



مَظَلَمَاتُ الْعَرَبِ وَالْإِسْلَامِ
ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
ORGANISATION DE COOPÉRATION ISLAMIQUE



FOURTEENTH OIC REPORT ON
ISLAMOPHOBIA

December 2020 – January 2022

PRESENTED TO THE
48th Session of the Council of
Foreign Ministers

Islamabad
The Islamic Republic of Pakistan
22 - 23 March 2022



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ABOUT

The OIC Islamophobia Observatory is a specialized Unit, or Center, currently operating under the supervision of Political Affairs Department at the OIC General Secretariat. The Observatory has been functioning for almost 15 years now, started in 2007, precisely since the 34th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Islamabad.

Its establishment was driven by 3 (three) main factors: the massive wave of anti-Islam sentiments in the West after 9/11; the growing trend of Islamophobia that seeks to defame and denigrate Islam through distortion and misperception; and by the introduction of laws in some non-Islamic countries that specifically discriminate, or target Muslim minorities. Altogether, that was an issue of great concern for the Muslim world, hence the 3rd Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Makkah in 2005, affirmed the need to counter Islamophobia. Brief, the OIC Islamophobia Observatory was an implementation of Recommendation put-on by the Leaders of Muslim world during the third Session of Extraordinary Islamic Summit.

Particular mandate given to the Observatory is to monitor all forms of Islamophobia, to report to all Member States, and to cooperate with Governments, and NGOs. Based on this mandate the OIC Islamophobia Observatory monitors manifestations of Islamophobia on daily basis, reading the trend, and drawing maps on how the situation related to Islamophobia develops from time to time; by which reports, policy recommendation, and measures to address the issue of Islamophobia are initiated thereafter.

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FOREWORD BY THE OIC SECRETARY GENERAL



As of the commencement of my service as the OIC Secretary General, I can immediately feel the global magnitude of Islamophobia nowadays. It is therefore a personal enthusiasm while a great pleasure for me to

submit the 14th Annual Report of Islamophobia prepared by the OIC Islamophobia Observatory, through which the OIC keeps spotlighting the phenomenon of hatred, racism, and discrimination against Muslims together with its various manifestations that have seriously disrupt the broad segment of Muslims' life across the world. Through this observatory, the OIC also seeks to monitor cases of violence against Muslims and against anything associated with Islam as religion, with a view to record and in particular to submit them to the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC Member States. In a wider context, the OIC wishes to raise global awareness on the obvious danger of Islamophobia as well as on discriminatory policies and practices against Muslims.

Islamophobia is a mixture of fear, hate, and prejudice on Islam that transform into negative sentiment, gestures, racist and intolerant attitude, as well as deliberate act of discriminations against Muslims, insults upon Islamic sacred symbols and venerated figures, and even into violent crimes against people with Islamic attires. Islamophobia also concerns with intentional attempts to tarnish the image of Islam as religion together with its over 1.9 billion followers, the majority of them have in fact built up radiant civilizations and stood as an exemplary model of tolerance and coexistence. Islamophobia is actually part of racist movements that usurps the right to freedom of thought, belief and identity and targets its victims not for

particular action they could have committed, but rather on the basis of their appearances and religious backgrounds. It usurps human rights at their most basic level.

Therefore, Islamophobia does not represent a threat to Muslims only. Rather, it constitutes a threat to the very principles of justice, equality and freedom, just as it represents a threat to security and social harmony. It runs over the achievements of human society evolved over centuries, as well as of human endeavor and sacrifice on the basis of which international institutions have been set up to ensure the preservation of humanity's achievements. In addition, Islamophobia is not a matter of concern for the OIC Member States only. It is rather a cause for mankind at large, the interests of the entire international community, given that it quite simply represents a threat to international peace and security. As of today, it is not an exaggeration to say that Islamophobia around the world has reached an alarming level—as widely reflected through official reports by many countries and international organisations, including the United Nations. Therefore, hatred and intolerance based on religion or belief are simply unacceptable.

Eventually, this phenomenon of Islamophobia must be contained through collective efforts of the international community, through dialogue, cooperation, and solidarity. commands specific measures to be taken at legal, cultural, religious, academic, political, and humanitarian levels, and I am pleased to state here that the OIC has been trying to do something to tackle this issue, through efforts, strategy, and programs. The OIC seizes every opportunity to open doors for dialogue with the other, since the negative stereotypical image of Islam been etched in the hearts and minds of the hatred advocates cannot be removed except by removing first the fear from Islam and its misapprehension. Through sustained positive dialogue aimed at creating mutual understanding the OIC is trying to address the problem right into the mind and soul of people towards the establishment of coexistence and mutual respect. The OIC is strongly committed to contributing to those efforts as it is committed to fighting terrorism and any

form of violence on the ground of religion or belief.

Within this context, I wish to bring into the serious attention of decision-makers in the Islamic world that the trend of Islamophobia continued to be alarming, hence I wish to encourage more efforts from all Member States for tackling this disease in the core through national policies including through national education curricula. I believe such measures would be more effective to secure young generations' mind from being poisoned by the advocates of hatred.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, under the terms of its charter and in implementation of its summit and ministerial resolutions, has been consistently present on the international arena, striving to support righteousness, justice, tolerance, moderation and peace, and combating terrorism and extremism on the one hand, while confronting Islamophobia on the other. Along this track, the OIC seeks the constant supports from Member States to help the organisation to fulfill its endeavor towards banishing hatred and racism while spreading love, justice, peace and tolerance among all humankind.

TREND OF

ISLAMOPHOBIA

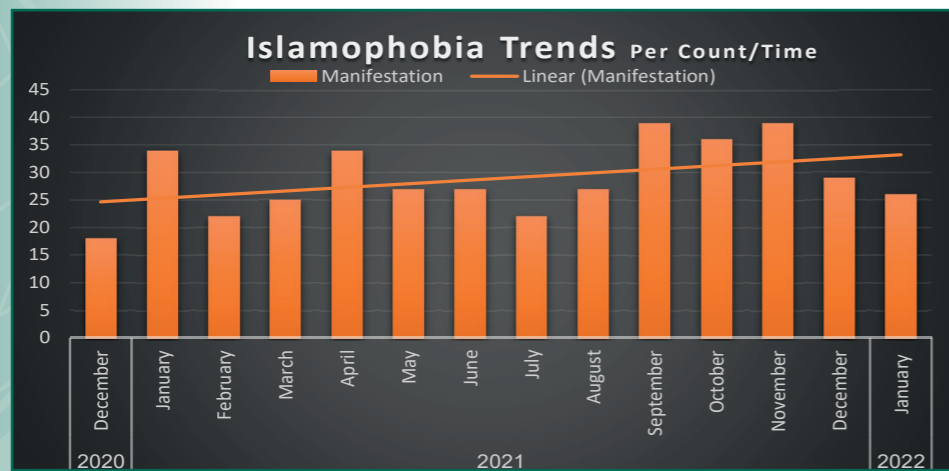
Trend of Islamophobia

Islamophobia is a combination of fear, hate, and prejudice against Muslims as well as against any object or place associated with Islam—as a faith or religion—such as Mosques, Islamic centres, Holy Qur’an, Hijab, halal food, name that sounds ‘Arabic’, men with beard, Azan (prayer call), Minarets, Domes, and so on. It also constitutes hatred, stigmatization, racism and discriminations on daily life, on Media, at workplace, at political sphere, etc. It rests in the mind and it may reflect in offending attitudes. At extreme, Islamophobia manifests through violent actions, such as burning mosques, vandalizing properties, abusing women wearing Hijab, or insulting Prophet, defaming venerated figures, or desecration of sacred symbols in Islam.

Islamophobia exists almost everywhere, in non-Muslim and in Muslim populace likewise. However, from the empirics, there has been a tendency that the issue of Islamophobia is usually found significant in non-Muslim societies, or in territories where Muslims are way less in term of number if being compared with the majority population—another way of saying, Islamophobia is more obvious when Muslims find themselves among the minority groups. However, the minority status must not be the only factor, since the seeds of Islamophobia could be diverse from one place to another. For instance, the phenomenon may come as an excess to the dynamic of the domestic politics, or merely a result of political bargaining by a winning coalition. Sometimes Islamophobia is being imposed through government policies; while in many cases, Islamophobia has strong connections with key issues like unemployment, immigrants, refugees, and the similar. In another case, Islamophobia rises as an ‘outcome’ of other issue, for instance on the case of backlash following preceding terrorist incidents. In addition, it is not a surprising phenomenon as modern civilizations are living within a global village, Islamophobia may appear due to certain events in different part of the globe. In brief, Islamophobia could be driven by multiple factors within multi-dimensional context.

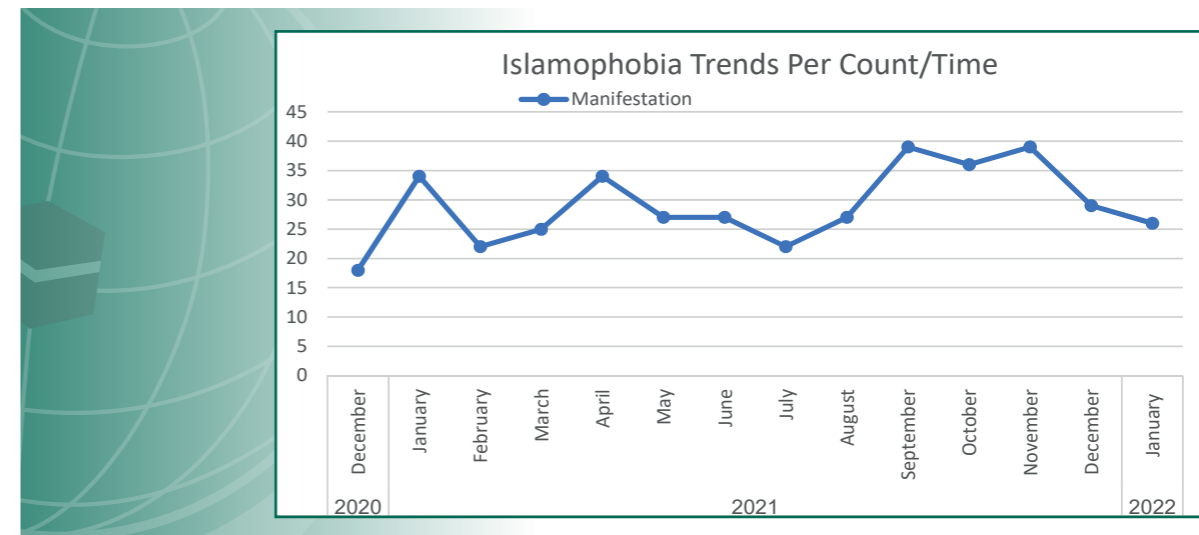
The main task of the Islamophobia Observatory is to ‘monitor’ events on daily basis, scanning the minds, public feelings, incidents, and materials that serves as possible indicator of Islamophobia.

All of the information were gathered and presented in this report with the expectation that all Member States would have a picture about the on-going trend of Islamophobia, based on which relevant decisions and policies might be taken.



The followings are the summary of such trend:

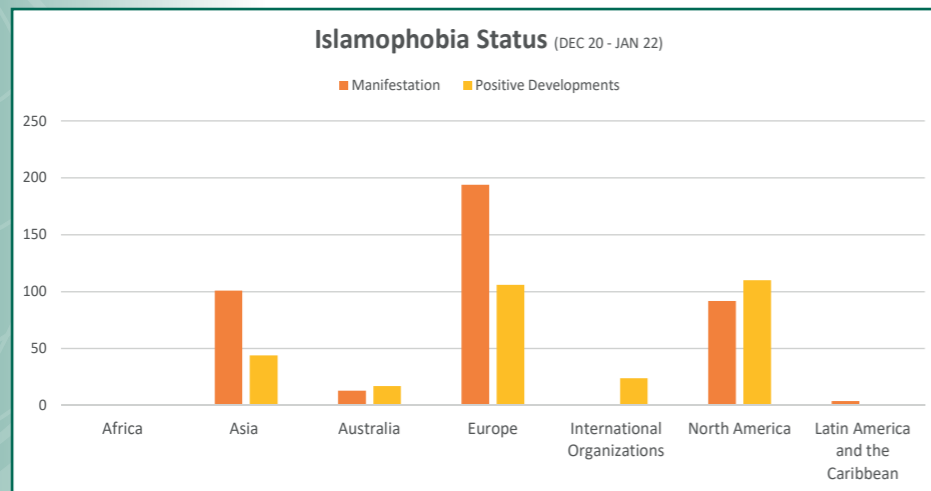
First, it seems that Islamophobia would continue to be among the most challenging issue at global level, at least for now and in the near times ahead. There has been a tendency that Islamophobia keep increasing since the past five years period; and during the past 14-months period (December 2020 until January 2022) such increase remain steady. A slight decrease happened in the beginning of the year, mid-year, and again by end-year of 2021, meaning that trend is quite fluctuating across the months, but the overall trend is increasing.



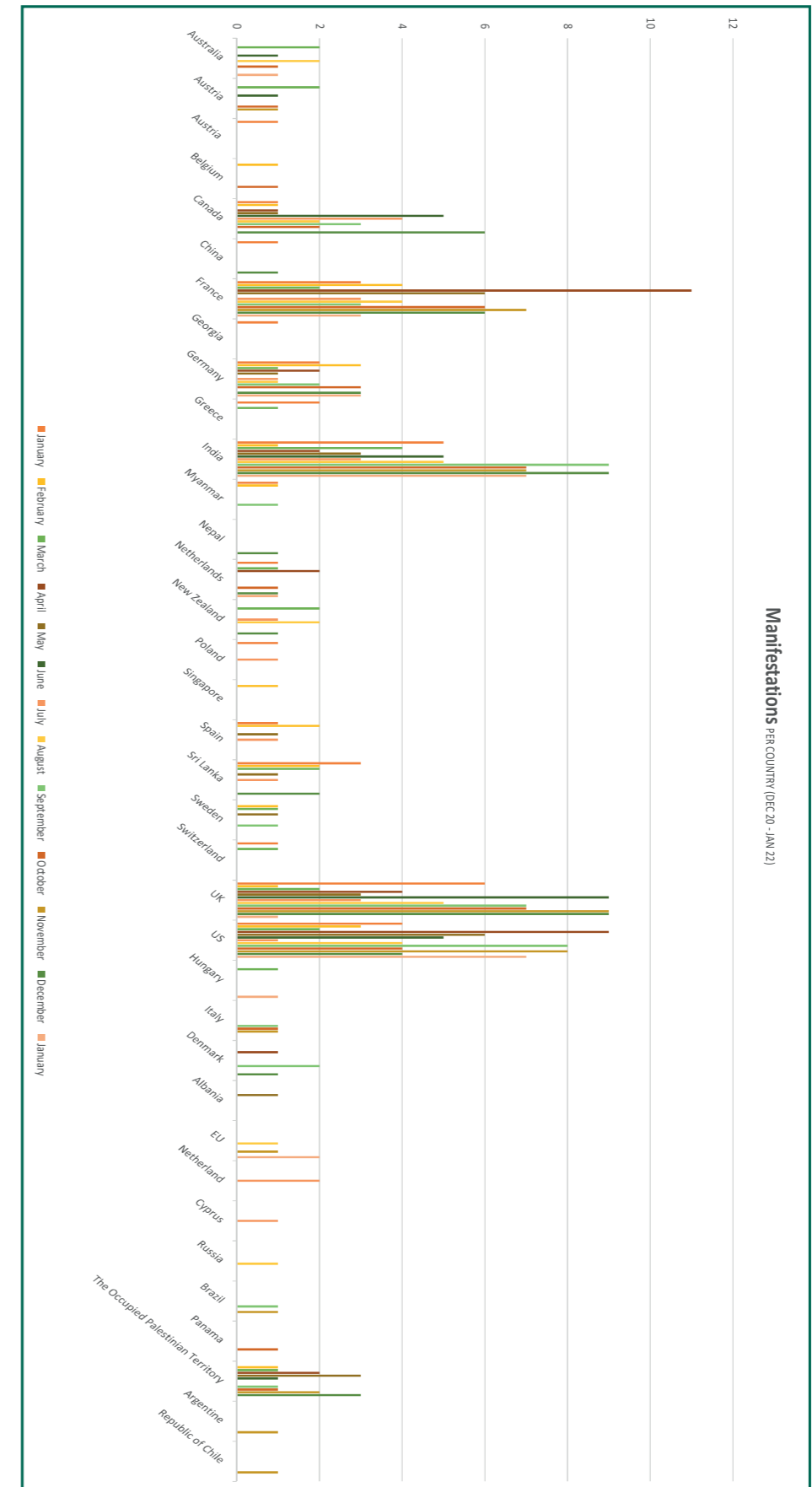
Second, in term of magnitude, Europe is region that deserve most particular attention, followed by Asia and North America. Two countries in Europe, France and United Kingdom among those that keep showing significant indicators of Islamophobia, cemented mostly through government policies, which serve more and more the vested interests far-rights ideologies. An interesting pattern noted by the Observatory thing is that now the central issue has moved far beyond immigration and refugees that used to dominate the political dynamics in Europe since the past five years. Instead, the recent trends shows that the tension was dominated by government policies and public sentiments targeting Islamic identity which somehow, getting close to the theoretical construction of ‘clash of civilizations’ prescribed by Samuel Huntington. The similar pattern was also seen in Asian region, showing the existence of ‘clash of civilization’ which eventually transform into Islamophobia, among others. In India, such ‘clash’ happened between Islam and Hindu; and on the case of Sri Lanka, Islam and Buddhism that seem to have sort of connection with the preceding tensions in Myanmar precisely the case of Rohingya. Meanwhile, Islamophobia in American region was dominated by incidents, mostly perpetrated by far-right supporters. Particularly in Asia, the issue of Islamophobia is closely intertwined with other issues i.e. politics, human rights, minorities, culture, identity, humanitarian action, terrorism, extremism, etc.

Third, at the time the COVID-19 pandemic continued to yield devastating repercussions worldwide, anti-Muslim groups in some countries have tapped the crisis to fuel hatred towards Muslims. Social media was inundated

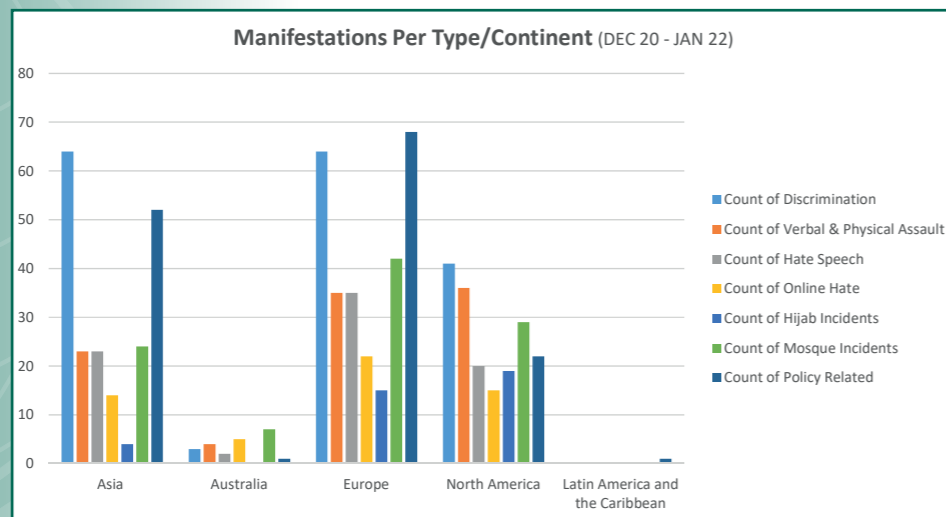
with claims of Muslims breaching the lockdown by continuing to attend mosques to pray, because of which many Muslims have been attacked. Fake stories blaming Muslims for spreading the virus intensely circulated on social media, casting Muslims as a threat to nations. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, incidents of violent attacks against Muslims have reportedly redoubled in countries of the region. Some leaders and prominent figures have also used the Corona virus crisis as a tool to further their agenda against Muslims. Therefore, in this report the Observatory would add COVID-19 into the main factors been identified as major contributors to Islamophobia at global level, in addition to far-right ideologies, refugee crises, immigration issue, extremism & terrorism, and rhetoric by media.



Fourth, in term of manifestation, Islamophobia was dominated by discriminations against Muslims which was followed by far-right campaign and government policy. It was observed that the number of incidents caused by far rights, which was dominant during the last few years, has now been showing a declining pattern, but in reality their influence has doubled and this time was exercised through government policies and political pressures. It could therefore be assumed that the far right ideology has taken significant portion of influence over administrations and ruling governments, especially when we look at the pattern from the result of recent elections in countries of Europe and Asia. Lower percentage of Islamophobia manifestation were seen through a number of incidents such as mosque burning, provocative statements in social media, mail threats, burning and desecration of copies of Holy Quran, insults of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), physical assaults, and verbal abuses.



Fifth, in four out of five regions in the world, Islamophobia continued to be marked by the growing popularity of right-wing parties and movements, evolving into a global wave of anti-establishment, ultra-nationalism, and the mushrooming of extreme right-wing parties. The Islamophobia Observatory believes that the majority of Islamophobia manifestations during the past few years was driven mostly by far rights, therefore, special attention need to be given to the expanding influence of far-right movements in countries, i.e. Avanza Libertad (Argentina), Republican Party (Chile), Fidesz (Hungary), Law and Justice (Poland), Vox Party (Spain), UKIP Party (UK), Freedom Party-PVV (The Netherlands), Ano (The Czech Republic), National Rally (France), Five-Star Movement and Northern League (Italy), Alternative for Germany-AfD (Germany), Freedom Party-FPO (Austria), Social Democrat (Sweden), Bharatiya Janata Party-BJP (India), SLPP (Sri Lanka), and so on.



Sixth, particular attention should also be given to the situation related to headscarf, hijab, veil, burqa, and other dresses associated with Muslim women. In 2020, the phobia against such dresses significantly declined due to the world-wide campaign to wear face masks as part of protective gear against Corona virus; but in 2021 such trend again rise sharply. Countries like France, Switzerland, and Austria started to implement at full force, the policy to ban the use of headscarf at public offices, universities, and schools. In addition, the incident related to hijab has been three-fold in countries like US, Canada, and UK. The Observatory also noticed further kicks on

the implementation of policies against headscarf in countries i.e. Belgium, Norway, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Austria, Bulgaria, Latvia, Kosovo, and Sri Lanka.

Seventh, it is quite relieving nevertheless, to note that during the covered period, there were efforts in many places around the world to promote harmony and tolerance, while countered anti-Islam sentiments and other Islamophobic activities, of which the Observatory would consider as positive signs towards combatting Islamophobia and incitement of hatred and violence towards Islam and Muslims. There have also been significant measures towards ensuring a better protection of Muslims and other minorities. Within the Muslim world, some Muslim countries have been more engaged in the global efforts to address Islamophobia. A similar sign of enthusiasm was also seen at the United Nations and at the European Union. Meanwhile, significant counter-balance to the fast growing far-rights were seen in the US, Brazil, Canada, Spain, UK, Germany, and Australia. In addition, the UN has started to materialize its Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech; The EU has also made commitments on their initiative on ‘Countering Racism and Xenophobia’. It has been found quite here and there, significant push towards the full implementation of UN Resolution 16/18 on Combating Intolerance, Discrimination, Stereotyping, and Incitement of Violence against Persons Based on Religion; and so on.

STEP FORWARD AND POLICY

RECOMMENDATIONS

Step Forward and Policy Recommendations

To address the issue of Islamophobia in term effective and efficient, collective measures need to be deployed by International Organisations, Governments, Non-Governmental Organisations, Civil Society Organisations, and all members of the international community. First, it is important to acknowledge that the issue of Islamophobia, anti-Muslim racism, hatred against Islam and Muslims, or whatever we may call it, it does exist within societies. Then it is pertinent to raise awareness about its danger to the harmonious life among people of different religions, as well as its potential threat to national and international security. People in the grassroots need to recognize the manifestation and motivations of anti-Muslim hatred, and to do necessary steps to anticipate violent actions done by Islamophobes. Visiting anti-racism organizations' websites is encouraged to see different forms of Islamophobia and racism; and when physical attacks, verbal harassment, and discrimination happen, they need to report to the authorities, or to get legal advice from Islamophobia Response Centres. There is also a need to hold discussions in schools, workplaces, and social groups about making spaces more inclusive to all. It is well-expected that governments would also provide sufficient protection to Muslim communities and other minorities, and to set up crisis response system capable to prevent violent attacks.

Particular to OIC Member Countries, a set of recommendations are included hereunder for the kind consideration of the Distinguished Member States during this CFM Session:

Member States are encouraged to foster their efforts at the national level to address the issue of Islamophobia through creative projects and implementable policies, such as boosting youth engagement in dealing with Islamophobia, integration of Islamophobia-related elements into school curricula, and provision of moderate content for early-age children.

Embracing such an approach would significantly contribute to eliminating ignorance of religion, which is believed to be among the major factor feeding Islamophobia. Establishing centres dedicated to the study of, and fight against, Islamophobia in Member Countries would expectedly help coordinate national efforts and deconstruct Islamophobic discourse and ideology.

At the international level, there is a pressing need to launch extensive campaigns slated to project a positive image of Islam, particularly in countries where the issue of Islamophobia is most palpable. This could be done with the help of Muslim communities in non-OIC countries. In this sense, Member States are encouraged to increase support for Muslim communities in non-Muslim societies in order to empower them to fight and resist acts of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief. This step has also the potential to curb tendencies of extremism in Western countries through the promotion of tolerance, moderation, mutual respect and peaceful co-existence among their citizens. Along these measures, Member States are encouraged to promote inter-faith and inter-religious dialogues to raise awareness about the well-founded interpretations of religious precepts and teachings, as well as open up space for discussion about Islam among non-Muslims.

Member States are equally encouraged to reach out as widely as possible to the Muslim diaspora in non-Muslim countries, while engaging them in a constructive dialogue with their non-Muslim fellows in order to develop a sustainable mechanism for countering all types of discrimination against Muslims or any other religious minority. Existing OIC mechanisms, notably the Contact Group on Muslim Minorities in Europe, and the Contact Group on Peace and Dialogue could prove effective tools for the coordination of the Muslim world's collective efforts in combating Islamophobia at the international level.

Generate projects for countering Islamophobia through close collaboration with a select number of international entities such as the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), as well as Non-Governmental

Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that advocate counter-Islamophobia at the grass-root level. Member States are encouraged to visibly keep the issue of Islamophobia high on the agenda of UN's Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly and implement the UN Resolution 16/18 on combating incitement to hatred, discrimination and violence against persons based on their religion.

National media outlets and social media platforms could be harnessed to promote the principle of responsible use of freedom of expression while implementing appropriate policies that hold accountable any media which perpetuate hate speech against Islam and Muslims.

Member Countries are encouraged to provide support to the Islamophobia Observatory in the General Secretariat by allocating the necessary resources to establish a network with other hate-speech monitoring platforms around the world. It is also recommended that Member States consider deliberation on the appointment of an OIC Special Envoy for Islamophobia in a bid to boost OIC's engagement with international and regional organizations on this highly critical issue.

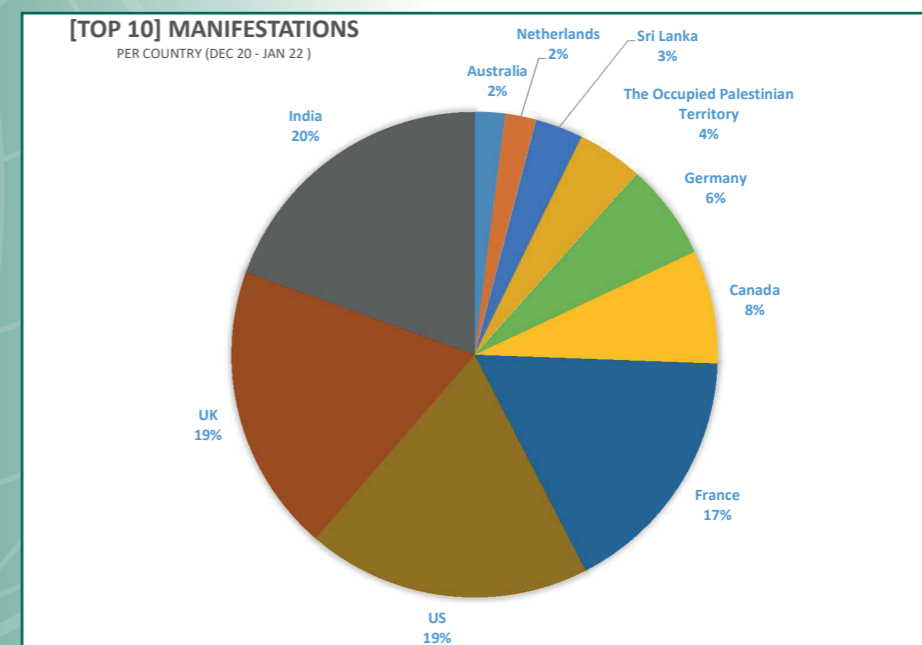
HOT SPOTS OF

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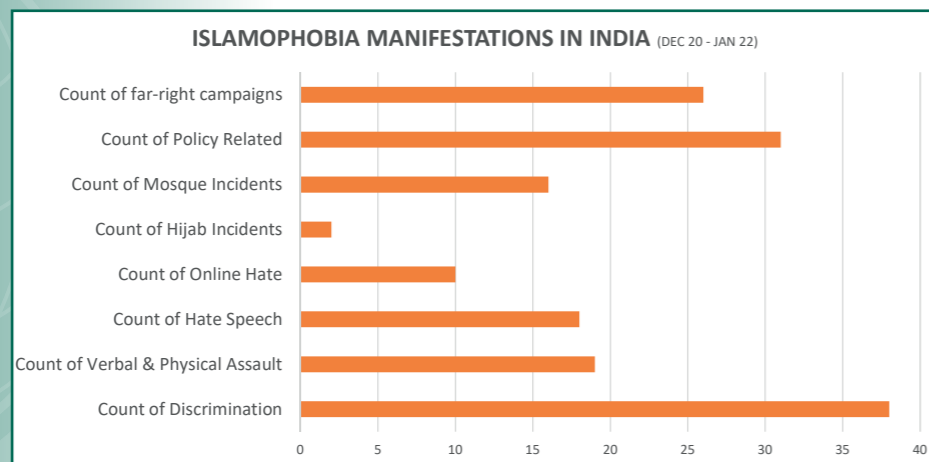
Through Resolutions No. 34/47-POL on Combating Islamophobia and Eliminating Hatred and Prejudice against Islam, the OIC Member States “Requests the OIC Islamophobia Observatory to prepare a list of ‘countries of concern’ where Islamophobic policies and actions are prevalent.” (OP-22) Accordingly, the Observatory has been working to identify countries that shows the most concerning trend of Islamophobia during the period under review, thereafter being referred as ‘hotspots’.

The Observatory manages to secure 10 (ten) countries which require particular attention in term of Islamophobia, namely: France, India, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Germany, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, and Australia. In this report, the Observatory would pick some hotspots by showing how, more or less, the Islamophobia had developed at top speed during the reviewed months.



India

The Observatory has been alarmed by the trend of Islamophobia in India since the last three years, which was becoming even worse during the past 12 months period, of which a report said that the country had become a “dangerous and violent space for Muslim minorities”. There is no secret that since 2019 the Government has been always in its drive towards Hindutva which is an ultranationalist Hindu ideology. Following re-election of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as ruling government, the party had been actively pursuing the agenda of its parent body, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Hindu right wing organization. Their leaders kept openly indicating negative signals on Muslims, including when they expressed concern about ‘population explosion.’ BJP introduced the Population Regulation Bill targeted a section of the Muslims for their supposedly high birth rates; which went to the extent of claiming that “one particular community was responsible for increasing the population of the country and that was curbing the nation’s development”, called for ‘compulsory sterilization’ of Muslims.



The strike happened notably by the adoption of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) granting fast-tracked citizenship to undocumented Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Christian migrants who had allegedly fled persecutions in their countries of origin, except Muslims. The government justified this discriminative omission by claiming that, since Muslims were majority

populations in the three neighboring countries, they were simply trying to assist non-Muslims who face religious persecution in those countries by allowing them to remain. In the run-up to the legislation, the government also declared its intentions to create a National Register of Indian Citizens, which would have the potential to render many Muslims stateless” The CAA was widely seen as an anti-Muslim legislation because it introduced religious grounds for granting citizenship, meaning that anyone who was deemed non-eligible under the law was subject to deportation. As immediate consequence, more than 4 million people in India, mostly Muslims, were at risk of being declared foreign migrants as the government pushed a hardline Hindu nationalist agenda that challenged the country’s pluralist tradition. This hunt for migrants happened for instance in Assam, a state near the borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh. Many of the people whose citizenship was questioned were born in India and have enjoyed all the rights of citizens, such as voting in elections. All of the 33 million residents of Assam have had to prove, with documentary evidence, that they or their ancestors were Indian citizens before early 1971 when Bangladesh was established. Since BJP returned to power with a in May 2019, it enacted measures aimed at signaling to Muslims. The Indian authorities had also weaponized the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, which regulates foreign donations to entities in India, against progressive and minority NGOs.

Another significant strike was when India unilaterally wiped out the statehood of India’s only Muslim-majority state, Jammu and Kashmir, removing its special autonomy and turning it into a federal territory (under Article 370 of the Constitution) without any consultation with local population and leaders — many of whom had since been arrested. The regressive constitutional change were accompanied by a communication blackout, mass detentions, and a movement lockdown. A military clampdown was imposed to prevent unrest, with mobile phone networks and the internet cut off. Local leaders had been imprisoned. Soldiers roam the streets. India’s governing party said the removal of the special status for Jammu and Kashmir – and a concurrent move to make the region into a federally administered territory – would create a more equal society,

removed obstacles to economic progress and enabled a more effective fight against terrorism. Obviously, the impact of such revolutionary policy on Islamophobia in these two special regions of India were immense, as the Observatory recorded a massive increase of Islamophobia incidents in the regions since the past three years.

What seems to be a continuous strike is ‘Love Jihad’, while so far at least four other Indian states were drafting laws against Love Jihad, the Islamophobic conspiracy theory developed by proponents of the Hindutva ideology. The conspiracy theory purports that Muslim men target Hindu women for conversion to Islam by means such as seduction, feigning love, deception, kidnapping, and marriage, as part of a broader “war” by Muslims against India, and an organized international conspiracy, for domination through demographic growth and replacement. On December 2, 2020, Police in Uttar Pradesh state had arrested a Muslim man for allegedly trying to convert a Hindu woman to Islam. The arrest was the first under the new anti-conversion law that targets Love Jihad. A complaint filed by the woman’s father the week before accused the man of pressuring his daughter to convert and threatening her life if she didn’t. The woman was allegedly in a relationship with the man but got married to someone else earlier this year. The man was sent to 14 days of judicial custody. He told reporters that he was innocent and had “no link with the woman”. The new law carries a jail term of up to 10 years. On January 1, 2021, the Telegraph newspaper had reported that nearly 40 Muslim families in this Indian province were planning to flee their village after saying they had been subjected to a campaign of harassment by a Hindu nationalist group, one month after laws were passed criminalizing marriage between Hindus and Muslims. According to the report, Mavi Meera village which had been home to approximately 600 families, and tensions between its Hindu and Muslim residents had existed since 2013. Since the “Love Jihad” laws were passed in November 2020, the Bajrang Dal group had stepped up its regular sermons in the village and described Muslims as outsiders. A Muslim who was the first to flee with his family, saying they no longer felt safe. “The Hindu community wants us to vacate the village. They have been attacking us

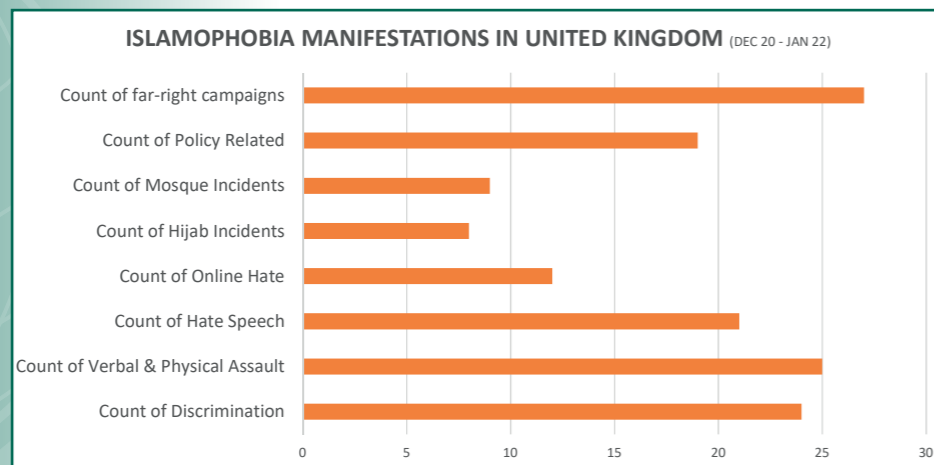
and harassing us for a long time Earlier, there would have been scuffles between the two communities and Hindus would beat us with canes, but now they feel confident to have fired bullets. It is better to leave this village before it turns ugly,” he told the media. When Muslims approached the local police to register the shootings, some Hindu officers allegedly told them to drop the claims or face charges themselves, according to the report.

On January 3, 2021, the Indian state Madhya Pradesh followed the step of Uttar Pradesh, passing a bill to stop Hindu women from converting to Islam. The bill to curb so-called “Love Jihad: were presented in the state assembly. Narottam Mishra, home minister of the state, said: “The bill includes a maximum punishment of up to 10 years in jail and up to 100,000 Indian rupees (\$1358) in fine, with the burden of proof virtually falling on the accused and those associated with the accused, including organizations and institutions.” An official statement said: “Those looking to change their religion will have to notify two months ahead, failing which the marriage will be considered null and void under the new law.”

