



ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION

Political Affairs Department

Islamophobia Observatory

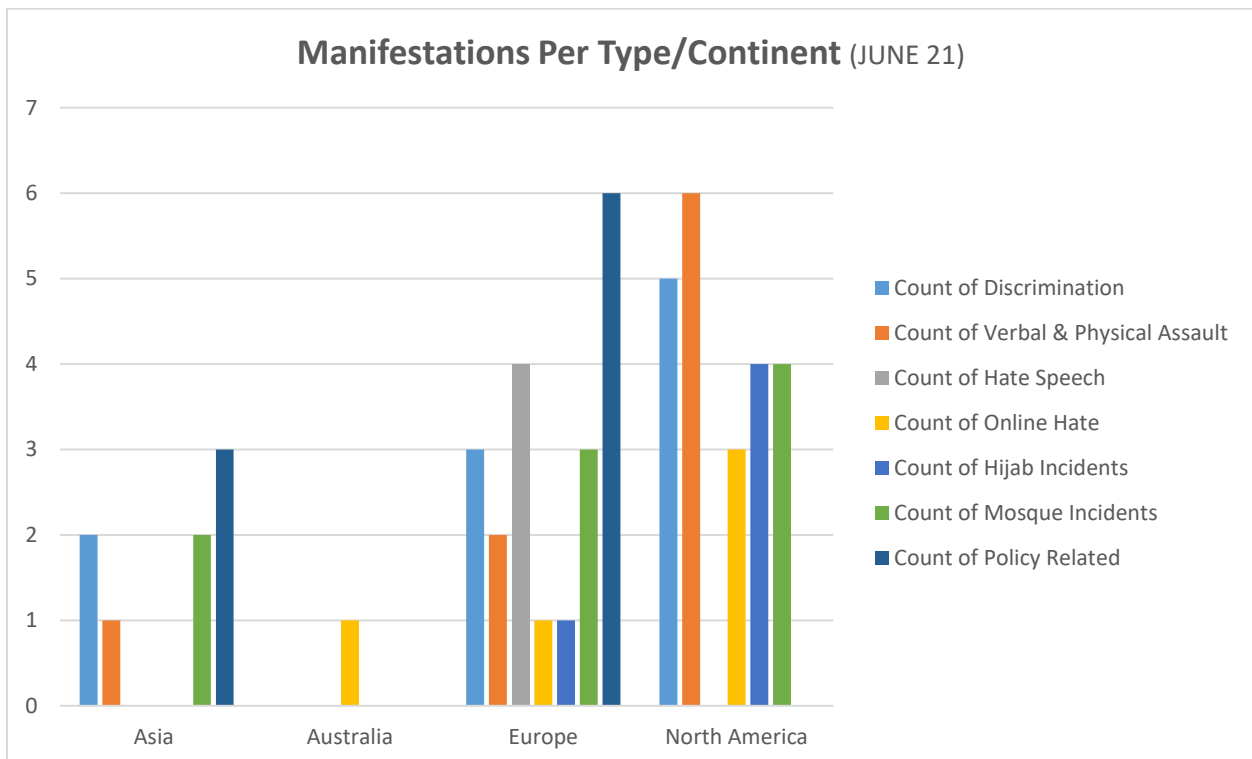
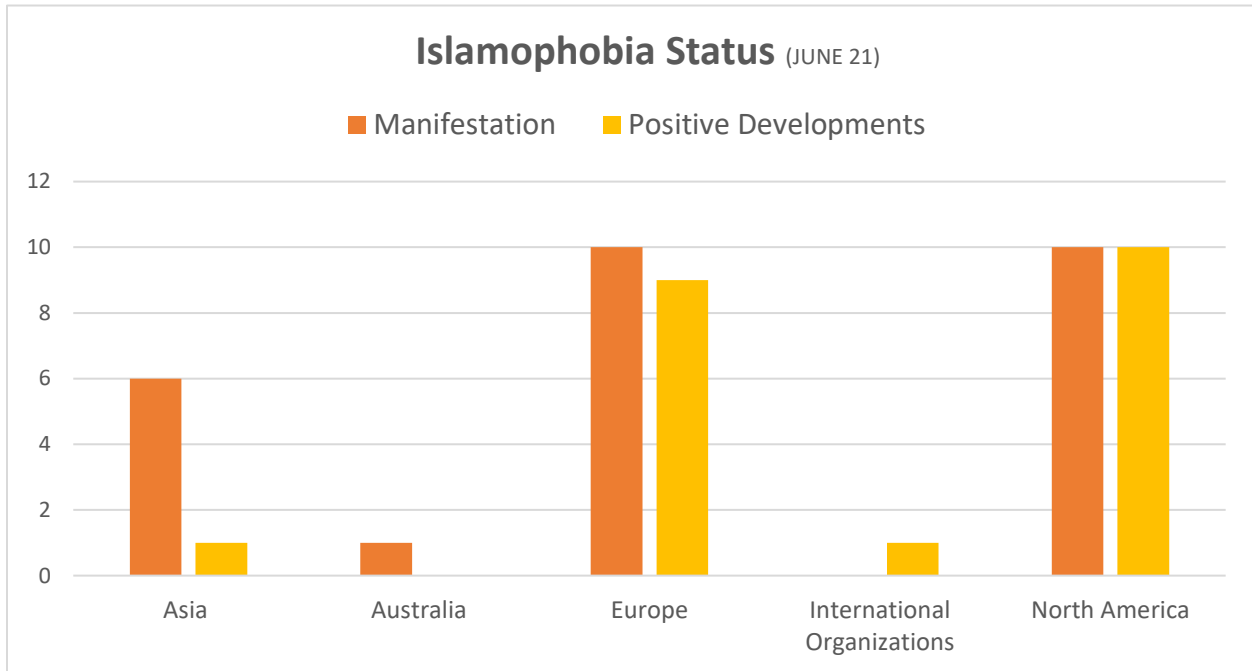
Islamophobia Monitoring

