entry, in: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/4-arrested-for-stabbing-muslim-man-travelling-with-hindu-woman-101617475508185.html>, retrieved on 19.04.2021

IsP140240-India: 'RSS man' held for posing as cleric— An alleged RSS worker was arrested in Murshidabad for posing as a Muslim cleric and spying on people in a local mosque. According to sources, the incident took place in Suti town where the RSS worker named Manik Kumar Chowdhury, a resident of Jharkhand, was spying on the activities of people inside Jama Masjid.

The locals handed him over to police. According to police, probe was underway. Meawnhile, Surya Pratap Yadav, Superintendent of Police (SP) of Jangipur Police District, who was posted to the area a day before, said he would follow-up the case.

See: Millennium Post News' entry, in: <http://www.millenniumpost.in/kolkata/rss-man-held-for-posing-as-cleric-438017>, retrieved on 26.04.2021

IsP140241-India: US Watchdog on Religious Freedom Proposes Targeted Sanctions Against India— On April 21, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), released its annual report in which they had designated India as a “country of particular concern,” and had suggested targeted sanctions on individuals and entities responsible for severe violations of religious freedom by freezing those individuals’ or entities’ assets and/or barring their entry into the United States.” The report had covered events in 2020, accuses India of “engaging in and tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations, as defined by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA).” The USCIRF had further recommended that the US “advance human rights of all religious communities in India and promote religious freedom and dignity and interfaith dialogue through bilateral and multilateral forums and agreements, such as the ministerial of the Quadrilateral.”

See: The Citizen News' entry, in: <https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/newsdetail/index/6/20251/us-watchdog-on-religious-freedom-proposes-targeted-sanctions-against-india>, retrieved on 28.04.2021

AUSTRALIA

IsP140242-New Zealand: New Zealand Anglicans urged to host Iftar meals for Muslims during Ramadan— The Tikanga Pākehā Ecumenical Group (TPEG) had issued a renewed call for churches to promote friendship between Anglicans and Muslims through hosting Iftar meals during Ramadan 2021. “The simple gesture of sharing a meal together builds solidarity and understanding between people of different faiths,” wrote TPEG chair the Rev. Michael Wallace in a letter encouraging the New Zealand dioceses to promote Ramadan hospitality at their church facilities. The Tikanga Pākehā Ecumenical Group was asking Anglicans to remember that our observant Muslim neighbors in Aotearoa New Zealand would be fasting during daylight hours for the month of Ramadan.

See: Episcopal News Service entry, in: <https://www.episcopalnewsservice.org/2021/04/23/new-zealand-anglicans-urged-to-host-iftar-meals-for-muslims-during-ramadan/>, retrieved on 28.04.2021