Assam, a state in northeastern India had meanwhile passed a law to convert all Islamic schools to regular education institutions. Every government-run Islamic school in Assam, locally known as madrassas, would be converted by April 2021, the state’s Education Minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma, confirmed on Twitter on December 30, 2020. In the new law, the madrassas would become “secular schools” and it would not teach students about the Quran, officials said. Opposition politicians had criticized the move, alleging it was a reflection of hardening anti-Muslim attitudes in the Hindu-majority country. Senior state opposition leader Debabrata Saikia claimed the new law was passed by the BJP to “consolidate more Hindu votes ... It is a polarization tactic ... (The BJP) is trying to do it in an official capacity. There is no such need for a law.” Saikia said. According to the chairman of Assam’s Madrassa Education Board, Imran Hussain, about 700 schools would be impacted.

United Kingdom

Islamophobia in the United Kingdom has been in constant high since the past five years; and the Observatory used to identify the major factor to such worrisome trend, which was the fast growing far-right influence in the country soon after the bold inspiration brought by the victory of far-rights in the United States at the end of 2016. There is no secret that far right movement in the UK have been focusing mainly on opposing Islam, in addition to their long struggle against British attachment to the European Union. Well then following a UK-wide referendum on 23 June 2016, in which 51.89 per cent voted in favor of leaving the EU, the extreme rights in UK would then have only ‘Islam’ as their major enemy, until today. As the result, Islamophobia in the UK keeps going high, manifested at all level, from government offices, to parliament, and continued until frequent incident on streets. Muslims, especially migrants and refugees were the easy targets.



An instance worth mentioning was the case of thousands of Afghans housed temporarily in British hotels following the recent crisis in Afghanistan. There were continuously harassed by far-right groups who drew on Islamophobic narratives to whip up hate against the refugees. Britain First was one of the most notorious and prominent groups involved in the campaign who had been reported to have made more than so many unsolicited visits to hotels housing refugees across England in just few weeks. Right-wing extremism monitor had observed that the resettlement schemes for Afghans had become a focal point for many far-right groups, since the arrival of the refugees had

led to the far right “reviving, and refining, similar attacks used during the Syria crisis.” The far right was using ideas rooted in Islamophobia such as the “Muslim takeover of Europe,” or framing refugees as potential terrorists or sex offenders, to incite hatred against them. In the videos, far-right activists were seen filming themselves showing up at hotels and where they tried to find and film refugees, who they incorrectly described as illegal immigrants. Somehow, the Afghan refugee issue is in coincidence with the revelation by Nigel Farage that he was planning a return to frontline politics, It is not a secret that this former UKIP leader was cynically seeking to exploit an increase in asylum seekers crossing the English Channel. Significantly, on 10 November 2021 Farage announced he had “finally joined Parler”, the right-wing social media app that faced closure earlier in 2021 over its links to rioting by Trump supporters at the US Capitol. Parler was banned by Apple, Amazon and Google in January 2021 over toxic posts that “glorified Nazism and called for violence against specific people”, but Apple lifted its ban in April 2021 and, shortly afterwards, Parler hired George Farmer, a British former Brexit Party candidate, as its new chief executive. Farage, its new champion, had also urged followers to join him there, generating Islamophobia across the country.

Discrimination was among the most-concerning issues in the UK during the reviewed period. A dire instance was the government policy being criticized openly by a member of the UK’s House of Lords, who challenged the British government over its disregard for British Muslims, who were being systematically deprived of university education because of refusal to introduce a student loan system that Muslims could access. The Lord highlighted a promise made by former UK Prime Minister David Cameron: “Never again should a Muslim in Britain feel unable to go to university because they cannot get a student loan — simply because of their religion,” which was unfortunately not implementable. Discrimination at workplace was also identified by an official report saying 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 Observatory recorded at local schools across the country, a significant number of incidents against

Muslim students been excluded, discriminated, or bullied for their religious beliefs or dresses. Not to mention some cases of discriminative policies against Muslim charities in the UK that happened since last year, and so on and so forth.

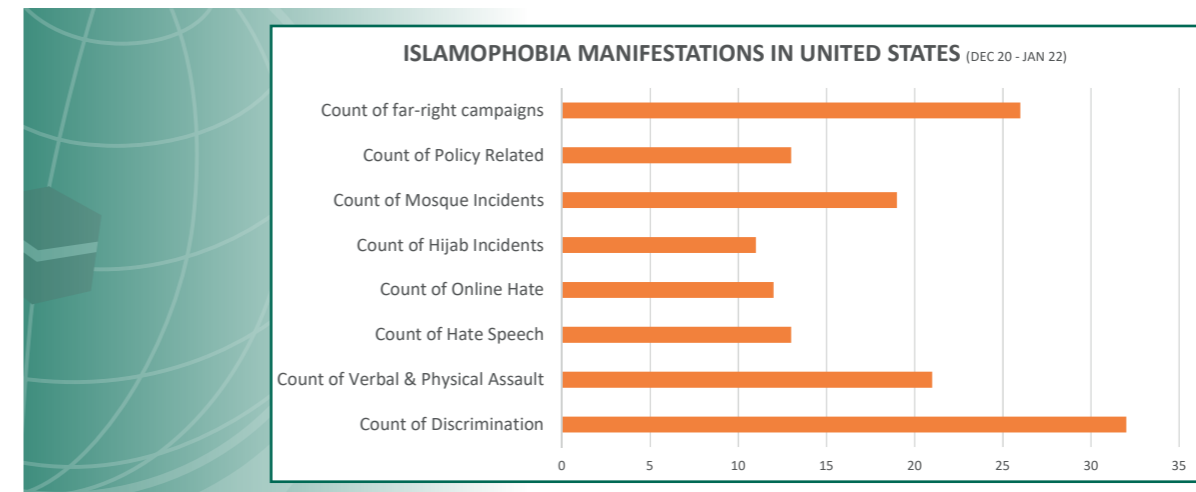
Hate crime was also among the major concerns in the UK since last year. According to official figures, the reported hate crimes had risen to a record number of more than 124,000 across England and Wales since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. Racially motivated crimes, which were nearly three-quarters of the total number of 124,091 hate crimes, increased by 12% over the year 2021 amid Black Lives Matter protests and a backlash from far-right activists.

The Observatory had also recorded a huge number of verbal and physical assault in the UK in the past 14-months period. Words like ‘Taliban’, ‘Islamic terrorists’, ‘people like him’, ‘all these bombings’, ‘Saddam Hussein’, ‘Osama bin Laden’, ‘pedophilia’, ‘go back to your country’, as well as other racist and misogynist comments in a manner intended to provoke a response from Muslims. Hate Speech and Online Hate were also a matter of concern as a significant number of British media continued to publish misleading headlines falsely accused Muslims and Islam. The Observatory also recorded that there has been intensive campaign by media to defame not only Burqa but also headscarves including veil and hijab. They tried to mislead public understanding in saying that Muslim men has forced their wives and daughters to wear such dress as matter of oppression. In some local schools, Muslim students were told to come back wearing the correct uniform. Violent assaults against woman wearing burqa were also reported.

The Observatory noted that attacks targeting mosques and Islamic centers in the UK during the past 14-months is much less if being compared with the statistic of the previous year. Less than 10 incidents of arson attack, provocative graffiti, eggs and stone throwing, damage property, were recorded across the months. However, incident targeting Muslim individuals seems to increase in term of number.

United States

The US has been always at the top-List of Islamophobia hotspots; and such worrisome trend seems not to stand in vacuum. Why? Based on the empirics gathered since the last few years, the Observatory would straightforwardly say that the terrorist attacks on World Trade Center in 2001 had somehow made many American sees Islam today as a serious threat to their national security. The rise of ISIS phenomenon few years back made the situation even worse as for many Americans (government, parliament, and ordinary people), Islam has then been portrayed as a religion of intrinsic violence whose disciples had a tendency to spread harm to the followers of other religions. In the US likewise in many other Western countries, Islam has even been considered as an ‘alien’ religion prone to bloodshed, a stigma that triggers intolerant attitudes from the majority population. These negative stereotyping eventually ended up into negative sentiments, dread or hatred of Islam that includes multi-form of discrimination, manifested into the exclusion of Muslims from economic, social, and public life. Together, all these things are the essential ingredients of Islamophobia in western countries, including in the US, which unfortunately still continue until today.



As an instance to support such conclusion, a report published by Pew Research Center Published in September 2021 worth of particular attention. The report found that in the 20 years since the September 11, 2001, Republicans had increasingly come to view Islam as more likely

than other religions to encourage violence among believers. According to the research, Muslims had continued to face bias and discrimination in the US two decades after 9/11, and those negative biases had become increasingly partisan. As of 2021, seven in 10 Republicans associated Islam with violence. While only about one-third of Democrats thought the same way, they were still more likely to think of Islam as encouraging violence than in early 2002. In a September 2001 survey, 28% of adults said they had grown more suspicious of people of Middle Eastern descent; that grew to 36% less than a year later. Republicans, in particular, increasingly came to associate Muslims and Islam with violence. In 2002, just a quarter of Americans – including 32% of Republicans and 23% of Democrats – said Islam was more likely than other religions to encourage violence among its believers. About twice as many (51%) said it was not. However, within the next few years, most Republicans and GOP said Islam was more likely than other religions to encourage violence. Today, 72% of Republicans express this view, according to an August 2021 survey. Democrats consistently had been far less likely than Republicans to associate Islam with violence. In the Center's latest survey, 32% of Democrats said this. Still, Democrats were somewhat more likely to say this today than they have been in recent years: In 2019, 28% of Democrats said Islam was more likely than other religions to encourage violence among its believers than other religions. Terrible fact, while making sense with regard to the continuously high level of Islamophobia in the US today.

The most common incidents found by the Observatory in the US were terror targeting Mosques and Islamic centers in the form of racist graffiti, pig carcass dumping, threatening mail, Holy Quran defacing, physical assaults, and verbal insults to Muslim individuals. In addition, the atmosphere of overwhelming insecurity feeling among Muslims living in the country was still obvious, and such feeling has actually been the case notably since the previous US administration that used to regard Islam as a major enemy. Muslims across America remain primary targets of crimes motivated by sheer hatred, mostly perpetrated by far right supporters and hate-groups existing in the US. A significant number of active hate groups operating

across the US, and the statistics revealed that domestic terrorism incidents were driven chiefly by white supremacist and anti-Muslim extremists, targeting mosques and Muslim individuals, as they were threatened, burned, bombed and hit with gunfire.

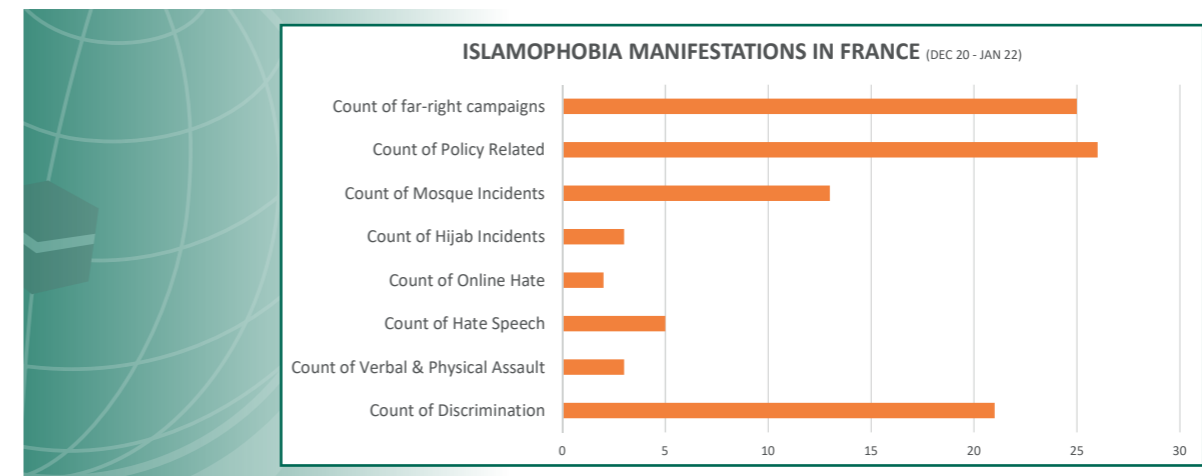
Further observation, discrimination was quite dominant manifestation of Islamophobia in the US during the past 14-months period. The Observatory recorded at least 140 incidents of discrimination in the US for 2021 only, meaning that this particular manifestation of Islamophobia worth serious attention. Some instances were presented in this report such as: Muslim communities were not allowed to build mosque in their area in north Mississippi; A Muslim political candidate in the US state of Virginia was questioned about his ability to serve all Virginians because of their faith; A Muslim passenger on Southwest Airlines was told that she could not sit in the aisle of the emergency exit door because she was wearing a hijab; A worker was harassed because of his faith in a dealership company in Utah after the worker's request for prayer breaks was denied by the company; US government invoke the protection of 'state secrets' to withhold information about its surveillance of Muslims at mosques in California; Discriminatory incidents faced by hijab-wearing women who work on the trading floors; and many more.

Far right fanatic is also among the most concerning issue during the period under review. Instance of such fanaticism was when a far right supporter detonated a recreational vehicle bomb in Nashville, Tennessee injured eight people and damaged dozens of buildings. Unfortunately, some of those fanatics were even promoted to key posts across the US that would even give them more space to exercise their hatred. For instance, John Bennett who drew the ire of Muslims when he called Islam 'a cancer' had been elected as chairman of the Oklahoma Republican Party; Laura Loomer, a self-described 'proud Islamophobe' had filed to run for 2022 Congress Midterm election. Loomer had described Islam as a 'cancer on humanity' and had been banned from various social media platforms, as well as ride-share apps, for her comments about Muslims.

In interesting incident opens the eyes of many Americans about the worrisome endemic of Islamophobia in the country. Anti-Muslim bigotry and hatred come obvious to US public after a Colorado Republican Rep. Lauren Boebert used anti-Muslim language in describing an encounter she had with Rep. Ilham Omar at the US Capitol. Boebert and a staffer were taking a Capitol elevator when she saw an alarmed Capitol police officer running toward them. She said she turned to her left and spotted Omar standing beside them. “Well, she doesn’t have a backpack. We should be fine,” Boebert recalled saying, drawing laughs from her audience. “And I said, ‘Oh look, the jihad squad decided to show up for work today.’” The incident gone viral provoking massive reaction pro and cons, after all showing the current reality of the growing Islamophobia in the US.

France

Islamophobia in France developed ‘à toute vitesse’ since last year. It started on 2 September 2020, when the French magazine Charlie Hebdo launched ‘another’ reckless provocation by re-publishing cartoons about the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). The same cartoon had in the past triggered condemnation, and eventual attack and killings in Paris in January 2015. The re-publishing of the cartoon apparently coincides with the trial of persons accused as accomplices in the 2015 attacks that killed 11 staff of the Magazine. The trial opened for public on that day and proceedings continued till 10 November 2020. The re-publishing of the offensive cartoons drew renewed condemnation in France and beyond. On the other hand, there were other groups who support the re-publishing of the cartoons viewing these through the classical lens of “freedom of expression and freedom of press”.



On 25 September 2020, a knife attack was carried out in Paris, near the former office of Charlie Hebdo magazine, wounded two people. The attack was being treated as “an act of Islamist terrorism” and French authorities arrested one suspect of Pakistan origin, together with six accomplices. It was confirmed that the attacker “mistakenly believed Charlie Hebdo’s office was still in that building and wanted to attack journalists from the magazine, to avenge the republication of cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH)”. Reportedly, the attack came in the wake of multiple death threats

made against employees of Charlie Hebdo in recent times. On 2 October 2020, President Macron announced his plan of action against all forms of “separatism”, especially the “radical Islamism”. Although the President was supposed to “tackle all forms of separatisms” such as religious sects or the far-right in his speech, it ended up being only about “Islamism”. The President began by stating that he did not want to fall in the “amalgam between Islam and religious radicalism” but nonetheless, stressed that Islam was a “religion that is experiencing a crisis across the world”, linked to tensions between fundamentalisms and religious/political projects and that “political Islam is not compatible with stability and peace in the world.” Recalling that “Islamist separatism” is often associated to the “constitution of a counter-society”, the President underscored the need to build “an Islam of Enlightenment”. In this context, he highlighted the “need to train imams in France who both are knowledgeable about the religion and ascribe to the values of enlightenment that underpin French society to provide guidance on how to reconcile being Muslim and French”.

Among measures announced by President Macron were: i) make secularism in public service compulsory, ii) school will be obligatory at 3 years old and home-schooling would be strictly limited to health imperatives, iii) associations requesting state funding will have to sign a “secular charter to respect the Republic’s values”. Furthermore, the President also intends to “free Islam and Muslims in France from the influence of foreign countries” (by training of Imams in France, as well as reinforcing the control of the financing). A budget of 10 million € will be provided for the Fondation pour l’Islam de France (Foundation for Islam of France) and the creation of a “scientific institute of Islamology”. The French Council of Muslim Faith would be requested to draw a charter within six months, non-respect could lead to the revocation of Imams. Brief, President Macron’s announced “project to fight against all forms of separatism” most prominently would include proposals for training of Imams in France and to curtail home-schooling and influence of foreign countries on France’s Muslim populations. In this regard, a draft bill was presented on 9 December 2020, of which analysts believe that this would be used to further stigmatize and target French Muslim communities in the country.

On 16 October 2020, an incident happened – when an 18 year-old French citizen of Chechen descent beheaded a secondary school teacher in the suburb in Northwest of Paris, provoking strong condemnation in France and beyond. The killing was believed to be linked to showing of cartoons of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) by the deceased teacher, Samuel Paty, to students apparently as part of a free speech class. Reportedly, photo of the teacher and a message confessing to his murder was found on the mobile phone of his killer, Abdullakh Anzorov, who was later shot dead by police. French citizens across the country in their strong condemnation of the killings and terror incidents were increasingly urging celebration of freedom of expression. The national tribute took place on 21 October 2020 in honor of the victim, during which President Emmanuel Macron posthumously awarded Samuel Paty with the Legion of Honour.

By 22 October 2020, the political scene in France has become tense, especially with the far-right parties, seeking to gain political mileage out of it. Marine Le Pen of National Rally party found it an apt opportunity to spotlight her hard-line views against Muslims and immigration. In a press conference on 19 October 2020, she accused the incumbent government for its “soft line” policy, while underlining that France now required “wartime legislation” to combat organized force of radicalized Islamists. Wary of appearing “inactive”, President Macron had already termed the killing an “Islamist terrorist attack” and described France as being in an “existential” fight against terror. He reassured that the government will “go further with measures against structures, associations or people close to radicalized circles”. Meanwhile, French Minister of Interior informed that a number of measures have been undertaken since, including police operations and administrative and judiciary controls of individuals and associations “showing signs of radicalism, like preaching radicalized sermons, or sharing hate messages on social networks”. The Minister referred in particular to the Collective against Islamophobia in France (CCIF), and threatened to shut it down, mentioning “it was clearly implicated, as a student’s father launched a fatwa against the professor, and clearly made reference to the Collective”. By 23 October 2020, France was seeking to move forward for

the adoption of the draft EU regulation preventing the dissemination of terrorist content, including the glorification of terrorism online, which has been under discussion since September 2018. On 29 October 2020, a knife attack killed 3 persons inside the Notre-Dame Basilica in Nice, France, complicating the already tense situation obtaining in France and beyond since the killing of Samuel Patty which was already been described as “terror attack by Islamist”. The attacker, around 25 year old, reportedly shot and wounded by security forces was investigated for “murder and attempt of murder in relation with a terrorist organization”.

On 9 December 2020, a draft bill was examined at the French National Assembly. The bill proposes 57 articles, designed to outlaw the activities defined as “Islamist separatism” and undermining the values of the Republic; it seeks to reduce homeschooling by making school compulsory for children after 3 years old; will be an offense to pressure civil servants and public service providers to deviate from France’s secular values in the name of ideology or religious extremism; online postings disseminating personal details of persons with the aim of endangering their lives will be a punishable offence; oversight of religious associations and mosques would also require to declare foreign funding, and all association requesting funds should sign a “Charter of secularism”; crack down on any behavior that violates the “dignity” of people, especially women. The law also strengthens the state’s arsenal against forced marriages and polygamy. On 23 July 2021, the controversial “bill against separatisms” was finally adopted by a large majority. Some French lawmakers, especially leftist Jean-Luc Mélenchon, tried to block and expressed strong criticisms against the bill. The government said that “the legislation was needed to bolster France’s secular system” and ensured the text “has a general scope and does not target one religion”. Other critics said that the bill “breaches religious freedom” and “unfairly targets Muslims”, and fear that the French government will pass more Islamophobic legislation. The bill, which has been officially renamed as “bill upholding republican principles”, proposes articles on the neutrality of public services, the protection of civil servants, online hatred and dissemination of personal details, reducing home-schooling, oversight

of religious associations and mosques and transparency of their funding, or fighting against “virginity certificates, forced marriages and polygamy”. Furthermore, the law states that organisations seeking public funds will have to sign a “Republican Contract” and abide by its conditions. Since then, Islamophobia in France has been soaring high, brought the country into the Top-list of ‘Hotspots of Islamophobia’.

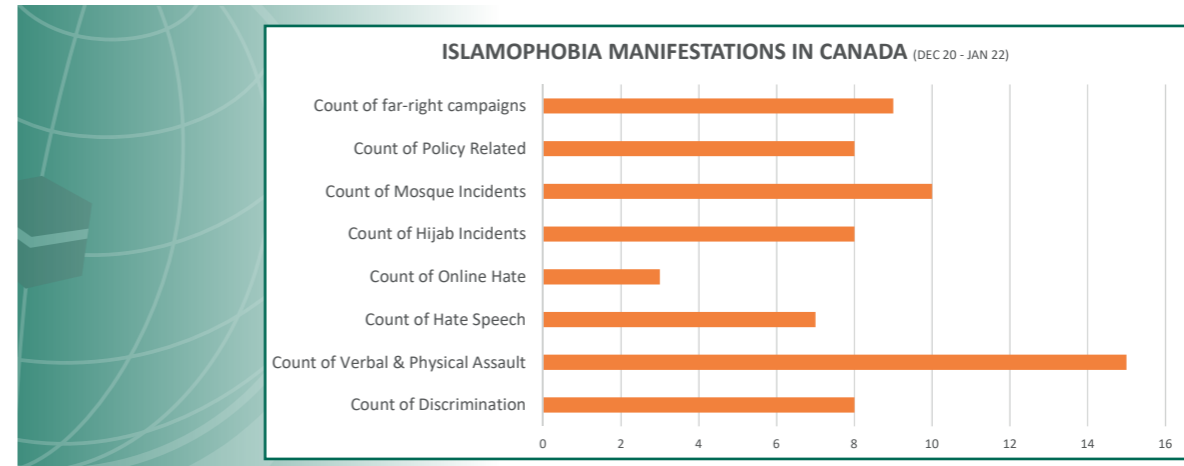
Canada

Facts about Islamophobia in Canada has actually been very much relieving, as the Observatory keeps recording good things happened in Canada since the past 5-years. The Canadian government keeps showing friendly gestures towards Islam, while taking significant measures to provide protections for Muslim population living in the country. Interfaith relations in Canada is also exemplary, where groups of people from different religious background tend support each other. The authorities also exercise appropriate actions against extreme far-right groups, and against perpetrator of crimes done on the basis of religion or faith. Positive views about Islam and promotion of tolerance have been pretty much reflected from statements made by Canadian leaders and prominent figures.

Things seem to be good enough so far, but obviously, those did not impede from bringing Canada into the list of countries considered as hotspots of Islamophobia during the past 14-months period. Looking at the empirics, the Observatory wishes to summarize what was mostly happening in Canada: aggression against Canadian Muslims accelerated as the number of anti-Muslim attacks and hate crimes had ballooned –incidents showed a dramatic increase more than threefold. Some incidents worth mentioning like racist attack against two Muslims in Kingston; Muslim mother and daughter were threatened with Islamophobic slurs and later to kill in Hamilton, Ontario; a Muslim family was hit by a car on Hyde Park Road, Ontario; A Muslim man was stabbed and had his beard cut by assailants as they yelled about his religious clothing in Saskatoon; Muslim mother and daughter were assaulted in a mall parking lot in Edmonton; A Muslim woman with hijab was attacked at the Southgate LRT station also in Edmonton; Man with knife attacks 2 women wearing hijabs still in Edmonton, etc.

In addition, the Observatory wish to bring into the kind attention of Member States, a new development regarding Islamophobia in Canada which is the controversial Quebec law - Bill 21 - which barred civil servants in positions of 'authority' to wear religious symbols at work. This Bill

was actually adopted in June 2019 and it had then fueled fierce debate throughout the country. Last year, the controversial surfaced once again as the Canadian Supreme Court upheld such adoption, in saying that Quebec had the right to restrict religious symbols donned by government employees. If going unabated, such trend may evolve into different kind of ban, notably targeting headscarf, hijab, and veil, the same trend been happening in Europe.



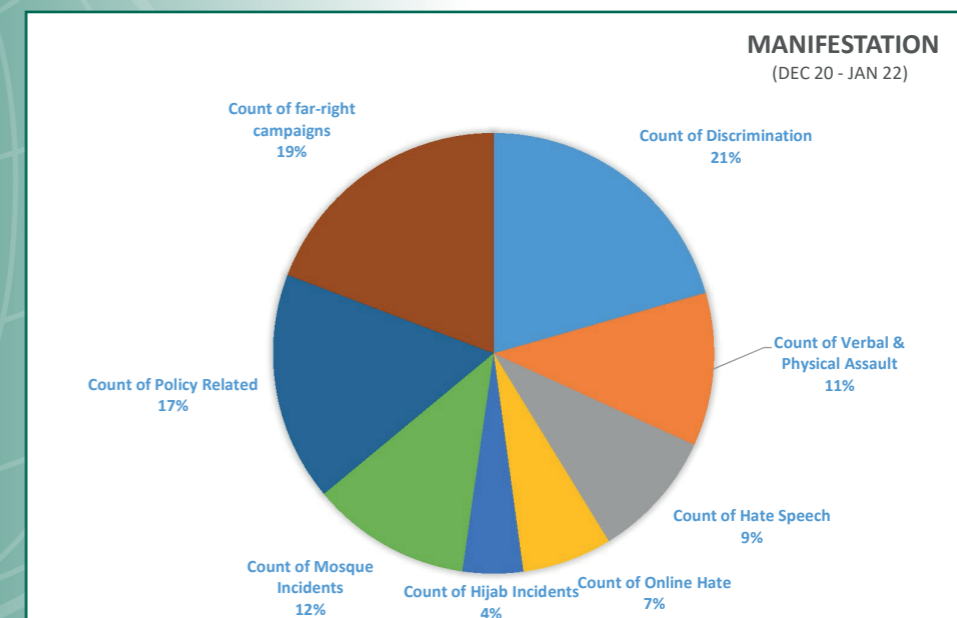
Another trend that have brought Canada into the List was the growing number of attack against mosques and Islamic Centers, which is quite a phenomenon since such trend was not quite common to happen in Canada in the past. Some incidents cited in this report such as vandalism targeting a mosque in Conception Bay South; shooting at Montreal mosque; swastika painted on Edmonton mosque; multiple instances of anti-Muslim graffiti found in central Newton; Scarborough mosque was broken into and vandalized; and so on. Nevertheless, despite the mounting number of Islamophobia incidents in Canada, the Observatory commend the continued efforts taken by the Canadian government to tackle the issue.

MANIFESTATION OF

ISLAMOPHOBIA

MANIFESTATION OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

Islamophobia is a combination of fear, hate, and prejudice against Islam, against Muslims, as well as against anything associated with the religion, such as Mosques, Islamic centres, Holy Qur'an, Hijab, etc. It also constitutes hatred, stigmatization, racism and discriminations in daily life, on Media, at workplace, in political sphere, etc. It rests in the mind and it reflects in attitudes, and could be manifested through violent actions, such as burning mosques, vandalizing properties, abusing women wearing veil, or insulting Prophet or sacred symbols of Islam. This Chapter elaborates those kinds of manifestation by looking at indicators comprise statements, events, and incidents that happened in different countries during the period under review. Such manifestations are being classified into Discrimination, Islamophobic policy, far right, verbal and physical assault, hate speech and online hate, and defamation of hijab, veil, and burqa.



Discrimination

Discrimination is the act of making unjustified distinctions between people based on the groups, classes, or other categories to which they belong or are perceived to belong. People may be discriminated based on race, gender, age, religion, or sexual orientation, as well as other categories. Discrimination especially occurs when individuals or groups are unfairly treated in a way, which is worse than other people are treated, on the basis of their actual or perceived membership in certain groups or social categories. It involves restricting members of one group from opportunities or privileges that are available to members of another group. Specific on the purpose of this report, such unjustified distinctions are targeting Muslim individual or a group on the ground of their faith or religion.

The first instance of discrimination was in the US, when 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. ²

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". ³

A Muslim passenger on Southwest Airlines was discriminated 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 than 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. ⁴

Owners of an Oklahoma gun range that once claimed to be “Muslim-free” had announced that they would sell the property after they faced a lawsuit from a local Muslim resident that had lasted several years. In a Facebook post, the owners of Save Yourself Gun Club announced the sale of their two-acre property located in Muskogee County. The shooting range first gained national attention in 2015 when it posted a sign stating, “This privately owned business is a Muslim free establishment!!! We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone!!! Thank you!” Raja’ee Fatihah, a local Muslim man, filed a lawsuit against the business’s owners several months later, and claimed that he was turned away when he attempted to shoot there, according to Star-Telegram. ⁵

Allan Goodson, from Utah had sued a Cedar City car dealership, where he accused his former employer of discrimination and dismissal because of his Muslim faith. When Goodson was hired as a mechanic at Bradshaw Chevrolet two years before, he was a Christian. He converted to Islam few months later, after which his supervisors denied his requests to take prayer breaks at work, the lawsuit said, and his colleagues began to harass him. Goodson sued Bradshaw Chevrolet over alleged violations of the Civil Rights Act’s Title VII, which prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and national origin. The federal lawsuit was filed on August 2 on Goodson’s behalf in U.S. District Court in Utah by a Salt Lake City law firm, as well as the Council on American-Islamic Relations, based in Washington, D.C. ⁶

The US Supreme Court was hearing arguments whether the US government could invoke the protection of “state secrets” to withhold information about its surveillance of Muslims at mosques in California. The dispute began a decade ago when three Muslim men filed suit against the Federal Bureau of Investigation, alleging the top US law enforcement agency deployed a confidential informant who claimed to be a convert to Islam to spy on them based solely on their religious identity. The US Constitution guaranteed freedom of the practice of one’s religion; but the government was claiming that it could refuse to disclose information about its surveillance under authority granted it by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, as well as its use of the state secrets privilege defense, which allowed the government to block the release of information it considered to be a risk to national security. The three Muslim men, Yassir Fazaga, Ali Malik and Yasser AbdelRahim, argued that the use of the surveillance law violated their religious rights and allowed the government to avoid accountability. ⁷

Essma Bengasbia, one of the first hijab-wearing women to work on the trading floors of the world’s largest asset manager company, BlackRock, had faced several anti-muslim discriminatory incidents. Bengabsia, who was hired at BlackRock in 2018, explained that her workplace quickly turned into a hostile environment as she experienced frequent discrimination for her gender, race, and religion. In a first-person essay she wrote for Medium.com on February 2021, she detailed her allegations and titled it “#MeToo at BlackRock”. In one case, Bengasbia was called out for opting to not wear a Christmas-themed sweater at a work party. She was considered to be not wanting to be a part of the team and asked by a senior investor, “Why don’t you just be American for once?” In another case, Bengasbia had been mocked by a managing director at the firm for addressing calls with her parents with the common Muslim greeting “Assalamu Alaikum”. The discrimination mounted in her workplace and Bengasbia proceeded to file a report with human resources where she provided a detailed spreadsheet of each incident with information regarding the dates, times, and witnesses. Following her departure from BlackRock, she joined another financial firm as a senior associate, and launched a petition calling upon BlackRock to take

matters at hand and hire an independent firm to address the harassment reports in the workplace and tackle racism. In response to Bengabsia letter, BlackRock released a statement subsequently denying any findings related to Bengabsia being the subject of harassment or discrimination. 8

Case also happened in Canada, as a verbal racist attack against two Muslim people had come to light in the Kingston area, according to the family victimized and local police. Jena Badawi, who was 13 years old, was with her mother at the Canadian Tire on Division Street when they were harassed by a white customer. Jena, said she's still shaken after been verbally attacked by the stranger while she waited in line for a curbside order at the Canadian Tire on Division Street. "She turned to me she started calling us names, saying we are not white, why are we over here, we don't belong here," Jena said. Both Jena and her mother wear a hijab and are visibly recognized as Muslim. The Kingston incident was reported to police, who had charged the woman in question and determined the incident was motivated by hate. "We take this seriously ... We are treating this as a hate crime. We have a dedicated officer from the core office who is assigned to equity diversity and inclusion." said Sgt. Steve Koopman. 9

Anis Ali, a train driver for Heathrow Express, took one of the UK's biggest security firms on December 2020, to a tribunal hearing for a religious discrimination over an incident in 2017. Redline Assured Security, had planted a fake bomb at a Heathrow airport train station with the words "Allahu Akbar" written in Arabic on it during a training exercise in 2017. The company defended the decision at the employment tribunal, where they said, it was used to make the package look "suspicious". Since then, the company had stopped using the phrase following the Ali's complain. The tribunal found that the practice did not constitute direct discrimination but called the decision to no longer make the association between Islam and terrorism in exercises as "sensible". The tribunal also heard that a train driver, duty station manager and Mr Ali's then-employer, Heathrow Express, unlawfully harassed him, related to religion and belief, after colleagues told him that Muslims "groom and rape Sikh and white women". They were

ordered to pay compensation totaling £4,000. The complaint against the pair and Heathrow Express was upheld, and according to the judgment statement the tribunal said that the actions created a "hostile and degrading environment". A Heathrow Express spokesperson said: "We apologise that we didn't live up to that commitment on this occasion but we will review and fully address and implement the findings of the tribunal." 10

Lord Sharkey, a member of the UK's House of Lords, on March 8, 2021 had challenged the British government over its disregard for British Muslims, who he said were being systematically deprived of a university education because of a refusal to introduce a student loan system that Muslims could access. In a debate about the Financial Services Bill, Lord Sharkey highlighted a seven-year-old promise made by former UK Prime Minister David Cameron: "Never again should a Muslim in Britain feel unable to go to university because they cannot get a student loan — simply because of their religion," which he told a World Economic Forum conference in Davos in 2013. But Lord Sharkey said this promise had gone unfulfilled, and the government's failure to act was excluding British Muslims. "Lords will know that Islam forbids interest-bearing loans. This prohibition can be and is a barrier to Muslim students going on to attend our universities," Lord Sharkey said. A senior British politician with direct knowledge of the issue told Arab News that the government's failure to introduce an alternative financing system was, in his view, inexplicable. "I genuinely do not understand why the government has taken seven years to do something about this. Six years ago the government not only recognized a problem, but recognized a solution: Takaful," he said. Estelle Clarke, a student finance campaigner, told Arab News that she attributes the government's failure to it being "indifferent" to the plight of students. "unfortunately, their inaction does suggest a systemic discrimination against certain students on the grounds of their religion, and that the government is indifferent to this discrimination," she added. 11

A London based school that had threatened the parents of a Muslim schoolgirl with legal action after she wore a skirt that was deemed “too long” had dropped its legal challenge and apologised. Siham Hamud, a 12 years old student, had described being bullied for her religious beliefs after being sent home every day in December 2020 from Uxbridge high school in Hillingdon, west London, and told to only come back when she wore a shorter skirt. The school had threatened the family with legal action over their daughter’s alleged unauthorised absences. But Siham’s parents had always maintained that shorter skirts contravened the family’s religious beliefs. Three months after first issuing the family with the legal threat, the school had reversed its decision. In a statement released by the family lawyers, Mishcon de Reya, Hamud said he was pleased that the school had listened to the family’s concerns and concluded that they were justified in raising the issue. The statement revealed that the school had sent the family a letter of apology and had now confirmed that it would not be taking legal action for the time Siham was unable to attend school. “We thank the school for its willingness to work towards a fair and positive outcome... This has been a difficult period and we are relieved to now have the matter concluded. We are grateful for the support we have received from the wider community.” Hamud said. ¹²

Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) had published On March 2, 2021 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. ¹³

High numbers of youngsters been monitored over right-wing extremism. Home Office statistics obtained by The Sun on June 13 show most of the right-wing cases referred to Government deradicalisation programmes came after concerns were raised by teachers or police. Of 302 people identified in 2019-20, 70 were 14 or younger while 105 were aged between 15 and 20. That was a 200 per cent increase in just four years. In the same period, figures for those at risk of Islamist radicalisation had fallen from 190 under 20s to 110. Nigel Bromage, founder of Exit UK, which helped people leave far-right sects, said extremists saw the internet as their “number one recruitment ground”. He added: “The far-right and other extremists are speaking to our children on their phones and in their bedrooms and the vast majority of parents have no idea what is going on.” ¹⁴

The Scottish Health Secretary Humza Yousaf had reported a nursery to care watchdogs over concerns it discriminated against his daughter. Mr Yousaf said Little Scholars in Broughty Ferry claimed it had no availability when his wife applied for a space for two-year-old Amal. But he said applications submitted by friends and family for “White Scottish-sounding names” were accepted. The nursery had denied any allegations of discrimination. Following the initial concerns from Mr Yousaf and his wife Nadia El-Nakla, a Daily Record investigation submitted applications with identical requirements to the nursery under the names Aqsa Akhtar and Susan Blake. The newspaper said Aksa Akhtar had her application rejected, but Susan Blake’s was accepted and offered spaces. ¹⁵