Month: June 2021



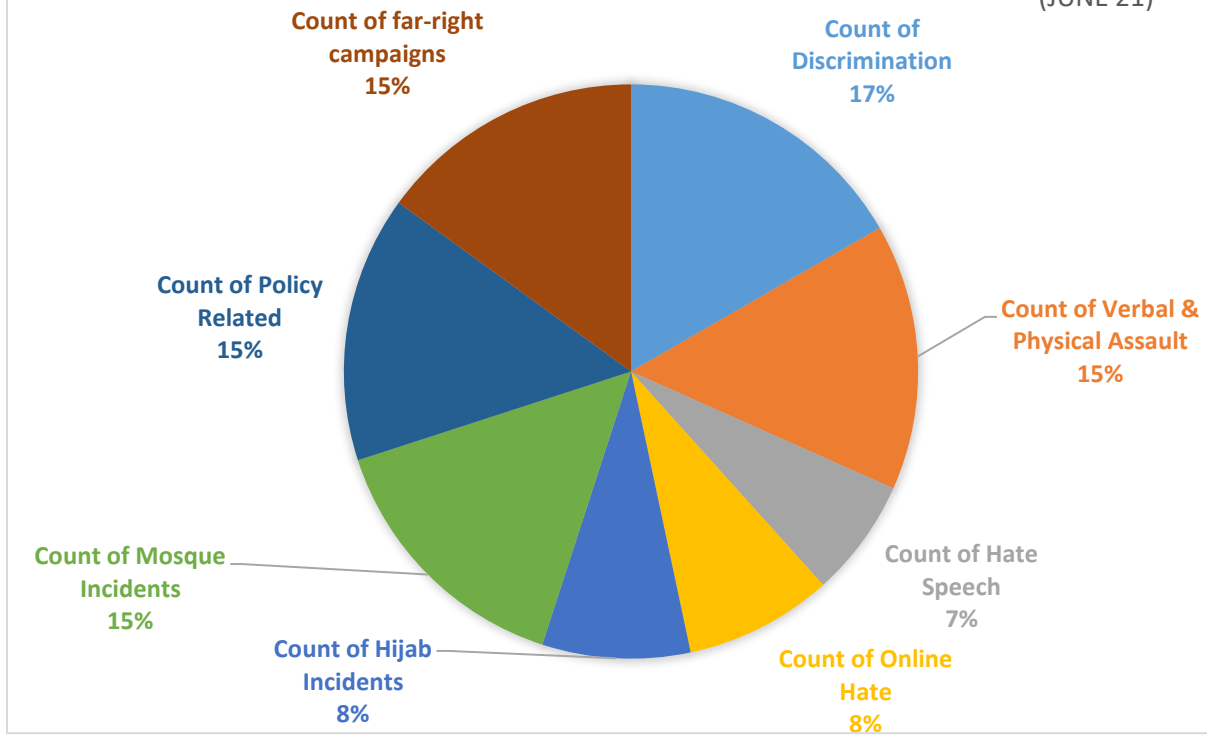
OIC Islamophobia Observatory

Issue: June 2021



MANIFESTATION

(JUNE 21)



MANIFESTATIONS OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

NORTH AMERICA

IsP140304-US: CAIR calls for reported assault on Muslim women to be investigated as hate crime— The Loudoun County sheriff's office was investigating attack on two Muslim women, who were waiting for their children outside of a school. The Council on American-Islamic Relations had asked the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to investigate the assault as a possible hate crime. CAIR said the attack happened on May 19 outside Rolling Ridge Elementary during dismissal. One of the victims, who spoke to FOX 5 off camera, said she and another Muslim woman were waiting to pick up their children when a woman came up to them and yelled, pushed and spat at them while she was holding a cross in their faces. "The two Muslim women were visibly wearing Islamic traditional clothing, hijab and the alleged attacker held a cross and was just showering them with insults and so you can see that there was a religious tone there," said Nihad Awad, executive director and co-founder of CAIR.

See: Fox5 Washington, D.C News' entry, in: <https://www.fox5dc.com/news/cair-calls-for-reported-assault-on-muslim-women-to-be-investigated-as-hate-crime>, retrieved on 07.07.2021



IsP140305-US: Religious flag burned, mosque vandalized with pro-Trump graffiti— On June 14, the Islamic Center of Suffolk County in NY State was vandalized. The perpetrators had also burned a sacred flag and painted pro-Trump graffiti on it's marble base. Two people cut through a fence to enter the facility, defaced the flag base, and set fire to the flag, Suffolk County police said. "It looks like it was pre-meditated," acting Suffolk County Police Commissioner Stuart Cameron said. "Someone had to cut through the fence...They also had to bring whatever was used to set the flag on fire...So it was a very upsetting hate crime to us." Cameron said. The mosque had been a fixture in Brentwood for the last 15 years, and police said there had not been an instance of mosque vandalism in the county since 2018. The nature of the crime, would clearly define it as a hate crime and increase the penalties, police said. And many fear the perpetrators could return.

See: NBC-2 News' entry, in: <https://nbc-2.com/news/crime/2021/05/21/religious-flag-burned-mosque-vandalized-with-pro-trump-graffiti/>, retrieved on 07.07.2021

IsP140306-US: ‘I am Satan chosen son.’ Charlotte mosque reports ‘creepy’ email threat to FBI.— Local Muslims were on alert after the Islamic Center of Charlotte received an email that said “every mosque from here to Bahrain will turn to dust,” center spokesman Jibril Hough said. “You have no Islamic rights in this country, you’re children and women are ours,” the email began. “No mayor, no city, county, state police, FBI, CIA, or the military can stop me,” the e-mailer wrote, according to a copy of the email provided to The Charlotte Observer and other news outlets by Hough on May 21. “I am Satan chosen son, and All religious teachings god or even Allah will be no more,” according to the email, whose writer also said “my power supersede the president of the United States.” “While we did advise the email did not appear to be a federal crime, However we would attempt to identify who wrote it and establish contact with them,” FBI Charlotte office spokeswoman Shelley Lynch told the Observer. Hough said the email “is definitely a threat. It’s a threat on so many different levels. Somewhere the letter says do away with all Muslims. And with us being visible ... we are one of the targets, and we have been one of the targets.”

See: Charlotte Observer News’ entry, in: <https://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/local/article251594828.html>, retrieved on 07.07.2021

IsP140307-US: Question to US Muslim politician prompts Islamophobia accusations— Sam Rasoul, A Muslim political candidate for lieutenant governor in the US state of Virginia was asked a question in a televised debate that critics described as “Islamophobic”. During the campaign’s only televised political debate on May 25, WJLA TV anchor Dave Lucas, one of the moderators, asked Rasoul and said: “The Washington Post reported your fundraising effort is ‘category-leading,’ because of some out-of-state donors connected to Muslim advocacy groups – there’s nothing wrong with that – but that was the case.... Talk a little bit about your fundraising efforts and can you assure Virginians, if you’re elected, you’ll represent all of them regardless of faith and beliefs?” Lucas said during the debate which was held at George Mason University in Fairfax. Rasoul, responded that he was “proud to have a campaign that’s 100 percent funded by individuals, with the majority of contributors coming from Virginia”. Joshua Cole who was running for re-election in the Virginia House of Delegates said he was never asked about how much money he received from “Christian donors”. “I just want a Virginia where Sam Rasoul can be measured on the merit of his work and not the stereotype of his faith,” he said in a tweet. Sean Perryman, a fellow candidate for lieutenant governor, also condemned the question. “No other candidate was asked about their ability to serve all Virginians because of their faith,” he tweeted. Susan Swecker, chairwoman of the Democratic Party in Virginia, said the moderator’s question was a “major fail” and that faith-based questions were “discriminatory and inexcusable”.

See: Aljazeera News’ entry, in: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/27/question-to-muslim-politician-prompts-islamophobia-accusations>, retrieved on 08.07.2021

IsP140308-US: ‘Very disappointing’: Muslim woman says flight attendant did not let her sit in emergency exit row because of hijab— A Muslim passenger on Southwest Airlines was discriminated against when she was allegedly told she could not sit in the aisle of the emergency exit door because she was wearing a hijab. Her sister, who was not wearing a hijab, said she was allowed to sit in the aisle. Fatima Altakrouri said at a news conference on June 1 that she and her sister wanted to sit next to each other in two empty seats on the emergency exit row as they were boarding the May 22 flight to Dallas. They returned to their original separate seats after the flight attendant allegedly denied Fatima. Altakrouri, who was born and raised in the U.S. and wore a hijab during the flight, claimed a flight attendant told her that she “couldn’t speak English and would bring the whole plane down in an emergency.” Fatima said that she spoke to the flight attendant in English. Her sister, Muna Kowni, said that she told the flight attendant twice that Altakrouri spoke English. “This is textbook religious discrimination and profiling,” Faizan Syed,

the executive director of CAIR-Texas DFW said in a statement. "You have two sisters, one who wears the hijab and the other who does not, and both board at the same time. One is denied the right to sit where she wants, while the other is encouraged to take a seat based on nothing else then perceived religiosity," Syed continued. A representative for Southwest Airlines told WFAA in a statement that individuals in exit rows must be able to perform certain duties. "With that said, Southwest neither condones nor tolerates discrimination of any kind," said Brandy King, the director of external communication.

See: WFAA News' entry, in: <https://www.wfaa.com/article/news/local/muslim-woman-claims-discrimination-on-southwest-flight/287-68b1afb7-4043-4b9b-9731-dee80be618a8>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140309-Canada: Edmonton police investigating attack on a Black Muslim woman wearing a hijab— Edmonton Police were investigating a report that a Muslim Canadian woman who was wearing a hijab was attacked on June 11. Jibril Ibrahim, president of the Somali Canadian Cultural Society (SCCS), said the Edmonton woman who was in her 50s, was grabbed by her neck and pushed down to the sidewalk by an unknown person while she was out for a walk near Edmonton's Northmount neighbourhood at about 9 p.m. "She was just walking on this street in the evening just to get a little bit of fresh air... And all of a sudden, someone just grabbed her by the neck and she was thrown on the ground." Edmonton Police Services said the case was been investigated.

See: Yahoo News' entry, in: <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/edmonton-police-investigating-attack-black-041420938.html>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140310-Canada: Hit-and-run that killed 4 believed to be planned Islamophobic attack, Canadian police say— On June 6, A Muslim family was hit by a car on Hyde Park Road, the London Police Service said. The group was waiting to cross the road when a man in a black pickup truck jumped the curb and hit five people from the same family. The truck then sped off from the scene, Detective Superintendent Paul Waight said on June 7. Nathaniel Veltman was found about four miles from the intersection and was arrested without incident by officers. "There is evidence that this was a planned, premeditated act motivated by hate... It is believed these victims were targeted because they were Muslim. There is no known previous connection between the suspect and the victims." Waight said. A woman was pronounced dead at the scene while two adults and two children were taken to a hospital. A teenager and both adults, a man and woman, later died at the hospital. The victims range in age from age 15 to 74, but they had not yet been identified by authorities due to the family's request.

See: NBCNEWS News' entry, in: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/hit-run-killed-4-believed-be-planned-islamophobic-attack-canadian-n1269904>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140311-Canada: Man with knife attacks 2 women wearing hijabs outside Edmonton, RCMP say— RCMP were looking for a suspect after they said a masked man attacked two young women who were wearing hijabs, where he knocked one unconscious and assaulted the second at knifepoint, in a daytime attack in St. Albert, Alta. The incident, which happened around 12:30 p.m. on June 23, was been investigated as a hate-motivated crime, St. Albert RCMP said on June 24. The women were walking along a gravel pathway near Alderwood Park, Edmonton's northwest. A white man yelled racist remarks and approached them, RCMP said in a news release. He grabbed one woman by her hijab and pushed her to the ground, and knocked her unconscious. He then pulled out a knife and knocked down the second woman, holding the knife to her throat while he continued to yell racial slurs at both women. The suspect ran off after the attack, police said.

See: HIIRAN News' entry, in: https://www.hiiraan.com/comments/comments7.aspx?fname=man_with_knife_attacks_2_women_wearing_hijabs_outside_edmonton_rcmp_sav&month=Jun&year=2021&id=183025, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140312-Canada: ‘Sad and troubled’: Police called after swastika painted on Edmonton mosque— There was frustration after a symbol was discovered on an east Edmonton mosque on June 15. It's been less than a week since a woman who were wearing a hijab was attacked in the city. Muslim leaders said the community was experiencing unprecedented hate. The president of the Baitul Hadi Mosque in east Edmonton said “It was not a good feeling that a symbol of hate was painted on our wall — at a mosque, which is usually a place of worship, a place of gathering,” Humayun Ahmed told Global News on June 15 night. He said the vandalism was first spotted in the morning, and police were contacted. He said the symbol of hate would be removed once the investigation was complete.

See: GLOBAL NEWS entry, in: <https://globalnews.ca/news/7953819/swastika-painted-edmonton-mosque/>, retrieved on 11.07.2021



IsP140313-Canada: Toronto mosque where staff were allegedly threatened calls for incident to be probed as 'hate-motivated'— On June 15, A Toronto mosque, where two people were arrested after they attempted to break in and threatened building staff, called for the incident to be investigated as potentially hate-motivated. "We are extremely concerned and saddened that this incident this took place in our beautiful place of worship. No community, or any place of worship should be subjected to such threats and heightened anxiety," said Fareed Amin, chair of the board of directors of the Islamic Institute of Toronto, in a statement. Toronto police said they received a call from the Islamic Institute of Toronto, near Morningside Avenue. Witnesses alleged a man and a woman tried to enter the building and uttered threats, notably to a custodian at the site. One witness told CBC News the intruders threatened to set off an explosive.

See: CBC News' entry, in: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/islamic-institute-toronto-arrest-threaten-1.6066929>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140314-UK: Israel-Gaza conflict triggers spike in antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate in UK— Reported incidents of antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred had spiked in Britain because of the Israel-Gaza conflict, monitors had said. The Community Security Trust (CST) reported a 500 per cent increase in antisemitic incidents since clashes at the al-Aqsa mosque in East Jerusalem. In the same period, Islamophobia monitoring group Tell Mama recorded a 430 per cent rise in reports of anti-Muslim hatred. Extremists, including neo-Nazis, had been trying to capitalise on the conflict while they spread hateful posts and conspiracy theories about both Israelis and Palestinians online. Tell Mama recorded 56 anti-Muslim hate incidents between 8 and 17 May, compared to 13 in the week of 1 to 7 May. Director Iman Atta OBE said there was a “measurable and distinct sharp rise...Anti-Muslim hatred in the UK is clearly affected by what takes place in Israel-Palestine. We would urge calm and cool heads prevail at this time.”

See: The Independent Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/israel-palestine-conflict-uk-antisemitism-incident-b1850333.html>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140315-UK: Police use mental distress claims to target Muslims— A report published by medical charity Medact on May 19, had found that the anti-terror police were forcing extremely vulnerable people into mental health units—and disproportionately those people were Muslim. Through Vulnerability Support Hubs, police were faking accusations about mental health to marginalise, lock away and stigmatise people. The report exposed “a disturbing trend in counter-terrorism’s turn to mental health.” It described how thousands of people suspected of “potential extremism” had been assessed through the Hubs. It said Vulnerability Support Hubs “blur the boundaries between security and care in ethically problematic ways.” Those assessed at the hubs had been referred to the racist scheme Prevent if they were suspected by the police of suffering mental distress. Muslims were disproportionately referred to Prevent. According to the report, Muslims were “at least 23 times more likely to be referred to a mental health hub for ‘Islamism’ than a white individual for ‘far right extremism’”. According to the report, many of those referred were children—mostly teenagers, with the youngest just six years old.

See: Socialist Worker News’ entry, in:

<https://socialistworker.co.uk/art/51840/Police+use+mental+distress+claims+to+target+Muslims>, Also See full report: <https://www.medact.org/2021/resources/reports/racism-mental-health-and-pre-crime-policing-the-ethics-of-vulnerability-support-hubs/>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140316-UK: Pension discrimination could cost Muslim Brits \$18bn — The next generation of British Muslims could lose out on as much as \$18 billion over the course of their lives because of workplace discrimination that would prevent Muslims from the advantages of government-backed pension schemes. According to a legal opinion obtained by top Islamic finance advisers, employers could break the anti-discrimination legislation introduced in 2010 if they failed to give Muslims the option of a Sharia-compliant pension fund. In 2012, the British government made it mandatory for employees to be automatically enrolled in workplace pension schemes that see employers match their employees’ contributions toward their retirement funds. However, according to halal investment advisers, Islamic Finance Guru (IFG), as many as one in three Muslims were still not enrolled in a pension scheme — and this could cost the community nearly £13 billion (\$18 billion). The main reasons that they had opted-out, according to research carried out by IFG, were twofold: Employers either did not offer a Sharia-compliant fund as part of the company pension plan at all, or employees did not receive enough information about the funds to considered halal.