Human Aid UK had accused the Charity Commission of clear bias against Muslim charities. The inquiry was triggered by the seizure of donations by UK border police on July 9, 2019 despite the fact that Human Aid repeatedly asserted the funds were lawful and for charitable purposes only. Human Aid UK raised complaints of police harassment and institutional Islamophobia numerous times. Chair of Human Aid UK, said: *“After over two years of investigation, which has consumed resources that would have been better used to assist the needy in Syria, Gaza and Yemen, we are pleased that the Charity Commission has concluded with no further action against Human Aid UK. The Charity can now focus single-mindedly on serving its many beneficiaries around the world.”* ¹⁶

Nusrat Ghani, A Muslim MP, said her faith was raised by a government whip as a reason why she was sacked as a minister in 2020. According to the Sunday Times, Ghani, a conservative party member, said when she asked for an explanation it was stated her “Muslimness was raised as an issue”. Conservative chief whip Mark Spencer said Ms Ghani was referring to him and added her claims were completely false and he considered them defamatory. Ms Ghani became the first Muslim woman to be a government minister when she was appointed to a post at the Department for Transport. She lost that job in a mini-reshuffle of Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s government in February 2020. According to the Sunday Times Ms Ghani said when she asked for an explanation a government whip said her “Muslimness was raised as an issue” during discussions about the reshuffle and her status as a “Muslim woman... was making colleagues uncomfortable”. ¹⁷

Case in Germany, on December 2020, police officers in Wuppertal, a western German city, had handcuffed a woman in a Muslim headscarf in front of her toddler and put her on the ground for not wearing a mask, as seen in video that recently went viral. According to the video taken by eyewitnesses, there were seven police officers outside of the building the woman left after she had visited a dentist. The video had showed two police officers handcuffing the woman in front of her toddler, putting her

on the ground, and pressing on her body while she screamed for help. When police tried to stop bystanders from filming, one said: “You have no right to stop me from shooting this video. The phone is mine. I can give my lawyer’s number.” When bystanders in the video made their opposition to the scene clear, the police removed the woman’s handcuffs and release her and left as if nothing had happened. The unidentified woman, who was born in Germany and converted to Islam, would file a criminal complaint against the police, according to anadolu agency. ¹⁸

Case in Switzerland, the Human Rights group, Amnesty International, said Switzerland’s vote to ban full face coverings was “needlessly fueling division and fear,” AI urged authorities to instead focus on measures that genuinely protect women. Cyrielle Huguenot, head of women’s rights at Amnesty International Switzerland said “After the vote to ban minarets, Swiss voters have once again approved an initiative that discriminates against one religious community in particular ...The ban on the full face veil cannot be viewed as a measure that liberates women. On the contrary, it is a dangerous and symbolic policy that violates the rights to freedom of expression and religion.” On March 7, Swiss voters had narrowly decided in a referendum to implement a ban on full face coverings, with 51.2 percent in favor and 48.8 percent against. “We call on the elected politicians and government to unequivocally support the fundamental rights of the country’s religious minorities and to commit to peaceful coexistence,” Huguenot said. ¹⁹

Israel authorities on February 26, 2021 had banned the raising of the Muslim call to prayer at the Ibrahimi Mosque in occupied Hebron under the pretext that settlers were celebrating the Jewish holiday of Purim. The Director and head of the Ibrahimi Mosque, Sheikh Hefzi Abu Sneina, said the ban came into effect at dusk on February 25 and will remain in place until the evening of February 27. The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had condemned the ban and said these measures were an infringement on the freedom of worship guaranteed by international law. ²⁰

US Senator Bernie Sanders had condemned Israel authorities on February 25, 2021 for sending surplus coronavirus vaccines to friendly nations overseas instead of giving them to Palestinians. Sanders tweeted: “As the occupying power, Israel is responsible for the health of all the people under its control. It is outrageous that Netanyahu would use spare vaccines to reward his foreign allies while so many Palestinians in the occupied territories are still waiting.” Israel’s decision to send out surplus Covid-19 vaccines was acknowledged by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on February 24. Local media reported the list of recipients included 15 countries that received around 100,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine. The list included countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, Hungary, Uganda, and the Czech Republic – those which had in some way supported Israel’s claim on Jerusalem as the capital. Israel claimed, that the vaccination of Palestinians was the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority. Israeli officials said surplus vaccines could be shared with the Palestinians when local demand is met. ²¹

On January 6, **Amnesty International** had called on Israel to provide coronavirus vaccine doses to Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. Amnesty said, saying the Jewish state was obligated to do so under international law. On 23 December, 2020, the Israeli Health Ministry began the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Israel had been hailed as the country had achieved the widest vaccination coverage in proportion to its population size. However, the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out plan was only for citizens of Israel, including Israeli settlers living inside the West Bank, and Palestinian residents of Jerusalem. It excluded the nearly 5 million Palestinians who live in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, under Israeli military occupation. “Israel’s COVID-19 vaccine programme highlights the institutionalized discrimination that defines the Israeli government’s policy towards Palestinians. While Israel celebrates a record-setting vaccination drive, millions of Palestinians living under Israeli control in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will receive no vaccine or have to wait much longer – there could hardly be a better illustration of how Israeli lives are valued above Palestinian ones,” said Saleh Higazi, Deputy Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International. ²²

The office of Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu on February 25, 2021 had halted the sending of Covid-19 jabs to other countries after the move sparked questions from the state attorney general and angered Defense Minister Benny Gantz. The suspension was announced, shortly after Israel’s attorney general, Avichai Mandelblit, asked National Security Adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat for clarification on the program. Gantz had welcomed the freeze, writing on Twitter that Netanyahu’s order to send the surplus of Israeli vaccines to foreign nations was “made in an undemocratic manner, bypassing the procedures.” Israeli authorities had insisted that it was not their responsibility to provide vaccines to the West Bank and Gaza, despite criticism from Palestinian officials and international human rights groups. ²³

The Israeli police had tightened the siege on the Yusufiya cemetery near Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, while the municipality and the Israeli Nature and Parks Authority had demolished parts of the cemetery and tombstones since 25 October. Few days later, the Israeli authorities fenced the walls surrounding the cemetery and installed surveillance cameras, and on October 29, Israeli police fired tear gas to prevent dozens of Jerusalemites from visiting their dead. The Jerusalem municipality had been working overtime to demolish more parts of the cemetery since October 17, when the Jerusalem Magistrate’s Court rejected a request submitted by the Committee for the Care of Islamic Cemeteries in Jerusalem to suspend bulldozing the cemetery and exhuming graves. The Israeli authorities were seeking to turn this part of the cemetery, which included the Martyrs’ Monument where Palestinians and Jordanians who fought in the 1967 war were buried, into a public biblical park, around the walls of the Old City. The Yusufiya cemetery was established at the beginning of the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem, but it was restored and expanded during the reign of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi and was named after him — Youssef bin Ayoub bin Shadi. After the city was occupied in 1967, the Jerusalem municipality took possession of the part that included the graves of the martyrs. ²⁴

A **Muslim peace activist** who had been jailed by Indian authorities after praying at a Hindu temple. Faisal Khan, an activist from Uttar Pradesh, had visited the temple in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh in late October to encourage communal harmony during a period of heightened inter-religious tension. According to activists, The Temple's priest invited Khan to pray at the back of the temple complex. However, on November 2, Khan was arrested in the city of Mathura after a photo of Khan and an associate praying in the temple went viral online. The same priest filed a complaint with local police where he had accused Khan of a slew of charges — including promoting enmity between religious groups and defiling a place of worship. Sunita Viswanath, a New Yorker and progressive Hindu who had been raising awareness about the arrest, described Khan as an activist whose devotion to nonviolence and interfaith unity follows in the footsteps of Indian independence leader Mohandas Gandhi. According to Viswanath, Khan's arrest was another example of how Hindutva — an ideology that underpins Hindu nationalism — had produced a “version of Hinduism that I neither recognize nor accept,” she told HuffPost. “As a Hindu, I cannot accept that there is any problem if someone, anyone, prays inside a temple... There is no doubt in my mind that Faisal Khan's arrest was due to the fact that a person who is Muslim, who devotes [his efforts] to an India which sees no difference between different communities, is not welcome in today's Hindutva India,” Viswanath said in an email, according to huffpost.²⁵

Janmabhumi daily newspaper on December 6, 2020 published an article for RSS leader KR Umakanthan where he had called for unity among Hindus and Christians in the state of Kerala to deal with the threats of political Islam. In the article, Umakanthan argued that attempts at Islamisation were a threat to Hindus and Christians alike and a weak Hindu or Christian leadership alone cannot fight Islamic terrorists. According to the Times of India, The words of Umakanthan was a clear indication of the implementation of a long-term strategy of BJP to establish its base in the state. Since there was a considerable presence of Christians and Muslims across the state, BJP had found it difficult to register electoral wins through consolidation of Hindu votes alone. Umakanthan had been BJP's organizational secretary of state until a few years ago. ²⁶

Hindu nationalist groups targeted Indian-born language after clothing brand came up with a Diwali advertisement with Urdu words. Hindu right-wing forces in India forced a leading firm to withdraw its festive season advertisement after it featured a couple of words from the Urdu language, which in the popular imagination in the country was a “Muslim language”. The company, FabIndia, issued an advertisement for Diwali – a significant Hindu festival that fell a month after – displaying its latest collection of clothes. The text at the top read: “Jashn-e-Rivaaz”. “Jashn” in Urdu mean a celebration while “Riwaaz”, mean tradition. The title translated to “A Celebration of Tradition”. However, a parliament member belonging to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Tejasvi Surya, was not happy. “Deepavali is not Jashn-e-Riwaaz,” he posted on Twitter, calling Diwali by its more traditional name. “This deliberate attempt of Abrahamisation of Hindu festivals, depicting models without traditional Hindu attires, must be called out.” FabIndia was a household name in India selling clothes, furniture, home furnishings and food items. It had hundreds of showrooms across the vast country and abroad. Surya said the company “must face economic costs for such deliberate misadventures”. Soon, other members of the BJP and other Hindu nationalist groups started attacking FabIndia on social media, accusing the brand of “hurting” the religious sentiments of Hindus.²⁷

A Muslim stand-up comedian in India, Munawar Faruqui, announced retirement after right-wing Hindu groups force cancellation of nearly a dozen shows in two months, while earlier in 2021. Faruqui posted on his Instagram profile after his show was again cancelled by the organisers in Bengaluru, the capital of southern Karnataka state. “We called off 12 shows in last two months because of the threats to venue and audience,” wrote the 29-year-old, whom the police in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-governed state called a ‘controversial figure’. In January 2021, Faruqui was heckled by right-wing Hindus and forced to stop his performance at a cafe in Indore in the central state of Madhya Pradesh. The members of Hindu Rakshak Sangathan group in Indore alleged he had insulted Hindu gods during the rehearsals of his show. The son of a prominent local politician belonging to the BJP claimed he overheard Faruqui “passing indecent remarks” about Hindu gods and

the powerful federal Home Minister Amit Shah, but he could not submit any evidence for his allegations. Still, Faruqui along with four others – Nalin Yadav, Prakhar Vyas, Priyam Vyas and Edwin Anthony – was roughed up and handed over to the police. Indore police initially claimed they had “enough evidence” on “objectionable comments” made against Hindu gods at the event. A senior police officer later told that Faruqui had not made the jokes at the show, but was “going to”. He ended up spending 37 days in jail for jokes he never told. In February, India’s Supreme Court said the allegations against Faruqui were vague and granted him interim bail after three lower courts refused to do so. Since then, right-wing Hindu groups had trained their guns on Faruqui. Over the past few months, the comedian’s shows had been cancelled in a number of Indian cities. ²⁸

Members of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) performed a “purification ritual” at a lake garden in the posh Vastrapur area of Ahmedabad after they learnt that some Muslims had offered ‘namaz’ at the spot. VHP workers reached the garden to ‘purify’ the place. They chanted mantras and sprinkled ‘Ganga jal’. Few days before, a video showing four Muslim men and two burqa-clad women performing namaz at the garden of the Vastrapur lake, a popular hangout in the city, surfaced on social media platforms. Footage suggested the video might have been shot by a resident of a multi-storey building near the lake. ²⁹

Soldiers of Cross, a Christian Group, had shared a district-wise list of Hindu-Christian owned hotels that they asserted were ‘spit and mucus’ free. The lists were widely circulated on Facebook, Whatsapp groups, and other social media platforms. Earlier in November, a video of a Muslim man allegedly spitting in the plate of food had rekindled the debate surrounding the unhygienic practices adopted by some Muslim cooks while preparing food. After the video went viral on social media, Christian groups in Kerala reportedly launched a campaign to identify hotels owned by non-Muslims and urged their followers to visit only these hotels for ‘spit -free food’. Social media pages of Christian groups such as ‘Soldiers of Cross’ shared lists of Kerala hotels that served “spit-free food”. These lists included hotels owned

by Hindus or Christians in different districts across the state that they call “spit-free hotels”. A report said both Hindu and Christian Groups had been leading the campaign against Muslim hotel-owners. As a part of its campaign, the group was also asking people to avoid hotels and restaurants with ‘halal’ signboards, asserting that ‘spit food’ being served in there. ³⁰

Ever since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, attempts were been made to bring communal angle in the battle against the deadly virus. On May 4, 2021 such attempt was made when Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP from Bangalore South, Tejasvi Surya, MLAs Satish Reddy and Ravi Subramanya raised questions over the recruitment of Muslim staff in the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) run COVID war room. According to a report published in the Cognate, the MLAs along with Bangalore South MP Tejasvi Surya entered into the BBMP COVID war room and raised questions over the recruitment of Muslim staff and accused them of corruption in hospital bed allotment to COVID-19 patients. In a video that went viral on social media, the BJP MP could be seen when he selectively read out names of the 16 staff members who were Muslims, while the accompanied MLA’s asked if the BBMP was a madrasa or Hajj Bhavan. They, however, neglected the fact that the COVID war room had 205 staff members who work in shifts. Soon after the video went viral, some of the netizens started to spread hate. One of them wrote,” Dr Rehan is the in charge of Bed allotment in BBMP Bengaluru South Covid War Room. He and his team of terrorists listed below are involved in hospital bed booking scam”. Responding to the viral WhatsApp message accusing the Muslim staff for mismanagement, the BBMP Joint Commissioner Sarfaraz Khan, took to Facebook and claimed that “anti-social elements” were inciting communal tension and “spreading poison”. ³¹

In a tweet on January 5, the Chinese Embassy in the U.S. had shared a state media report, which claimed that Muslim women in Xinjiang province were “no longer baby-making machines” and that the decrease in population growth throughout the province had led to a drop in terrorism. The tweet, which was later deleted by Twitter, garnered instead blowback, given the

Chinese government’s campaign against Uighurs and other Muslim ethnic minorities. “Decreases in the birthrate and natural population growth rate in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region in 2018 resulted from the eradication of religious extremism,” according to the article published by China Daily, the largest Chinese Communist Party-owned English language newspaper with circulation worldwide. The study and press releases from the Chinese government attributed the decrease in population growth to family planning programs and increased education, which religious extremism “incited people to resist,” according to another press release from the embassy. However, according to experts, Uighur women in Xinjiang were sterilized. Adrian Zenz, senior fellow in China Studies at the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, research back in June 2020 provided substantial evidence for a “forced mass sterilization” campaign taking place in Xinjiang. “We first thought that internment and strict enforcement of family planning was greatly depressing population growth rates in Uighur regions ... But then the shocker came when I dug deep and found plans to reduce natural birth or natural population growth to near zero by 2020.” China had strongly denied any claims of forced sterilization. ³²

The Human Rights Watch (HRW) had on January 7, 2021 called on the Myanmar authorities to release two groups of Rohingya who were arrested for allegedly traveling without documentation. The HRW said: “On January 6, Myanmar police had detained 99 ethnic Rohingya in Yangon for traveling without documentation in the country where they were born and lived all their lives.” They had reported that most of the arrested were women and children as young as 5 years old who were traveling to Malaysia. According to the right group “They sought to escape Myanmar’s longstanding oppression of the group ... All 99 Rohingya were being held in government quarantine on the outskirts of Yangon, after which they would likely be transferred to immigration detention to await criminal charges.” In a separate incident, the right group had reported the arrest of 13 Rohingya in the Bago Region on December 24, 2020, after they left Maungdaw township. Following their detention, they would be transferred to an immigration police cell to await charges, according to the HRW. “Both groups of Rohingya should

be released, allowed to self-isolate until their quarantine is over and they test negative, and permitted to travel freely, subject to Covid-19 restrictions applicable to everyone in Myanmar. Criminal charges should not be brought against them for simply being Rohingya and trying to move from one place to another.” the statement read. ³³

Muslims who took to the streets in a bid to educate Kiwis about their faith had copped verbal abuse. Representatives of the Discover Islam NZ project had been visiting New Zealand towns to talk to everyday Kiwis and break down Muslim stereotypes. In Tokoroa on July 8, project member Haris Ahmed said “We were down in Whanganui and this couple came up to myself and one of my colleagues [who was] holding a board that said ‘Meet a Muslim’. They were about 45-50 years old ... The guy said: ‘You know why the Christchurch attack happened ... because you Muslims choose to come to our country, that is why you guys got killed, if you guys weren’t here, this wouldn’t have happened.’ The group had similar experiences in Huntly and Raglan, with comments such as “Go back to your country, I don’t want to see you Muslims,” Ahmed said. However, for Mirza Ahmad and campaign organiser Imam Sabah Al-Zafar, the handful of incidents was outweighed by the 90-95 per cent who “encourage us and try to hug us, and support our campaign”. ³⁴

Islamophobic Policy

Policy is a deliberate system of guidelines to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. A policy is a statement of intent and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. Policies might be taken by government, public sector organizations and groups, as well as individuals, Presidential executive orders, corporate privacy policies, and parliamentary rules of order are all examples of policy. Policy differs from rules or law, simply because the law can compel or prohibit behaviors, policy merely guides actions toward those that are most likely to achieve the desired outcome. Islamophobia could be one of such intended outcomes, hence the Observatory presents below, Islamophobic policies in countries as empirical instances during the reviewed period.

A **Canadian** court had largely upheld a controversial Quebec law - Bill 21 - which barred civil servants in positions of “authority” to wear religious symbols at work. But the province’s top court struck down parts of the law that applied to English-speaking public schools. Adopted in June 2019, it had fuelled fierce debate throughout the country. The ruling would likely be appealed to the Canadian Supreme Court, local media said. On April 19, Quebec Superior Court Justice Marc-André Blanchard said that under Canada’s constitution, Quebec had the right to restrict the religious symbols donned by government employees. But Justice Blanchard ruled that this same ban could not be applied to English schools because of protections offered to minority language education rights under Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms. ³⁷

Greece’s Education and Religion Ministry had rejected the Muslim community’s demand to open a place of worship in Thessaloniki. Located in the second-largest city of Greece, Macedonia-Thrace Muslims Education Culture Foundation made a formal application for the opening of a place of worship after they completed the necessary preliminary preparations in line with legal regulations. The rejection came after a process that took two years, the ministry rejected the application on the basis of a lack of

additional documents and technical details. Members of the foundation slammed the decision, they said: “Greece, which does not open the existing mosques, also does not show Muslims another place for their worship. Our applications to conduct our worship in our foundation have been also rejected with excuses outside the legal regulations.” ³⁸

France’s Minister of Interior had announced on twitter, a crackdown on 76 mosques that the government suspects of “separatism” and encouraging extremism. On December 2, 2020, Darmanin said the mosques would be inspected and any found to be “breeding grounds of terrorism” would be shut. He added “In the coming days, these places of worship suspected of separatism will be inspected. Those that should be closed, will be”. According to an interior ministry document leaked to Le Figaro newspaper, the 76 targeted mosques include 18 of particular concern, eight of which are in the greater Paris area. Two of these, in the Seine-Saint-Denis banlieue, home to a large number of France’s north African community, had already been ordered to close and a third had been flagged up by the country’s security commission. ³⁹

On November 19, 2020, he also sent a notification of dissolution to the Collective against Islamophobia in France (CCIF). The NGO had eight days to reply before the dissolution been decided by the government. On November 27, the CCIF’s board of directors reacted by announcing that it had, as of October 29, “Pronounced voluntary dissolution” of the collective, and redeployed “A large part of its activities abroad”. In a statement, the board announced that they had transferred The assets of the association to partner associations which took over the fight against Islamophobia on a European scale. It was after the assassination of Professor Samuel Paty, on October 16, that the Minister of the Interior, accused the CCIF of being “Obviously involved” in the attack, an assertion that was not subsequently substantiated. Darmanin, confirmed his intention to dissolve the CCIF, accusing it of feeding a “Hate climate” and to be “An Islamist pharmacy working against the Republic”. The decision to dissolve CCIF was denounced by various Human right organization. In a statement, Amnesty

International said “The dissolution of an organization is an extreme measure that can be justified only in very limited circumstances. The French authorities have failed to provide to date any evidence that could justify the dissolution of CCIF”.⁴⁰

On December 9, 2020, France’s draft law aimed at tackling what the government terms “Islamist radicalism” was unveiled. President Emmanuel Macron had promoted the bill to target what he called “separatists” undermining the nation, but rights groups had raised concerns over the law, saying it would discriminate against French Muslims. Among notable measures was making school obligatory from age three with the ability to opt-out in favour of homeschooling for special cases only. The measure was aimed at ending so-called “clandestine” schools run by hardliners. Another article encouraged mosques to register as places of worship, so as to better identify them. Many of the nation’s more than 2,600 mosques had been operating under rules for associations. Foreign funding for mosques, while not forbidden, would have to be declared if more than \$12,000. The draft law would make it a crime punishable by fines and up to one year in prison for a doctor to provide a young woman with virginity certificates, sometimes demanded ahead of marriage. French doctors and Muslim feminists were also against such certificates, but some have argued against an outright ban, saying it could harm women who could face violence without them. Those practicing polygamy would be forbidden French residence cards. Neither the words Islam nor Muslim were named in the text. Parliament would open a debate on the draft law in the months ahead. ⁴¹

What is “Reinforcing Republican Principles” Bill? ⁴²

During a high-profile speech on secularism and Islam on October 2020, French President Emmanuel Macron said “Islam is a religion which is experiencing a crisis today, all over the world”, and there was a need to “free Islam in France from foreign influences”.

- On December 2020, the French government unveiled draft legislation in order to combat what it termed “Islamist separatism” and an ideology it described as “the enemy of the Republic”. Critics said the so-called

“separatism law” was discriminatory to Muslim community.

- On February 2021, French MPs staged two weeks of heated debates in the National Assembly, discussing some 1,700 proposed amendments to the bill’s 51 articles. Tensions over the legislation were highlighted by the unusually large number of amendments, which came from parties across France’s political spectrum. While France’s left lambasted an attack on civil liberties, the right criticised the government for failing to overtly tackle “Islamist extremism”, which was not mentioned in the text.
- On February 16, 2021, the bill was approved by the lower house, after 313 amendments were accepted. MP’s voted 347 to 151 in favor of the bill with 65 abstained votes. The new legislation was passed up to France’s upper house, in which they could amend the bill but had been expected to approve it.

On February 16, 2021, French lawmakers in the lower house National Assembly had approved a bill that the government said would strengthen the country’s secular principles. The so-called “anti-separatism” bill, brought forward by President Emmanuel Macron, paved the way for it to be passed into law within months. The lower house National Assembly, voted 347 to 151 in favour of the bill with 65 abstained votes. The new legislation was passed up to France’s upper house, in which they could amend the bill but had been expected to approve it. Among the more than 70 separate articles, the law had expanded the ability of the state to close places of worship and religious schools, as well as to ban preachers it considered “extremist”. In addition, the law would require religious groups to declare large foreign donations.⁴³

Key Measures in the Legislation:

Hate-speech & ‘separatism’ • A new offence for online hate speech had made it possible to quickly detain a person who spreads personal information about public sector employees on social media with the intent to harm them, and the offender would be punished by up to three years’ imprisonment and a fine of 45,000 euros (\$55,000). The bill made it easier to block or delist of websites which promote hate speech and would accelerate legal proceedings. Under a so-called “separatism” offence, anyone who found threatening, violating or intimidating an elected official or public sector employee would face up to five years imprisonment and a fine of 75,000 euros (\$91,000). If the offence was committed by a foreigner, they could be banned from French territory.

Controlling organizations • Any association in France that receives public funding were required to sign a “republican contract of engagement” which, if breached, could result in the removal of the fund. If the subsidy had already been granted, it must be reimbursed, and within a maximum period of six months.

• The grounds for dissolving an association were no longer limited to court orders – they would be extended to include administrative decisions.

Homeschooling & sport • Aimed at ending so-called clandestine schools with their own agenda, all homeschooling would need to be authorized by the state rather than be self-declared, starting from the 2024/2025 school year. This would affect an estimated 62,000 home-schooled children in France, though exemptions include health and disability reasons, as well as geographic distance from school. The approval of sports

associations and structures, meanwhile, considered a breeding ground for “separatism”, would be entrusted to state representatives and no longer to national federations.

Virginity certificates, polygamy, forced marriage • Doctors would be fined 15,000 euros (\$18,000) and faced a prison sentence of up to one year for if they provide virginity certificates and rules would be put in place against polygamy. Any immigrants practising it, for instance, would not be issued a residence permit. Suspected forced marriages could also be referred to a prosecutor and laws would be introduced to guarantee gender equality in inheritance.

Foreign funding of religious organisations • Stricter financial controls would be put in place on foreign money sent to religious organisations in France, and so-called “anti-putsch” rules for religious associations are designed to allow the government to prevent takeovers by “extremists”. Those that receive foreign financing would need to declare any income of more than 10,000 euros (\$12,000) from abroad and the law required them to publish government accessible annual accounts.

Policing places of worship • Greater punishments for offences committed in connection with religious communities. It included increased penalties and allowed authorities to close any places of worship for up to two months in order to stop hate preachers. Individuals convicted of terrorism would also be banned from leading a religious association for 10 years.

Extending the ban on religious symbols • The bill extended what was known in France as the “neutrality principle”, which prohibits civil servants from wearing religious symbols like the Muslim hijab and voicing political views, beyond public sector employees to all private contractors of public services such as those employed by the transport companies.

By March 18, 2021, Muslim leaders in France had criticized a French authority's decision to ban the slaughter of poultry animals in line with Islamic principles. A joint statement issued by Paris Mosque director Chemseddine Hafez, Lyon Mosque director Kamel Kaptane and Evry Mosque director Khalil Maroun, said that the French Agriculture and Food Ministry's circular sent a negative message to the large Muslim community in the country. Under the new rule, the Islamic slaughter of poultry animals will be banned in France from July 2021. The three administrators had conveyed their concerns to the relevant ministry but did not receive any concrete results, the joint statement said. "These precautions are a serious obstacle preventing people from freely practising their religion," the statement read. The Muslim leaders, added that they were planning to take necessary legal action to restore the "fundamental right." 44

On March 29, 2021, in a series of tweets, the General Secretariat of the Inter-ministerial 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 "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". 45

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.⁴⁶

On April 12, 2021 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:⁴⁷

- 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.

On July 23, 2021, the French National Assembly approved a controversial “anti-separatism” bill despite strong criticisms from parliamentarians from the Left and the Right. After an acrimonious seven-month debate, the anti-separatist bill was approved by 49 votes to 19. There were five abstentions. France’s main opposition parties, including the Socialists (PS) and the centre-right Les Républicains, along with the French Communist Party, voted against the bill for different reasons. Only three parties in the National Assembly – the ruling La République en marche (LREM) party and two allies – voted for the law. The far-right National Rally, led by Marine Le Pen, abstained from the vote. 48

On August 13, the French constitutional watchdogs had validated most of the provisions of the anti-separatism bill. Officially known as the law comforting the principles of the republic, the draft law was approved in parliament in July. However, around 100 MPs raised doubts over whether the law could come into force and called on the Constitutional Council

to give a verdict. The council modified only two provisions as it gave the green light to the bill. The council’s decision meant the bill would become a law. The Council censured just two measures. One concerned the residence permits for foreigners. Under Article 26, non-French citizens who manifested a rejection of the principles of the Republic could have had their residence permits withdrawn or refused. The council deemed the notion of rejecting principles of the Republic was not precise enough to justify such a decision. The other significant change concerned associations, some of which had been accused of fostering extremist ideology. The proposed law gave the authorities the power to suspend associations if they were facing an emergency dissolution procedure. As the procedure could take up to six months, the council deemed that “the legislator has infringed the freedom of association in a way that is not necessary, appropriate and proportionate”.49

French political scientist and sociologist Vincent Geisser said that the separatism law, introduced by French President Emmanuel Macron’s La République en Marche (LREM) party, was based on a sociological diagnosis that was derived from extremely weak statistical information and that, despite the state’s many resources, the government could not find data to support the argument used to defend the law. Evaluating the “Republican values” bill, which was criticized for targeting and marginalizing Muslims in France, Geisser, who was a researcher at the French National Scientific Research Center (CNRS) and the Institute of Research and Study on the Arab and Islamic Worlds (IREMAM), asserted that associations, mosques and schools simply became targets of the law. He noted that despite all government resources, there had been “no respectable, quantitative data to support the argument of the government used to defend the separatism law.” Geisser added that a legal basis was being created to legitimize France’s intervention in Muslim affairs. Geisser said that France, which was a secular state in principle, should not interfere in religious affairs no matter what, but that the state was interfering with the mosques, imams, associations or schools of Muslims. 50

In September 2021, again France’s Minister of Interior announced the ministry would shut down six mosques and a variety of Islamic associations in France accused of promoting “separatism.” He revealed that a third of the 89 places of worship in France had been under investigation since November 2020 on the grounds of been “suspected of being radical.” Six places of worship in France would close as a result of this crackdown. French authorities were intensifying efforts to eradicate Islamic “separatism” in the country.⁵¹

On September 24, the French Interior Minister posted a tweet where he confirmed and supported the closure of two prominent French-Islamic organizations. Darmanin stated one of France’s highest judicial bodies, the Council of State, supported the motions to close Muslim NGO Baraka City and the anti-islamophobia group Collective against Islamophobia in France (CCIF). “The fight against Islamist ideology is reaching a decisive stage,” Darmanin concluded in his social media post. The news follows French authorities’ decision to close Nawa Editions publishing house, a top Islamic literary publishing company. On Twitter, the French Interior Minister alleged Nawa was involved in the “distribution of several works legitimizing the jihad,” while he failed to provide substantial evidence to support his claim. He Argued that the decision was purely political, Nawa accused the French government of taken an anti-Islamic direction to win support among right-leaning populations in France. While the company’s catalog included literature on Islamic historical figures and religious customs, there was very little evidence that it contained literature that sympathized with or celebrated jihadist sentiments. ⁵²

On September 24, France’s top administrative court, the Council of State, approved the French authorities’ December 2020 dissolution of the Collective against Islamophobia in France (CCIF), a leading anti-discrimination group. Over the years, CCIF had provided legal support to people who faced anti-Muslim discrimination and were documenting the discriminatory impact on Muslims of France’s counterterrorism measures. In their judgment, the court said that CCIF’s denunciation of France’s hostility toward Muslims in the fight against terrorism, as well as the group’s failure to “moderate” third

parties’ antisemitic and other hostile comments in response to CCIF social media posts, constituted incitement to discrimination, hatred, and violence, which justified the decision to close it down. The court also accepted disputed allegations that CCIF maintained close links with supporters of radical Islamism. The Council of State rejected all other arguments by the French government, yet nevertheless upheld the decision to close it down.⁵³

Again, France’s Minister of Interior announced that the ministry had shut down Al Madina Al Mounawara Mosque in Cannes in the Alpes-Maritimes region on January 12, 2022. Darmanin told French TV channel CNews, said the closure of the mosque comes as a response to its “support for the CCIF and BarakaCity.” The French prefecture of Oise announced on December 27, 2021, the official temporary closure of the Great Mosque of Beauvais, according to media. Amid a political climate where politicians were competing to be combative against Muslims to win votes, France had been raiding Islamic organizations and mosques since the horrific attacks against Samuel Paty in 2020 and Charlie Hebdo’s former office. ⁵⁴

Moving northward, on October 16, 2021, **Dutch daily NRC** reported that at least 10 municipalities in the Netherlands had been investigating mosques, imams, mosque association officials, and people active in the community through private companies. According to the report, the municipalities involved in such investigations included Rotterdam, Delft, Almere, Huizen, Leidschendam-Voorburg, Zoetermeer, Veenendaal, and Ede. The newspaper added that the Utrecht Municipality had stopped the investigation due to concerns about privacy and the method of the probe. The report claimed that the NTA (Nuance door Training en Advies), a consultancy firm that informs the government on radicalization, was paid by the national coordinator for security and counterterrorism through municipalities. Around \$347,990 was spent on the secret investigations, according to the report. The NTA employees who did the investigations posed as members of the community or visitors and met numerous people without revealing their true identities, the report added. According to the daily, findings on the backgrounds of imams and administrators, such as where they came from or their schooling, were submitted to the municipalities as “secret information” by the NTA. ⁵⁵

Austrian government had called for the registration of Imams in Europe after adopting the measure at home. The mandate was one of several new measures Chancellor Sebastian Kurz's government adopted after a November 2, 2020, terror attack in Vienna. Karoline Edtstadler, Austria's Minister for European Affairs, said Imam registration was key for "the fight against political Islam ... Most imams move through many EU countries, so the security authorities need to know who is preaching what in which mosque at any given time," Edtstadler told Die Welt, German newspaper, on January 2 edition. Edtstadler, a member of Kurz's conservative Austrian People's Party, believed that EU funds should be "so strictly controlled in the future that they do not go to organizations and associations that advocate Islamist and anti-Semitic positions," she said. ⁵⁶

On February 20, Farid Hafez, an Austrian academic and anti-Islamophobia scholar, spoke out against the raid on his family home for the first time since it happened on November 9, 2020. In a video released on YouTube, Hafez, an internationally published academic, recalled how guns with infrared dots were aimed at his chest as police sporting balaclavas stormed his house. A scholar on racism and anti-Muslim bigotry, Hafez had been a strong critic of Austria's increasingly draconian policies towards its Muslim minority. Hafez, recalled the growing confidence of the far-right in the country, which had focused in particular on Muslims. "This is the reason I became interested in Islamophobia because I felt like nobody was talking about it," said Hafez. The political scientist lecturer at the University of Salzburg had not been charged with any crimes by the Austrian government, which led some to believe that the government is deliberately harassing the academic in a bid to muzzle his research. One academic called Hafez's treatment by the Austrian state "a gross miscarriage of justice." The Austrian government had also blocked Hafez's bank accounts, which had put his family's livelihood in jeopardy. The Austrian authorities had a right to keep the investigation open for up to three years without providing any evidence and without pressing charges while maintaining restrictions on Hafez's bank accounts. Supporters of Hafez had set up a fundraising page to help the academic pay for his legal costs. ⁵⁷

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.⁵⁸

British Muslim advocacy group CAGE and Vienna-based rights group 'Assisting Children Traumatized by Police' (ACT-P) had jointly authored a searing report demanding the appointment of an investigative commission to probe Operation Luxor. The Austrian Government carried out one of

the country's largest police operations on November 9, 2020 where more than 30 Muslim activists and academics were arrested in a supposed witch-hunt of 'Islamists'. To date no one affected by the raids had been charged for any offence, despite having their lives turned upside down. The raids were declared unlawful by the Graz Higher Regional Court, and had left a deep impact on the collective psyche of Muslims in the country. Azfar Shafi of CAGE and the co-author of the report said: "Operation Luxor was the opening shot in an ongoing campaign of repression by the Austrian state against Muslims, in the name of combating 'Political Islam'. Institutions like the Documentation Centre for Political Islam and its "Islam Map" which listed the names and addresses of Muslim organisations in the country were enabling Islamophobic attacks by the Austrian far-right with tacit approval from the state, the report highlighted. The governing ÖVP in Austria has managed successfully to fundamentally reshape the state's politics towards Muslim communities by introducing the terminology of 'Political Islam' into the public discourse. The ÖVP has also been using institutions such as the Documentation Centre to produce knowledge that supports their narrative, in order to criminalise Muslimness and Muslim communities, which is seeping into the work of the domestic intelligence agency and subsequently police operations." 59

In Belgium on December 17, 2020, **The European Court of Justice** had rejected objections of Muslim and Jewish religious groups and backed a Belgian ban on kosher and halal slaughter of animals without being stunned. The European Court said all member states had to reconcile both animal welfare and freedom of religion and EU law did not prevent countries from requiring the stunning of animals as long as they respected fundamental rights. While the Court accepted that imposing such a requirement limited the rights of Muslims and Jews, it did not ban ritual slaughter and the Belgian law's "interference with the freedom to manifest religion" had met an "objective of general interest recognised by the European Union, namely the promotion of animal welfare". EU law, along with UK law, already required animals to be stunned before being killed, unless the meat is intended for Muslims or Jews, and then only in approved abattoirs. Muslim groups had repeatedly challenged the Flemish legislation before it was passed and came into force in

On September 30, The Belgian Constitutional Court supported the judgment of the European Court of Justice (CJEU) on December 2020 on banning animal slaughter without stunning. The ruling followed a request from the Belgian court to CJEU for clarification on the legal issue and the correct interpretation of EU regulation No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing. The regulation allowed ritual slaughter without stunning if it took place in approved slaughterhouses but left the door open for the EU member states to adopt stricter rules to protect animal welfare but not to ban ritual slaughter completely. 60

In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, on April 13, 2021, **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. 61

In India, on March 8, 2021, the **Madhya Pradesh Assembly** had passed a bill that penalised religious conversion through marriage or any other fraudulent means and provides for a prison sentence of up to 10 years. While the opposition Congress questioned the need for a new law, Home Minister Narottam Mishra said that unlike the 1968 legislation, the present act provides for annulment of marriage and a harsher sentence. He added, the government would not tolerate “Rafiq becoming Ravi” for “Love Jihad”. After the “Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Bill 2021” was passed by a voice vote, some BJP MLAs chanted ‘Jai Shri Ram’. Senior Congress leader Govind Singh said there was no need for new law as the MP Dharm Swatantra Adhiniyam, 1968, was already in place. The bill would not benefit people in any way and was only a political stunt, he said. ⁶²