See: Arab News Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1864091/world>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140317-UK: Ruling Conservative Party has Islamophobia ‘problem’: Report— A study publish on May 25 by Professor Swaran Singh, who had served as a commissioner for the UK’s

Equality and Human Rights Commission, found that most discrimination within the conservative party was related to anti-Muslim racism. The party received reports of 727 incidents of discrimination from 2015 to 2020, two-thirds of which alleged Islamophobia. The study was commissioned by the party, which was led by Prime Minister Boris Johnson. “Judging by the extent of complaints and findings of misconduct by the party itself that relate to anti-Muslim words and conduct, anti-Muslim sentiment remains a problem within the party,” Singh wrote in his 51-page report. “This is damaging to the party, and alienates a significant section of society.” Singh said the Conservatives had not been active enough in challenging discrimination, he added that the complaints procedure needed to be overhauled. Former Conservative cabinet minister Sajid Javid decried the “distressing examples of anti-Muslim sentiment” in the report and urged his party to “unconditionally” adopt its recommendations. Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, a Conservative member of Parliament’s upper chamber House of Lords, said the report demonstrated how the party was “at best unable and at worst unwilling to deal with the issue of racism”. Marsha de Cordova, Labour’s shadow equalities minister, described the study as a “damning indictment of the discrimination rife in the Conservative Party”. The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), the UK’s largest Muslim umbrella body, said while Singh’s report “rightly recognises that Islamophobia has been a serious issue” for the Conservatives, it failed to acknowledge “the root causes of this bigotry”. Zara Mohammed, MCB’s secretary-general, said: “The investigation primarily deals with form over substance. Procedure is important, but it needs to be underpinned by dealing with the deep-seated issues of institutional racism.”

See: Aljazeera News’ entry, in: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/25/uk-conservative-party-has-ongoing-issue-with-islamophobia-report>, Also See: Full Report: https://singhinvestigation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Singh_Investigation_Report_for_download.pdf, retrieved on 07.07.2021

IsP140318-UK: Boris Johnson’s burqa comments gave impression Tories ‘insensitive’ to Muslim communities, review finds— An independent review into allegations of Islamophobia in the Conservative Party had been labelled a “whitewash”, as Boris Johnson was called to issue a “proper public apology” over his incendiary comments about Muslim women. The probe led by professor Swaran Singh said the PM’s article about women wearing the burqa gave the impression that the Tories were “insensitive to Muslim communities” and said the leadership of the party “ought to set a good example for appropriate behaviours and languages”. “Several” witnesses told Prof Singh’s investigation that they found Mr Johnson’s language in a newspaper column “discriminatory and unacceptable”, the report said. And one witness told the inquiry that the comments led to “a large increase in anti-Muslim events” reported to the Tell MAMA project, which records incidents of Islamophobia hate. A Tell MAMA report in 2019 found that Islamophobic incidents rose by 375 per cent the week after Mr Johnson’s article, with 42 per cent of reported racist abuse in the streets of the UK directly referenced his language.

See: The Independent newspaper entry, in: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/boris-johnson-burqa-racism-islamophobia-b1853358.html>, retrieved on 07.07.2021

IsP140319-UK: At least 16 members of UK military referred to anti-extremism scheme— At least 16 members of the armed forces had been referred to the UK’s terrorism prevention programme – in the majority of cases because of concerns about far-right activity. Soldiers, air force and naval personnel were among those investigated over the past two and a half years under Prevent, which aimed to stop people from radicalization, according to figures obtained by the Guardian under freedom of information. The figures reveal 14 investigations were carried out in 2019 into serving armed forces personnel. Eleven stemmed from far-right concerns. The campaign group Hope Not Hate said the MoD had publicly committed to have a zero-tolerance approach to far-right extremists operating within the armed forces, but added: “Unfortunately, the strong words have not always led to strong action.” Nick Lowles, Hope Not Hate’s chief executive, said action

had sometimes not been taken against military personnel identified as active far-right extremists, while investigations into racist incidents had gone cold.

See: The Guardian newspaper entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/may/31/at-least-16-members-uk-military-referred-anti-extremism-scheme-prevent>, retrieved on 07.07.2021

IsP140320-UK: Norwich Muslim community feels well supported - despite recent hate crimes— Members of a Norwich mosque said they feel "very supported" by the wider community - despite the racist incidents in the city. The comments come after an increase in tensions between Israel and Palestine the month before, which according to anti-racism charities helped fuel an increase in religious hate crime. On May 15, Islamophobic graffiti was sprayed in yellow paint on the pavement close to Norwich Central Mosque and Islamic Community Centre on Aylsham Road.

See: EDP24 News' entry, in: <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/norwich-muslim-community-very-supported-despite-attacks-8029850>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140321-Germany: Germany's AfD lurches further to the right with new top candidate duo— Germany's far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) had selected two hardliners from the extreme right-wing of the party, Alice Weidel and Tino Chrupalla, as its top candidates for September's election. The duo emerged as the clear favourites in a membership ballot, in which they received 71% of the votes. Just 48% of members cast a ballot in the vote on May 24. Parliamentary co-leader Alice Weidel and co-chairman Tino Chrupalla ran for the party's extreme far-right wing, which was based in the eastern state of Thuringia. "The result is a clear victory for the radical far-right movement, [known as] the 'wing'," political scientist Albrecht von Lucke told tagesschau24. Germans was scheduled to vote in a parliamentary election on September 26. Recent polls had suggested that the AfD could hope to match its 2017 election result, when it got 12.6% of the vote after they had campaigned heavily against immigration.

See: Euractiv News' entry, in: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/elections/news/die-afd-rueckt-mit-neuem-spitzenkandidaten-duo-weiter-nach-rechts/>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140322-Germany: New German law may prohibit wearing of headscarves for public employees— On May 7, The German Senate had approved a controversial law which banned public employees from the rights to wear ideological or religious symbols on the job. The new legislation on dress and appearance allowed state authorities to prohibit or restrict public officials who wore tattoos, symbols, jewelry, or visible cloths related to religion, regardless of belief, while they were at work or in service. But it was unclear whether the authorities could use this new legislation would impose a general ban on Muslim women's headscarves. Katarina Niewiedzial, Berlin's senate commissioner for integration and immigration, had criticized the legislation, she argued that it unfairly targeted Muslim women. "This law provides the basis for a far-reaching ban on the hijab and sends the wrong signal," she said in a statement. Niewiedzial emphasized that under the new measures, Muslim women would not be able to freely practice their profession in the public sector. The German interior ministry claimed that the legislation would not introduce a general ban for public employees who wore religious symbols or cloths at work, but would impose restrictions in exceptional cases. German Muslim association strongly criticized the move and said that the legislation was introduced in a hurry by the government without prior consultation with the country's religious communities. Burhan Kesici, chairman of the Berlin-based Islam council, said that the language of the bill was very vague, which could lead to arbitrary implementation by the authorities, which would violate the basic rights of Muslim women who work in the public sector.

See: SIASAT News' entry, in: <https://www.siasat.com/new-german-law-may-prohibit-the-wearing-of-headscarves-for-public-employees-2142344/>, retrieved on 08.07.2021



IsP140323-Austria: Austrian Muslims to sue government over ‘Islam map’— Austrian Muslim groups slammed the government over map which identified locations of mosques and Islamic associations around the country. The group would file a lawsuit against the government of Chancellor Sebastian Kurz after the publication of the “Islam map”, according to Austrian media reports. “The publication of all names, functions and addresses of Muslim institutions and institutions that have been read as Muslim represents an unprecedented crossing of boundaries,” the group was quoted as saying on May 29. Integration Minister Susanne Raab launched a website on May 27, called the National Map of Islam, with the names and locations of more than 620 mosques, associations, and officials and their possible connections abroad. The group Islamic Religious Community in Austria (IGGOE) warned against the stigmatized of all Muslims who lived in Austria “as a potential danger to society and the democratic legal order in the country”. This campaign was fuelling racism and “exposes Muslim citizens to a massive security risk”, the IGGOE added. According to the integration minister, the map was not aimed at “placing Muslims in general under suspicion”. Reports of anti-Muslim attacks in Austria had increased since a deadly attack in Vienna November 2020. The map had raised tensions between Kurz’s conservative

Austrian People's Party and their coalition partner, the Green Party. The Austrian Green Party's spokeswoman for integration and diversity Faika El-Nagashi wrote on Twitter on May 27 that no member of the party was involved in it or informed about it in advance. She added the project "is contrary to what integration policy and dialogue should look like". Immediately after the publication, right-wing extremists in Vienna sprayed graffiti on several mosques and hung up posters with the inscription "Look out! Political Islam near you." Similar signs were also put up in St. Pölten. While this represented a clear danger for Muslims, it was the intellectual architects of the attacks, namely the authors of the map and Austrian Integration Minister Susanne Raab (ÖVP), who immediately received police protection.

See: Aljazeera News' entry, in: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/29/austrian-muslims-to-sue-government-over-islam-map>. Also: <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2021/06/08/aust-j08.html>, Source of Pictures: <https://twitter.com/miqdaad/status/140040169349259269>, retrieved on 07.07.2021

ASIA

IsP140324-India: MHA invites applications for citizenship from non-Muslim refugees from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh— The Union Home Ministry had issued a notification under the 2009 rules of the Citizenship Act, 1955 which asked non-Muslims who belonged to Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan and resided in 13 districts of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Haryana and Punjab to apply for Indian citizenship. The Union home ministry on May 28 issued the notification for immediate implementation of the order.

See: New Indian Express News' entry, in: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2021/may/29/mha-invites-applications-for-citizenship-from-non-muslim-refugees-from-afghanistan-bangladesh-2308924.html>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140325-India: Another mosque demolished in UP by state govt— Uttar Pradesh administration had demolished another Mosque in Khatauli, Muzaffarnagar. Locals claim that the property belonged to Muslim Wakf board and the police had demolished it without any reason. The incident was tweeted by journalist-activist Aarif Shah, who said that this was the second incident after Barabani Ghareeb Nawaz Masjid. About a week before, the Uttar Pradesh government defied a state High Court order and bulldozed a 100-year-old mosque in Ram Sanehi Ghat area of Barabanki district. The UP Sunni Wakf board announced that it will soon approach the Allahabad High court to demand restoration of the Mosque.

See: SIASAT News' entry, in: <https://www.siasat.com/muzaffarnagar-another-mosque-demolished-in-up-by-state-govt-2142223/>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140326-India: Hindu Nationalist Government Targets Muslims With New Regulations— After they abolished the full state status of Muslim majority Jammu and Kashmir and downgraded it to a Union Territory status, India's Hindu religious Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government was targeting another Muslim dominated Lakshadweep island, the smallest Union Territory. The federal government moved to introduce number of reforms which irked the locals and sparked protests in the south Indian state of Kerala. The Kerala Legislative Assembly on May 31 unanimously passed a resolution which demanded the recall of Lakshadweep administrator Praful Khoda Patel and withdrawal of the controversial orders issued by him. The house also expressed solidarity with the people of Lakshadweep who were protesting against the decisions of the administrator and had demanded immediate steps to secure the culture and livelihood of the people of the island. A draft bill called Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation 2021 (LDAR), gave arbitrary, unchecked powers to the government to directly interfere with an islander's right to possess and retain their property for town planning or any developmental activity. The new

proposal brought changes in the electoral regulations that made any person with more than two children ineligible to contest local body elections. In the name of reforms, the administration also proposed a ban on beef and beef products under the draft Lakshadweep Animal Preservation Regulation. The draft law made it clear that no person shall directly or indirectly sell, keep, store, transport, offer or expose for sale or buy beef or beef products in any form anywhere in Lakshadweep. Lakshadweep was known for its low crime rate in India, but the administration had implemented the Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act (PASA), in January 2021, that gave the government power to detain a person without any public disclosure for a period of up to one year. Locals fear that the bill would pave the way for the administration to make arrests without trials and feel that such harsh laws were not required. The controversial reforms in the islands started when Praful Khoda Patel, a close aide of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who also served as the interior minister of Gujarat state when Modi was the state's chief minister, took charge as the Administrator in December 2020 after the death of former administrator Dineshwar Sharma.

See: COUNTERPUNCH News' entry, in: <https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/06/04/indias-hindu-nationalist-government-targets-muslims-with-new-regulations/>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140327-India: Imam killed in blast at Bihar mosque— On June 8, A high-intensity explosion ripped through a madrasa (seminary) in Bihar's Banka district, in the Indian state of Bihar where it killed an imam (religious teacher) and damaged other houses in the locality, police said. According to superintendent of police (Banka) Arvind Kumar Gupta, the blast took place around 8am at the complex situated in Nautolia locality, pulling down a major portion of the seminary. "The compound's front portion comprises the madrasa. It was locked from outside. There is a pathway inside which leads to the mosque, the gates of which were found open. The explosion has caused extensive damage to the seminary building," Gupta told news agency PTI.

See: HINDUSTAN TIMES News' entry, in: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/others/imam-killed-in-blast-at-bihar-mosque-101623166426155.html>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140328-India: mosque demolition: officials accused of filing false report on Muslim leaders— A local government administration in Uttar Pradesh had been accused of filing a "false and unfounded" police report against eight Muslim leaders who had opposed the "illegal" demolition of their mosque, in a case filed in an Indian court. The bulldozing of the Masjid Gareeb Nawaz Al Maroof the month before, carried out on the orders of the local administration of Barabanki district, caused an outcry and sent many local Muslims into hiding. In the days after the demolition, the Barabanki administration filed a police case against eight local Muslim leaders who had opposed the demolition, where it accused them that they forged documents that had led to the mosque been illegally registered on government land. In a petition filed at Allahabad high court published on June 1, representatives for the mosque administration alleged that a "false and unfounded" police report had been made against the Muslim leaders. In an order, judges found that the state government had provided no proof to the court of falsified or forged documents, but gave the government three more weeks to produce the evidence. The Muslims named in the case were also granted protection from arrest.

See: The Guardian Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/01/india-mosque-demolition-officials-accused-of-filing-false-report-on-muslim-leaders>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140329-Palestine: Far-right Israeli mob attacks Palestinian motorist live on Israeli TV— On May 12, A far-right Israeli mob had attacked a Palestinian man near Tel Aviv, and the footage was aired live on television. The images showed a man been forcibly removed from his car and beaten by a crowd of dozens until he lost consciousness. The attack, which was broadcasted by public broadcaster Kan, took place on the seafront promenade of Bat Yam, south of Israel's

commercial capital Tel Aviv. Police and emergency services did not arrive on the scene until 15 minutes later, while the victim laid motionless on his back in the middle of the street. Those in the crowd justified the attack and said the man was an "Arab" who had tried to ram the far-right nationalists, but the footage showed the motorist was trying to avoid the demonstration.