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. ⁶³

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. ⁶⁴

On August 13, 2021, **the BJP government** in Assam passed the Cattle Slaughter Prevention bill. The bill would prevent slaughter, sale, and purchase of beef within five-kilometer radius of any temple or monastery. Additionally, it would prohibit Muslims from consuming beef in the presence of non-beef-eating people. The Opposition had a period of 30 days to recommend amendments to the bill, but they could not back their suggestions with proper facts, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.⁶⁵

On September 23, 2021, **Mainal Haq**, a farmer was one of the two people killed during Assam government eviction drive in Dhalpur Part 3 village located on the riverine island of the Brahmaputra River in Darrang district. Twelve-year-old (12) Sheikh Farid was another victim of police firing on residents who were protesting against what they called forced displacement. Many of the families had been living there for 40 years. Sheikh was hit by

police bullets while he was on his way to fetch his national identity card from the local post office, his family said. A viral video of the incident showed Mainul were running towards the police with a bamboo pole. The clip showed him shot by the police, clad in a lungi loincloth and a vest. As he collapsed, the police were seen beating him with batons. A local photographer who was taken by the district administration to document the eviction proceedings stomped on Mainul even as he lay on the ground, barely alive. A police officer was later seen hugging the photographer. The Assam government led by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) announced a judicial inquiry into the incident that had sent shock waves among the civil society. The state Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma claimed that the villagers had attacked the police first with machetes and sticks, and that the violence was a result of a conspiracy. He also claimed outsiders instigated the villagers. Sarma, known for his anti-Muslim rhetoric, however, provided no proof for his litany of claims. The police had arrested two locals residents – Asmet Ali and Chand Mamud – from Kira Kara and Dhalpur Part 3 villages after they were accused of involvement in the violence. The land dispute had its origin in the state government’s decision to free government lands from encroachment. Nearly a month after taking over as the chief minister, Sarma announced that it would use about 25,666 acres (10,386 hectares) of land “freed from encroachers at Gorukhuti, Sipajhar in Darrang for Agri purposes”. Critics had accused Sarma and his BJP party of targeting the state’s Bengali-origin Muslims, who form the bulk of the state’s Muslim population of more than 12 million, calling them “encroachers”, “intruders” and “illegal immigrants”. The issue of undocumented immigrants from neighbouring Bangladesh had dominated the politics of this northeastern state of 32 million for decades. A citizenship register published two years ago excluded nearly two million people, both Hindus and Muslims of Bengali origin. However, the BJP, some local organisations and even officials currently in charge of the exercise had questioned the veracity of the long and arduous process and claimed that many “illegal immigrants” had managed to get their names in the citizens’ register. The process continued to be in limbo because of these reservations. Bengali-origin Muslims who lived in Dhalpur Part 1 and Dhalpur Part 3

villages where eviction was carried out said they had been victimised. Locals said many of these families had moved from other districts like Nagaon, Barpeta and Goalpara in the 1970s and 1980s after they lost their land to erosion. “Our family moved here from Barpeta in 1982 after our land there was swept away by the Brahmaputra,” said Saddam Hussain, a local activist. “We were earlier in neighbouring Kira Kara village. Two years back we moved to Dhalpur Part 3 after our house was again taken by the river,” he said. Even as discussions were on with the government and the district administration on resettlement and rehabilitation, the latest round of eviction started on September 20, locals pointed out. “The locals were served notice only the previous evening and in the morning the administration arrived to evict them,” said Hussain. “They had guns, we had nothing’ Chief Minister Sarma was quick to compliment the administration and the police for “evicting 800 households, demolishing four illegal religious structures”. Local residents said on September 20 authorities asked them to move to a spot next to the river, which was flood-prone and unfit for habitation. “The depth of the water is 15 feet [4.5 metres] there. How will we stay there with our kids. We will be swept away,” said Kamaruddin, a daily wage worker. “There is no water to drink, there is no tree. In this heat, there is no water. We are using the water from the river. Does the government want to kill us like this?” he asked. Meanwhile, after the first round of evictions, two days later on September 22, the villagers were served another round of notices late in the night. “The people had slept when the notices arrived. And in the morning, when they had barely woken up, the administration and the police were already there,” said Hussain. The locals were incensed, Hussain said. “The administration had done nothing to rehabilitate the ones who were evicted previously and yet they had come again to evict more,” he said.⁶⁶

Two boys in Aligarh who were discussing “conversion to Islam” in a video that went viral were booked by police under a non-bailable section of the Indian Penal Code for “promoting enmity between classes”. A probe later found that both the boys were minors and belonged to the Hindu community. Their families, shocked at the FIR against them, said the boys were students of class 12 and were engaged in a “friendly debate” and

“someone complained unnecessarily”. The case was filed after the video went viral and a local BJP member approached police. In his complaint, Ram Gopal said, “I have seen a video in which one boy is threatening Hindus and asking them to convert to Islam. The video had created anger among people and the content can create religious enmity.” In the video, a masked boy on his bicycle was pretending to be Muslim and another a Hindu. Police probe later found that the boys in the video were minors. ⁶⁷

An eviction drive in India’s northeastern state of Assam of residents living on government-owned land had heightened insecurities among the state’s Muslim population according to rights activists. The evictions came into national spotlight after two people were killed in September during one of the drives to evict 800 mostly Muslim families from Dhalpur in Assam’s Darrang district. The violence caused outrage after a video went viral on social media showed a policeman shooting a young man who was running toward him with a stick — he was among residents protesting the evictions and demanding rehabilitation. Seconds later, the video showed him lying motionless on the ground and a government-appointed photographer kicking the victim’s body. The young man, Moninul Haque, and a 12-year-old boy who got caught in the violence were killed. Many of those displaced told that they had been farming the land for decades since moving to the area after losing their own land to river erosion. The eviction drive resumed in November as Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party that ruled the state vowed to press on with its campaign to clear people settled on government land. The campaigns to clear government land were being carried out in areas populated predominantly by Muslims. ⁶⁸

On December 1, 2020 Sri Lanka’s **Supreme Court**, dismissed petitions filed by members of the Muslim community against the government’s regulation that makes cremations mandatory for COVID-related deaths. Sri Lanka’s mandatory cremation policy for all bodies suspected to be infected with Covid-19 had been the cause of outrage for the Muslim and Christian minorities, whose beliefs stipulate bodies should be buried. Several of the Muslims whose bodies were cremated by the authorities had not been tested

for coronavirus, or had even tested negative. Some Muslim families had begun disowning their dead because they do not want to be complicit in the cremations, which they see as a sin for their loved ones. Many had also refused to pay the fees of 48,000 rupees that are demanded by the state to cover the costs of cremation, meaning bodies of Muslim Covid-19 victims have begun to pile up in hospital morgues. Human rights activists say the policy is part of an ongoing attack on Sri Lanka’s Muslim community, who make up 9% of the population. Shreen Saroor, a human rights activist, said: “The way they are treating the Muslim community during this pandemic is clear-cut racism. The community is being forced to abandon their own dead in order to protect their beliefs and traditions. There is not even a scientific justification for them being denied dignity in death.” World Health Organization issued guidelines stating that the burial of victims posed no danger to public health, and the United Nations resident coordinator for Sri Lanka and UN regional groups had all written to the Sri Lanka government calling for the Covid-19 dead to be handled with dignity and their religious beliefs respected. ⁶⁹

The expert committee appointed by Sri Lanka’s Health Ministry to study the issue of the disposal of the bodies of coronavirus victims, had recommended both burial and cremation. The committee had been appointed after Muslims objected to the forced cremation of Muslim coronavirus victims. In its report leaked on social media, the committee noted that it firmly stands by on the previous recommendation and guidelines on exclusive cremations of dead bodies as the most appropriate method of disposal which was based on the understanding at the time. However, the expert committee said it had revised the recommendations on disposal of bodies to include both cremation and burial, while adhering to the specified safety precautions. The committee said the body should be buried within 24-hours and placed in a double-layered body bag prior to being placed in a coffin. The committee also said there was no evidence to prove the virus could transmit through water contamination after burial. ⁷⁰

On January 1, **The Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA)** had issued a statement in response to the issue of COVID-19 death management in Sri Lanka. The association had concluded that burial of COVID-19 victims could be permitted in Sri Lanka based on available scientific data, according to the statement published on twitter. SLMA said: “A positive PCR found post-mortem does not necessarily mean that the dead body is infectious.” It added that the COVID-19 virus could be transmitted only the respiratory route. “The virus itself can thrive only inside a living cell. It is unlikely that it could remain infectious within a dead body for any significant period of time,” the statement read. The SLMA also dismissed concerns raised on the burial of humans citing environmental issues that arose due to the massive burial of minks culled in Denmark. The medical association pointed out that the burial of corpses had been practiced even in the case of severe waterborne diseases like Cholera. ⁷¹

On January 8, the **Sri Lanka’s government** insisted on the cremation of all coronavirus victims, and had rejected international pleas and recommendations from its own experts to allow the Muslim minority to bury their dead in line with Islamic custom. The government first banned burials in April 2020 amid concerns -- which experts had said it were baseless -- by influential Buddhist monks that burying bodies could contaminate groundwater and spread the virus. The World Health Organisation had said that there was no such risk, recommending both burials and cremations of virus victims, but the Sri Lankan government had refused. Sri Lanka’s Health Minister, Pavithra Wanniarachchi, said: “This decision will not be changed for social, religious, political or any other personal reason,” according to ministry officials. The announcement came despite a government-appointed expert committee had noted that while it felt cremations were safest, burials could be allowed under strict conditions. Sri Lanka’s Muslim Council (SLMC) had accused the government of trying to provoke Muslim youths into doing “something rash” with its decision on cremations. ⁷²

On January 25, 2021, **the United Nations** had condemned the Sri Lankan Government’s policy of forced cremation of deceased COVID-19 patients, especially in the case of Muslims and other minorities in the country. UN human rights experts said the practice could foment existing prejudices, intolerance and violence. “The imposition of cremation as the only option for handling the bodies confirmed or suspected of COVID-19 amounts to a human rights violation,” they said in a statement. According to figures from Johns Hopkins University, more than 280 people had died of COVID-19, and a significant number of those deaths were from Muslim minorities, according to the UN. The Sri Lankan Government said the decision to make cremations mandatory was made based on expert advice. However, the World Health Organization had said there was no evidence to suggest that cremation prevents the spread of the disease. The College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lanka Medical Association had also issued statements clarifying that there had been no proof that burial of COVID-19 dead bodies constitutes a public health hazard. “We strongly urge the Government of Sri Lanka to stop the forced cremation of COVID-19 bodies, to take all necessary measures to combat disinformation, hate speech and stigmatization of the Muslims and other minorities as a vector of the pandemic, and to provide remedy and ensure accountability for cremations that were carried out by error ... We deplore the implementation of such public health decisions based on discrimination, aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism amounting to persecution of Muslims and other minorities in the country.” the UN said. ⁷³

On January 26, **The Sri Lankan government** had said it would not comply with a United Nations report on Sri Lanka which had demanded the country to stop the cremation of Muslim COVID-19 victims. In response the U.N. statement, Cabinet Spokesman and Mass Media Minister, Keheliya Rambukwella said the cremation rule was not meant to discriminate against any group. They can’t point the finger at us and say that. We reject it. We do things only on expert advice and we can’t take ad-hoc decisions, he said. Rambukwella added that Colombo was not prepared to take any steps which would harm the sovereignty of the nation. The Minister

told reporters: “The government is following the methodology given by the health authorities in this regard. The government will have to take responsibility for the dangers in the country and it cannot deviate from the current methodology recommended by the experts in the medical field. We cannot take arbitrary decisions.” On January 25, UN human rights experts said the policy of forced cremations ran contrary to the beliefs of Muslims and other minorities in the country, and could foment existing prejudices, intolerance and violence. ⁷⁴

In February 2021, **a group of eight Muslim families** had complained to the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) about Sri Lanka’s policy of enforced cremation of all those confirmed or suspected to have died with Covid. The families said the policy had breached their religious rights and caused “untold misery”. The case was brought on behalf of the families by the Muslim Council of Great Britain and with the support of the British law firm Bindmans. The claim stated that the Sri Lankan government had enforced hundreds of cremations despite the objection of the international and Sri Lankan medical experts, where they denied the existence of any evidence that Covid-19 might be communicable from dead bodies. UN special rapporteurs had written twice to the Sri Lankan government and urged it to respect the wishes of those who seek burial, and to recognize that the disregard of Muslims’ feelings might lead them not to present bodies for cremation. ⁷⁵

On February 16, 2021, **the Co-Cabinet spokesperson Minister** Udaya Gammanpila said Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa had expressed his private opinion when he told Parliament, on February 10, that burial of the remains of Covid 19 victims would be allowed. Gammanpila, the Energy Minister, was responding to questions from reporters at Cabinet press conference where he was asked whether the government was split on the matter. Gammanpila said that the Director-General of Health Services Dr Asela Gunewardana would take the final decision “based on the recommendation of the Technical Committee he has appointed.” Senior Professor Jennifer Perera, Head of the Expert Committee, had recommended

to the Health Ministry that burials could be permitted subject to certain conditions. Prof Perera, told Media on February 14, that her committee of experts appointed on December 24 had reported to the Health Department that both cremation and burial could be permitted. ⁷⁶

On March 13, 2021, **Sri Lanka** had announced plans to ban the wearing of burqas and said it would close more than 1,000 Islamic schools known as madrassas, citing national security. Minister of Public Security Sarath Weerasekara said he signed a paper seeking the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers to ban burqas. “The burqa has a direct impact on national security” Weerasekara told a ceremony at a Buddhist temple on March 13. “In our early days, we had a lot of Muslim friends, but Muslim women and girls never wore the burqa ... It is a sign of religious extremism that came about recently. We will definitely ban it.” Weerasekara said, according to video footage sent by his ministry. ⁷⁷

On March 23, 2021, **The UN Human Rights Council** in Geneva had adopted a resolution against Sri Lanka’s rights record. The resolution titled ‘Promotion of Reconciliation Accountability and Human Rights in Sri Lanka’ was adopted by the UNHRC after 22 members out of 47 voted in favour of it. Eleven members voted against the resolution and 14 abstained, which included Sri Lanka’s neighbours, India and Nepal. The resolution, (A/HRC/46/L.1), was presented to the Council by Julian Braithwaite, the UK representative to Geneva, on behalf of the Core Group on Sri Lanka. The text pointed to trends emerging over the past year, which according to Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger, who spoke on behalf of the European Union, represented a clear early “warning signs of a deteriorating human rights situation in Sri Lanka” In his introductory comments, UK Representative to the UN in Geneva, Julian Braithwaite, warned of trends which “threaten to reverse the limited gains made in recent years and risked the recurrence of policies and practices that gave rise to the grave violations of the past.” Tichy-Fisslberger highlighted the “accelerating militarisation of civilian government functions, “the erosion of the independence of the judiciary”, and “increased marginalisation” of Tamil and Muslim minorities, which had

been “exacerbated” by the island’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the reported prevention of Muslims, and members of other religions, from practicing their own religious burial rites. The resolution also called on the Sri Lankan government to revise the law on the prevention of terrorism which rights groups had warned that it was been used as a weapon targeting dissidents and minorities in the country. ⁷⁸

Meanwhile, **Chinese authorities** had been reported using predictive software to select Muslim minorities for detention based on seemingly innocuous behavior, according to a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) released on December 9. That program, called the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP), had been using artificial intelligence to compile lists of so-called “suspicious persons” based on data and personal information that it has collected from citizens—often without their knowledge or consent. The program which targeted Uyghurs and members of other mostly Muslim Turkic minorities in China’s far-western region of Xinjiang, where evidence suggests more than 1 million Muslims were held in extrajudicial detention, ostensibly to counter terrorism. IJOP created the lists using data mined with technology including closed circuit cameras with facial recognition, “Wi-Fi sniffers” that collect information from smartphones and computers, and spyware that police occasionally order Xinjiang residents to install on their phones, the HRW report said. Those lists were then issued to state officials, who evaluate the named individuals’ “general performance” and determine whether to send them to what Beijing calls “re-education centres”. One such list, containing the names of over 2,000 detainees from Xinjiang’s Aksu prefecture and referred to in the report as the Aksu List, was leaked to HRW in August. The rights group’s analysis indicates that most people named were flagged by IJOP and detained for everyday lawful behavior. Maya Wang, a senior China researcher at HRW said: “The Aksu List provides further insights into how China’s brutal repression of Xinjiang’s Turkic Muslims is being turbocharged by technology.” ⁷⁹

On December 16, 2020, **Tommy Zwicky**, The head of communications for Huawei in Denmark confirmed to VICE World News that he had resigned over the Chinese company’s role in testing surveillance tools capable of

tracking China’s Muslims. Zwicky, said that he had “left because of how the Uighur case was handled.” His resignation followed a report by U.S.-based surveillance research firm IPVM that the Chinese company tested facial recognition software that could identify the faces of the Uighur minority from a crowd and send automated “Uighur alarms” to the authorities. The Washington Post, which partnered with IPVM, published these allegations on December 9. ⁸⁰

On December 17, **Alibaba**, the Chinese tech company, said in a statement, that it had stopped trying to identify faces by ethnicity after the company was accused of creating a facial recognition system meant to detect Uyghurs. Alibaba’s statement came a day after The New York Times newspaper and IPVM, a surveillance industry publication, had reported that a division of Alibaba showed its clients how they could use its technology to identify members of the Uyghur community in videos and images. The system was built by Alibaba’s cloud computing team, and allegedly included the example: “Is this a Uyghur?” in an algorithm, according to the report. It also reportedly included code to recognize if someone was a “minority” or “Asian.” According to the statement, Alibaba said that it was “dismayed to learn that Alibaba Cloud developed a facial recognition technology in a testing environment that included ethnicity as an algorithm attribute for tagging video imagery.” Alibaba did not mention Uyghurs in its statement, or explain how or why the system was built in the first place. But it stressed that the technology had been limited to trials, and “was not deployed by any customer... We never intended our technology to be used for and will not permit it to be used for targeting specific ethnic groups,” the company said. “We have eliminated any ethnic tag in our product offering.” ⁸¹

FAR RIGHT

Identity politics refers to the idea that political stands are grounded in ethnicity, race, or religion rather than on broader policies. Far-right politics—also referred to as the extreme right or right-wing extremism— are politics further than the standard political right (within the left–right political spectrum), particularly in terms of being anti-communist, authoritarian, ultranationalist, and having nativist ideologies and tendencies. Traditionally, politics in the West was framed around economic issues surrounding how much the state should interfere to ensure equal opportunities to all its citizens, versus how much freedom to allow to individuals and the private sector to thrive. However, over the past decade, the nature of global politics has been shifting and has become dominated by identity rather than ideology, characterized by assertions of identity and group belongingness, being linked to the recent widespread of populist revolt against globalization and its disruptive cultural dimension. Particular in Europe, the growth of populist movements was not only grounded in the discontent with Globalization’s unequal economic consequences, but also on the threats to traditional national identities arising from high levels of migration; which have given birth to anti-immigrant populism and the emergence of white nationalism. Within such dynamics, anti-Islam sentiments bolstered along with debates about hot issues such as immigrants, non-European foreigners, assimilation and integration, national identity etc., which was worsened by the surge of refugees fleeing the civil war in some Muslim countries, as well as ‘periodic’ terrorist attacks hitting the continent. These ingredients has been creating environment for right-wing parties and figures to prosper. Fanaticism has also growing like mushrooms among their supporters.

Instance of such fanaticism happened in United States on December 25, 2020, when **Anthony Warner** detonated a recreational vehicle (RV) bomb in downtown Nashville, Tennessee. The incident, which injured eight people and damaged dozens of buildings, occurred in the early hours of Christmas day. Soon after the bombing, law enforcement officials said Warner had not had their attention before. However, a police incident report surfaced

on December 29, 2020, had revealed that Warner’s girlfriend as well as her attorney had told the authorities of his bomb making on August 2019. At the time, Police had closed the case following few days of inspections, where they were unable to make contact with Warner or enter his home or RV, according to the report. The police “saw no evidence of a crime and had no authority to enter his home or fenced property,” a department spokesperson said. The rebuke by critics had extended beyond the Police Department’s initial handling of the tip. They had raised concerns about race, questioning whether the investigation into Warner, a white man, was being handled differently. Zulfat Suara, a member of the Nashville Metro Council, said: “If someone had broken into that R.V., they could have stopped the destruction ... If his name had been Mohammed or Jamaal, would they have kicked the doors down?” Suara, who in 2019 became the first Muslim person elected to the Nashville Metro Council, added that it reflected a broader problem in law enforcement — “not just a Nashville one.” 82

On January 6, 2021, The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) condemned the former Chicago mayor, Rahm Emanuel, for “demeaning and Islamophobic comments” made about Sunni and Shia Muslims during election coverage on ABC News on January 5. Emanuel compared post-Trump relations between Republicans and Democrats to Shia and Sunni Muslims, he said: “It’s going to make the Sunnis and Shiites look like a very calm family gathering.” CAIR said the offensive comments represented another reason why Emanuel “should not be included in the Biden-Harris administration.” In a statement, CAIR Government Affairs Department Director Robert S. McCaw said: “Rahm Emanuel’s comments about Muslims were demeaning, uninformed and Islamophobic. In America and abroad, Sunni and Shia Muslims live as neighbors, co-workers, friends, and family members....Emanuel’s Islamophobic comments show a fundamentally flawed understanding of the Muslim community and perpetuate the false and harmful anti-Muslim trope that Sunni and Shia Muslims cannot peacefully co-exist.” 83

The Oklahoma Second Amendment Association, a nonprofit that bills itself as “the state’s leading advocate for Second Amendment rights,” had endorsed for state Republican Party chairman, John Bennett, former state lawmaker who drew the ire of Muslim groups when he called Islam “a cancer.” John Bennett, a United States Marine who served in the House of Representatives from 2011-2019, called Islam “a cancer that needs to be cut out” of America in 2014. Later that year he told a Tea Party group of supporters at a meeting that there’s “no difference between moderate Islam and extreme Islam.” The state convention was scheduled for April 10, in Oklahoma City at the Cox Convention Center. Adam Soltani, the executive director of CAIR-Oklahoma, said hearing Bennett’s name again was a bit like going back in time. Don Spencer, the president of OK2A said: “As soon as we heard that (Bennett was running) for party chair, we were pretty convinced that’s our guy.” Spencer, said he was aware of Bennett’s past comments and statements about Muslims, but said he didn’t believe Bennett was “anti-Muslim” as much as he was “anti-Islam.” “That’s a major difference,” Spencer said. ⁸⁴

On February 24, 2021, **Laura Loomer**, a self-described “proud Islamophobe,” had filed to run for 2022 Congress Midterm election. Loomer was looking to unseat Democratic Representative Lois Frankel, to whom she lost in 2020 by 20 points. She already gained support from Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, a freshman Republican who was removed from her committee assignments on February 4, over her controversial comments before she was elected to Congress, which included wild conspiracy theories and extreme anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic comments. Loomer had described Islam as a “cancer on humanity” and had been banned from various social media platforms, as well as ride-share apps, for her comments about Muslims. In a tweet on February 25, Greene called Loomer a “friend” who was “exactly the type of America First Patriot that I need standing beside me on the House floor.” ⁸⁵

On April 11, 2021, 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.⁸⁶

On March 31, 2021, a woman named, **Luba Bozanich**, was caught on camera making islamophobic and racist 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. ⁸⁷

On April 15, 2021, **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.” 88

A data breach from **Christian crowdfunding site GiveSendGo** 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. 89

On September 2, **ProPublica** had published an investigation into a new right-wing movement to infiltrate the American electoral system, spurred by the lie that the 2020 election was stolen from former President Donald Trump. Fueled by calls from former Trump adviser Steve Bannon, thousands of new precinct officers — who in some cases collectively had the power to help elect members of election oversight boards — had already signed up in key battleground states, including Michigan and Florida. At first blush, the new army of Republican operatives may appear similar to the tea party backlash to then-President Barack Obama, which caused the Republican Party to lurch to the right as more activist candidates won office. However, what Bannon was fomenting was different and more worrying. Because this new grassroots effort to penetrate the machinery of the electoral system was not only trying to win back control of government — it was also an attempt to subvert the very basis of its legitimacy. As the ProPublica report explained, the new movement appeared too had gotten traction after Bannon, repeated the false claim that Trump had the 2020 election stolen from him, urged listeners of his hugely popular podcast in May to win back control of the country “precinct by precinct.” ProPublica found that in recent months, at least 8,500 new Republican precinct officers (or equivalent lowest-level officials) had joined county parties in 41 of 65 counties targeted by activists. Republican Party operatives were describing the influx as unprecedented. Precinct officers do not have much power individually, but collectively they could wield substantial influence in some states by choosing poll workers and helping select boards that oversee elections. 90

By October 2021 **Laura Loomer**, a far-right Republican activist infamously banned from numerous social media and tech platforms, was running for Congress again, but this time for a Central Florida district held by GOP Rep. Dan Webster, a longtime Florida Republican who had served in Congress since 2010. 91

Meanwhile, more than two dozen **members of the police and military in Oregon** had at one point been members of the Oath Keepers, a far-right anti-government militia group, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported on

October 15. According to the leaked data obtained by Distributed Denial of Secrets, a non-profit whistleblower organization that shares leaked information with journalists and researchers.⁹²

On October 5, **Drake University President Marty Martin** sent out a campus-wide email about an incident involving a white supremacist hate group known as Patriot Front. In the days before the email, Drake Public Safety was made aware that Patriot Front had placed stickers advertising itself on surfaces around campus. This was not the first time a white supremacist group had inserted itself into Drake’s community. On November 8, 2018, a white supremacist hate group called Road to Power orchestrated a robocall to Drake’s landlines that was full of racist language. It came just as Drake was hosting a meeting to address its response to several threatening racist notes slipped under the doors of students of color. In an interview in December 2018, Martin said the group had found out about the meeting from the media and timed their robocall to disrupt it, but to no avail. The meeting continued, and student organizers of #PaintItBlack won the right to paint Painted Street black to stand in solidarity with students of color. In his email notifying campus of this incident, Martin said this incident was contrary to what Drake University stands for. “We will not tolerate racism or hatred of any form on this campus, no matter the source,” Martin wrote. “We remain steadfast in our commitment to upholding human dignity and fostering a culture of belonging across the university.”⁹³

Sill in October 2021, **local and federal law enforcement officials** were investigating reports of hate crimes in the Sacramento area, which include Aryan Brotherhood leaflets concealed in a bag of white rice being put on people’s property. It was not just residents, but schools in the area were also targeted.⁹⁴

The Islamophobia controversy engulfing **Rep. Lauren Boebert** escalated to a full boil after the Colorado Republican went after Rep. Ilhan Omar in a video following a tense phone call between the two. The Minnesota progressive ended her phone conversation with the Colorado conservative after both demanded public apologies. Boebert claimed that she sought to deescalate

tensions with Omar after a video circulated on social media a week before of the conservative lawmaker making anti-Muslim remarks, calling Omar a member of the “jihad squad” and saying the Minnesota Democrat was safe to ride with in a Capitol elevator so long as she wasn’t wearing a backpack. When Boebert called Omar, she said that she attempted to explain that she had not meant to impugn Omar’s religion — but the exchange ended with the Democrat continuing to insist on public contrition, to which Boebert herself replied with an insistence on a public apology. This time, Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her leadership team sharply condemned Boebert’s comments but demanded that House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy be the one to act against the Coloradan. Omar echoed that sentiment in her own statement released after her call with Boebert: *“This is not about one hateful statement or one politician; it is about a party that has mainstreamed bigotry and hatred.”*⁹⁵

In Canada, on December 27, 2020, **Bridging Gaps Foundation**, a registered non-profit organization, had filmed an exchange during which a woman used derogatory language and anti-Muslim sentiments towards members at an information stand. The foundation, which had been active in bridging the gaps between Muslim and non-Muslim communities by using education, integration, and outreach programs, had explained the incident in a Facebook video, they said: “On a weekly basis, some of our team members set up a ‘Meet a Muslim’ booth to bridge the gap between Muslims and non-Muslims, and share information on Islam ... On Sunday, December 27, in downtown Vancouver, a lady walked up to our team and started abusing, swearing, and harassing the team as well as some bystanders.” The video included a six-minute exchange between the woman and three members at the outreach station. “Would you like a ride to the airport?” she said. The Bridging Gaps Foundation said it was sharing the video to highlight the importance of education, the severity of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim bigotry, and the general lack of understanding of Islam. Sergeant Steve Addison, from the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), said in an email: “VPD officers did respond and spoke to the person who called police, however, the subject of the complaint had left the area and could not be located.”⁹⁶

Alliance Citoyenne Quebec (ACQ) mayoral candidate Alain Giasson said he think Boufeldja Benabdallah, who was running in the Cap-aux-Diamants district, was promoting the Islamization of the provincial capital. In response, Benabdallah pointed out he had no intention to impose his religion on anyone. “He does not intend to turn his back to his religion, but neither will he impose his point of view,” reads a statement from Benabdallah’s campaign. Benabdallah’s name on mayoral candidate Marie-Josée Savard’s team led Giasson to include the following on his party platform: “Islam is contrary to fundamental Quebec values. Islam is a cancer that is slowly growing inside Quebec society.” “The trigger was the fact that the co-founder of the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec (Benabdallah) is up for election,” Giasson told CTV News. “His whole adult life in Quebec City, he has worked very publicly for the Islamization of Quebec. They’re taking steps and making decisions that favours the Islamization of Quebec society.”⁹⁷

In Brazil, **President Jair Bolsonaro** hosted far-right German lawmaker Beatrix von Storch at the presidential palace on July 21, 2021. Ms. Von Storch, the deputy leader of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), which won 13 percent of the vote in the 2017 elections. The party was placed under surveillance by the German intelligence agency for extremism. “An impressive encounter in Brazil,” Ms. von Storch wrote on Instagram. “I would like to thank the Brazilian president for the friendly welcome and I am impressed by his clear understanding of the problems in Europe and the political challenges of our time... At a time when the left is promoting its ideology through its international networks and organizations on a global level, we conservatives must network more closely and stand up for our conservative values on an international level. Besides the U.S. and Russia, Brazil is a global strategic partner for us, with whom we want to shape the future together,” she added.⁹⁸

The Brazilian far-right leader chose to skip UN climate talks in Glasgow after the G20 summit in Rome to instead spend two days in northern and central Italy. He was met by flag-waving supporters but also protesters when he collected an honorary citizenship from the northern town of Anguillara

Veneta. His other programme was no less controversial. The local bishop boycotted a ceremony attended by Bolsonaro and Salvini in the cemetery of the Tuscan town of Pistoia, where a monument remembers 500 Brazilians who died fighting the Nazis. The diocese condemned the politicization of the event, while neither the mayor of Pistoia nor the head of the Tuscan region turned out to welcome the Brazilian.⁹⁹

In Argentina, the polls held ahead of legislative elections on November 14, 2021, forecasted **Javier Milei** winning a seat in the Chamber of Deputies. This was the first time an ultra-conservative candidate had achieved since the country’s return to democracy in 1983. Milei was elected to Argentina’s Chamber of Deputies for the Avanza Libertad (Freedom Moves Forward) coalition which showed the political grouping that he founded taking at least 13% of the vote in the capital during legislative elections. In Buenos Aires province, the country’s largest electoral district, it was estimated Avanza Libertad would glean over 5%. When the new lawmakers assume their office in December 2021, the extreme right would be represented in Argentina’s Congress for the first time.¹⁰⁰

In Chile, **José Antonio Kast**, current candidate of the Republican Party – and an extreme right of the Chilean political map – openly defender of Pinochet’s economic legacy and currently a surprising leader in the poll, with a 24% intention to vote. Kast served as a deputy from 2002 to 2018 for the Independent Democratic Union, a right-wing party with Pinochet roots. He became a favorite of the press and now of the most conservative sectors of the country that had gone from supporting Sebastián Sichel —the candidate of the ruling party that had been in a tailspin for months – and to assure, especially on social networks, that they support Kast.¹⁰¹

Tens of thousands of protesters, many from far-right groups, marched through Vienna in November after the Austrian government announced a nationwide lockdown to contain skyrocketing coronavirus infections. Demonstrations against virus restrictions also took place in Switzerland, Croatia, Italy, Northern Ireland and the Netherlands. Protesters rallied

against coronavirus restrictions and mandatory COVID-19 passes needed in many European countries to enter restaurants, Christmas markets or sports events, as well as mandatory vaccinations. In Switzerland, 2,000 people protested an upcoming referendum on whether to approve the government's COVID-19 restrictions law, claiming it was discriminatory. A day after the Rotterdam rioting, thousands gathered on Amsterdam's central Dam Square, despite organizers calling off the protest. In Northern Ireland, several hundred people opposed to vaccine passports protested outside the city hall in Belfast, where the city's Christmas market opened — a market where proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test was required. In Croatia, thousands gathered in the capital of Zagreb, carrying flags, nationalist and religious symbols, along with banners against vaccination and what they describe as restrictions of people's freedoms. In France, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin condemned violent protests in the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, one of France's overseas territories. Twenty nine people had been detained by police overnight as authorities were sending 200 more police officers to the island and imposed a nightly curfew from 6 p.m. to 5 a.m. 102

On January 14, 2021 **the Head of Greek Church**, Archbishop Ieronymos, stated during historical series about the Greek War of Independence 1821 that “Islam, its citizens, is not a religion, it is a political party, it is a political pursuit and it is the people of war, the people of the spread, that is a characteristic of Islam, as Muhammad's teaching says.” The Archbishop added: “They are the people who spread, this is characteristic of Islam,” referring to the Mehmed the Conqueror who captured Constantinople. Mr. Ieronymos, spoke on the Greek television station OPEN, and it was uploaded to the TV's YouTube channel on January 14. 103

On January 17, 2021 the Head of Greek Church, Archbishop Ieronymos, had clarified his controversial statement about Islam through a spokesperson, following wide criticism. “The Archbishop and our Church respect in practice all the known religions,” said the press office of the Holy Archdiocese of Athens. “With everything that the Blessed Archbishop of

Athens and All Greece, Mr. Ieronymos, said about Islam, in the context of his recent television interview about the contribution of our Church to the Revolution of 1821, he meant nothing more than the perversion of the Muslim religion itself by extreme fundamentalists, who sow terror and death throughout the Universe,” the statement said. The announcement continued: “These are exactly the people the Archbishop was referring to, people who are instrumentalising Islam and turning it into a deadly weapon against all those who have a different opinion from them.” Finally, as it is emphasized: “both the Archbishop himself and all the metropolitans of the Church of Greece, respect in practice all the known religions and treat all their faithful with Christian love and solidarity, which knows no discrimination, through all their actions and initiatives, especially in the social and charitable fields.”104

In Spain, on May 4, 2021 **Right-wing incumbent leader Isabel Diaz Ayuso** landed a victory in Madrid's elections, with more 95% of ballots had been counted. The result of the election in the country's capital city and richest region where 7 million people live, out of a total population of 47 million, could impact Spain's political landscape. Ayuso, who defied lockdown requests from the central, more than doubled her party's performance in the 2019 ballot, in which the party won 65 of the regional parliament's 136 seats. However, Ayuso, a member of the conservative People's Party (PP), was short of the 69 seats required for an absolute majority. She would rely on support from the extremist far-right Vox party, who gained 13 seats, to form a viable coalition. The election was called by Ayuso after she dissolved her center-right coalition in an attempt to broaden her power base. 105

In **Italy**, whether they are camped outside in freezing temperatures or stranded at sea, Matteo Salvini exhibited little sympathy for the asylum seekers blocked at European borders. The Italian far-right leader, who as interior minister attempted to stop NGO rescue boats landing in Italian ports, in one case leading to criminal charges, would travel to Warsaw in a show of solidarity with his Polish allies who had deployed hardcore tactics to ward off thousands of refugees trying to enter from Belarus. Salvini said:

“My objective is to give economic serenity to Italians to encourage them to have children. I refuse to think of substituting 10 million Italians with 10 million migrants.” 106

The far-right Brothers of Italy party led by Giorgia Meloni and the far-right party Northern League led by Matteo Salvini were leading the latest polls, with 21% and 20.6% respectively. Salvini’s party had been topping the list as Italy’s favourite right-wing party since 2018. Brothers of Italy snatched the top spot when Salvini decided to support the ‘national emergency’ government led by former ECB head Mario Draghi. Brothers of Italy continued to be in the opposition, along with a few other small groups of MPs. However, the two parties had always said they would present themselves in the next general elections set for 2023 together with the party of former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, Forza Italia. Among Italy’s various party leaders, Meloni had one of the highest approval ratings with 44.4%, another poll released on September 4 showed. Salvini and centre-left democratic party leader Enrico Letta trail behind with 31% and 29.6% respectively. Only Prime Minister Mario Draghi’s approval rating was higher than Meloni, with 67%. However, he was unlikely to run for the next elections. Even with the premise that elections were more than a year away, several Italian observers considered the victory of the right-wing coalition likely once the mandate of Draghi’s ‘emergency’ government comes to an end. 107

Rachele Mussolini, the granddaughter of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, had won a second term as a city councilor in Rome, and received over 8,200 votes. While Rachele Mussolini, a member of the Brothers of Italy party (a far-right group which critics said was rooted in neo-fascism) had previously garnered only 657 votes in the 2016 election, she was able to capture a plurality this time, where she received more votes than anyone else on the ballot. The election took place on October 3 and 4 in 1,200 municipalities across Italy. 108