See: TRT World News' entry, in: <https://www.trtworld.com/middle-east/far-right-israeli-mob-attacks-palestinian-motorist-live-on-israeli-tv-46663>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

AUSTRALIA

IsP140330-Australia: New report shows online comment sections normalise Islamophobic beliefs— A study from All Together Now (ATN), an Australian not-for-profit organization, found comment sections on racialised opinion pieces in Australia's mainstream media had polarised readers and perpetuated Islamophobia. Politely Racist explored online reader comments in response to negatively racialised opinion pieces about Muslim people and unraveled the role played by comment sections and whether it had perpetuated, normalised and consolidated racist ideas. From September 2020 to January 2021, ATN analysed comments posted by readers who responded to 29 articles that contained negative opinions about Muslim Australians in three main newspapers: The Daily Telegraph, Herald Sun and The Sydney Morning Herald. Most of the comments in The Daily Telegraph and Herald Sun agreed with the content of the negatively racialised opinion pieces (71% and 63% respectively). In contrast, The Sydney Morning Herald, had an audience that disagreed with the content of negatively racialised opinion pieces, with only 17% of comments agreed. The report found racist discourse was interwoven with mainstream societal themes discussed in the articles and further disseminated in comments sections. It showed that racist ideas were not fringe or confined to radical online spaces. Previous ATN studies found 53% of race-related social commentary monitored over 26 months contain overt or covert racism. This jumped to 78% when the piece was discussing Muslim people.

See: Mirage News entry, in: <https://www.miragenews.com/new-report-shows-online-comment-sections-563267/>, Also See the report: https://alltogethernow.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Politely-Racist_Media-Report-2021.pdf, retrieved on 05.07.2021

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

IsP140331-Council of Europe: Council of Europe asks Austria to withdraw controversial ‘Islam map’— On May 31, The Council of Europe called upon Austria to withdraw the controversial “Islam map”. Publication of the map was hostile to Muslims and potentially counterproductive, the top European human rights body said in a statement. The counter extremism and ideologies that spread dangerous narratives under the guise of freedom of religion was an important national security task but the map served “existing resentments” and many Muslims felt it as “extremely discriminatory,” the statement noted. “They feel stigmatized and threatened in their security by the publication of addresses and other details.” The week before, Austria’s Integration Ministry launched a website which provided details of the country’s 620 mosques and Islamic associations, with the location, address and names of officials.

See: Anadolu Agency News’ entry, in: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/council-of-europe-asks-austria-to-withdraw-controversial-islam-map-/2259952>, retrieved on 07.07.2021

NORTH AMERICA

IsP140332-US: Tenn. man pleads guilty to federal hate crime charges after attacking Muslim family— A Tennessee man pleaded guilty to a federal hate crime after he attacked a Muslim family. In 2017, Christopher Beckham, of Nashville, harassed two Muslim sisters after they got off their school bus. Beckham yelled “Allahu Akbar!” and “Go back to your country!” at the girls, who were wearing hijabs. After their father arrived, Beckham pulled a knife and sliced at the man and punched him. When their girls’ mother arrived in a car, Beckham chased after the whole family while still waving his knife around. After he was arrested, Beckham described the family as “terrorists” and said he would kill them when he was released from jail. The Justice Department announced on May 17, Beckham appeared in court the week before to enter the plea. Beckham pleaded guilty after a 2019 trial ended in a hung jury.



See: The New York Daily News newspaper entry, in: <https://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/ny-man-guilty-attack-muslim-family-hate-crime-20210518-vxnjlwtvnbhno5qhs7swvmo64-story.html>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140333-US: EEOC, JBS ink \$5.5 million settlement over firing of Muslim workers— JBS USA LLC, a meatpacking company, would pay \$5.5 million to settle a lawsuit by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission after JBS had fired scores of Somali Muslims who had sought longer prayer breaks in the holy month of Ramadan. JBS, the EEOC, and several individual workers who intervened in the case filed a joint proposed consent decree in Colorado federal court on May 21 which, if approved, would bring the heavily litigated 2010 lawsuit to an end. The EEOC claimed JBS unlawfully fired approximately 200 Muslim employees at a Colorado plant. About 150 of them had staged a walkout after JBS barred them from unscheduled breaks to pray during Ramadan in 2008, according to court filings. The EEOC maintained that those concerns were speculative, and that JBS was required to make individualized assessments before it disciplined workers. Instead, the agency said, JBS treated all of its Muslim employees “monolithically” even though a small number were accused of antagonizing coworkers or other behavior which required disciplinary action.

See: Reuters News' entry, in: <https://www.reuters.com/business/legal/eeoc-ibs-ink-55-mln-settlement-over-firing-muslim-workers-2021-05-24/>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140334-US: CAIR-NJ Welcomes School Ethics Commission Penalty on Piscataway BOE Member Over Islamophobic Flyer — On May 26, The New Jersey chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-NJ) welcomed the New Jersey School Ethics Commission's decision to censure Piscataway BOE member Nitang Patel Over Islamophobic Flyer. In June 2019, Mr. Patel signed an anti-Muslim flyer that targeted Dr. Atif Nazir, an outspoken and admired Muslim former school board member, during the 2019 Democratic Primary in Piscataway. The flyer was signed by Patel and two other local Hindu-American officials, translated into Gujarati and distributed exclusively to Hindu-American households. CAIR-NJ and Bromberg Law LLC filed a Complaint under the School Ethics Act against Patel for violations of three provisions of the Code of Ethics for school board members. The New Jersey School Ethics Commission issued its final decision on May 25, 2021. The Commission recommended a penalty of censure against Patel for the violation of multiple provisions of the Code.

See: Insider NJ News' entry, in: <https://www.insidernj.com/press-release/cair-nj-welcomes-school-ethics-commission-penalty-piscataway-boe-member-islamophobic-flyer/>, retrieved on 06.07.2021



IsP140335-US: Prison guard fired for anti-Islamic meme showing men hanging from nooses— On May 25, Correction Officer Anthony Marlak was fired for “just cause” after an investigation into the 2018 post which showed five apparently Muslim men hanged from nooses with the caption “Islamic Wind Chimes,” according to the termination letter. “The type of speech posted threatens the safety of staff and inmates who are Muslim,” Garner Correction Institution Warden Amoda Hannah wrote to Marlak. “Your actions violate the standard of conduct for correctional employees and will not be condoned or tolerated.” Hannah said Marlak’s post “undermined the public’s confidence” for him to continue performing his duties. Marlak reportedly admitted that he reposted the meme in 2018 during an interview with correction officials on 2020 while he used an alias of Anthony David.

See: NYPOST News' entry, in: <https://nypost.com/2021/05/27/guard-fired-for-anti-islamic-meme-showing-men-hanging-from-nooses/>, retrieved on 08.07.2021

IsP140336-US: Wilfrid Laurier employee put on leave after alleged Islamophobic posts— A Wilfrid Laurier University employee had been placed on leave after allegedly posting Islamophobic messages online. "These posts were brought to our attention and we are investigating the matter with high priority," a university spokesperson said in an emailed statement to CBC on May 28. A screenshot of the alleged messages was shared by the Coalition of Muslim Women of KW. In it, the employee allegedly shared a message in a private Facebook group that advised people to tell their children to stay away from Muslims and not to buy anything sold by them. The screenshot indicated that the employee worked in international recruitment at the university.