In France, a **far-right politician in France’s national assembly** had tabled a bill that would result in “internment camps” for Muslims, according to the news channel TRTWorld. The proposed legislation, which was dated November 17, and presented by Guillaume Peltier, a former member of the extremist far-right party National Rally led by Marie Le Pen, who later joined The Republicans, a liberal-conservative party in France, had been criticized by human rights activists. A French human rights defender, Yasser Louati, warned that Peltier’s chilling remarks on radicalization were not even defined in the Bill and lawmakers had struggled to come up with a working definition in the past. Were the bill to become law it would result in “interning” French citizens who were on so-called radicalization watch-lists and would see them being officially sent to “administrative detention centers”. It’s not yet clear when and if the proposed bill would pass into law. According to Peltier France had been monitoring more than 22,000 people who were on a radicalization watch-list. France had not collected statistics on the religious background of those it is watching, however, Peltier’s speech had left no doubt that he believed that the new law was aimed at Muslims. 109

On December 15, 2021, a **French Court in the northern city of Lille**, had convicted three members of the French far-right group Generation Identity (GI). They had been found guilty of offences which include assault and in one case, inciting terrorism, after an evidence filmed by Aljazeera was used to indict them, according to Aljazeera report. A judge at the High Court said footage from the two-part documentary Generation Hate, which was aired in December 2018, played a key role in establishing the verdicts. Remi Falize, a former leading member of the Flanders branch of the far-right group GI, was convicted of incitement to “terrorism” and assault. He was sentenced to eight months in prison, suspended for 18 months. Falize was filmed by an undercover Al Jazeera reporter who had infiltrated the GI’s Lille branch at the Citadelle bar in the city Centre. Falize was caught on a covert camera where he said: “The day that I find out I’ve got a terminal illness, dude, I get a weapon, and I go sow carnage....A mosque, whatever ... even a car-ramming, I take my car and bam! There we go! ... Next to that, Charlie Hebdo will be like dog’s p***.” Falize said Wazemmes market,

a place popular with Arabs and Muslims, “is where all the ‘ragheads’ of Lille go. If you take your car there on a Sunday, it’ll be a massacre ... I’ll leave my ID card ... like the jihadists do ... and then bam! I f*** all your mamas ... right into 5th gear. If I manage to survive the first carnage, I’ll do it again, I swear to you”. Etienne “Le Roux” Vanhalwyn and Guillaume Dumont St Priest were also found guilty. Nicolas Nef Naf, lawyer for SOS Racisme, a French anti-racism charity, welcomed the court’s verdicts. 110

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.111

About 75,000 people had signed an **Islamophobic letter written by French soldiers** that threatened a civil war in France. The message, published in a right-wing magazine on May 10 and issued anonymously before being backed by members of the public, had accused the French government that it had granted “concessions” to Islamism. The number of, and the ranks, of the original signatories, remained unclear. The authors described themselves as part of a younger generation who served in Afghanistan, Mali and the Central African Republic, or who joined domestic anti-terrorism

operations. A similar letter published, the month before, by retired top brass was condemned by the government. The May 10 message criticized the French government’s response to the “elders” letter. The letter read “They gave their skin to destroy the Islamism to which you are giving concessions on our soil”.112

On May 10, **French President Emmanuel Macron’s ruling party** had barred Sara Zemmahi, a Muslim woman, to run as the party’s candidate in a local election after she wore an Islamic headscarf for a photograph that appeared on a campaign flier. *La Republique en Marche* (LaRem) said the party line was that in secular France there should be no place for the overt display of religious symbols on electoral campaign documents. “This woman will not be an En Marche candidate,” Stanislas Guerini, the party’s general secretary, told RTL radio. French law does not prohibit women to wear the hijab or other religious symbols in images that appear on campaign fliers. The episode illustrates just how sensitive a subject the place of Islam in French society had become ahead of 2022 presidential vote. The affair over the campaign poster erupted after Jordan Bardella, the number 2 in the far-right *Rassemblement National* party of Marine Le Pen, tweeted a copy of the flier with the message: “Is this how you fight separatism?” Guerini responded directly on Twitter, in which he demanded either the flier be withdrawn or the candidate to lose the party’s support. 113

On July 4, **The French far-right party**, *Rassemblement National* (RN) re-elected Marine Le Pen as its leader. Her re-election, with more than 98 percent of the vote, was likely to help her in the next election. Le Pen received congratulations and praise on Twitter from other far-right European organizations and individuals which included Katalin Novak of Hungary’s *Fidesz* party and Italian nationalist group *Fratelli D’Italia*. 114

French far-right essayist and political journalist Eric Zemmour had promised to ban non-French first names like Mohammed, and said, Arab first names and other aspects of Arab culture were making French society less French. Zemmour had been rumored to be preparing to announce

his candidacy for France’s upcoming presidential elections in 2022. His latest book, “La France n’a pas encore dit son dernier mot” (France has not yet said its last word), was said to be a campaign book in which the far-right commentator lays out his vision for reclaiming France’s lost imperial prestige. Zemmour made his latest anti-Muslim remarks while he appeared, on September 11, on the television segment “We are Live” to discuss the end of his time as a pundit for CNEWS, a popular French television channel. During the segment, Zemmour continued to discuss a possible presidential run for the 2022 election. When asked what policies he would implement if elected, the far-right commentator laid out his unmistakably anti-Islam platform. He said one of the first policies he would implement upon being elected president was to ban the first name “Mohammed,” because “it is not a French name.” He added his “good ideas” for France included banning Muslim names, and asking Muslims to “limit their religion to faith and practice” at the individual level.¹¹⁵

On October 13, **Laurent Nuñez**, France’s national intelligence and counterterrorism coordinator, who was visiting Washington, said Right-wing extremist groups in the United States had been influencing French groups. “As far as the threats from the extreme right, the developments we are observing in France are quite similar to what is happening in the United States,” he said. In previous years, extreme right-wing groups in France were open about their activities, less violent and had different motivations, he said. But right-wing extremists were now older, Mr. Nuñez added, and they were often people whose activities the French authorities do not know about. “They want to organize themselves into clandestine networks,” he said. “There is no more visibility. They are willing to commit violent actions, which can be compared to terrorists.” The groups’ targets had expanded from mosques and Islamic groups to institutions of the French state, he said. Like American groups, many extremist groups had adopted conspiracy theories about the government’s actions. Still, he said, there had been no right wing extremist cells dismantled by authorities, while in the last five years six Islamist cells were broken up by authorities and accused of plotting attacks. The French authorities had not found “operational links”

between domestic extremist groups and the United States. But French groups had drawn inspiration from other movements outside the country, including QAnon, Mr. Nuñez said.¹¹⁶

Remarks by a far-right French politician on the migration crisis at the EU’s borders with Belarus sparked concern across the country in November. Speaking to the French BFM TV news channel on the events transpiring on the Belarusian-Polish border, Julien Odoul, a member of the far-right National Rally party of Marine Le Pen, said the main task of European authorities must be to protect Europeans. “We have to keep our borders closed to migrants, we mustn’t let them in,” Odoul said, adding that many of the migrants waiting on the border were “potentially dangerous.” Responding to a question by a journalist on whether the migrants ought to be left to freeze at the border, Odoul said: “Absolutely, yes.” Unable to hide his astonishment, the journalist repeated his question, and Odoul, defended himself by saying, “Otherwise, Europe may have to face a migrant invasion.” In October 2019, Odoul had requested that a Muslim woman take off her veil at a meeting in the eastern Besançon, attacking her verbally. The woman was chaperoning a school trip in which one of the students was her child.¹¹⁷

On January 26, 2021, the UK government had announced the appointment of **William Shawcross**, as the new Independent Reviewer of Prevent. Shawcross, the former head of the charity watchdog, who had made controversial comments about Islam, was to lead a programme which was part of the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy and aimed to safeguard vulnerable people from being radicalized. The Prevent strategy included a statutory duty for schools, NHS trusts, prisons and local authorities to report any concerns they had about people who may be at risk of turning to extremism. The independent review of the program was supposed to consider the strategy, delivery and future of the Prevent programme. Civil liberties and human rights organizations such as Amnesty International had been calling for an independent review of Prevent for some time, they said it fosters discrimination against people of Muslim faith or background and inhibits legitimate expression. The appointment of Shawcross, chair of

the Charity Commission between 2012 and 2018, was met instantly with criticism over previous remarks he had made about Islam. In 2012, as a director at neoconservative think tank the Henry Jackson Society, he said: “Europe and Islam is one of the greatest, most terrifying problems of our future. I think all European countries have vastly, very quickly growing Islamic populations.” Dal Babu, a former senior Muslim officer in the Metropolitan police, condemned the appointment, and said: “Shawcross is a man who has demonstrated lack of independence in matters involving the Muslim community and sadly this is a missed opportunity to develop an effective [programme] that safeguards our children.” A spokesperson for the Muslim Council of Britain said: “the government is making it clear it has no interest in truly reviewing the policy. William Shawcross is singularly unfit to be a neutral and fair assessor of this government policy, which has been criticised for unfairly targeting British Muslims, given his frightening views about Islam and Muslims ... It is ironic that a policy supposedly charged with preventing extremism is to be scrutinised by a person who holds hostile views on Islam and Muslims, who has links to people with extreme views on us, and who defends the worst excesses of the so-called ‘War on Terror.’” 118

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, 2021, 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. 119

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”. However, 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.” 120

A far right group linked to neo-Nazis had allegedly compiled a list of around 60 organisations and individuals in Scotland who oppose racism and fascism, the Ferret revealed. The list, claimed to have been made by Patriotic Alternative (PA) Scotland, names charities, political parties, student groups and 33 individuals. They included Stand Up to Racism, Edinburgh University Marxist Society, Anti-Fascist Action Dundee and the Scottish Socialist Party, among others who oppose fascism. The alleged covert project by PA was called Scottish Anti-Anti Fascists (SAAF) and involved the infiltration of left wing groups. Details of SAAF were leaked by a former member of PA who said in a video he was asked to infiltrate left wing groups, but decided not to due to concerns he had over how the information would be used. 121

Racist and anti-Muslim letters sent to councilors had sparked a police investigation. Four members of Wakefield’s Labour group received the notes, which branded Islam “dangerous” and warned of a “Muslim takeover”. Signed off with “a Conservative colleague”, the letters took aim at one councilor and their religion. The Conservative group said it was “shocked”

and the messages were not sent by one of its members. In the letter, seen by the BBC, Muslims were described as “very dangerous”. Referring to one councilor, it urged recipients to “avoid this person at all costs”, it added: “We cannot allow Muslims to take over”. West Yorkshire Police said it was investigating allegations of malicious communications. Labour members Steve Tulley, Michael Graham, Betty Rhodes and Olivia Rowley all received a version of the note.¹²²

Thousands of Afghans housed temporarily in British hotels had faced increasing harassment by far-right groups, according to organizations monitoring the activities of extremists. Campaigners said the groups were drawing on Islamophobic narratives to whip up hate against the refugees. Britain First was one of the most notorious and prominent groups involved in the campaign, and according to its own website, it had made more than a dozen unsolicited visits to hotels housing refugees across England in last few weeks. Right-wing extremism monitor Hope Not Hate said the resettlement schemes for Afghans had become a focal point for many far-right groups. It said the arrival of the refugees had led to the far right “reviving, and refining, similar attacks used during the Syria crisis.” The far right, it added, was using ideas rooted in Islamophobia such as the “Muslim takeover of Europe,” or framing refugees as potential terrorists or sex offenders, to incite hatred against them. In the videos, far-right activists were seen filming themselves showing up at hotels and where they tried to find and film refugees, who they incorrectly described as illegal immigrants.¹²³

A phone recovered from a man on trial for terrorism offences contained three copies of a livestream of the 2019 mass shooting in New Zealand, a court had heard. The attack was carried out on a mosque in Christchurch by Brenton Tarrant, who killed 51 people and injured 40 others. An iPhone belonging to Sam Imrie, 24, also contained a number of images glorifying the New Zealand shooter, with the words “Brenton Tarrant did nothing wrong”, “hail Tarrant” and “Saint Tarrant”. The Edinburgh Organised Crime and Counter-terrorism Unit described the footage of the attack as “horrific” in telling the court: “(Tarrant) carried out a filming session of the attack.

He livestreamed it at first, which was copied and then went massive on the internet. It’s horrific. It starts with him driving, playing music before arriving at the Islamic centre. You see him getting the weapon from his car, going to the Islamic centre, you can see people walking towards him and he starts shooting, murdering them. You see him going from room to room, getting back into his vehicle”. The 24-year-old had also been accused of planning to stream live footage of an incident. The court also showed images from the accused’s Facebook page. The cover photo on the Facebook page was described in court as Adolf Hitler, standing in front of a microphone, addressing a crowd. His biography read: “Seeing muslims suffer.” Several symbols associated with “far right Nazism” were also posted on the Facebook page.¹²⁴

The revelation by Nigel Farage that he was planning a return to frontline politics came at a point when the media platform he enjoyed for spouting his divisive rhetoric had never been bigger. He took over his four-nights-a-week primetime slot on GB News in July, months after telling The Telegraph he had quit politics for good. Now he wrote in the same paper that he might be “getting back into the political arena”. For the former UKIP leader, who was cynically seeking to exploit an increase in asylum seekers crossing the English Channel, it would mean a need to ramp up his presence on social media, the key to political success for his friend and inspiration, Donald Trump. Significantly, on 10 November Farage announced he had “finally joined Parler”, the right-wing social media app that faced closure earlier in 2021 over its links to rioting by Trump supporters at the US Capitol. Parler was banned by Apple, Amazon and Google in January over toxic posts that “glorified Nazism and called for violence against specific people”, but Apple lifted its ban in April and, shortly afterwards, Parler hired George Farmer, a British former Brexit Party candidate, as its new chief executive. Farage, its new champion, has urged followers to join him there. Predictably, his first posts on Parler concerned the “huge numbers of undocumented young men” crossing from France.¹²⁵

Pete Molloy, who seated on Spennymoor Town and Durham County councils, wrote: “We don’t want Muslims here.” He also posted a link to a “white supremacist conspiracy theory”. Appeared before the county council’s standards committee, Molloy denied being racist and claimed he faced “politically-motivated” allegations having been “targeted unreasonably” by other people at the council. Investigating Officer Matt Lewin described Molloy’s Facebook posts as “on the wrong side of the line” between free criticism and an “attack on all Muslims, a denial of their right to live in this country.” One of the posts from 2019 said: “We don’t want Muslims here and they don’t want us here.” Mr Molloy said the posts were expressing his personal opinions “in my private capacity as an individual”. He said of the white supremacy-related post: “Just because I’ve shared something, it doesn’t mean I actually agree with the source of where that information has come from.” 126

In Germany, on January 4, **Kemal Ergun, president of the Turkish-Muslim association IGMG**, expressed alarm over the increased in Islamophobic hate crimes. Ergun, said more and more mosques have become the targets of threats, vandalism or arson in recent months. “At least 122 mosques were targeted in such attacks last year,” he told Anadolu Agency. He added Muslim women in particular who wear headscarves had frequently been verbally harassed on the streets, and that incidents of physical assault had reportedly also been on the rise. Durmus Yildirim, chairman of ATIB, criticized right-wing populist politicians for inciting hatred and discrimination against immigrants and Muslims. “We want an end to this racist and populist rhetoric, efforts should be made for peaceful coexistence,” he told Anadolu Agency.¹²⁷

Germany’s intelligence service had identified more than 1,200 far-right extremists licensed to own guns. The finding had fuelled fears that the country could see repeats of terror attacks carried out by neo-Nazis and other fanatics in coming years. According to released data by Germany’s domestic security agency, the BfV, identified a total of 1,203 known or suspected far-right extremists who were licensed to own firearms as of December 2019.

It also found that, of those, 528 were so-called Reichsbürgers, members of a movement which rejects the legitimacy of the modern German state and holds that the German Reich had continued to exist in its pre-World War 2 borders. The most recent estimate of how many of the extremists licensed to have a gun actually own one is 700, DW had reported. German intelligence also reported 17 cases of shooting practice sessions or programmes attended by members of the far-right between early 2019 and late 2020. Of those, three-quarters were held in other parts of Europe. The BfV had estimated that in Germany, there were around 13,000 members of the far-right who were prone to violence. The data was released in response to questions submitted to parliament by Die Linke, or “The Left Party”, focused on gun violence and far-right extremism. Speaking on February 2, Martina Renner, a member of the party, said the latest findings “[prove] the growing threat posed by neo-Nazis and racists.” 128

On March 5, 2021, a German court had temporarily blocked the country’s domestic intelligence agency from putting a far right party - Alternative for Germany Party - under observation due to suspicions of extreme-right sympathies. The Cologne state court said the party, known as AfD, could not be classified or treated as a “suspected case” of extremism until a decision was made on an emergency brief submitted by the party, after it alleged the intelligence agency broke a court order not to make such a classification public. In an ongoing legal battle, the AfD had been fighting against being classified as “suspected” by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, known by the initials BfV, in which they argued that the publicity surrounding such a move so close to the September 26 national election would damage the party’s electoral chances. 129

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.”¹³⁰

The **German Defense Minister** had told the armed forces that reported racist and sexual abuse in a German platoon based in Lithuania had put their entire reputation at risk. The 30 soldiers had been recalled. Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer said the scandal was a “slap in the face” for all those serving in the Bundeswehr (armed forces). The reports spoke of a sexual assault, bullying, anti-Semitism and Nazi songs. The platoon was part of a NATO mission. “Through their behaviour these soldiers frivolously put the whole Bundeswehr’s reputation at risk,” she addressed a Bundeswehr officers’ academy in Hamburg. The allegations, first reported by Der Spiegel news, relate to a party held at a hotel in Lithuania at the end of April. Members of the platoon allegedly filmed an incident of sexual assault and sang anti-Semitic songs. Later more allegations emerged of sexual and racial abuse in the platoon, including soldiers singing a song to mark Adolf Hitler’s birthday on 20 April.¹³¹

In Denmark, **Danish authorities** stripped 94 refugees of their right to stay in the country, and 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 is less

like that of its Scandinavian neighbors than of nationalist countries like Austria or Hungary. Thankfully, nobody was sent back to Syria anytime soon. Under the new system, refugees should have 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 would not 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. However, 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 being 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. Gradually, the Danish People’s Party had dragged all the other parties in their direction. Now, 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. However, if it passes, the policy could have terrible consequences for collaboration within the European Union and on the international level.¹³²

In Netherlands, on April 12, 2021, **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.”¹³³



Sweden Democrats (SD) Party leader Jimmie Åkesson had convinced three other opposition party chiefs — the center-right Moderate Party, the Christian Democrats and the Liberal Party — that they would need his support to take power from Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, a Social Democrat, at an election on 2022. Åkesson was seeking to negotiate the best price for that support, in the form of policy concessions from his would-be new allies, in order to secure real influence for his party for the first time since it entered parliament in 2010. “We are identifying what we can agree on and what we can’t agree on, and then looking at how important the things we can’t agree on are,” Åkesson told POLITICO in an interview in parliament the week before. “This is definitively a formative moment within Swedish politics,” said Tommy Möller, a political scientist at Stockholm University. “The landscape is changing rapidly.” The country had long pitched itself internationally as a “humanitarian superpower” where a large number of refugees and asylum seekers were welcomed. As SD was gaining momentum to enter parliament in 2010, former Moderate Party leader Fredrik Reinfeldt, Sweden’s prime minister from 2006 until 2014,

called them a “xenophobic force” and refused to discuss policy with them at all. But Europe’s migration crisis of 2015, and a resulting spike in the number of asylum seekers entering Sweden, caused support for SD to surge and changed the equation for the Moderates, as well as their long-time partners the Christian Democrats, and the Liberals.¹³⁴

In Russia, on August 20, 2021, **Security forces released approximately 600 Muslims** who were arrested at a mosque in Moscow. “All those arrested have been released,” lawyer Mariya Krasova told the Russian TASS news agency. They were detained for passport checks and biometric data collection in the Moscow region town of Kotelniki, lawyers told state media late Friday. “According to my knowledge, around 600 people were detained. These people were detained at the mosque in Kotelniki,” said Anasova, who added that the detainees were taken to the Lyubertsy Police Station. Other outlets, which cited eyewitnesses and lawyers, said officers interrupted Friday prayers on August 20 and blocked worshippers inside the mosque, in some cases asked for money in exchange for their release.¹³⁵

On March 19, 2021, the **Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán** said he would meet with other right-wing politicians from Poland and Italy to discuss setting up a new nationalist political force in Europe. In an interview with state radio, the populist leader said he was in touch with Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki and Italian former interior minister Matteo Salvini, whose parties were ideological allies of Orbán’s Fidesz Party. “Poland, Italy and Hungary will try to reorganize the European right wing, and we will soon see each other and plan for the future,” Orbán said. Orbán’s interview came only a day after Fidesz pulled out of the European People’s Party (EPP), its center-right European political family, following years of conflict over Hungary’s respect for democratic norms and the rule of law. The EPP had accused Orbán of abandoning Christian Democratic principles in favor of his own self-styled “illiberal democracy,” while Orbán said the EPP had become an “annex of the left” on issues like migration and national sovereignty. In a video interview posted to his Facebook page on March 2021, Salvini, confirmed that he was in discussions with

politicians from Poland and Hungary on creating a new faction within the EU legislature. “We are working to create something new, because a certain type of Europe with an outdated mindset is unable to respond to emergencies and the needs of 2021,” Salvini said. 136

Bosnian officials and religious leaders on 22 December 2021 denounced **suggestions voiced by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán** and his spokesperson that the integration of Bosnia-Herzegovina into the European Union would be challenging because of its large Muslim population. Mr. Orbán’s spokesperson Zoltan Kovacs tweeted on 21 December 2021 that “the challenge with Bosnia is how to integrate a country with 2 million Muslims.” During his long speech Tuesday 21 December 2021 in Budapest, right-wing populist Orbán said Hungary supported Bosnia-Herzegovina’s EU bid, he added “I am doing my best to convince Europe’s great leaders that the Balkans may be further away from them than from Hungary, but how we manage the security of a state in which 2 million Muslims live is a key issue for their security too,” he said. 137

In Poland, **Jarosław Kaczyński, the leader of Poland’s ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party**, had announced that he had signed a joint declaration with several other European right-wing parties aimed at “protecting the sovereignty” of EU member states. The signatories of the document include Marine Le Pen, the President of the National Rally in France, Viktor Orbán, the Hungarian PM and President of Fidesz, Matteo Salvini, the head of the Italian right-wing Liga, Giorgia Meloni of Brothers of Italy, and Santiago Abascal, the leader of Vox, as well as a number of other conservative parties from across the continent. According to Kaczyński, the declaration came about in response to what he believes were “unclear objectives and structure” of the Conference on the Future of Europe, which began last month and aimed to define a new vision for the union. The former Polish prime minister said the EU was attempting to carry out a cultural revolution aimed at “destroying the current social structures”. 138

In Cyprus, **Far-right party** with a link to The golden dawn of the late Greek neo-Nazis Doubled their support in Cyprus after widespread dissatisfaction with the corruption scandal dominated Sunday’s (July 1) new parliamentary elections. The National People’s Front (Elam) gained 6.8% of the votes, narrowly replaced the Movement for Social Democracy (Edek) and became the fourth largest political force in the island’s Greek Cyprus party system for the first time in 45 years. “The neo-Nazi party was clearly the winner of today’s election, securing two more seats out of 56 seats,” said Christophorus Christophorou, an analyst who specializes in election campaigns. 139

In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, **Jewish far-right groups** told their followers prepare for a violent protest on April 22 night in Jerusalem, with the vehemently anti-assimilation group Lehava told supporters to gather at 10 P.M. for a march from Safra Square on Jaffa Road to Damascus Gate in the Old City, to “restore Jewish dignity.” Other far-right organizations posted instructions in WhatsApp groups on how to avoid arrest, while inciting violence and called on members to carry arms. . In a message group, operated among others by far-right Otzma Yehudit chairman Itamar Ben-Gvir, included a text which said: “The biggest nightmare of the Arabs, the only thing they won’t want to happen is that the Arabs will come up against a group of Kach supporters with clubs,” he referred to the outlawed racist party. Another chat included the text: “Who needs clubs? We need Krav maga to hit them in sensitive enough places.” Another group posted: “If they don’t hang one of the attackers (one of the Palestinians who attacked Jews and filmed it) in the town square of Jerusalem, it won’t end.” A text in a group of which Ben-Gvir is not a member of also had instructions on how to avoid arrest, it said “It’s best to come wearing a white shirt and black pants. Jerusalemites don’t bring your cellphone. Coming from outside Jerusalem? Best not to bring a cellphone if possible, or find a different cellphone. Don’t bring your own phone. Are you organizing via Telegram? Still, be careful and don’t write things that are too criminal or inciting. Did you already do that? Erase it...be careful when you pass the (Central Bus) Station with all kinds of self-defense means. Try to go around with a mask on your face, even in places were masks are not needed.” Another text

from far-right group La Familia's chat said: "Burning Arabs today, Molotov cocktails are already in the trunk...the way I see it, an Arab dies today." On April 20 evening Arabs were once again attacked by dozens of young Jewish men. Several journalists were also assaulted by Jews, among them Suleiman Maswadeh of Kan broadcasting, and Yossi Eli from Channel 13. Eye-witnesses said that the police were too few to deal with the rioting and slow to respond. 140

On May 12, 2021, 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. 141

In India, on December 6, 2020, **Janmabhumi daily newspaper** published an article for RSS leader KR Umakanthan where he had called for unity among Hindus and Christians in the state of Kerala to deal with the threats of political Islam. In the article, Umakanthan argued that attempts at Islamisation were a threat to Hindus and Christians alike and a weak Hindu or Christian leadership alone can't fight Islamic terrorists. According to the Times of India, The words of Umakanthan was a clear indication of the implementation of a long-term strategy of BJP to establish its base in the state. Since there was a considerable presence of Christians and Muslims across the state, BJP had found it difficult to register electoral wins through consolidation of Hindu votes alone. Umakanthan had been BJP's organizational secretary of state until a few years ago. 142

On August 10, 2021, **members of right-wing extremist outfit Kranti Sena** told the local businesses and people to not work with Muslims and appealed to people to "not allow Muslim men to apply mehndi on the hands of Hindu women as they indulge in love jihad". The incident came to light when Alishan Jafri, a journalist who document anti-muslim violence in India, put out a

video on his social media account, where some men were seen conducting a drive to 'check' the shops in the main markets of Muzaffarnagar. According to a report by The Times Of India, the outfit's general secretary, Manoj Saini, said, "On the pretext of these odd jobs, Muslim youths entice Hindu girls and trap them in love jihad." Rajesh Kashyap, one of the members of the outfit wrote on his social media, "If Muslim men are found working as Mehendi artists on Hariyali Teej (a Hindu Festival), then Kranti Sena would teach them a strong lesson in our style." 143

The Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan had given yet another excuse to India's Hindu supremacists to unleash a new wave of Islamophobia against its Muslim minority. Muslim politicians, writers, journalists, social media influencers and everyday citizens had become the targets of a hate campaign launched by the country's right wing, which included members of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). As soon as the Taliban toppled the Afghan government on August, the hashtag #GoToAfghanistan began trending on Indian social media, a repeat of the #GoToPakistan campaign launched by right-wing groups. Shortly after Taliban took over Kabul, BJP politician Ram Madhav called the 1921 Moplah rebellion one of the first manifestations of a "Talibani mentality" in India, and that the state government of Kerala was trying to "whitewash" it. Madhav was speaking at an event to mark 100 years since the peasant uprising against British colonial rule and the feudal system in the southern state. In another incident, media reports said Muslims in the central state of Madhya Pradesh raised pro-Pakistan slogans during a Muharram procession. The BJP state chief minister commented on the reports, and said he would "not tolerate the Talibani mentality". Two days after his comments, the fact-checking website Alt News debunked the initial media reports. Likewise, in the northeastern state of Assam, 15 Muslims, who included Islamic scholars, a politician and a local journalist, were arrested for allegedly "supporting" the Taliban in social media posts and charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act or UAPA, a draconian anti-terror law under which dozens of Muslims and other government critics were behind bars. 144

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat, on September 6, 2021, stressed that Islam came to India with invaders and Muslims had nothing to fear in the country. He spoke at an event organised by Pune-based Global Strategic Policy Foundation, Bhagwat said that Hindus and Muslims share the same ancestry and every Indian citizen was a “Hindu”. RSS Chief addressed a seminar titled “Nation First, Nation Supreme”, he stated that Islam came to India with invaders and this fact should not be hidden. “Islam came to India with invaders. This is history and should be told in that manner. Sane Muslim leaders should oppose unnecessary issues and stand firmly against fundamentalists and hardliners. The more we do this at the earliest, the less damage it will cause to our society... The word Hindu is equivalent to the rich heritage of our motherland, ancestors and culture, and every Indian is a Hindu,” the RSS chief added.¹⁴⁵

On September 23, 2021, **Uttar Pradesh Minister Anand Swaroop Shukla** had said that lord Ram, Krishna, and Shiva were the ancestors of Indian Muslims and they should bow to the “land and culture of India”. In provocative remarks, the minister of state for parliamentary affairs also said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Adityanath had defeated the mindset, which intended to create an Islamic State in the country by raising the flag of Hindutva and “Indian culture”. Presenting the account of Adityanath government’s work during the last 4.5 years before the media on Thursday evening, Shukla said: “The ancestors of the Muslims of India are lord Ram, Krishna, and Shankar (Shiva). They do not need to see the land of Kaaba. These people should bow to the land and culture of India.”¹⁴⁶

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said many people in the state believe immigrant Muslims were the root cause why Assam had lost identity, culture and land. Himanta Biswa Sarma also said that there was no community-based politics in Assam. Speaking at the 19th edition of the India Today Conclave 2021, Himanta Biswa Sarma said encroachment was taking place because immigrant Muslims were producing in large numbers.¹⁴⁷

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, walked out of a BBC interview on January 10, 2022, annoyed at questions on the BJP government’s silence over hate speeches made at the Haridwar dharma sansad the month before. Mr. Maurya also defended the right of the “dharmacharyas” to express their views from their own platform. As per a BBC report on the incident, Mr. Maurya asked his security personnel to delete the video of the interview. The reporter’s question on why Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister of the State (Uttar Pradesh) remained silent after the statements which incited violence against Muslims were made from the stage of dharma sansad in Haridwar and wouldn’t the silence of the authorities further encourage the perpetrators, upset Mr. Maurya. Mr. Maurya said, “BJP does not need a certificate. We believe in developing sabka saath sabka vikas.” He also defended the right of the “dharmacharyas” (religious leaders) to express their views from their own platform.¹⁴⁸

A video from a Chhattisgarh village had been widely circulated where villagers were seen taking a pledge to boycott Muslims. The police said they had traced the person who organised it, but had not found the involvement of any political party or religious group “We Hindus will not buy goods from any Muslim shopkeeper, will not sell or rent our land to any Muslim ... We Hindus pledge to buy from vendors coming to our villages only after ascertaining their religion. We also pledge to not work as labourers for them,” the residents of Kundikala village in Sarguja district said in the video.¹⁴⁹

Myanmar’s military junta had released controversial Buddhist monk Ashin Wirathu, known for his nationalist and anti-Muslim rhetoric. He had previously been charged for sedition against the civilian government, which had since been deposed in a February military coup. He had been dubbed the “Buddhist Bin Laden” over his speeches targeting Muslims, particularly the Rohingya. ¹⁵⁰

Australia’s national police agency had revealed that the number of investigations it was conducting into far-right extremism had increased 750 percent in the past 18 months. Australian Federal Police (AFP) Assistant

Commissioner Scott Lee, on October 8, 2021, warned that far-right extremism was the country’s fastest-growing threat. He told broadcaster SBS that the number of nationalist and racist violent extremism cases before the AFP’s Joint Counter Terrorism Team (JCCT) had grown by 750 percent since the start of 2020 and now accounts for 15 percent of the unit’s investigations compared to 2 percent in 2019. 151

A report published on March 22, 2021 by **the UK’s Centre for the Analysis of the Radical Right** (CARR) and Hedayah, a UAE-based violent extremism research centre, had identified more than a dozen white supremacist organisations operating in Australia that recruit disaffected young men and women through encrypted online messaging platforms. According to the report: “Australia has become fertile ground for radical right extremist activism and violence.... Australian chapters of more fringe neo-Nazi cells [have been] actively engaged in campaigns of radical right terror and violence.” Compiled with policy assistance from Australia’s Department of Home Affairs, the report also found that since the Christchurch terrorist attack of 2019, which was perpetrated by an Australian, these groups had “become more explicitly anti-Semitic, aggressively racist and white supremacist”. One of Britain’s most senior counter-terrorism police officers, Detective Chief Superintendent Martin Snowden of Yorkshire Police, echoed the report’s findings. “It’s a significant risk for us, and I think that risk can be seen in a number of countries around the world including Australia... Daesh or AQ [Al Qaeda] inspired terrorism is still the most significant threat, but right-wing is growing at a faster pace...Arrests over the past 12 months would indicate that 20 to 25 per cent of those are in the right-wing terrorism space, and that volume is growing year on year and I think will continue to grow.” he said. “I think there has been a growth in individuals who are embracing extremist or terroristic ideologies in Australia in the aftermath of the Christchurch attack,” Dr Bethan Johnson, a researcher with CARR told the ABC. Four of the groups named in the report had been proscribed overseas but not in Australia: Combat 18 (proscribed by Canada in 2019 and Germany in 2020), Blood and Honour (proscribed by Canada in 2019), Generation Identity (proscribed by France in 2021) and the Proud Boys (proscribed by Canada 2021). 152

In New Zealand, on December 7, 2021 **Philip Arps, a man who shared Christchurch terror attack on 2019**, appeared in the Christchurch District Court where the Department of Corrections sought to impose another release condition prohibiting him from going within 100m of the Linwood Islamic Centre and the Masjid An-Nur (Al Noor mosque) on Deans Ave. Arps, was sentenced to 21 months’ jail on 2019 after he sent the video of the Christchurch terror attack to 30 people, and asked a friend to modify it by adding cross-hairs and a “kill count”. He was released in January on strict conditions, including not being allowed to enter or loiter near any mosque in New Zealand. Arps had been prohibited from coming within 100 metres of a Christchurch mosque after he repeatedly visited a home brew store next door. Judge Ian Mill said Arps’ continued presence in the area would affect the Linwood mosque’s congregation deeply given the trauma he had already caused the Muslim community. 153

A December 11, 2021, **Newsroom article by Marc Daalder** revealed that New Zealand Initiative (NZI) chief editor Nathan Smith had a personal blog that “attacks Muslims and Jews and espouses incel [misogynist] ideology”. Following the article, NZI, a prominent think tank funded by international corporations including Google, British American Tobacco and MasterCard; among others, had announced that Smith had resigned after being immediately put on leave. Smith, played a major role in the think tank for at least a year. He edited and co-wrote numerous publications and interviewed people for podcasts. Smith’s personal “Likebulb” blog, which had been deleted, contained views not very different to those of the fascist terrorist Brenton Tarrant, who massacred 51 Muslim worshippers in Christchurch on March 15, 2019, and far-right groups such as Action Zealandia. Newsroom reported: “In a post from April 2018, Smith outright says he ‘just [doesn’t] like Arabs or Africans.” In April 2020, Smith wrote: “While not all Jews encourage immoral behaviour (from a Christian perspective), most people who do tend to be Jewish. Same with influential positions in the West. Not all Jews are in those spots, but nearly all those spots are filled by Jews... The answer to why Jews keep being kicked out of Christian countries is Jewish behaviour.” In October 2020, he wrote: “The word ‘racism’ is a propaganda tool to pathologise normal human behaviour. Preferring your own race is

a survival tool—like eating or sleeping.” Responding to the Christchurch terror attack, Smith wrote on March 24, 2019: “There is no such thing as racism.” He called for Muslims to “forgive” Tarrant, adding: “Unfortunately, I have never heard a Muslim or a progressive forgive.” NZI director Oliver Hartwich told Stuff he was “gobsmacked” to read about Smith’s views: “I almost fell off my chair... His sub-editing was extremely good, the podcast extremely good... we had no idea. I’m horrified.” Hartwich, who has known Smith for several years, said all publications Smith was involved in were being “vetted for any traces of his views.” The National Business Review (NBR), New Zealand’s main financial newspaper, had remained silent about the fact that it employed an anti-Semite as a feature writer between 2012 and 2020. 154

Two years after the video of the 15 March 2019 mosque attacks was made, efforts to stop its spread were still failing and a simple search using an alternative search engine to Google could take a person straight to the footage uploaded by the gunman to glorify his actions. The video had so far received at least 128,000 views. Muslim Association of Canterbury spokesperson Abdigani Ali said witnesses and the bereaved were already on edge leading up to the two-year anniversary and he was worried they may inadvertently stumble upon the footage. While sharing or even viewing the video could land people in prison in New Zealand, the jurisdiction of Internal Affairs does not stretch overseas to the search engines and websites that have been making it available. Ali said there needed to be a filter applied to the video in the same way child abuse was filtered out by the government here, to prevent it reaching these shores. Netsafe chief executive Martin Cocker said Voluntary efforts such as the Christchurch Call had gone some way towards cleaning up the likes of Google and Microsoft which had all invested in stamping out harmful content when it turned up, he said. “In terms of being able to say that the internet is clean of harmful content, no, we’re a very long way from that and maybe a step closer than we were a few years ago but it’s such an insignificant step really.” Cocker said there were about 30 alternative search engines similar to the one where the video could be found and most did not have the resources or the will to do anything about it. 155

Verbal and Physical Assault

Verbal assault means a threat (including written message) of an immediate harmful or offensive touching, coupled with an apparent immediate ability to commit same, and which puts a person in a reasonable apprehension of such touching; or, the use of offensive language directed at a person, where such language is likely to provoke a reasonable person. Verbal assault could be excessive taunting or teasing, bullying or other verbal harassment, a bomb threat directed at a school building, other school property, or a school event. Physical assault, meanwhile, means intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence. On the context of Islamophobia, the target of both types of assault are Muslims on the ground of their faith or religion; or any objects associated with Islam as religion.

In US, **Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota** called for House leaders to take “appropriate action” against Colorado Republican Rep. Lauren Boebert for using anti-Muslim language in describing a recent encounter she had with Omar at the US Capitol. Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other House Democratic leaders demanded Boebert retract her comments. Boebert and a staffer were taking a Capitol elevator when she saw an alarmed Capitol police officer running toward them. She said she turned to her left and spotted Omar standing beside them. “Well, she doesn’t have a backpack. We should be fine,” Boebert recalled saying, drawing laughs from her audience. “And I said, ‘Oh look, the jihad squad decided to show up for work today.’” Omar publicly urged Pelosi and GOP House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy to discipline Boebert. “Saying I am a suicide bomber is no laughing matter,” Omar tweeted. “@GOPLeader and @SpeakerPelosi need to take appropriate action, normalizing this bigotry not only endangers my life but the lives of all Muslims. Anti-Muslim bigotry has no place in Congress.” Pelosi and other top House Democrats called on Boebert in a statement to “fully retract these comments and refrain from making similar ones going forward.” They also demanded that Republican leaders “to address this priority with the Congresswoman and to finally take real action to confront racism.” 156

In Canada, a **Muslim mother and daughter in Hamilton, Ontario** hid behind bushes after police said a man threatened them with Islamophobic slurs and later threatened to kill them. In a news release, Hamilton police said a mother and daughter were walking through a parking lot on July 12 when a driver nearly hit one of them with his vehicle while he was pulling out of a parking spot. The driver then threatened the pair using slurs, prompted the women to run across the street and hide behind bushes, police said. “He eventually located them and threatened to kill them. One of the victims ran screaming for help and witnesses intervened as the suspect fled the area,” the release said. Soon after, police reported that they arrested a man and charged him with three counts of uttering threats, two counts of assault with a weapon, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, and failure to comply with probation. The incident was also been investigated as a hate crime.¹⁵⁷

More than 130 Canadian civil society groups, charities and Muslim institutions had called for a probe into what they describe as “Islamophobic” tax audits that unfairly target Muslim charities. “Targeting Muslim charities on the basis of terrorist financing suspicions simply because of the religion they uphold is Islamophobic and prejudiced,” they said in a letter, sent to the Ottawa government. The letter called on the government to issue a review of the Canada Revenue Agency’s (CRA) audit processes related to charitable organizations to ensure a lack of bias or racial prejudice. “Not only are Muslim organizations being targeted by the government with questionable and unfounded allegations of promoting radicalization, the process of an audit, and possible revocation, creates a chilling effect that can cripple the Canadian Muslim charitable community,” the letter read. The letter also called on Ottawa to undo “systemic racism” in government policies in the name of “national security,”¹⁵⁸

In Panama, **photographs** revealed on social media uncovered Panama’s law enforcement officials capturing at targets wearing conventional Arab clothes, together with a headdress, throughout an Israeli-run coaching course. The pictures, which prompted controversy on-line, was revealed on Twitter, by the Nationwide Police and the native Israeli chamber of

commerce however it had since been deleted. The deleted Twitter posts claimed that the coaching was organized by the Israeli embassy in Panama. The controversy drew criticism from the Panamanian Committee of Solidarity with Palestine, which stated that the course promoted “violence and racism, in order that anybody who wears a hijab or one thing related might be categorised as a terrorist.” They added a request to the federal government in Panama to discontinue the intervention of international locations in coaching safety forces. In response, the Panama police drive issued an apology: “We’re respectful of cultural, spiritual and ethnic variations. We remorse that ... a state of affairs arose outdoors the character of our mission and obligation.”¹⁵⁹

In France, **the facade of an imam-training center** was covered with racist and Islamophobic inscriptions in Martigues, in the Bouches-du-Rhône. The Tags included: “Muslim = pig”, “Dehors les Bougnoules”, and called for justice for the victims of the Bataclan, Nice or Samuel Paty attacks... Dozens of similar tags were discovered on the morning of July 4 on several walls, windows, shutters and bins of the imams training center, as reported by Provence. “We are a little shocked by this bad surprise”, the director of the center Azeddine Djaghballou told the regional newspaper. He rejected any anger nonetheless, and said: “We remain peaceful because more serious things are happening. Living well together remains our objective and this kind of gesture is that of a small minority”. Police officers started a neighborhood investigation, a police source told AFP. The mayor of Martigues, Gaby Charroux, went to the institute and expressed his support for the Muslim community, according to the regional newspaper, he also condemned “with the greatest firmness these stupid and senseless actions”.¹⁶⁰

On December 20, 2020, **Ali Imdad, a former UK contestant on the Great British Bake Off program**, was compared to a bomber by another passenger on a bus and he was saddened that no one came to his defense and appalled that the driver threatened to throw him off after he spoke out to defend himself. Imdad, was on his way home in Birmingham when a woman told him that Asians were “everywhere” and blamed “people like him” for “all

these bombings.” According to the footage of the incident which had been uploaded to social media, the woman can be heard telling Imdad: “50 years ago - there was no Asians. Now it’s everywhere. Imdad told Newsweek that he had felt disappointed nobody came to his aid and that the only other passenger to speak out at the time of the incident, was another man who told him off for the way he spoke to the woman. 161

On March 16, 2021, **the columnist Julie Burchill** had apologised to the Muslim activist and journalist Ash Sarkar, and agreed to pay her “substantial damages”, after a series of social media posts in which she accused Sarkar of being an Islamist, a hypocrite and worshipping a paedophile. In Twitter and Facebook posts, Burchill said that her posts had “included racist and misogynist comments” and “played into Islamophobic tropes”. She wrote: “although it was not my intention, I accept that my statements were defamatory of Sarkar and caused her very substantial distress”. The Sunday Telegraph columnist added: “I do not believe, have never believed and never intended to make any allegation that Sarkar is a promoter, supporter and/or sympathiser of Islamists or fundamentalist terrorism or to suggest that Sarkar condones paedophilia in any way”. Burchill asked her social media followers to share her apology. The retraction came after Burchill published a series of social media posts to and about Sarkar in response to the Novara Media senior editor’s criticism of Rod Liddle in December 2020 for an article from 2012 in which he wrote that if he was a teacher he “could not remotely conceive of not trying to shag the kids”. Burchill responded by accusing Sarkar of “worshipping a paedophile”, a reference to the Prophet Muhammad. After she settled the case, Burchill said “I deeply regret having reacted in the way I did. I accept that I should have behaved better. On reflection, I accept that I misjudged the situation, and made statements that simply are not true, which I now want to put right.” The apology also acknowledged that Muslims do not worship Muhammad and would consider doing so blasphemous. 162

A Muslim family had described how a couple had sat behind them on a bus in the Southwark area in London on August 16, 2021, and loudly discussed the Taliban and other “Islamic terrorists” in a manner intended to provoke a response. The family, who were South Asian, and the women wore hijab, overhead a white male loudly described how Osama Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein were “Islamic terrorists” in a prolonged rant. He also ranted about how, “we went over there, we killed the Taliban before, but now they’re back we’re going to have to go again.” The family spoke to Tell MAMA, one of the family members said the man, described as been white and in his mid-to-late twenties or early thirties, continued to repeat references to “Islamic terrorists” even when the white woman next to him did say that “not all Muslims are terrorists” but he continued with the rants. They added that they would not report the incident to the police as they did not feel intimidated but, instead, to raise public awareness. 163

A legal assistant sacked after she promoted violence against Muslim children and ‘jokes’ about the pedophilia of Jimmy Savile and taking class A drugs on public Facebook posts had their claim for unfair dismissal over her pregnancy dismissed by an employment tribunal. Leanne Livesey had, according to the tribunal ruling, posted a ‘joke’ about gravely assaulting Muslim children by throwing boiling water over them during a water fight – and given the public nature of the horrific content, it took little time for management to find them, as evidenced by a screen recording presented to the tribunal. 164

A London Imam had spoken out about his experience growing up in the UK as a Muslim and the hate he still gets. Sabah Ahmedi said he was a victim of Islamophobia when he was younger, with people often calling him a ‘terrorist’ or ‘Osama Bin Laden’ - especially after the September 11, 2001 attacks. Despite still being on the receiving end of hate, the 27-year-old, who was one of Britain’s youngest Imams, said he would not stop defending the religion. Sabah said: “Online I still receive a lot of abuse, some people say ‘Islam is not compatible with the west. They were looking at my wife as though I’d radicalised her’. Although he had now turned his comments off

on TikTok, it could be seen some of the hate he had received. One person commented: “Doesn’t this dog ever stop barking.” Another said: “What are you gaining out of this? Keep your beliefs to yourself! You’re bound to get hate chill out. Stop preaching your belief to others, we don’t care.” 165

A video had gone viral after a Mansfield woman was subjected to an expletive-laden rant in Mansfield due to her Muslim religion. 26-year-old Dina Singh was out shopping with her friend Fatima Khokher and Fatima’s three-year-old son when a stranger confronted her, screaming expletives in her face and accusing her of being a ‘terrorist’. Dina was born in Mansfield Woodhouse and wears a mixture of western and traditional Muslim clothing, and had opted to wear a headscarf for her shopping trip when the incident occurred, which was videoed by a passerby. Dina was a mother-of-three and was born and raised in Mansfield said: *“I was born in Mansfield, and so were my family and several generations before me – this is my home. Unfortunately, whenever I choose to wear a headscarf or Muslim clothing, I get stared at, people mutter under their breath, or shout abuse – but this was awful. The woman just walked up to me and started screaming in my face about my religion and offering to fight me – in front of Fatima’s little boy.”* The altercation ended when town centre security intervened, but the whole episode was recorded by a concerned shopper who gave Dina the footage for evidence. 166

Nadiya Hussain had shared insight into her family’s experiences of Islamophobia, after she and her daughter were called ‘terrorists’. Speaking on media she explained that in the wake of recent terror attacks in the UK, such abuse had become ‘normal’ for her family, and had made them more inclined to ‘stay at home’. Nadiya, who was the daughter of Bangladeshi immigrants, went on to describe the difficulty in explaining the racism to her children. 167

A man had come under fire after allegedly verbally abusing a Muslim man on a train in the UK. In a video shared on social media, the man was seen accusing the Muslim man of not “respecting other people” by reading his

Koran on the train. “Do you see anybody of any other faith sitting here doing their morning prayers? Do you know why? Because they respect other people and that’s your problem, you got no respect for other people,” the man told the Muslim passenger. The Muslim passenger then told the man to “act his age” and “move along”. In response to the tweet, British Transport Police said the incident was under investigation. 168

Dutch carrier airline KLM had opened an investigation after a viral video surfaced online which showed individuals were insulting Moroccans at a Netherlands airport. The video showed people who were celebrating as a flight which belonged to Moroccan flag carrier Royal Air Maroc were taking off. “Yes, yes, there goes another plane full of Moroccans going back to Morocco. Give them all a single ticket, f*** off” one of the individuals said. Only one person appeared in the video, wore a KLM uniform. After the video went viral online, KLM issued a press release to apologize, and promised to take legal measures against the perpetrators. “We are horrified to learn of this video and KLM rejects these images and statements,” the airline said in a press release. 169

In India, in August 2021 **a video that went viral on social media** showed a terrified little girl clinging to her Muslim father as a Hindu mob assaulted him. The footage showed the Muslim rickshaw driver being paraded through the streets of Kanpur, a city in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, as his crying daughter begged the mob to stop hitting him. His attackers asked him to chant “Hindustan Zindabad” or “Long Live India” and “Jai Shri Ram” or “Victory to Lord Ram” - a popular greeting that has been turned into a murder cry by Hindu lynch mobs in recent years. He complied, but the mob still kept hitting him. The man and his daughter were eventually rescued by the police. Three men arrested for the attack were freed on bail a day later. A few days later, another viral video surfaced which showed a Muslim bangle-seller being slapped, kicked and punched by a Hindu mob in Indore, a city in the central state of Madhya Pradesh. In the video, the attackers abused Tasleem Ali and told him to stay away from Hindu areas in future. In a police complaint, he later alleged that he had been “beaten

by five-six men who hurled communal slurs at him for selling bangles in a Hindu-dominated area and robbed him of money, his phone and some documents”. But in a strange turn of events, Ali himself was arrested the next day after the 13-year-old daughter of one of his alleged attackers accused him of molesting her. His family and neighbours had strongly denied the accusation. They said it was inconceivable that the father of five would do something like that. 170

In September 10, 2021, **Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, Bishop of the Palai diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church in Kerala**, triggered a major controversy when he claimed the existence of ‘narcotic jihad’ in the state targeting young people who belonged to non-Muslim faiths. He also alleged that young women, who belonged to Christianity and other non-Muslim faiths, were being lured by ‘jihadis’ through ‘love jihad’ and subjected to exploitation, forced religious conversion and terrorist activities. Mar Joseph Kallarangatt heads the Palai diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church, one of the biggest Catholic churches in the state. Bishop Kallarangatt made the controversial remarks while he addressed the laity on the occasion of the Eighth Day of Lent of Mary at a church in Kuravilangad in Kottayam district. While he spoke about the importance of protecting families and young women, he raised the twin issues of ‘love jihad’ and ‘narcotic jihad’ as grave threats to young men and women of Christian and other non-Muslim faiths. It was the first time a senior Catholic Bishop took direct aim at the Muslim community by raising the theory of ‘love and narcotic jihad’. He claimed that since weapons cannot be easily used to destroy people of other faiths in a democratic society like India, ‘jihadis’ were using means which were not easily identifiable. He said that women of non-Muslim faiths were being subjected to exploitation, forced religious conversion and terrorist activities by ‘jihadi’ groups after trapping them through ‘love’ and other means. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, in his first response to the Bishop’s remarks, said that it was the first time he had heard of a term called ‘narcotic jihad’. He said that while the context and circumstances of the Bishop’s remarks were not clear, the issue of narcotics is an ‘anti-social’ issue and does not have religious hues. He added that those in responsible positions must refrain

from making statements that cause divisions in society. A few days later, at another press conference, the chief minister stressed that the state did not intend to initiate legal proceedings against the Bishop even though many have labeled it as ‘hate speech’. The CPI(M) formally echoed the CM’s remarks, and said the Bishop did not have ‘sinister’ motives behind making the claim of ‘narcotic jihad.’ 171

On December 15, 2021, **The Wire, an Indian news website** had published an article written by Nitika Khaitan, a lawyer based in Delhi, titled “One Year On, No Accountability for Delhi Police’s Terrifying Impunity at Jamia”. The Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), attack referred to by the author was the forceful entry by Delhi police into the Jamia Millia Islamia university during a confrontation with student protesters against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which had started outside the campus on 15 December 2019. Khaitan said “The police assault on Jamia, was documented in-depth and yet mandatory procedures for investigating police brutality have not been followed. The official narrative has succeeded in shielding police impunity through a haze of paltry excuses – not entirely unexpected when the police are tasked with investigating themselves.” According to Khaitan, students were arrested under anti-terror laws by the same agency accused of perpetrating the violence. The police had responded to the JMI law suit by claiming that it had used moderate force. However, Khaitan said “the police’s actions on that day went far beyond the force permitted to apprehend or disperse rioters, and instead constitute as a systematic attack.” She added “Though the police claim that they could successfully contain violence by temporarily apprehending 52 people, their claim appears to be wholly arbitrary. One of the students detained was picked up by officers from outside a hospital that was treating several injured students. Another student recounted how 40-50 policemen flogged him, as he was dragged from the library where he had been studying, to be detained overnight. At the two police stations where Jamia students were detained, most detainees were injured but were denied access to medical care and water.” The author had referred to a report released by the National Human Rights Commission in June which had recommended administrative action against police

officers involved in “damaging CCTV cameras, unnecessarily caning” and using tear gas shells inside the library but no criminal prosecution. “Unlike in cases of certain other police excesses, no commission of inquiry has been set up.” She said. Khaitan added “In the year following the brutality at JMI, the Delhi Police has been accused of standing by as mobs attacked Jawaharlal Nehru University, of one-sidedness and participation in the worst communal violence Delhi has seen in decades, and of violent excesses while enforcing the public health lockdown. Citizens are left with no effective way to demand accountability for power, even the power to wield lethal violence.”¹⁷²

In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 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”.¹⁷³

On May 7, 2021, at least **205 people were injured** at Jerusalem’s Al Aqsa mosque after Israeli police in riot gear clashed with Palestinians after the evening prayers, according to the Palestinian Red Crescent. Eighty-eight of the injured were taken to hospital for treatment, where most had suffered from wounds caused by rubber-coated bullets, the Red Crescent said. About 20 were treated in field hospitals set up to cope with injuries from the most significant night of unrest in the city for years. Video showed stun grenades going off across the mosque compound, in which some landed inside the mosque building and scattered worshippers. Tension had been rising in East Jerusalem in days before over the possible eviction of

Palestinian families who lived there. On night of May 5, 22 people were injured in the neighborhood, according to the Red Crescent, two of which needed hospital treatment. ¹⁷⁴

Hate Speech and Online Hate

Hate speech is any form of expression through which speakers intend to vilify, humiliate, or incite hatred against a group or a class of persons based on race, religion, skin color sexual identity, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, or national origin. Therefore, online hate speech is simply defined as a type of speech that takes place online or through social media with the purpose of attacking a person or a group based on their race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or gender. In the context of Islamophobia, the target of both types of hate speech are Muslims or Islam as a religion.

In US, on April 8, 2021 **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.” 175

Instagram, had removed content about the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the site of clashes between Israeli police forces and Palestinian worshippers, after they associated the site with terrorism. The photo-sharing app, had removed posts and blocked hashtags about the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third-holiest site in the Islamic faith, because the content moderation system mistakenly associated the site with a designation the company reserves for terrorist organizations, according to internal employee communications seen by BuzzFeed News. The error, which was flagged internally by upset employees on May 11, 2021 caused Instagram to remove or block posts with hashtags for the Al-Aqsa Mosque Since May 7, the mosque had been the location of clashes between Israeli police forces and Palestinians, many of whom had visited the site to pray during the last days of Ramadan. In an attempt to draw attention to the violence, Instagram users posted videos tagged with the hashtag #AlAqsa or its Arabic counterparts #الأقصى or #الاقصى , only to find that their posts had been taken down or hidden from search results. Some notifications showed that Instagram, which is owned by Facebook, removed the posts because they were associated with “violence or dangerous organizations.” When employees learned of the removals and the justification behind them, some filed internal complaints. Facebook previously told Middle Eastern news outlet the National that posts with the Al-Aqsa hashtags “were restricted in error,” but an internal post obtained by BuzzFeed News on May 12 went further, noting that the content was taken down because Al-Aqsa “is also the name of an organization sanctioned by the United States Government.” In response, Guy Rosen, Facebook’s vice president of integrity, wrote a day later that the company had teams “triaging and unblocking any issues as they come up.” Others were less confident in Facebook’s internal explanation. Ashraf Zeitoon, who served as Facebook’s head of policy for the Middle East and North Africa region from 2014 to

mid-2017, noted that the company employed some of the top terrorism experts in the world who could surely distinguish mentions of Al-Aqsa from the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades. "For them to go and identify one word of a two-word name as associated with a terrorist organization is a lame excuse," he said, noting that he was involved in drafting policies on how the company designated terrorist groups and their content. "They are more qualified than this and more competent than this." Zeitoon cited an internal fear at Facebook of upsetting Israeli interests and over reporting of the content as potential reasons why the Al-Aqsa videos and images were removed.¹⁷⁶

On August 25, **US Far-right Georgia Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene** was embroiled in yet another social media furore over a tweet in which she insisted Islam was "not a religion of peace". The GOP congresswoman, who had previously been sanctioned by the House of Representatives over her long history of racist, incendiary and sometimes violent statements, offered her thoughts on the implications of the withdrawal from Afghanistan in an typically unambiguous post. "Pray for American missionaries in Afghanistan," she tweeted. "There are reports that some families may have been killed. Islam is not a religion of peace."¹⁷⁷

Religious leaders and human rights groups had denounced **United States Republican Sen. Amanda Chase** after her controversial remarks in which she compared the mandatory wearing of masks during the COVID-19 pandemic to the face coverings worn by Muslim women around the world. Chase had been accused of hate speech and Islamophobic comments. On January 9, 2022, Chase, a Virginia state senator, said in a Facebook post that face-covering in Islam was a shameful attempt by men to strip women of independence and "break their will and individuality." She drew a parallel between masks, which had been mandatory in the U.S. since the coronavirus pandemic began in 2019, and face covers worn by some Muslim women, such as burqas and veils. "Long before Islam, (the) Arabs discovered that forcing people to cover their nose and mouths, broke their will and individuality, and depersonalized them," Chase claimed. "It made them submissive. That's why they imposed on every women the mandatory

use of a fabric over her face," she added. Chase continued by alleging that "Islam turned it into the women's symbol of submission to Allah," and made men "the owner of (the) harem, and the king."¹⁷⁸

On April 4, 2021, 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".¹⁷⁹

In UK, on December 22, 2020, **the Daily Telegraph and Daily Mail, British newspapers**, had accepted the ruling of the UK Independent Press Standards Organization (IPSO) that they had published misleading

headlines which falsely accused Pakistan of importing Corona cases to the UK and been responsible to half of the cases. The story was first published on July 26, 2020, by the Telegraph newspaper headlined “Exclusive: Half of Britain’s imported coronavirus cases originate from Pakistan” and the republished by Daily Mail (Pakistan was the origin for HALF of Britain’s imported coronavirus cases), and several other papers. The IPSO decision came following a complaint filed by the Centre for Media Monitoring (CfMM), associated with the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), that Mail Online, Daily Telegraph breached Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the Editors’ Code of Practice in the articles falsely accusing Pakistan of importing Corona cases to the UK. These articles had called for “tougher quarantine checks on arrivals from ‘high-risk’ countries” such as Pakistan. The papers claimed that half the incidents of imported infections were understood to have come from Pakistan since June 4, 2020, as data from Public Health England showed 30 cases. In the IPSO detailed decision published on November 26, 2020, the Committee found that the headline gave the strong and misleading impression that half of all Britain’s imported coronavirus cases for the pandemic as a whole had originated in Pakistan. The publication of the headline, said the IPSO, “amounted to a clear failure by the newspaper to take care not to publish misleading or distorted information, raising a breach of Clause 1(Accuracy) of the Editors Code.” In compliance to the decision, Mail Online said: “The headline to this article has been amended since publication to make clear that the number of imported cases of COVID-19 from Pakistan into Britain related to the month of June.” Also, Daily Telegraph tweeted: “Our tweets 26/6 “Pakistan origin of half of Britain’s imported virus cases was misleading as it suggested that half of all the UK imported cases originated in Pakistan, in fact, the figures only related to the period 4-26/6”. 180

On April 1, 2021, 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.” 181

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 on to 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 worked 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”. 182

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. 183

A man who stated “I hate Islam” and branded it a “scummy race” had been called out by passers-by and those lived in Sheffield as he spouted his ignorant beliefs in the street. The video, uploaded onto Instagram on June 11, had amassed 16,000 views. It was claimed that shortly before it was recorded, he shouted “I hate all p***s”. The woman reacted and said: “It’s like me saying I don’t like all white people because one called me a n*****.”

“You don’t know every single Pakistani person to be saying you hate them all. It’s disgusting.” He replied by saying: “I hate Islam then. What a scummy race.” The woman added: “It’s not a race. It’s a religion.” 184

An A4 leaflet, found in the Crookes suburb of the city, contained racial epithets and homophobic slurs while it called for a white supremacist “summer of violence” and a “national hate month”. The despicable message appeared on a piece of paper torn from a notepad in what appeared to be wax crayon or marker pen, with hate written in red and the harmful and hateful slurs written in purple. In a joint statement, Crookes’ three city councillors – Ruth Milsom, Mohammed Mahroof and Tim Huggan – condemned the letter and said it “does not speak for Crookes”. Hate speech action group TellMAMA, reported the letter to South Yorkshire Police after it was discovered on July 4. 185

One of Scotland’s best known tabloid newspapers had started an investigation after reporters were accused of using “hate speech” on social media. The Daily Record had confirmed that it was looking into claims that journalists used offensive and discriminatory language on Twitter. The newspaper ran a front-page story the week before which disclosed that members of the Heart and Hand football podcast, an official media partner of Rangers FC, had used anti-Catholic and sectarian language in the past. In response Rangers supporters compiled a dossier which contained distasteful comments allegedly made by Daily Record staff members. In one tweet it was claimed that one journalist made an obscene comment about the Prophet Muhammad and also tweeted: “Where are the IRA when you need them?” alongside an image of the 2014 Commonwealth Games opening ceremony in Glasgow. In a statement, the Daily Record said: “A number of historical tweets from some of our writers have come to our attention. The Daily Record takes any claims of discrimination or hate speech very seriously and we have launched a full investigation into the matter.” 186

In Germany, **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, 2021. “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. 187

Germany’s Federal Criminal Police (BKA) accused **the messenger app Telegram** of failing to respond to requests to delete far-right content, according to a report by the German newspaper Die Welt on January 17, 2022. A police official said Telegram had hardly cooperated with police requests and advocated flooding the provider with removal or data requests as a means to ramp up the pressure. The Telegram company, “largely does not comply with requests to delete right-wing extremist content,” the BKA said. Uneven enforcement of rules Telegram had tended to delete propaganda related to Islamist terror groups such as the so-called Islamic State and al-Qaeda, often without request. However, when it came to right-wing and conspiracy theorist content in Germany, such as QAnon groups, “it does not appear to be the case that Telegram intervenes and blocks groups or channels of this kind of its own accord,” the BKA said. 188

In The Occupied Palestinian Territory, on May 18, 2021, **Israel’s official Arabic Twitter account** mocked Muslims where they shared pictures of the Gaza bombing with verses of Surah Al-Fil (The Chapter of The Elephants) to justify the brutal action against the civilians in Palestine. The tweet featured Surah Al-Fil from the holy Quran, which refers to God’s punishment inflicted on the People of the Elephant, who tried to destroy the Holy Kaaba centuries ago. Israel Arabic had replied to their own Tweet, @

IsraelArabic said, “This is a reminder of God’s ability to support those who are righteous over falsehood, especially since Hamas is the arm of Iran that seeks to ignite the region. The IDF targets Hamas terrorist targets in Gaza.” The Israeli tweet had drawn enormous backlash from around the world, in which people denounced the Israelis for mocking the holy Quran. 189

In India, **a video** had been viewed tens of thousands of times on Facebook and Twitter alongside a claim it showed crowds of Indian Muslims gathered during Ramadan in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad. The posts were circulated online as India endured a huge second wave of coronavirus cases that had partly been blamed on large religious gatherings. But the video had been shared in the wrong context: it actually showed Muslims mourning the death of a cleric in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The video was shared on Facebook on April 18. It had been viewed more than 13,000 times. The post claimed the video showed Indian Muslims gathered for Iftar. The post’s Hindi-language caption translated to English as: “The people should also see this Iftar feast if they are done with spreading knowledge over Kumbh”. 190

As the Uttar Pradesh election was getting closer, TV news channels were getting ready to attract the viewer’s attention. According to newslaundry, the assumption was that the viewers wanted to watch Hindus who were screeching “Hum khatre mein hai” – “we are in danger” – and Muslims been blamed for it. The Indian media watchdog said, Zee News made one such attempt on their 5 pm “debate” programme Taal Thok Ke, which indicated that Muslims wanted to produce many children in an effort to take the country backward. 191

Delhi Police on July 10, 2021, said they were investigating online harassment which involved hundreds of Muslim women, who were put up “for sale” on a now-defunct app and website titled “Sulli Deals,” many of whom also received rape and death threats. The women, who were active on social media platforms such as Twitter, found their profile pictures displayed on GitHub, a web platform that hosted the open-source app, as the “Sulli

Deal of the day,” where it offered people the chance to “bid” on them in a mock auction. GitHub immediately shut down the website for “violating its policies,” but several of the women said the app’s purpose was to degrade and humiliate them. The term “sulli” was a derogatory slur for Muslim women in India, commonly used by Hindu nationalists. 192

On August 8, 2021, a **video went viral** which showed a mob who raised provocative anti-Muslim slogans in Delhi. As per a report by the Indian Express, a rally was called by Supreme Court lawyer and former Delhi BJP spokesperson Ashwini Upadhyay, inflammatory, anti-Muslim slogans were allegedly raised at Jantar Mantar during a march “against Colonial-era laws” in the country. In the video, a mob could be seen chanting slogans like, “Jab mulle kaate jayenge, Ram-Ram chillayenge (Muslims will chant Ram-Ram when they will be slaughtered).” Another slogan raised was “Hindustan me rehna hoga, Jai Shree Ram kehna hoga (You will have to chant Jai Shree Ram if you want to live in India).” 193

A **social studies study material** meant for class 8 students in Telangana had come under severe criticism for portraying the image of a terrorist holding a gun in one hand and the Quran in the other. The image was part of a series of other images presented in a chapter titled ‘National Movement – the last phase 1919-1947’. While the remaining images portrayed Indian freedom fighters like Gandhi and Nehru as resisting the British empire’s rule. The image of the “terrorist” not only did not fit in with the rest of the chapter but also cunningly clubbed Islam and terrorism as one and the same. This is made worse by the fact that the front of the study material reads “prepared as per government revised textbook.” A student activist from Hyderabad, Shaikh Aslam who was the first to point this out from his sibling’s book said that this humiliates the Muslim students, teachers, and the community, and also would lead to the destruction of unity and integrity of the country. Further, he demanded immediate action against those who had written and approved this book. The study material in question had been published by VGS publishers who prepared the same based on recommendations given by the state government. State president of Students Islamic Organization

(SIO), Dr Talha Fayazuddin also released his statement on the issue on September 25 and said that the 8th class, social studies textbook, is creating and propagating stereotypical and hateful views towards a specific community. Showing a person holding a “gun” in his right hand and the Holy Quran in the left hand is discriminatory and hateful content which destroys harmony, unity, and integrity of the society,” he stated. 194

Facebook was well aware of incendiary anti-Muslim narratives been promoted on the platform in India, whistleblower and former Facebook employee Frances Haugen told United States authorities, *The Wire* reported. Haugen also cited internal company documents referred to “fear-mongering content” promoted by “Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh users, groups and pages”. She claimed that “political considerations” prevented Facebook from providing a designation to “this group”, in what seems to refer to the possibility of increased monitoring of RSS-related content. Haugen referred to internal records on hateful content which targeted Muslims in India. “There were a number of dehumanizing posts comparing Muslims to ‘pigs’ and ‘dogs’ and misinformation claiming the Quran calls for men to rape their female family members,” she quoted a company document as saying. The document reportedly stated that no action was taken against much of those content as the company lacked “Hindi and Bengali classifiers”. Classifiers referred to algorithms that detect hate speech. Haugen, through her lawyers, had filed at least eight complaints against Facebook with the US’ Securities and Exchange Commission, CBS News reported. The complaints were related to “making material misrepresentations and omissions in statements” to investors through filings with the SEC, testimonies to the US Congress, online statements and media articles. She reportedly based her complaints on tens of thousands of documents that she secretly copied before she left Facebook in May 2021. At least four of the complaints contained references to India, according to *The Wire*. 195

Videos of **Hindu religious leaders in India** in which they called for genocide against Muslims had sparked outrage and prompted demands for action. A speaker at the gathering told the crowd that people should not worry about

going to jail for killing Muslims, according to a video that went viral. “Even if just a hundred of us become soldiers and kill two million of them, we will be victorious ... If you stand with this attitude only then will you able to protect ‘sanatana dharma’ [an absolute form of Hinduism],” the woman said. The meeting was attended by at least one member of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The woman in the video reportedly added that Indians should “pray to Nathuram Godse”, the Hindu hardliner who assassinated Indian independence icon Mahatma Gandhi in 1948. Another delegate, Prabodhanand Giri – the head of a hardline Hindu group who was often photographed with senior BJP members – called for a “cleansing” and for those present to be “ready to die or kill”. “Like Myanmar, the police, politicians, the army and every Hindu in India must pick up weapons and do this cleansing. There is no other option left,” he said. A third speaker said that he wished he had killed Modi’s predecessor, the main opposition Congress party’s Manmohan Singh, who was the first Sikh prime minister of India. Another said he had asked hotels from his state not to allow Christmas celebrations. The statement was met with cheers from the audience. The BJP denied accusations that their agenda was to turn officially secular and pluralistic India into a purely Hindu nation. Indian police said, on 24 December 2021, they had launched a hate-speech investigation into the event in Haridwar, in northern Uttarakhand state, in which participants called for the mass killings and use of weapons against Muslims. 196

Defamation of Veil, Hijab, and Burqa

Defamation means making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them. Meanwhile, veil, hijab, and burqa are commonly used to refer to a head dress, covering, or scarf that Muslim women use in such a way that no part of their hair is visible in public, which is in keeping with the regulations and faith within the Islamic teaching concerning modesty. Too often, those kind of Muslim women costumes are not recognized as one of the dress codes, provoking criticism, negative sentiment and intolerant attitudes against the use of such dresses by Muslim women in public space. A series of ‘Islamophobia’ manifested through defamation of veil, hijab, and burqa have been monitored by the Observatory during the past 14-months.