See: CBC News' entry, in: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/waterloo-region-wilfrid-laurier-islamophobic-posts-1.6044847>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140337-US: TV station apologizes for anti-Muslim debate question directed at Del. Sam Rasoul— Washington-area TV station ABC7-WJLA apologized for an anti-Muslim question one of its anchors addressed to a candidate during a televised debate on May 25. "During an important, relevant exchange related to campaign finance during the debate, our anchor, Dave Lucas, asked an inappropriate and disrespectful question to Del. Sam Rasoul ... We have reached out directly to Del. Rasoul's campaign and expressed our sincere apology for this question and for the impact of these words." Bill Fanshawe, senior vice president at Sinclair Broadcast Group, emailed to the Council on American-Islamic Relations. Lucas asked Rasoul the question during a debate between the six Democratic candidates in the June 8 primary for lieutenant governor, in which he cited a Washington Post story that reported Rasoul's fundraising relied on "out-of-state donors with ties to Muslim advocacy groups." "Can you assure Virginians, if you're elected, you'll represent all of them regardless of faith or beliefs?" Lucas asked. The question drew condemnation on social media.

See: Fredericksburg News' entry, in: https://fredericksburg.com/news/state-and-regional/tv-station-apologizes-for-anti-muslim-debate-question-directed-at-del-sam-rasoul/article_d5877080-2ade-5aef-981d-8c5f0931bf07.html, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140338-Canada: Canadian caught for Ontario Islamophobic killings charged with murder— Nathaniel Veltman, A Canadian national had been charged with murder and attempted murder after he mowed down a family in Ontario with his pick-up truck on June 6 evening, where he killed four and injured a child, in what was been described as a case of Islamophobia. Canadian PM Justin Trudeau had condemned the killings and said hate had no place in the Canadian society. Veltman, resident in the same town, was charged with four counts of first degree murder and one count of attempted murder.

Opposition leader Erin O'Toole described the killings as "vile and extreme hatred". "This type of vile and extreme hatred must be condemned. An Islamophobic act of terror like this has no place in Canada." Ontario Premier Doug Ford too said that hate and Islamophobia had no place in the province. "Justice must be served for the horrific act of hatred that took place in London, Ontario yesterday. My thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends during this difficult time. These heinous acts of violence must stop," he added.

See: HINDUSTAN TIMES News' entry, in: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/canadian-caught-for-ontario-islamophobic-killings-charged-with-murder-101623123100636.html>, Picture Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/london-murder-suspect-muslim-family-1.6057164>, retrieved on 11.07.2021



IsP140339-Canada: ‘Call out the hate’: Green leader demands anti-Islamophobia plan from Ottawa— Green party Leader Annamie Paul called on the Liberal government to create a national anti-Islamophobia strategy in the wake of an attack in London, Ont. that left four members of a Muslim family dead. Paul said the Muslim community had been asking for a comprehensive national strategy that included law enforcement, education and identification of those who were promoting hateful ideologies. She said the government had a duty to identify, expose and root out movements that promote discrimination and hate, and to ensure that those who promoted such ideologies know that there would be no safe place or dark corner where their belief would be allowed to flourish.

See: SAANICH NEWS entry, in: <https://www.saanichnews.com/news/call-out-the-hate-green-leader-demands-anti-islamophobia-plan-from-ottawa/>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140340-Canada: Canadian church pledges support for Muslims after ‘hate’ attack on family— Faith communities and politicians condemned an attack on a Muslim family in London, Ontario, that police had labeled a hate crime. The CCCB Executive Committee in a June 10 statement called for an end to religious violence in Canada and specifically hatred against Jews and Muslims. Signed by Archbishop Richard Gagnon of Winnipeg, Manitoba, CCCB president, it said the bishops “adamantly object to all forms and expressions of hatred and they strongly denounce the recent violence seen in Canada against the Jewish People and Muslims, for which there can be no possible justification ever.” The statement came in response to what London police said was June 6 attack that killed four members of a Muslim family by a driver. Auxiliary Bishop John A. Boissonneau of Toronto and Archbishop Paul-André Durocher of Gatineau, Quebec, who represented the CCCB’s Canadian Rabbinic Caucus Bilateral Dialogue, endorsed the statement.

See: Catholic News entry, in: <https://www.catholicnews.com/update-canadian-church-pledges-support-for-muslims-after-hate-attack-on-family>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140341-Canada: Canadian Lawmakers Pass Motion for Emergency Islamophobia Summit in Wake of Deadly Hate Crime— On June 11, Members of Parliament unanimously passed a motion from the New Democratic Party (NDP) in the House of Commons, less than a week after a driver mounted a sidewalk and plowed into a family on a walk in London, Ontario. London-Fanshawe MP Lindsay Mathyseen, who brought forward the non-binding motion, argued that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the liberal government needed to do more to address prejudice against Muslims in the country. "A Muslim family went out for a walk, like so many families and people have been doing in this pandemic, and this family didn't make it back home because of hate. No one should ever feel unsafe in their community and neighbourhood," Mathyssen said in a press release. "Canada needs to urgently address our problem of white supremacy and far right radicalisation. We cannot give hate any air to breathe or space to take hold...Unfortunately, tragedies like these are not isolated events. Muslims across this country have experienced hate for years. It should not be this way. It is the government's responsibility to address this now." NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh said.

See: NEWSWEEK News’ entry, in: <https://www.newsweek.com/canadian-lawmakers-pass-motion-emergency-islamophobia-summit-wake-deadly-hate-crime-1599957>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

EUROPE

IsP140342-UK: Labour to investigate ‘vile’ Islamophobic remarks by ‘party official’— The UK Labour Party had been accused of Islamophobia after a ‘senior official’ was quoted in the Mail on Sunday newspaper on June 20, in which he said Muslims were turning away from Keir Starmer, leader of the Labour Party, because of his stance against antisemitism. The party’s deputy leader Angela Rayner promised an investigation into the comments, which came ahead of a by-election

in Jo Cox's former seat Batley and Spen. After the anonymous official was quoted, the Labour Muslim Network said "this is a patently vile, Islamophobic briefing....This racism needs to be challenged urgently and publicly by the Labour leadership and the party as a whole." The individual reportedly linked the party lost support from Muslim voters with leader Sir Keir Starmer's efforts to combat antisemitism. Ms Rayner said: "As deputy leader I want to make clear publicly that these comments that are being attributed to a member of Labour Party staff in a newspaper today are not a Labour Party response or statement, are completely unacceptable and are not condoned or sanctioned in any way by the party. I will be ensuring that the party investigates this reported comment in line with our party's rules and processes."

See: The Metro newspaper entry, in: <https://metro.co.uk/2021/06/20/labour-to-investigate-vile-islamophobic-remarks-by-party-official-14802181/>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140343-UK: PM Johnson offers qualified apology for remarks on Islam— British Prime Minister Boris Johnson issued a qualified apology for offence caused by his past remarks about Islam. PM Johnson, spoke in a critical report into his Conservative Party which looked at discrimination which included complaints of Islamophobia. Johnson was interviewed for the report, commissioned by the ruling Conservatives in response to criticism of how it handled discrimination and complaints. The report was conducted independently by Professor Swaran Singh who had served as a Commissioner for the Equality and Human Rights Commission. It cited several examples related to Johnson, which included a 2018 newspaper column in which he referred to women who wear burqas as "going around looking like letterboxes" and likened their appearance to bank robbers. In the report, PM Johnson said: "I do know that offence has been taken at things I've said, that people expect a person in my position to get things right, but in journalism you need to use language freely. I am obviously sorry for any offence taken ... Would I use some of the offending language from my past writings today? Now that I am Prime Minister, I would not."