In US on April 1, 2021, **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.” 197

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 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. 198

On September 1, 2021, **the Atlanta Journal-Constitution** published a cartoon which depicted two women in black burqas with a speech bubble above them that read: “Pray for Texas women ...” An Arizona Republic opinion column made the case that the new law — which baned abortions as early as six weeks into a pregnancy — “seems to have less to do with the U.S. constitution than with Sharia law.” The headline declared: “Texas goes Taliban on abortion rights. Is Arizona next?” 199

On January 29, 2021, **French far-right leader Marine Le Pen** had proposed a ban on Muslim headscarves in all public places. “I consider that the headscarf is an Islamist item of clothing,” Le Pen told reporters at a press conference where she proposed a new law to ban “Islamist ideologies” which she called “totalitarian and murderous.” Since taking over from her father, Le Pen had unsuccessfully run twice for the French presidency, However latest polls showed her closer than ever to the presidency. The

poll conducted online by Harris Interactive suggested that if a final-round presidential run-off were held today Le Pen would secure 48 percent while Macron would be re-elected with 52 percent, Le Parisien newspaper reported. The margin, the narrowest ever recorded, had set off alarm bells in the French political mainstream as the dual health and economic crises caused by the coronavirus pandemic sweep across the country. Jean-Yves Camus, a French political scientist specialised in the far-right said Le Pen was benefiting from frustration and anger over the pandemic, with France on the verge of a third lockdown, but also the beheading of a French school teacher by an Islamist in October 2020. “It had a major impact on public opinion,” the expert from the Jean-Jaures Foundation told AFP. “And in this area, Marine Le Pen has an advantage: her party is well known for its position denouncing Islamism.” 200

The French parliament debate on the draft “separatism bill” had sparked criticism in France, dividing parliamentarians on the question of the face veil and whether to include amendments to ban university students from wearing a veil on school premises. On January 19, 2021, several lawmakers had considered the move counterproductive and said it would alienate the Muslim community. Sacha Houlié, a member of President Emmanuel Macron’s centrist liberal La République En Marche party, warned that prohibiting students and parents from public services and school trips, and preventing their participation in cultural and sporting activities would “be totally counterproductive in relation to the very objective of this text which fought against the separatists” and “would refer these people to their identity” so they “would favor the community withdrawal.” Boris Vallaud, a member of the Socialist Party, also reacted: “Students are users of the public service; this secularism does not apply to them.” “To ban the veil at a university would be to say that all women who wear the veil pose a problem, which would mean we consider that it is Islam which poses a problem,” said Pierre Yves Bournazel, an Act Together party member representing Paris. A 2004 law had prohibited the open display of religious symbols in all French schools, but it was not applied to universities. 201

On March 30, 2021, 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. 202

On January 18, 2022, **the French Senate had voted to ban sports players wearing headscarves** during competitions, a move politicians said was taken in the interests of religious neutrality. The contentious decision, opposed by the French government, was approved by 160 votes to 143 in the upper house of parliament. Prior to the vote, senators from the right-wing Les Republicains party had amended the proposed legislation, which initially concerned “religious symbols”, to explicitly mention “the wearing of the veil”. “Today, there is legal uncertainty about the wearing of religious symbols, and it is necessary for the state to clearly define the rules ... If the wearing of the veil is not explicitly forbidden, we could see the emergence of community sports clubs promoting certain religious signs,” the amendment read.²⁰³

Dawn Maqsood, a Scottish mother, who converted to Islam 12 years before, had told Dailyrecord how she stopped wearing her Hijab headscarf due to everyday Islamophobia. Mrs Maqsood said she was “mentally worn down” by people’s attitude to her and the fear that her daughters would be affected. She said: “I wore hijab for two years and in that time I was mentally worn down by the way people treated me... I was anxious for my daughters that something would happen when I was out with them

and it started to wear on my mental health. Hijab was not created to be a burden upon us so I decided after a lot of soul searching to stop wearing it although I hope to go back to it one day”. Immediately after she had started wearing hijab she had noticed a change in people’s behavior toward her, she described how “People don’t hold the door for you, they don’t help you in the supermarket when you’ve dropped something on the floor, you don’t get the same friendly customer service as the non-Muslim person in front of you in the queue.” She also observed the negative “assumptions that my husband had forced me to wear it and I must somehow be oppressed”. 204

In UK, **the parents of Siham Hamud**, a 12 Year old Muslim girl, had been threatened with court action because their daughter had refused to wear a knee-length skirt to school. Siham had been wearing an ankle-length skirt to school for years but teachers allegedly told her it was incorrect school uniform on December 2020. Her father Idris Hamud, said she was sent home from Uxbridge High School, in London, to change every day in December 2020, and told to come back wearing the correct uniform. But she refused because it was “against her religious beliefs,” he said. The School said girls should wear black trousers or a black pleated skirt from official uniform suppliers - which the family claims falls above the knee. The school had sent Mr. Hamud a letter threatening legal action over “unauthorised absences” as a result of Siham being sent home from school. Siham, who had been studying from home because of coronavirus lockdown restrictions, said: “It feels like bullying because of what I believe ... I feel confused and annoyed that I can’t wear what I want for my religion. Mr. Hamud said the issue would be discussed by a complaints panel with school governors. The school’s principal, Nigel Clemens, said: “This matter is currently subject to examination through the formal school complaints policy. It would therefore not be appropriate to comment further at this time.” 205

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. ²⁰⁶

In Netherlands, on January 9, 2021, **the Freedom Party (PVV)** had presented its program for the country's general election scheduled for March 17. The party's points of view were explained in over 50 pages. In the preface, the party leader Geert Wilders wrote that he would like to return to "a country without headscarves, but with traditional Dutch coziness, such as the Sinterklaas tradition with Zwarte Piet." The PVV manifesto said it would "de-Islamize" the Netherlands. Among other things, PVV election program said it would stop the spread of "Islamic ideology." The party would close the borders to "fortune seekers and immigrants from Islamic countries." There would be a "Ministry of Immigration, Remigration, and De-Islamization," and people with dual nationality would no longer have the right to vote, argued the election program. Temporary asylum permits for Syrian refugees would be withdrawn. The party also said it would "take control of our own money" and leave the European Union. Public broadcasting would also be abolished, said the party. ²⁰⁷

On May 7, 2021, **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. ²⁰⁸

On January 22, 2021, a voter survey had revealed that, **majority of Swiss voters favored the introduction of "burqa ban"**, ahead of a referendum on the issue in March. Tamedia poll of 15,000 eligible voters showed that 63 percent of those questioned would vote yes or were considering voting yes in an upcoming popular vote on the ban, the Tages Anzeiger daily reported. The Swiss were set to vote on whether they want to ban face coverings in public on March 7, as part of the country's famous direct democratic system. The text, which had not mention Muslim veils explicitly, stated that 'no one shall cover their face in public, nor in areas accessible to the public or in areas where services are ordinarily accessible to all.' However, the proposed ban, which had been opposed by the Swiss government, was widely seen as targeting burqas and other face-covering Muslim veils. ²⁰⁹ On March 7, **Switzerland had narrowly voted in favour of banning face coverings in public**, including the burka or niqab worn by Muslim women. The official referendum results showed the measure had passed by 51.2% to 48.8%. The proposal was put forward by the right-wing Swiss People's

Party (SVP) which campaigned with slogans such as “Stop extremism”. The Central Council of Muslims said in a statement, that it would challenge the decision in court. The Swiss government had argued against the ban, in which they said it was not up to the state to dictate what women wear. According to research by the University of Lucerne (in German), almost no-one in Switzerland wears a burka and only around 30 women wear the niqab. Ahead of the vote, Walter Wobmann, chairman of the referendum committee and an SVP lawmaker, described Muslim face coverings as “a symbol for this extreme, political Islam which has become increasingly prominent in Europe and which has no place in Switzerland ... In Switzerland our tradition is that you show your face. That is a sign of our basic freedoms,” he said. 210

In India, on March 24, 2021, **Uttar Pradesh Minister Anand Swarup Shukla** said Muslim women would be “freed” from the practice of wearing ‘burqa’, which he described as an evil custom and compared it to the banned triple talaq. This came a day after Shukla wrote to the Ballia district magistrate, complaining that he was facing difficulties in discharge of his duties due to loudspeakers at mosques and said their volume should be fixed according to the court orders. “Muslim women will be freed from ‘burqa’ like triple talaq. There will come a time when they will get rid of it.” Shukla told reporters. Shukla, the Uttar Pradesh Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs minister, said “burqa is inhuman and evil custom” and added that those with progressive thinking were shunning it and not pressing for its use.²¹¹

Six students were denied entry into classes by college authorities in Udipi district, located around 400 km from Bengaluru, for wearing hijabs. The incident took place at the government pre-university college for women. On January 1, 2021 the parents of these students along with activists held a protest against the authorities for not allowing the students inside the class for three days. College principal Rudra Gowda said the students could wear hijabs on the school premises, but not inside the classrooms. The rule was being followed to ensure uniformity in classrooms, he said. 212

On February 25, 2021, **Sri Lanka Government** announced that they were considering enforcing a ban on the burqa. Mr. Ali Sabry, Justice Minister said that Government was looking to ban full face coverings in public places. He insisted that the move was not an attempt to target any community but was in the best interest of National security. Emergency regulations were enforced following the Easter Sunday attacks in April 2019 imposing a ban on clothing that conceals the face. Human rights groups had raised concerns, Dinushika Dissanayake, Amnesty International’s Deputy South Asia Director, said at the time, imposing a ban that effectively targets women wearing a face veil for religious reasons risks stigmatizing them. 213

On March 16, 2021, **Sri Lanka Government** said it would take time to consider a proposed ban on the wearing of burqas, which a top security official called a sign of religious extremism. Sri Lanka’s minister of public security, Sarath Weerasekera, said on March 13, he was seeking Cabinet approval to ban burqas. A move he said would have a direct impact on national security. However, government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said a ban was a serious decision requiring consultation and consensus. “It will be done in consultation. So, it requires time,” he said during the weekly media briefing.²¹⁴

On April 27, 2021, **Sri Lanka’s cabinet** had approved a proposed ban on women to wear full-face veils, which included Muslim burqas in public. The cabinet had cited national security grounds, despite a United Nations expert’s comment that it would violate international law. The cabinet approved the proposal by Public Security Minister Sarath Weerasekera at the weekly meeting, Weerasekera said on his Facebook page. The proposal would first be sent to the Attorney General’s Department and followed by the parliament’s approval to become a law. The proposal could easily be passed as the government held a majority in parliament. Weerasekera, had called burqas, a garment that covers the body and face worn by some Muslim women, a “sign of religious extremism” and said a ban would improve national security. The UN special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief Ahmed Shaheed tweeted that a ban would be incompatible with international law and the right to free religious expression. 215

In New Zealand, **Primary school teacher Mazlinah binte Haji Mohamad Noor** never thought she would struggle to find work when she moved to Wellington in 2017 - especially when New Zealand was facing a teacher shortage. But after she applied for more than 200 roles, Mazlinah, had little interest from employers and managed to only get five interviews and no offer of a permanent job. Her husband David Blocksidge, got her to ask schools for the reasons for not been shortlisted - and concluded the responses show “a toxic mix of institutional bias, Islamophobia and unconscious bias”. Mazlinah, a Muslim who wore hijab, said at one school the interviewer rolled her eyes when she walked in and before she could even say a word. “I tried to stay calm and professional, but I was feeling ‘what’s the point’. I am already being judged by my name and what I wear, and I’m not going to make it again,” she said. Originally from Singapore, Mazlinah taught primary school students aged between 7 and 12 for nearly 20 years and was the school’s art coordinator, before she moved to Auckland at a time of reported teacher shortages in 2009. 216

POLLING AND REPORT

There have been a significant number of reports released by credible institutions in different countries, displaying the facts that anti-Islam sentiments had bolstered almost everywhere across the world. The Observatory highlighted some of those reports, which are presented here in a brief manner, as evidence of the continuing trend of Islamophobia at the global level.

United Nations

The UN, for instance on March 4, had warned the UN Human Rights Council that institutional islamophobia was reaching epidemic levels. The UN expert Ahmed Shaheed presented his annual report to the rights council as part of his role as the UN's Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. The report cited European surveys in 2018 and 2019 that showed that nearly four in 10 people held unfavorable views about Muslims. He said that States had responded to security threats "by adopting measures which disproportionately target Muslims and define Muslims as both high risk and at risk of radicalization". The expert said that "Islamophobic" discrimination and hostility were often intersectional, such as where "Muslim women may face a 'triple penalty' as women, minority ethnic and Muslim...Harmful stereotypes and tropes about Muslims and Islam are chronically reinforced by mainstream media, powerful politicians, influencers of popular culture and in academic discourse. 217

United States

On November 16, 2020, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released its annual report on hate crime statistics for 2019. According to the Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council (MJAC), the report grossly underestimated the number of hate crimes, as participation by local law enforcement agencies in the FBI's hate crime data collection system was not mandatory. MJAC noted that the Hate Crimes Statistics report showed 7,314 hate crime incidents in 2019, up slightly from the 7,120 incidents reported in 2018. MJAC Co-chair Stanley Bergman, said: "Muslims and Jews across America

remain primary targets of crimes motivated by sheer hatred, but no ethnic or faith group is immune ...The persistence of and continuing increase in hate crimes demands urgent attention and action.” MJAC called on the U.S. Congress to pass the Jabara-Heyer National Opposition to Hate, Assaults, and Threats to Equality (NO HATE) Act. The measure would incentivize state and local law enforcement authorities to improve hate crime reporting by making grants available, to be managed through the Department of Justice. It would also amend the penalties for hate crimes to allow courts to require offenders to undertake educational classes or community service related to the victim’s community as a condition of release. 218

On February 1, 2021, the Southern Poverty Law Center released its annual report titled “Year in Hate and Extremism”, in which they said that the number of active hate groups in the U.S. had declined as far-right extremists migrated further to online networks. SPLC had identified 838 active hate groups operating across the U.S. in 2020, a decrease from the 940 documented in 2019 and the record-high of 1,020 in 2018. “It is important to understand that the number of hate groups is merely one metric for measuring the level of hate and racism in America, and that the decline in groups should not be interpreted as a reduction in bigoted beliefs and actions motivated by hate,” said the report. Many hate groups had moved to social media platforms and use of encrypted apps, while others had been banned altogether from mainstream social media networks. The report added, white nationalist organizations, declined on 2020 from 155 to 128, while they had seen huge growth the previous two years after being energized by Donald Trump’s campaign and presidency. The number of anti-Muslim hate groups remained largely stable, while their in-person organizing was hampered by the coronavirus pandemic. Margaret Huang, SPLC President and CEO, told the Associated Press, that the levels of hate and bigotry in America had not diminished, he said “What’s important is that we start to reckon with all the reasons why those groups have persisted for so long and been able to get so much influence in the last White House, that they actually feel emboldened.” In their recommendation, SPLC had called for establishing offices within the Department of Homeland Security,

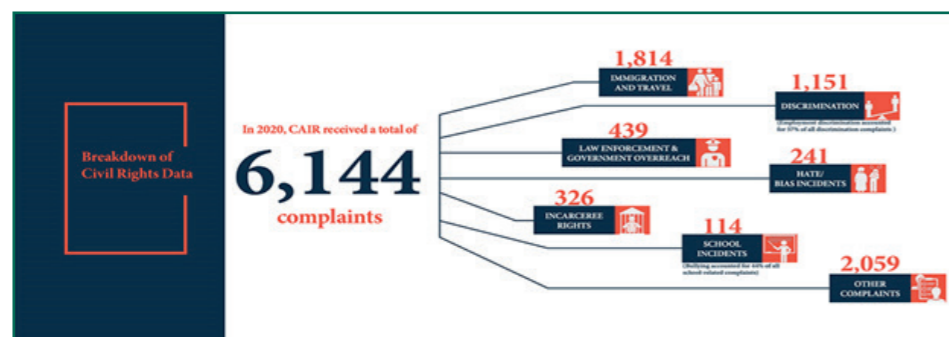
the Justice Department and the FBI to monitor, investigate and prosecute cases of domestic terrorism. It also urged improving federal hate crime data collection, training, and prevention; and for enacting federal legislation that shifts funding away from punishment models and toward preventing violent extremism. 219

U.S. far-right and white supremacist groups sharply stepped up their distribution of racist or anti-Semitic fliers, posters banners and other forms of physical propaganda in 2020, according to a study released on March 17. The Anti-Defamation League said it logged a total of 5,125 cases in 2020, compared with 2,724 in 2019. Its study focused on paper propaganda and signs, not online messages. The tally was the highest since the ADL, which monitors the activities of domestic and international hate groups, began tracking such materials in 2016. While the materials surveyed came from 30 different organizations, the most prolific was the Texas-based Patriot Front, which ADL said was behind 80% of all the incidents. Formed in 2017, the group sought to build its “brand” last year by avoiding white supremacist language and symbols, instead favoring phrases such as “America First,” “United we stand,” and “Two Parties. One Tyranny”, ADL said. 220

On April 12, 2021, 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.” 221

On April 26, 2021, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), had published a report on the civil rights of American Muslims, which noted a rise in complaints about bias directed at the American Muslims. The report detailed incidents that the nation’s largest Muslim advocacy organization had addressed over the year 2020. The report, titled “Resilience in the Face of Hate: Civil Rights Report 2021,” found a 9% increase in complaints in 2020, even as hate crimes fell by 20%. The authors gave no reason for the increase in complaints but suggested that the decrease in hate crimes was due indirectly to COVID-19 lockdowns that kept people at home. The report detailed 6,144 civil rights complaints that CAIR received, either at its national headquarters in Washington, D.C., or through the organization’s affiliates around the nation, in 2020. CAIR identified seven categories of complaint: Besides immigration and travel issues, the organization



tracked law enforcement surveillance and overreach issues, prisoner rights issues, incidents involving educational facilities, outright discrimination, hate and bias incidents, and “other” incidents. Of the more than 6,000 complaints, 2,069 incidents were classified as “other,” which indicated the amorphous nature of anti-Muslim hate and discriminatory practices.

Examples given in the report ranged from overt acts of bias, such as an Oklahoma business that put up a sign saying it would not serve Muslims, to more subtle incidents in which Muslims received unexpected delays or other disruptions in business or public service transactions. Some 1,814 complaints regarded immigration and travel-related issues; discrimination — more than half of which was reported as employment discrimination — accounted for 1,151. Those included incidents at some of the nation’s largest employers, such as Walmart and McDonald’s franchises. Other incidents ranged from individuals being denied access to concealed weapons licenses to multiple examples of a denial of religious accommodation for Muslim inmates held in various county- and state-run correctional facilities. Of the 114 incidents related to educational institutions, some 44% involved incidents of bullying of employees or students. 222

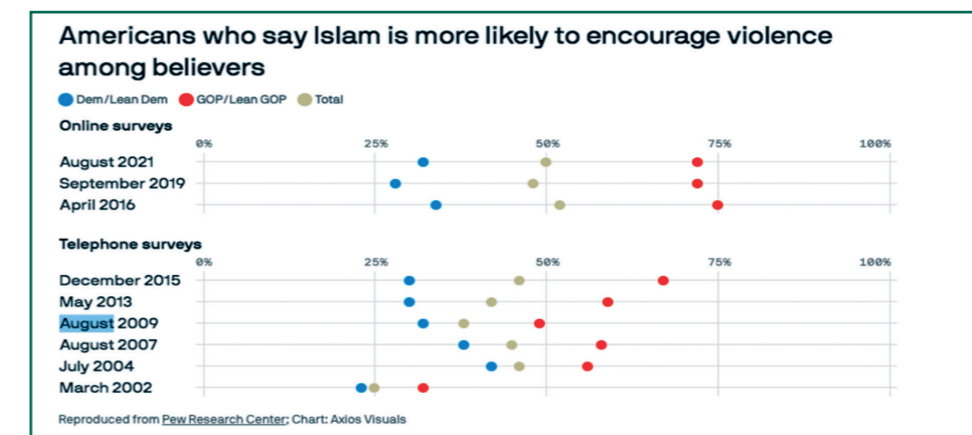
The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) said in a report released on May 4, 2021 that sixty percent of Muslim youths surveyed in Massachusetts reported been mocked, verbally harassed or physically abused because of their Islamic faith,. The Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization said about one-third of students also altered their appearance, behavior, or names to hide the fact that they were Muslim. In addition, about 17% reported other forms of physical harassment, which included their hijab been pulled. “The report demonstrates that we are in the midst of a crisis among Muslim youth in our state,” the organization said on its Facebook page. “We hope that it helps serve as a catalyst for urgently needed change by showing the full scale of the issue.” The organization said the results came from their first-ever survey of Islamophobia in Massachusetts public schools. The survey was modeled after similar ones conducted every two years by the organization’s California chapter. Between July 2019 and January 2020, nearly 200 public school students enrolled in grades 6 through 12 were surveyed in Massachusetts, according to the organization. One 14-year-old student living in the Boston-area said she stopped wearing her hijab after been harassed in high school. She said students spread rumors about her been in ISIS, and when she tried to report a student that called her a terrorist, she faced retaliation from students on the football team. Students

also shouted “Allahu akbar” at her in the cafeteria. A 13-year-old Boston-area Muslim student cited in the report said during a class assignment about building types, one of his classmates drew a picture of the World Trade Center towers and depicted him as one of the terrorists. Districts should require teachers and staff members to participate in cultural competency trainings, as some 40% of survey respondents said those school officials also made offensive comments about Islam or Muslims, the organization said.²²³

On July 21, The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) had released a mid-year report highlighting serious cases of anti-Muslim incidents that occurred in the United States during the first seven months of 2021. CAIR, typically published an annual report which track hate crimes and bias incidents. However, the organization decided to release a mid-year “snapshot report” because of a spike in May and June, Robert McCaw, CAIR’s government affairs director, told CNN. The report, highlighted 38 of the hundreds of anti-Muslim bias incidents documented by the organization this year, CAIR said in a news release. The incidents include hate crimes, harassment, school bullying, discrimination and hate speech. The report was based on incidents directly reported to CAIR’s national office and chapters across the United States, as well as the media. CAIR documented a spike in anti-Muslim incidents in May and June, which included four at mosques in May alone. Those cases involved vandalism, harassment towards women who wore hijab or headscarf and an attempted stabbing, Huzaifa Shahbaz, CAIR’s national research and advocacy coordinator, told CNN The spike coincided with renewed violence in the Middle East between Israelis and Palestinians. ²²⁴

According to a study published in the journal JAMA Network Open, when former US President Donald Trump issued an executive order in 2017 which banned Muslims from selected countries from travelling to the US, the decree quickly rippled down to affect health outcomes for Muslim-Americans. The researchers examined more than 250,000 adult patients treated at a Minneapolis-St. Paul HealthPartners primary care clinic or in emergency departments in 2016 and 2017. The researchers, indicated that a

significant number of people in the Muslim community in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area skipped their primary care appointments after the ban. There was also an increase in their visits to the emergency department, found the study. Before the ban, primary care visits and diagnoses of stress for individuals from Muslim-majority nations were on the rise, the researchers said. In the year which following the ban, however, there were approximately 101 missed primary care appointments beyond what would have been expected among people from Muslim majority countries not named in the ban. “This offers support to the thesis that the Islamophobia fostered by former President Trump affected the health of Muslim-Americans in the US and that immigration policies can have indirect and unexpected consequences for those targeted by such actions,” said researcher Gregg Gonsalves from the varsity. ²²⁵



Pew Research Center Published a report on September 2, 2021 found that in the 20 years since the September 11, 2001, Republicans — far more than Democrats — had increasingly come to view Islam as more likely than other religions to encourage violence among believers. According to the research, Muslims had continued to face bias and discrimination in the U.S. two decades after 9/11, and those negative biases had become increasingly partisan. As of August 2021, seven in 10 Republicans associated Islam with violence. While only about one-third of Democrats thought the same way, they were still more likely to think of Islam as encouraging violence than in early 2002. In a September 2001 survey, 28% of adults said they had grown more suspicious of people of Middle Eastern descent; that grew to 36% less

than a year later. Republicans, in particular, increasingly came to associate Muslims and Islam with violence. In 2002, just a quarter of Americans – including 32% of Republicans and 23% of Democrats – said Islam was more likely than other religions to encourage violence among its believers. About twice as many (51%) said it was not. But within the next few years, most Republicans and GOP leaners said Islam was more likely than other religions to encourage violence. Today, 72% of Republicans express this view, according to an August 2021 survey. Democrats consistently had been far less likely than Republicans to associate Islam with violence. In the Center’s latest survey, 32% of Democrats said this. Still, Democrats were somewhat more likely to say this today than they have been in recent years: In 2019, 28% of Democrats said Islam was more likely than other religions to encourage violence among its believers than other religions. ²²⁶

On September 29, 2021 the Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley had released a survey which found that nearly 68% of Muslims in the United States had experienced bias, hate or exclusion — forms of Islamophobia. For women, the numbers were especially staggering. Nearly 77% of Muslim women responded that they had faced some form of anti-Islamic prejudice, compared with 58.6% of men. The survey also found that 93.7% of respondents said Islamophobia affects their emotional and mental well-being. ²²⁷

The Southern Poverty Law Center released a groundbreaking report on September 27, 2021, which exposed the origins and growth of the far-right podcast ecosystem over the past decade. The series was the first investigative report on the SPLC’s new TechWatch, a resource that tracked the role technology played in perpetuating hate. The investigative series on TechWatch also examined the extremists and groups that used this technology to create and expand their networks of hate. “For years, far-right extremists and hate groups have increasingly used technology to spread dangerous messaging, raise money, expand their membership and audience and even coordinate violence,... This new resource seeks to expose the various ways these groups use all sorts of tech platforms....Despite constant warnings

to tech companies about the dangers of these groups, more often than not, companies have put profits over the public good. Our hope is resources like this will shine light into dark corners of the web and help propel action by the companies, the public and even Congress to address this dire situation.” said Susan Corke, director of the SPLC’s Intelligence Project.²²⁸

According to its ‘2021 Bullying Report’ by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Muslim-American community continued facing hate in California classrooms. The biennial study evaluated the school climate for California Muslim students between the ages of 11 and 18. The survey distributed between January 2021 to August 2021 asking Muslim students statewide about their experiences with bullying and Islamophobia. Around 700 students participated in the survey, including 34 from Fresno, Madera, Tulare and Merced counties. Nearly 50% reported being bullied, compared to 40% in 2019. More than half said they felt unsafe. According to the 2021 and 2019 surveys, Muslim students in California were bullied at more than twice the reported national average of 20%. ²²⁹

Hate crimes surged a shocking 96 percent in New York City throughout 2021, a data from the New York Police Department (NYPD) had revealed, as Manhattan’s District Attorney Alvin Bragg announced on January 21, 2022, that he would be expanding the hate crimes unit to address radically motivated attacks. Despite ‘religious’ hate crimes decreasing overall, Muslims and Jews did see an increase of 180 and 54 percent from 2020 to 2021, respectively. Asian hate crimes skyrocketed 343 percent from 2020 to 2021 as the pandemic rattled on, with 133 Asian Americans experienced dangerous experiences of discrimination, according to the new data, which was first reported by Fox News. Overall, the City saw a 96 percent increase in bias crimes throughout 2021, as more and more New Yorkers were been attacked in the streets, pushed onto subway tracks, and harassed for their gender, race and religion. Hispanic hate crimes were also up a 700 percent the year before with a total of eight people been harassed or harmed in 2021, up from one in 2020. A total of 538 hate crimes occurred throughout 2021, compared to 275 in 2020. ²³⁰

On January 11, 2022, a report published by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) revealed that organizations deemed Islamophobic received more than \$105 million in donations from U.S. charities between 2017 and 2019. CAIR said in the report titled “Islamophobia in the Mainstream” that it studied the tax records of 50 organizations it had previously identified as the largest funders of anti-Muslim causes, and found that 35 of them were the source of a total of \$105 million directed at such groups. ²³¹

Canada

On October 15, 2021, the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) said in a report that aggression against Canadian Muslims accelerated after the 9/11 attacks al-Qaeda terrorists carried out 20 years before. The hate increased in the years immediately following the World Trade Center attack and had slowly grown since, with Statistics Canada reporting that anti-Muslim attacks numbered 99 in 2014, up from 36 in 2009. In 2015, hate crimes ballooned to 159, a 60% jump, and in 2017 - the year of the Quebec City Mosque murders - incidents showed a dramatic increase, to 349, police reported. “It’s become systemic since then,” said Fatema Abdalla, communications coordinator for the NCCM, told Global News. “And what we’re seeing now is that not only is it growing, but it’s also evolving.” Also in 2015, former Conservative Party leader and Prime Minister Stephen Harper wanted to form a “barbaric cultural practices hotline” where Canadians could call to report disturbing rituals their neighbors were involved with. The idea, which many considered stemmed from anti-Muslim sentiment, died when Justin Trudeau won the election the same year, but Islamophobia survived. Then Quebec instituted a law which banned religious symbols from been worn by public servants, such as teachers, nurses, and police, in the workplace. ²³²

A web panel survey carried out by Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies on January 7-9, found 55 per cent of Quebecers were in favour of banning religious symbols being worn by public school teachers. That appears to be a drop from the results of a previous Leger survey published in September 2021 that found 64 per cent of Quebecers were in favour of

Bill 21, which applied to civil servants in positions of authority including judges, teachers, and police officers. Jack Jedwab, the president of the Association for Canadian Studies, said the shift in public opinion could be tied to recent debate on the issue, including the case of an elementary school teacher in western Quebec who was removed from her teaching position in December 2021 because her hijab contravenes the law. ²³³

Spain

On January 25, Spain’s Equality Ministry, stated in their 2020 report that racial and ethnic discrimination in Spain had worsened in the past few years, fuelled by far-right politicians and fake news. The report said religion-related discrimination had increased considerably, with North African and Indo-Pakistani communities hardest-hit as a result of the increased stigmatisation, Islamophobia and been likened to terrorists. “The media noise about squatters mean people associate North African, Latino and Sub-Saharan people with over-crowding and squatting,” said study coordinator Anabel Suso. “Racially-motivated hate speech against determined groups is surging, gaining traction through social media,” the report said. Without naming any particular party, the study said that far-right parties incited hate crimes and spread racial stereotypes and xenophobic attitudes which have gained momentum in the political debate. The ultranationalist, anti-immigrant Vox party became the third-largest force in parliament in late 2019. ²³⁴

France

On January 29, the National Observatory of Islamophobia, said that the number of Islamophobic incidents in France, rose sharply on 2020 amid controversy over the French government’s stance toward the religious minority. Abdallah Zekri, the head of the observatory said in a statement, there were 235 attacks on Muslims in France on 2020, up from 154 the previous year, a 53% jump. According to Zekri, most of the attacks took place in the Ile-de-France (greater Paris), Rhones-Alpes and Paca regions of the country. Attacks on mosques had also jumped 35% in the same year, Zekri added. Moreover, 70 threatening letters were sent to the headquarters of the French Council of Muslim Worship (CFCM) or its administrators on 2020. ²³⁵

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.²³⁶

According to ‘Le Monde’, Marine Le Pen would largely win the vote of 25-34 year olds. According to a file from Le Monde which revealed the figures of the Ipsos and IFOP institutes, 29% of 25-34 year olds would vote in 2022 for Marine Le Pen against 23% in 2017. The president of the RN, who was the favorite candidate of this age group, Emmanuel Macron, had fallen from 29% to 20%. But among the “first time voters”, the 18-24 year olds, the trend was reversed: the Head of State would win 29% of the votes, while Marine Le Pen would only reach 20%, i.e. the same height as the rest of the population. However, only 58% of the youngest citizens were intended to vote in 2022.²³⁷

According to the Ipsos Sopra Steria poll for France Television, the far-right looked set to win control of the regional authority encompassing Provence and the French Riviera in elections in June, which would show momentum was building behind Marine Le Pen. Le Pen’s party, led by former conservative minister Thierry Mariani would come top in all alliance scenarios, with between 37% and 39% of the votes in the first round on June 20. In the second round of voting on June 27, Mariani would also come first. The scenario in which all parties rallied behind the best-placed one to defeat the far-right, a strategy known as the ‘Republican front’, was not tested. The win of Provence-Alpes-Cote d’Azur region around Marseille and Nice, the first time the far-right would take control of a French region, would give Le Pen a strong boost ahead of 2022 presidential elections.²³⁸

A poll had revealed that as much as 60 per cent of the French police support populist National Rally (RN) leader Marine Le Pen for president ahead of 2022 presidential elections. The data, which was part of a survey published by the Centre for Political Research of Sciences Po (Cevipof), revealed that in the first round of the presidential election, a plurality of 44 per cent of police and soldiers would vote for Ms Le Pen. In a second-round run-off vote against current French President Emmanuel Macron, the amount of support from the military and the police would rise to 60 per cent, according to the figures, which were first published by the newspaper L’Opinion. The figures were a slight increase for Le Pen from her second-place finish in the 2017 presidential election, in which she scored 57 per cent of the vote from the military and police. When broken down by active and retired police officers, the difference was stark. While 51 per cent of retired police said they would vote for Le Pen, 74 per cent of active-duty police said they support the National Rally leader. Around half the police, 48 per cent, said they had a positive view of Le Pen and said she “understands the problems of people like us”, compared to just 13 per cent who said the same of President Macron. Forty-two per cent also state that Le Pen would do a better job than the current French president would.²³⁹

According to a human rights committee report issued on July 9, 2021, anti-Islam acts in France had increased by 52 per cent during 2020 compared with 2019. This came in report No.30 on racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, released by the French National Consultative Committee on Human Rights (CNCDDH). The report pointed out that 59 per cent of respondents to an online survey conducted on March “consider Islam a threat to French identity.” Meanwhile, 72 per cent of respondents expressed their belief that immigrants came to France only to benefit from social protection. The report indicated a 22 per cent decrease in racist acts during 2020, with 888 racist incidents been recorded. The report stated that anti-Semitic acts dropped by 51 per cent during 2020 compared with 2019, while anti-Islam acts increased by 52 per cent during the same period.²⁴⁰

French right-wing firebrand Eric Zemmour was rising in opinion polls ahead of France’s 2022 presidential election just as Marine Le Pen, head of the far-right National Rally party, was taking a hit. One poll published on

September 14 suggested controversial Zemmour, an author and TV pundit, would get 10 percent of the vote in a presidential election, compared with only 19 percent for the far-right candidate Marine Le Pen. The two-round system of the French presidential election would allow only the main two candidates to the runoff vote. Until now the populist National Rally candidate had been polling above 20 percent, often neck and neck with French President Emmanuel Macron in the first round of the election. According to the same poll, Zemmour, who was not yet officially a candidate, had overtaken opponents on the left, the Socialist candidate Anne Hidalgo at 7 percent and the Green hopeful Yannick Jadot also at 7 percent. ²⁴¹

A poll released on October 6 had suggested for the first time that far-right pundit Eric Zemmour would qualify for the second round of next year's presidential election and eclipse traditional far-right leader Marine Le Pen. Some 17-18 percent of voters told Harris Interactive polling they would vote for Zemmour in the first round, compared with 15-16 percent for Le Pen. This would mean he would advance to a second-round with President Emmanuel Macron, who was credited with 24-27 percent of voter intentions in the first round, set to be held on April 10th. The online poll of 1,310 people, was carried out on October 4 and published in *Challenges* magazine.²⁴²

A poll published in October 2021 showed that two thirds of French people believed white Christians were 'threatened with extinction' by Muslim migration, while sixty per cent of the people said such a scenario would 'definitely' or 'probably' play out in the country. The question was posed ahead of 2022 election, where Emmanuel Macron would face off against one of two right-wing candidates: Marine Le Pen or Eric Zemmour. The poll was conducted to test belief in the idea of a 'Grand Replacement', a concept touted by Eric Zemmour. Central to Zemmour's ideology in the idea of 'The Great Replacement', a theory put forward by Renaud Camus that argues Christian civilisation was intentionally replaced using Muslim immigration from Africa in a plot by global capitalists. The poll, carried out by Harris Interactive, aimed to test whether or not voters believe in the concept - despite it being widely panned by experts. The question voters

were asked, based on Camus's definition, was: 'Some people speak of the "great replacement": That European, white and Christian populations were being threatened with extinction following Muslim immigration, coming from the Maghreb [northern Africa] and black Africa. Do you see such a phenomenon?' It found that 61 per cent of French people believed the phenomenon could happen in France, with 27 per cent saying they were 'certain' it would take place. Just 39 per cent of people said it 'probably' or 'definitely' would not happen. A follow-up question asked whether French people were 'worried' or 'not worried' about the idea of a 'Great Replacement'. This found even more people - 67 per cent - were worried about the idea, compared to just 33 per cent who were not.²⁴³

The far-right pundit had jumped to second place in polls ahead of April's French presidential election. French President Emmanuel Macron's main challenger in April 2022 presidential election might not be lawyer Marine Le Pen, as firebrand political pundit Eric Zemmour cemented his position just behind Macron in recent polls. Zemmour was the choice of roughly 18 percent of French voters, according to the latest Harris Interactive poll, at least three percentage points ahead of Le Pen but behind Macron at 23 percent. In polling matchups for a second runoff, Macron still beat all challengers. Zemmour, an author and columnist for French newspaper *Le Figaro*, a media figure lamenting the West's supposed decline, while possessing a well-honed understanding of where the media's power began and ended. Benjamin Haddad of the Europe Center at the Atlantic Council, noted that although Zemmour had embraced modern techniques to keep hold of the spotlight—constantly stoking outrage by publicly indulging his grievances over race, immigration, homosexuality, and Islam—his position on the French political spectrum was more traditional. ²⁴⁴

A media star with no political experience threw his hat into the ring and soared in the presidential polls, hurling crude insults at his critics, bashing the elites, vilifying the press, and lavishing praise upon Russia, he rode a wave of populist anger, fear, and xenophobia as he promised to restore his demoralized country to its former glory. Many pundits were calling

Eric Zemmour the French's Donald Trump. The 63 years old Zemmour acknowledged Trump's rise to power as a blueprint for his own potential run. He even modeled the cover of his latest book, *France had not said its final word*, on Trump's 2015 Manifesto, *Great Again*. Zemmour, who belonged to no party, was scrambling to improvise a movement of his own, and Zemmour's Case was meteoric. Credited in June 2021 with a 5.5% share of the theoretical vote, he had now more than tripled that margin and currently having a chance of facing off against Macron in the runoff of France's two-round election in April 2022. Until recently, conventional wisdom had pointed to a replay of the 2017 matchup between Macron and Marine Le Pen, of the far-right anti-immigrant National Rally party. Relentlessly insisting that "Marine can't win", Zemmour could lure a substantial number of Le Pen's 2017 voters to his camp. 245

According to most polls on 2022 French presidential election, Emmanuel Macron counted on the support of one in four voters. In 2017, he managed to attract support from both the centre-left and centre-right. He was helped by the fact that neither of his main rivals was aiming to win from the centre-ground. However, during his presidency Macron's popularity among left-wing voters had waned considerably – and he might now need to rely on right-wing voters more than he did five years before. His current ratings might therefore suffer once the centre-right Republicans chose their candidate in the primaries scheduled for early December. With potential losses on the right, Macron might find it tricky to make up for this with support from the left – even if the latter remained divided, with no serious chance of any of its candidates getting through to the second round. In the meantime, there was another reason to keep a close eye on the election: the resilience of support for the far-right among a third of voters. It was conventional wisdom that Marine Le Pen – leader of the National Rally party – would go through to the second round, where she would almost certainly lose to Macron. No poll had predicted victory for her, although some had anticipated a disturbingly close result between her and Macron, sometimes by barely a few percentage points. However, the context had changed again. Since August, a new contender had emerged on the far-

right in the form of Éric Zemmour – a misogynist and Islamophobe whose scandal appeared to follow wherever he went. He had already caught up with Le Pen and depressed her polling share. Each could expect around 15-17 per cent of the vote. In this sense, two far-right candidates entering the frame could further cloud the gloomy picture. Their mere presence was likely to push the political debate – and the centre-right – further to the right. This, combined with Macron's record in power, would make his claim to represent both left and right feel even thinner, and that might bring Macron's experiment with French politics to a failed end. 246

A study in France had revealed a strong tendency by the country's media to give far-right voices airtime and amplify their fringe views. As the country was heading towards presidential elections in 2022, many of France's right-wing and far-right candidates had a stridently islamophobic view of Muslims. Many of the same candidates also regularly pepper their speeches with views against migrants and sweeping statements against minorities. The study by the National Audiovisual Institute (NAI) found that all the main TV channels in France gave significant airtime to Zemmour in particular. BFMTV, the country's largest channel, dedicated almost 35 percent of its coverage for the 2022 presidential elections to Zemmour, a former TV host who had never held elected office before and was a far-right firebrand. In contrast, editors at the BFMTV decided to give just over 15 percent of airtime to the country's president. Whereas Marine Le Pen, a more established far-right candidate, received almost 15 percent. The authors of the NAI study found that right-wing political events in the country received "privileged" coverage amongst the country's main TV channels. Far-right candidates like Zemmour had proved to be such a ratings bonanza for the country's media that one major TV channel known as TPMP had dedicated almost 55 percent of its presidential coverage to the convicted politician. "TPMP gives an overwhelming emphasis to the far right," said the report with more than 70 percent of references on the channel about far-right candidates. The study went on to add that "overall, the centre, the right and the extreme right are very clearly mentioned more than the political families on the left." France's other main TV channels, LCI and CNews, both devoted more

than 25 percent and almost 40 percent of their coverage respectively to Zemmour. Most other candidates barely broached the 20 percent mark of coverage; only Macron came close while other candidates trailed on single digits. The NAI report said that 60 percent of the coverage on CNews was principally airing far-right views of candidates. ²⁴⁷

United Kingdom

On January 13, The London Metropolitan university's Centre for Equity and Inclusion published a report with the conclusion that the Universities in the UK were failing to acknowledge the growth of Islamophobia on their campuses and had done little more than offer 'empty platitudes' in their efforts to tackle discrimination against Muslim students. The report, *Institutionalised: The Growth of Islamophobia in Higher Education*, combined data-informed insights and research into the experience of Muslim students in higher education across the UK with vivid personal accounts from students and staff at London Met. Sofia Akel, London Met's Race Equity Lead within its Centre for Equity and Inclusion, and the report's author said: "The Institutionalised study builds on past Muslim scholarship and research and adds the experiences of Muslim students at London Met to present a compelling case for urgent action. "Universities have failed to see the multifaceted and insidious nature of racism, despite the body of evidence which points towards the institutionalised form that racial oppression takes. What this looks like in practice, is a lack of appropriate responsiveness and decisive action against racism in its many forms. Institutions must charge themselves with the responsibility of understanding Islamophobia beyond the superficial - from how it operates through to its potential impact on recruitment processes, the psycho-social environment and to complaints procedures." The 5 (five) key recommendations of the report included: (a) 'Islamophobia' must become part of the institutional vocabulary, embedded in all codes of conduct, and related behavioural policies; (b) Human Resources and hiring managers must assess their recruitment practices and existing positions of Muslim staff in relation to this report's findings; (c) The university should accommodate staff and students participating in religious practices and holidays such as Ramadan,