See: Reuters News' entry, in: <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-pm-johnson-offers-qualified-apology-remarks-islam-2021-05-25/>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140344-UK- Scotland: Man jailed for Elgin Mosque swastika vandalism— On May 25, A man who sprayed offensive graffiti and swastikas on a mosque in Moray, Scotland had been jailed for 14 months. Mark Macpherson, admitted a racially aggravated act of malicious mischief carried out in Elgin. The incident happened in the town's South Street in May 2019. Sheriff Sara Matheson told Inverness Sheriff Court: "The north of Scotland has a long history of tolerance between religions and is friendly and welcoming to all."



See: BBC News' entry, in: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-57241804>, Also See: Police report: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2021/may/mark-macpherson-sentenced-for-racist-graffiti-on-elgin-mosque/>, retrieved on 06.07.2021

IsP140345-UK: Jews and Muslims take stand against hate with national newspaper adverts—

On May 28, Full-page advertisements had been taken out in British national newspapers from Jewish and Muslim organisations in a show of solidarity against hate. Muslims Against Antisemitism (MAAS) and the Jewish Leadership Council had teamed up to place the adverts in British newspapers which included The Times and The Mirror, where it condemned both antisemitism and Islamophobia. “Jews and Muslims. We’re on the same page,” states the advert.



“We accept there’s much to disagree about, whatever side of the argument we sit. Let us disagree without hatred. Let us negotiate in good faith in search of a just solution... This is what the silent majority stand for,” said Muslims Against Antisemitism. “Jews and Muslims: We’re on the same page... We say no to Antisemitism and to anti-Muslim hate.” Said the Jewish Leadership Council. See: New Indian Express News’ entry, in: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2021/may/29/mha-invites-applications-for-citizenship-from-non-muslim-refugees-from-afghanistan-bangladesh-2308924.html>, retrieved on 08.07.2021

IsP140346-UK: JAILED: Racist who threatened and abused taxi driver—

A racist who robbed, threatened, and abused a taxi driver in a shocking Islamophobic hate crime received a three-year prison sentence on May 27. Samuel Thomas Egerton, of Grange Road, Cheddleton, pleaded guilty to charges of robbery and religiously aggravated fear or provocation of violence at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court. Egerton filmed himself when he subjected the taxi driver with racist abuse, and stated: “You’re getting terrorised by English people because you’re a dirty P*** b*****d bruv. Dirty Muslim b*****d.” Egerton also used the homophobic slur “f*****,” threatened to “smash his head in” and steal his taxi, before he used more racist language, “P*** f*****s, I’ll take his taxi off him if he doesn’t take me home,” the recording captured. The footage Egerton filmed went viral on January 18, 2020, and triggered a police investigation that resulted in Egerton’s arrest three days later, amidst national public outcry and political condemnation locally. It emerged that the racist incident took place in the early hours of August 4, 2019. Prosecutor Steven Bailey said: “He filmed the driver on his phone. The driver was scared. The defendant was chanting, ‘England till we die.’”



See: TELL MAMA UK News’ entry, in: <https://tellmamauk.org/jailed-racist-who-threatened-and-abused-taxi-driver/>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

IsP140347-UK: Two secondary school pupils suspended after 'ripping up the Koran' in front of students in Preston—

Two secondary school pupils had been suspended after 'ripping up the Koran' in front of other students, after they brought copies of the holy book to school. Teachers alerted police and anti-terrorism officials after the two incidents took place at Fulwood Academy in Preston. In a statement, the school said that the two separate incidents 'sit deeply at odds with

everything we stand for'. Fulwood Academy principal Dave Lancaster said he 'immediately' notified Lancashire Constabulary and Prevent.

See: Daily Mail Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9685297/Two-secondary-school-pupils-suspended-ripping-Koran-students-Preston.html>, retrieved on 11.07.2021



IsP140348-Finland: Court convicts nationalist organisation chair on defamation, incitement charges— Pirkanmaa District Court in Finland had found Geurt Marco de Wit, chair of the nationalist and anti-immigrant organisation Finnish Nation First, guilty on numerous charges of defamation and incitement to hostility. The court handed down a six month suspended prison sentence in relation to three charges of aggravated defamation and 13 charges of defamation, as well as two further charges for inciting hostility against a group of people and one charge of violating religious freedom. The court also ruled that de Wit must remove several articles he published on the internet, ordering him to pay compensation of almost 40,000 euros to the victims for suffering and legal costs. In addition, de Wit was accused of inciting ethnic hostility as well as violating the right to religious freedom in connection with his party's parliamentary election campaign in the spring of 2019. According to the prosecutor, de Wit published articles threatening and insulting Muslims, dark-skinned people, Afghans, refugees and asylum seekers on the basis of their skin colour, background, national and ethnic origin, as well as religion. De Wit was the leader of Suomen kansa ensin, or Finnish Nation First, at the time and he was running as a candidate for parliament.

See: Yleisradio Oy (Finnish Broadcasting Company) News' entry, in:

https://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/court_convicts_nationalist_organisation_chair_on_defamation_incitement_charges/11956218, retrieved on 07.07.2021

IsP140349-Austria: Church criticizes Austrian government’s ‘Islam Map’— ON June 4, The Austrian Catholic church became the latest religious group to criticize a government-backed, online map of hundreds of Muslim organization which sparked violence against the Muslim minority. The highly controversial map showed details of more than 600 Muslim associations — from youth groups to mosques — which included details on their location and photos of members. Cardinal Christoph Schoenborn, the head of the Austrian Catholic church, wrote in an op-ed that it was “dangerous to give the impression that one of the religious community is under general suspicion,” and asked why one of the country’s many religious communities was singled out.

See: Arab News newspaper entry, in: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1870646/world>, retrieved on 07.07.2021

IsP140350-France: Le Pen’s far-right party suffers blow in French regional elections— Marine Le Pen’s far-right party had suffered a serious electoral blow when it failed to win a regional election in its stronghold in the south of France. The Rassemblement National (RN) had pinned its last chances to take the Provence-Alpes-Côte-d’Azur region (PACA) after they emerged victorious from the week before’s first-round vote, although by a small margin. However, an alliance of rival parties to form a “republican front” against the RN – which included the withdrawal of the Socialist party and left-wing alliance candidate – prevented the far right to take the region. The June 27 result was a final bitter disappointment for the RN which had been predicted to do well in at least five regions in the first-round vote. In the end, the RN came first only in PACA, and then only by a narrow margin. Exit polls suggested that the Les Républicains candidate in PACA, Renaud Muselier, had polled a convincing 56.6% of votes against the RN’s Thierry Mariani’s 43.4%.

See: The Guardian Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/27/le-pens-far-right-party-suffers-blow-in-french-regional-elections>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

ASIA

IsP140351-India: Sikh family donates ancestral land to build mosque in Malerkotla village— A Sikh family from Jitwal Kalan village in the newly created district’s Ahmedgarh subdivision had donated its ancestral land to build a mosque. A dozen Muslim families resided in the village, situated about 15 kilometres from the district headquarters, where they had to go to nearby villages to offer prayers during Eid and other occasions. Jagmail Singh, whose family owned a large tract of land, on June 8 announced to donate 6 biswa (around 8,000 square feet) in the centre of the village to construct a mosque. Muslims from Malerkotla and other villages also assembled at the spot to offer prayers. “There are around 12 Muslim families in the village. They have to go to other villages to offer prayers. I knew they could not buy land, as they mostly work as labourers and are poor,” said Jagmail Singh, whose family had been associated with Muslims in the village for three generations.

See: HINDUSTAN TIMES News’ entry, in: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/sikh-family-donates-ancestral-land-to-build-mosque-in-malerkotla-village-101623172487059.html>, retrieved on 11.07.2021