(d) Overhauling and centralising complaints procedures to reflect subtle forms of racial and religious discrimination such; (e) Offering prospective students financial support on how to access Shar'iah compliant student loans and bank accounts. ²⁴⁸

Monitors had said that incidents of antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred had spiked in Britain because of the Israel-Gaza conflict. 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." ²⁴⁹

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. ²⁵⁰

According to a report released by the Islamic Finance Guru (IFG), 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 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 be considered halal. ²⁵¹

A study published 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." ²⁵²

A report published on June 29, had concluded that, four-fifths of Muslims in Scotland had directly experienced Islamophobia. The Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Tackling Islamophobia organised the first public inquiry into Islamophobia in Scotland and gathered 447 responses. Of those, 83% of Muslim respondents said they experienced Islamophobia directly with Muslim women more likely to encounter it than men. The inquiry also found 75% of Muslims said Islamophobia was a regular or everyday issue in Scottish society with 78% believed it was getting worse. That figure increased to 82% of Muslim respondents with a Glasgow postcode. Individuals warned that verbal and physical assaults had intensified, particularly on public transport. Asked about where Islamophobia took place, the street was the most common answer ahead of public spaces such as shops or restaurants and public transport, then at work and places of education. Just under a third (31%) said they had experienced Islamophobia at work, 18% at school and 13% at college or university. The report had made a series of recommendations, which included, that the Scottish Government should adopt a formal definition of Islamophobia. It also called to adopt a "no tolerance" approach; support initiatives to recruit more police officers from within Scotland's diverse communities; integrate an understanding of Islamophobia into compulsory components of the Scottish education curricula and teacher training education; and fund and support initiatives that educate the people of

Scotland about the damage that Islamophobia would do to Scottish society. CPG chairman and Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar said: “We pride ourselves on being a welcome and tolerant country... There are people in Scotland who feel scared to leave their homes for fear of verbal or physical attack; are withdrawing from public services with devastating knock-on consequences on their health and education; and feel they are outsiders in their own country. This should shame us all.” The report was authored by Professor Peter Hopkins of Newcastle University. He said: “Islamophobia permeates all domains of Scottish society; it is not only restricted to one context. It threatens education, limits employment prospects, and impacts everyday issues including health, wellbeing and housing. It is time to address the issue of Scotland’s Islamophobia rather than denying its existence.” A Scottish Government spokeswoman said: “We are committed to tackling hate crime and prejudice, including Islamophobia in all its forms and we will carefully consider this inquiry’s recommendations.... we will consider the need to define Islamophobia, including consideration of the UK’s All-Party Parliamentary Group’s definition.” 253

The Home Office had recorded 70 racist incidents by far-right supporters against asylum seekers in barracks and hotel accommodation, according to a freedom of information response obtained by the Guardian. The data, which covered 1 January 2020 until 13 July 2021, involved incidents in the much-maligned Napier and Penally barracks. In Napier barracks, four incidents were recorded between September and December 2020 while 12 incidents had occurred so far this year. This was despite the barracks being temporarily emptied in April after the coronavirus outbreak. The number of incidents recorded in hotels had tripled this year, with 40 examples reported, up from 13 the year before. On Saturday 7 August, the far-right organisation Britain First posted a video on its website headlined “Britain First exposes an illegal immigrant hotel in Hull” in which members of the organisation said they posed as journalists to confront asylum seekers. One asylum seeker from Yemen experienced two incidents which involved far-right protesters at his Home Office-provided hotel on the outskirts of London. “They were driving around the hotel recording us on video...They

were insulting us, swearing at us and screaming things like ‘go out from our country, why are you eating our food, go away from us, you are strangers here’. We were too scared to go outside the hotel and felt like it was a prison we had to stay inside.” he said. 254

A research, published on September 7, by the University College London (UCL) researchers and commissioned by education charity SINCE 9/11, had revealed that extreme views such as racism, misogynistic views and homophobia were widespread in classrooms across the UK. The authors noted that the findings came amid warnings from police of a rise in the number of children being radicalised by neo-Nazi and other extremist groups and the report not only looked at violent extremism but ‘hateful extremism’ (homophobic, misogynistic and racist attitudes and behaviours). The *Addressing Extremism Through the Classroom* report, co-authored by a team of academics from the UCL Institute of Education - found that teachers were not given the time, training or resources to teach pupils about violent and ‘hateful’ extremism and that schools believed instead that the Government expected them to focus on seeking out and reporting pupils who were thought to be at risk of radicalisation. As part of the study, the researchers talked to 96 teachers in schools in England. Teachers expressed concern at the rise in pupils who were looking at hateful content online. More than half the teachers had heard pupils express far-right extremist views in their classroom, while around three-quarters had heard “extremist views about women” or Islamophobia. Almost 90% had heard conspiracy theories, such as that American business magnate Bill Gates “controlled people via microchips in Covid vaccines”. The study also found that many teachers do not talk about extreme views in the classroom out of fear that they will “get it ‘wrong’, especially on matters related to race”. Overall, nearly all teachers reported feeling at least ‘somewhat confident’ in dealing with extreme views when encountered, however, a fifth of teachers felt only ‘somewhat’ or ‘not at all’ confident in dealing with conspiracy theories and far-right extremism. In 2020, research showed that young people under 24 had accounted for nearly 60% of extreme rightwing terror arrests, a rapid rise, according to police. In total, young people had made up 13% of arrests for terrorism, compared to 5% in the previous year. 255

According to official figures released on October 12, 2021, the reported hate crimes had risen by 9% to a record number of more than 124,000 across England and Wales since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. Racially motivated crimes, which were nearly three-quarters of the total number of 124,091 hate crimes, increased by 12% over the year ending in March 2021 amid Black Lives Matter protests and a backlash from far-right activists. Homophobic hate crimes increased 7% to 17,135. Hate crime was defined by the Home Office as “any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic”. The statistics released showed that religious hate crimes fell by 18%, in the second successive annual drop since a peak in 2019. ²⁵⁶

An exclusive poll had found that a majority of voters in the UK believe that the police had a problem with racism. The poll was carried out by Savanta: ComRes and asked voters to what extent they thought that the police in general had a problem with racism, with 63% of respondents said they thought the police had a problem with racism, compared to 23% who believed they did not. More than half of those who answered the survey said that the police had a problem with Islamophobia (52%) compared to 26% who thought they did not. 58% of those aged 18-24 years old said that the police had a problem with Islamophobia, compared with 40% of those aged between 55-64 years old. Concerns over Islamophobia in the police were particularly high among Lib Dem and Labour Party voters (64%) each, compared to 48% of Conservative Party voters. When it came to age, 72% of those aged 65 and over said they believe the police had a problem with racism, as do 66% of 18-24 year olds. Concerns over racism in the police were particularly high among those who lived in London, with 70% of respondents said they thought the police had a problem with racism, compared to 52% of those who lived in the West Midlands. When it came to party affiliation, 73% of Labour voters thought that the police had a problem with racism, compared to 58% of Conservative voters. Black people were nine times more likely to be stopped and searched by police than white people, official figures for England and Wales showed. A total of

577,054 stops were carried out across England in 2019-20, with 76% leading to no further action. Black people were 18 times more likely to be stopped under section 60, under which no reasonable suspicion was required. ²⁵⁷

A ‘Census 2021’ report from Home Office said that Muslims had been the target of almost half of recorded religious hate crimes. Hate crime offences recorded against Muslims reached 45 per cent of all recorded religious hate crimes in the year ending March 2021 – a similar proportion to the previous year. The 2,703 offences against Muslims included acts targeted towards more than one religious group and instances where the assumed religion of the victim was not the same as their actual faith group. Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) Secretary-General Zara Mohammed condemned the “pervasive form of bigotry” and the threat it poses, especially to young Muslims. Racially motivated hate crimes saw an increase of 12 per cent while the volume of charges has seen a decrease in recent years, suggesting a need for further action. ²⁵⁸

Netherlands

On March 17, Dutch citizens had concluded the voting in the country’s general elections in order to elect all 150 members of the House of Representatives. Official election results would be finalised and announced on March 26. However, exit polls showed Prime Minister Mark Rutte People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) won 22 percent of the vote and 36 seats, 3 more than in 2017 election. The D66 party had become the second largest party in the Netherlands; it won 15 percent of the vote and 24 seats, 5 more than in the previous election. The result would force Rutte to orientate his future policy in a more pro-European direction. As Rutte ruled out any form of cooperation with the two main radical right-wing parties – Geert Wilders’ Party for Freedom (PVV) and Forum for Democracy (FVD) – he would engage with other parties to form the government. In addition, in an increasingly fragmented political landscape, the VVD had more parties to choose from than ever. The 150-seat Dutch parliament would have 17 parties after this election result. It might take a while to form the government but it would probably end up been a broad

continuation of the last. The PVV lost a few seats but the combined vote shares with those of two other more radical parties – JA21 and FVD– the Dutch far right had won more seats than ever before. The Dutch far right won 29 seats. The PVV party came only third with 17 seats, three fewer than in 2017. 259

Netherlands:— According to Politico’s latest poll of polls of the Netherlands General election, the far-right candidate Geert Wilders was set to come second in a huge climb from just five seats in Parliament to a whopping 20. The poll predicted that the PVV leader would gain 13 percent of the votes, which had seen as a warning to the incumbent Prime Minister Mark Rutte. Mr Rutte, who had been the caretaker Prime Minister of the Netherlands since the Government quit in January, was still heading the polls with 25 percent of the vote. This would allow him to get up to 40 seats in Parliament but he would still be left in need of a coalition partner. Mr Wilders said in his campaign manifesto that the three largest parties should automatically enter into talks for a post-election coalition. But Mr Rutte had already ruled out inviting Mr Wilders to team up with him. In his manifesto, Mr Wilders wrote that he wants the Netherlands to return to “a country without headscarves, but with traditional Dutch cosiness”. 260

Germany

According to provisional police figures released on February 4, 2021, the number of crimes committed by right-wing extremists in Germany had jumped to its highest level for at least four years in 2020. Police recorded 23,080 crimes of a far-right nature in 2020 - around 700 more than 2019 - the figures published by the German MP, Petra Pau show. The number was already the highest since 2016, and could yet rise to the highest level since records began in 2001. Pau, told Berlin newspaper Der Tagesspiegel “The acceptance of violence as a replacement for politics is rising.” She added that the coronavirus crisis had acted as a “booster” for far-right crime in the same way that the refugee crisis had in 2015 and 2016. The provisional figures for 2020 include 1,054 violent crimes, which led to at least 307 injuries. The final total, which had been expected to be released later, were

already on course to exceed the all-time high of 23,555 recorded at the height of the refugee crisis in 2016. 261

A German daily wrote on February 8, 2021 that Islamophobic attacks had been on the rise, with Germany reporting over 900 attacks against Muslims and Islamic organizations across the country. According to Neuer Osnabrücker Zeitung, at least 901 Islamophobic attacks were recorded in Germany in 2020, a 2% rise compared to the previous year in which the interior ministry recorded 884 crimes that would be considered Islamophobic. Despite the coronavirus’s lockdown had limited public life, the number of criminal offenses, including defacing spaces with Nazi symbols, writing threats and ripping women’s headscarves off, had risen again. German Left Party (Die Linke) interior expert Ulla Jelpke described the attacks to the newspaper as “the tip of the iceberg.” The article pointed to a large proportion of the attackers being far-rightists. It noted that 48 people were physically wounded in attacks in 2020, increasing the figure from the year before. Two people lost their lives in Islamophobic attacks in the country. 262

Interior Ministry of Germany said in their 2021 report that anti-Muslim sentiment and antisemitism had become an everyday occurrence in Germany. The country’s Interior Ministry registered 1,026 anti-Muslim attacks in 2020. It is suspected that many more had occurred but had not been reported. This was not a purely German phenomenon, said the Council of Europe’s Special Representative on Antisemitic and Anti-Muslim Hatred, Daniel Hölzgen. The results were not comprehensive, but they were the basis for further research and need to be followed up by authorities in the respective countries. The victims describe online hatred and threats to be just as real as everyday discrimination and verbal attacks on the streets said Hölzgen. He added “These are criminal actions. This has nothing to do with the right to free speech”. The chairman of the Council of Muslims in Germany, Aiman Mazyek, agreed that online hatred was a “new phenomenon.” But the number of cases had skyrocketed. In 2020 alone there were more than 1,000 criminal incidents and almost 150 physical attacks on mosques across Germany. Mazyek hoped the Council of Europe’s survey would give

fresh momentum to more decisive action against this kind of aggression. Höltgen stresses that the Council of Europe had probed only eight of the 47 Council members — but these eight countries were among those with the largest Muslim communities: Germany, France, UK, and Austria. The European Commission on Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) was planning to publish concrete political recommendations to give politicians guidelines for combatting antisemitism and anti-Muslim sentiment. ²⁶³

Germany saw a big jump on 2020 in politically motivated crimes, and offences committed by far-right supporters hit a record high, Interior Minister Horst Seehofer said on May 4. Far-right offences were up nearly 6% from the previous year at 23,064, and accounted for more than half of all politically motivated crimes, the highest level since police started to collect such data in 2001. Violent crimes classified as political in nature rose by nearly 20% year-on-year to 3,365 and included 11 murders and 13 attempted murders, Seehofer said. “These numbers are very alarming mainly because a trend has been established over the last few years,” he said. “During the pandemic we observed a further polarisation of the political discussion.” ²⁶⁴

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. ²⁶⁵

Germany’s far-right populists had far fewer party supporters than their big-tent competitors. But they still managed to dominate the discourse on social media — especially in election campaigns. On 2021, just one month before the federal election on September 26, the AfD lingers at 11% in opinion polls. But on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, it still dwarfed much bigger parties like the center-left Social Democrats (SPD) and outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel’s center-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU). DW analyzed the parties’ posts across social media from June 12 to August 15, and found that one of the lead candidates for the AfD, Alice Weidel, was by far the most successful politician online. Even though she had no hope of becoming the next German chancellor, her videos were viewed around 4.9 million times across the different platforms during that time period. And the number of comments, likes and shares outnumbered those of other politicians. Such engagement was considered hard currency in the world of social networks because they imply that users identified with the post to such an extent that they would spread it further. While the AfD had only 32,000 members, the ruling CDU had almost 430,000, the same as that of the conservatives’ top candidate Armin Laschet, who hoped to succeed Merkel as chancellor. Facebook was the main platform for the AfD, in an interview with DW, Marcus Schmidt, the press officer for the AfD parliamentary group, admitted that: “Without Facebook, I don’t believe that the AfD could have become successful so quickly.” Using Facebook as a channel to it their supporters allowed the AfD to bypass established media outlets and spread its messages directly — many of which were openly racist, nationalist and factually false. A total of 84% of Weidel’s user interactions on social media took place on Facebook platform. ²⁶⁶

A report published by Hope not Hate had provided a snapshot of how parties in the Bundestag were making use of paid-for ads, examining the spending patterns by selected pages belonging to each of the major parties over the past two years. Specifically, it compared the parties spending with that of AfD and analyses the role that paid-for ads plays for radical right actors. It found that AfD spent less on Facebook ads than other parties in the German Bundestag while instead it had been considerably more successful in terms of organic influence through shares and interactions. ⁶⁷

Germany’s far-right AfD party stepped up criticism of Cologne’s mayor Henriette Reker for the decision to allow mosques to broadcast call to prayer (Azan) on Fridays. “This gives the impression that Germany is not a Christian country, but a Muslim one. This is not the case,” Matthias Buschges, the AfD’s deputy spokesman in Cologne, said in a statement. Cologne had been home to more than 120,000 Muslims, nearly 12% of the city’s entire population. Mayor Reker announced the week before that nearly 30 mosques in the city would be allowed to broadcast muezzin’s call for Friday prayers over loudspeakers. “Cologne is a city of religious diversity and freedoms. Allowing muezzin’s call to prayer is for me a sign of respect,” she stressed. 268

Austria

The Austrian human rights group SOS Mitmensch had reported that the racist sentiment against Muslims in Austria doubled in 2020 compared to 2019. Alexander Pollak, the spokesperson for SOS Mitmensch, said in a video conference that anti-Muslim rhetoric and campaigns by political parties and individuals reached an unprecedented level in 2020. Pollak added that a recent survey showed that 35% of the public had a negative opinion about Muslims, while 40% supported the idea that Muslims should not enjoy equal rights with Austrians. The Austrian Government adopted a bill which prevented girls younger than 10 from wearing the headscarf in 2019, the law was later challenged by two children and their parents. However, Austria’s constitutional court in December 2020 struck down the law, which banned the headscarf in primary schools, and described the measure unconstitutional and discriminatory. 269

Luxembourg

On January 7, The Observatory of Islamophobia in Luxembourg (OIL), had published the second survey dealing with discrimination and violence against Muslims in the Luxembourg. The 2019 report, which were commissioned by OIL said Islamophobia frequently were unreported in Luxembourg, with just 7% of cases formally or informally reported. 314 men and women of Muslim faith had participated in the survey, detailing their

experiences with Islamophobia in Luxembourg. The participants consisted of 182 men and 132 women, almost half of whom were aged between 31 and 40 years of age. 20% were aged 21-30, with another 20% aged 41 to 50. 54% of participants have Luxembourgish citizenship, and 35% live in the country. Almost 76% of participants said they felt they had integrated well into Luxembourgish society. 75% said in their experience, those of Islamic faith were less likely to face discrimination in Luxembourg than in its neighboring countries. The OIL, which was founded in January 2018, was shown to have had a positive impact through the report. Islamophobic acts reduced by 8% between 2017 and 2019. In spite of this, almost 28% of participants said they had witnessed a case of Islamophobia which did not concern them directly in 2019. Around 18% had been subjected to discrimination based on their religion, in a slight increase on 2018. 13% said they had been both witness and victim of Islamophobia in 2019. The OIL reported a significant phenomenon of non-declaration, confirmed by the survey’s findings. Islamophobic acts were frequently not reported, with just 7% reported in 2019. 270

India

The annual South Asia State of Minorities Report 2020 said that India had become a “dangerous and violent space for Muslim minorities” according to the annual report published on December 7. The report said: “In December 2019, an amendment in the Citizenship Act was passed which opened a pathway for a category of illegal immigrants, specifically leaving out Muslims. In the run-up to the legislation, the government also declared its intentions to create a National Register of Indian Citizens, which would have the potential to render many Muslims stateless”. The report noted the raise in hate crime against minorities, which had “taking the form of mob lynching and vigilante violence against Muslims, Christians, and Dalits.” The report said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) assuming power nationally in 2014 “unveiled a new and now frontal attack on religious minorities and other vulnerable groups. This has had a chilling effect on civic space for Muslims and Muslim-community-based organisations and activists specifically. The report added that the situation had “exacerbated

significantly” since BJP returned to power with a “brute majority” in May 2019, the report said. In quick succession, it enacted a slew of measures aimed at signaling to Muslims “particularly its will to brutally subjugate”, it added. The Indian authorities had also weaponized the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, which regulates foreign donations to entities in India, against progressive and minority NGOs, the report noted. It further highlighted the alleged human rights violation in Jammu and Kashmir since 2019 when the Centre abrogated the erstwhile state’s special status under Article 370 of the Constitution. “The case of Muslim-majority Kashmir – where regressive constitutional changes in August 2019 were accompanied by a communication blackout, mass detentions, and a movement lockdown – demonstrates how civic space can be sought to be completely erased, within a formal democratic framework,” it said. 271

On January 2021, the India Today Group-Karvy Insights Mood of the Nation (MOTN), had conducted a poll regarding the issue of “love jihad” and the anti-conversion laws which had passed in several BJP-ruled states. The survey had revealed, that there was a strong belief among respondents (54 per cent) in a widespread “love jihad” conspiracy to convert Hindu women to Islam. Only 36 per cent said there was no such conspiracy. Besides, 58 per cent of those surveyed had backed laws passed to discourage inter-faith marriages. The survey showed that while more than 60 per cent Hindus supported such laws, 51 per cent Muslims opposed it. BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand had passed laws prohibiting religious conversion for the purpose of marriage in last few months while two other states -- Haryana and Karnataka -- were mulling similar legislations. The laws by UP and Uttarakhand had been challenged in the Supreme Court. In Uttar Pradesh, for instance, the police had, till mid-January, lodged at least 17 cases under the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020. While 14 of them related to inter-personal relationships, marriages and elopement involving Hindu women and Muslim men, in at least three cases the ordinance had been slapped against Hindus and Christians on charges of the latter allegedly luring people into converting to Christianity. In two such cases,

the complainants were directly linked to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the BJP. More than half of the respondents (54 per cent) were opposed to inter-faith marriages while 41 per cent were in its favor, the MOTN survey showed.272

On March 3, The U.S. democracy research institute, Freedom House, had downgraded India from free to partly free in an annual report titled “Freedom in the World”. The report, published by the U.S. government-funded research group, pointed to mob violence against Muslims, intimidation of journalists and rising judicial interference since PM Modi’s Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won power in 2014. “India’s status declined from Free to Partly Free due to a multiyear pattern in which the Hindu nationalist government and its allies have presided over rising violence and discriminatory policies affecting the Muslim population and pursued a crackdown on expressions of dissent by the media, academics, civil society groups, and protesters,” the report said. The report, which ranked democracies around the world, had several events of 2020 mentioned, these included Delhi riots, use of sedition laws against critics and plight of migrant workers after PM Modi announced a sudden lockdown to control the coronavirus spread in the country. “The ruling Hindu nationalist movement also encouraged the scapegoating of Muslims, who were disproportionately blamed for the spread of the virus and faced attacks by vigilante mobs.” the report stated. 273

One-third of Muslims and over 20 per cent Dalits and Adivasis said they had been discriminated on the grounds of religion, caste, or because of illness in a hospital or by a healthcare professional, according to a survey by Oxfam India. The survey — titled ‘Securing Rights of Patients in India’ — provided a perspective on the plight of patients and citizens in the healthcare system. According to the survey, as many as 58 per cent of respondents said they were not provided with an estimated cost of treatment or procedure before it was started when they or their close relatives were hospitalised in the past 10 years. Thirty-one per cent respondents reported being denied case papers, patient records, investigation reports for treatment or procedure by the hospital even after requesting. Thirty-five per cent of the women surveyed said that they underwent physical examination . 274

Sri Lanka

In a report published in October 2021, Amnesty International said: “Sri Lanka’s Muslim community had suffered consistent discrimination, harassment and violence since 2013, culminating in the adoption of government policies explicitly targeting the minority group”. Anti-Muslim sentiment in Sri Lanka had evolved from a series of attacks within the society, into government policies discriminative against Muslims, including the forced cremation of Muslim Covid-19 victims and proposals to ban niqab (face veil) and madrasas (religious schools). The campaign gave rise to a number of attacks on mosques and Muslim businesses the same year, followed by anti-Muslim riots in the coastal town of Aluthgama after a Sinhala Buddhist nationalist group held a rally. Shortly after 2017 election, anti-Muslim violence flared in the town of Ginthota, similarly seen in 2018 in Digana and Ampara. The Easter Sunday attacks of 2019 made things even worse. Following these attacks, on 13 May 2019, Muslims in several towns in the North-Western Province of Sri Lanka came under attack during Ramadan. Mosques across the country were also attacked and a spate of ‘hate speech’ posts and anti-Muslim vitriol was seen on social media. Emergency regulations rushed through by the authorities were also used to arbitrarily arrest hundreds of Muslims in the wake of the attacks.²⁷⁵

Australia

In the aftermath of the Christchurch mosque shootings, a team of researchers had surveyed mosques in Australia to gauge the extent of anti-Muslim attacks on those places of worship, and published their findings on March 15. The researchers were Professor Scott Poynting and Senior Lecturer Dr Derya Iner in the Charles Sturt University Centre for Islamic Studies and Civilisation, Professor Gail Mason from the University of Sydney, Professor Nicole L. Asquith from the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies and the University of Tasmania, and Research Associate Mr Ron Mason from the University of Tasmania. The study found that the threat of similarly motivated acts of hatred remained widespread. During 2020, they surveyed 75 mosques from five states and two territories of Australia about their experiences of violence in the five years from 2014 to 2018, as well as

detailed questions about 2019. About half of the responses were from imams or mosque officials, 15% from volunteers and 35% from other congregation members. According to the researchers, most concerning was that over half (58.2%) of participating mosques had experienced targeted violence between 2014 and 2019. The threat of an attack increased in cases where there had been public attention. For example, mosques that were reported in the media (100%) or experienced online opposition to the development of the mosque (83%) experienced higher rates of victimisation. The types of violence suffered by mosque attendees and the mosque buildings included arson, physical assault, graffiti, vandalism, verbal abuse and online abuse and hate mail, including death threats. There were notable geographical differences in these occurrences of violence. Despite been home to more mosques, attacks against Sydney mosques between 2014 and 2018 were proportionally lower (at 41% of the 51 respondent mosques) than for Melbourne (70% of 17 mosques) and Brisbane (89% of nine mosques). The proportion of attacks against mosques in Australian states and territories was 29% in 2019, in the wake of the Christchurch massacre. In the wake of the Christchurch terror attack, Australian mosques were still been targeted with threats and violence. In 2019 alone, 30% of respondent mosques had experienced a graffiti attack, with 17% reporting two or more instances. Some 12% had experienced one or more arson attacks, with one mosque reporting six such incidents in that year. Mosques were also vandalised, with 34% of participating mosques experiencing at least one such incident, and three mosques experiencing four to five incidents. Hate mail was received by 17% of the mosques. According to the researchers, a national, independent hate crime reporting system was needed to capture the experiences of targeted communities in Australia. They added, A systematic and timely analysis of mosque attack data would enhance long-term security for mosques and their communities. ²⁷⁶

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.²⁷⁷

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.²⁷⁸

In **Australia**, a vast majority of Muslims in Australia had experienced discrimination, the Australian Human Rights Commission had found. According to a report published by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) on July 19, 2021, 80% of Islamic people in Australia had faced prejudice or discrimination. Half of 1,000 respondents to the survey said they were discriminated against by law enforcement and 48 percent said they were targeted in workplaces or while they were looking for work. One in every four said they were too scared to speak up when they - or someone they knew - experienced discrimination.²⁷⁹

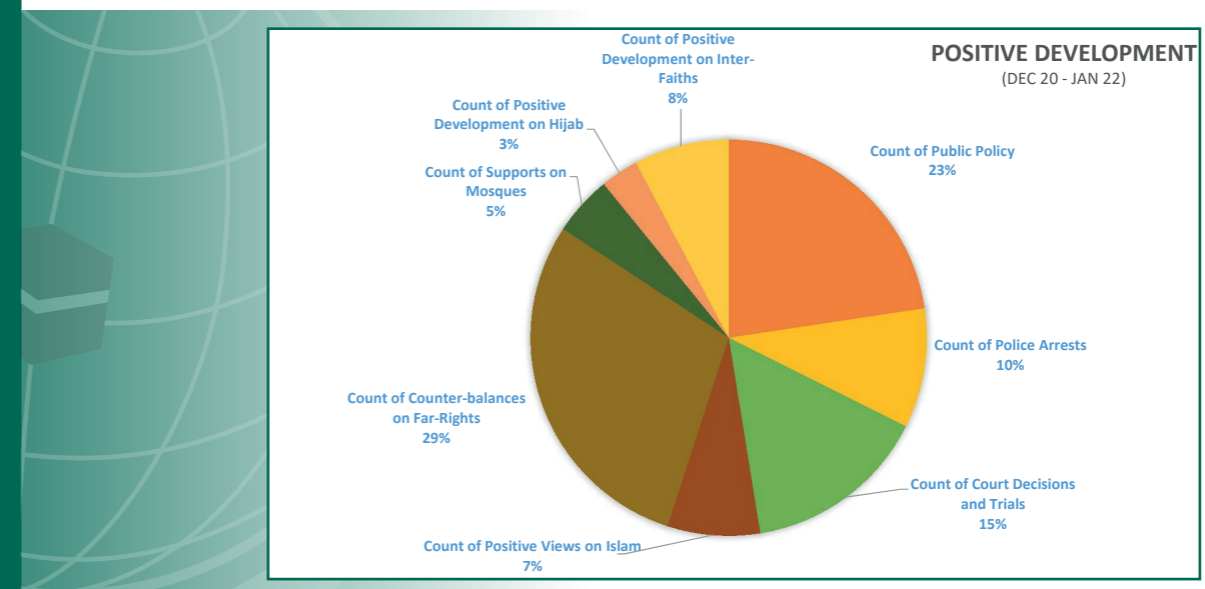
According to a new report by Australian Strategic Policy Institute analyst Ariel Bogle “Buying and selling extremism: New funding opportunities in the right-wing extremist online ecosystem”, Australian right-wing extremists were making thousands of dollars to support their activities using a smorgasbord of online fundraising tools. Despite being chased off many of the major platforms, far-right extremists had access to a network of lightly or unmoderated digital platforms that allowed them to make money from the attention they earned online. The report examined how a sample of these groups, organised through the Telegram messaging platform, used different online tools to raise money. What Bogle found was that far-right funding had moved from being structured around groups — i.e. charging membership dues — towards an individual creator model, not unlike that of an Instagram influencer. Individual right-wing extremists solicited

donations or earned money through creating engaging and credible content. This arrangement, Bogle argued, could also incentivise people to make right-wing extremist content to earn money rather than making content to support their beliefs. The report documented more than 20 tools used to solicit donations, facilitate transactions, and earn and store money. These range from major platforms like Google and Amazon advertising programs used on far-right websites to niche “alt-tech” platforms which offered alternatives to popular streaming or video platforms. The report noted that these platforms were generally opaque, which made it difficult to ascertain how much money was changing hands between Australian right-wing extremist creators and their audiences. 280

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

The Observatory noted with pleasure that during the covered period, there were efforts in many places around the world to promote harmony and tolerance, while countered anti-Islam sentiments and other Islamophobic activities, of which the Observatory would consider as positive signs towards combatting Islamophobia and incitement of hatred and violence towards Islam and Muslims. The following instances of positive trends are worth mentioning:



Counter-balance on Far Rights

In US, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the USA's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, announced on December 4 that it had offered office space in its Capitol Hill headquarters in Washington, D.C., to a French Muslim anti-racism organization shut down on November 2020 by the French government in a crackdown on the Muslim community and its legal rights. CAIR said it had offered the office space and logistical resources to the Collective Against Islamophobia in France (CCIF), which French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin falsely accused of spreading "Islamist propaganda." In fact, CCIF's main

function was monitoring growing Islamophobia in France. In a statement, CAIR National Executive Director Nihad Awad called out the French authorities' baseless accusations to CCIF, he said: "Targeting human rights organizations like CCIF -- at the expense of the rule of law -- is only the tip of the iceberg. In an unprecedented move, the French government wants to criminalize and dissolve any organization that disagrees with its plan to control Muslims, by labeling them as 'separatists.'" Awad added: "We hope CCIF may be reconstituted and carry on important work challenging hate in France, even when that work must be carried out in another country like the United States where domestic laws guarantee free speech and religious rights."²⁸¹

On January 14, 2021, a County in the U.S. state of Oregon, Clackamas County, had passed a resolution which censured Mark Shull, a Member of Board of Commissioners, and called on him to resign over Islamophobic social media posts. The vote was 5-0. The full commission joined its chair, Tootie Smith, who on January 13 had called for Commissioner Mark Shull to step down immediately. In their vote, commissioners referred to county Resolution No. 2015-96, passed in 2015, which committed the county to "valuing diversity." In the resolution statement, Commissioners had called for Shull's resignation, and referred to his online remarks, describing it as "derogatory, offensive, insensitive, and racist." The resolution added, Shull's comments "imputed to Clackamas County a reputation of racist, sexist, and religious insensitivity and intolerance." Shull was elected to the county board in November. Other elected officials around the Portland region had criticized him recently for online writings dating from 2019 and 2020 that equated Islam to radical terrorism.²⁸²

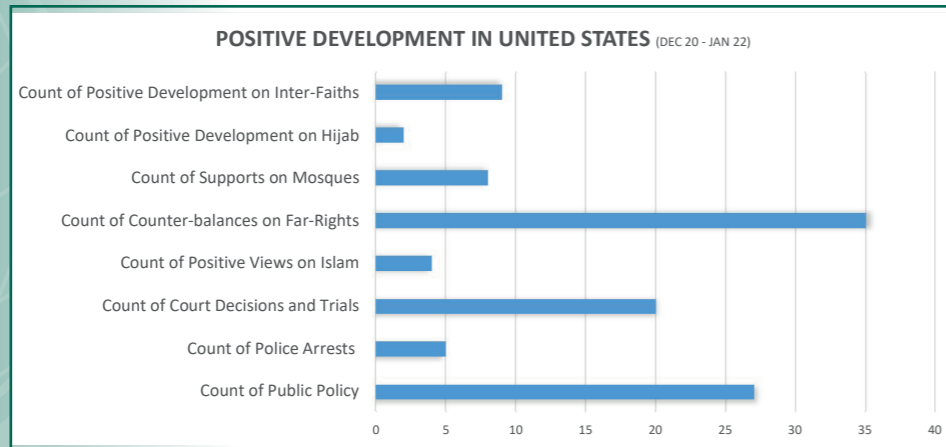
On January 11, The Correction Department and Attorney General's Office in Connecticut, a U.S. state in southern New England, had launched an investigations into the anti-Muslim social media posts of a state prison guard, Officer Anthony Marlak. The move came after the Connecticut Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) called for the firing of Corrections Officer, citing posts on Facebook that included a meme depicting five apparently Muslim men hanging from nooses with the

caption, "Islamic Wind Chimes." Farhan Memon, chairman of CAIR-CT said: "What's happening in Washington is showing us that there is a nexus between the far right-wing in this country that has morphed into terrorists and law enforcement and military folks who show some sympathy with that ideology," Marlak's Facebook page, under the alias Tony Mint, had a profile that reads "I am the prototype, infidel, veteran, boss. Stand back and I will handle it. Now walk away." Marlak was given a five-day suspension in December 2020 for his part in the confrontation with a Muslim correction officer and for making what were deemed inappropriate remarks toward the other guard. The Correction Department, said in a statement, its Security Division and Legal Affairs units were reviewing the information provided by CAIR to determine appropriate action. It said the department would not tolerate or condone discrimination.²⁸³

Meanwhile, a central Florida sheriff's deputy named Michael Johnson was suspended for nearly a month after a civil rights group asked for an investigation into his Facebook posts about Muslims. The Orange County Sheriff's Office suspended the Deputy for 150 hours without pay after an internal investigation found he showed "unbecoming conduct" and "bias and disrespect" toward Muslims, according to a report obtained by the Orlando Sentinel in a public records request. In a February 2020 post on his personal Facebook page, Johnson wrote that "Muslims are taking over America," calling them the "most intolerant people when it comes to other religions," the report said. When interviewed by investigators, Johnson acknowledged that the post was "offensive towards all Muslims." He said he was "trying to describe a small percentage of radicalized Muslims that only represent a very small percentage of the followers." Sheriff John Mina told the newspaper he updated the agency's social media policy after he took office in 2018 and warned deputies he would not hesitate to give "very harsh" discipline for violations.²⁸⁴

Also in US, a police officer in the city of Fresno, state of California, was put under investigation after he was spotted in photos and video posted online over the weekend (March 13-14), which appeared to show him affiliating

with members of the far-right Proud Boys group at a protest, according to law enforcement officials. The officer, identified by the Fresno Bee as Rick Fitzgerald, was on paid leave as the investigation went forward. Fresno Chief Police Paco Balderrama said an investigation was underway. “Any allegations of actions unbecoming of a police officer or affiliation with any alleged criminal or hate group will always be investigated and addressed,” Balderrama said. 285



On April 24, In the middle of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the Islamic Society of Fargo-Moorhead, a mosque located in the city of Moorhead - Minnesota State, was vandalized with anti-Muslim graffiti. According to a press release from the Moorhead Police Department, officers found hate messages directed toward the Islamic faith and its followers spray-painted on several areas of the building’s exterior. Such messages include “Death to Islam,” “F**k Islam” and a Nazi swastika symbol. A suspect wore a camouflage jacket, dark ski mask, hat, and sunglasses which appeared on the surveillance footage. Jaylani Hussein, executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR-MN said: “[North Dakota] White supremacist militia groups in 2016 actually put out a video of them shooting at a replica mosque... So there are threats from white supremacy militia groups from that region that have been active and ongoing ... I’m not sure the FBI actually does investigations of these hate crimes seriously unless there’s public pressure,” he said. Moorhead Police Captain Deric Swanson told Newsweek that the community was very supportive and “behind the department” on this investigation, which remained “very open and active ... This is the most attention any crime in the area has received,” he said. 286

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. 287

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. 288

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. 289

Meanwhile, 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.290

Still in US, 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. 291

On June 22, US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced that she was creating a select committee to investigate the causes of the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol and recommend ways to prevent it. Mrs. Pelosi said

the committee would in part examine the root causes of that day, which included “White supremacy, antisemitism and Islamophobia”. 292

Also in US, Police officers were speaking to the congregation at the Dar El-Eman Islamic Center in Arlington City in Texas during a family-night event when panic swept across the gathering. Someone had called 911 from a blocked number in which he claimed he had a pipe bomb. The caller said he was going to kill everyone inside the mosque during the November 2018 incident. The bomb threat turned out to be a “swatting call” — a dangerous form of harassment intended to get police SWAT units to respond to a target’s location. On May 4, an alleged neo-Nazi from the Houston area was sentenced to 41 months in federal prison for his role in that swatting conspiracy, according to prosecutors. The defendants targeted 134 different locations across the U.S., mostly for racist reasons, authorities said. John Cameron Denton, of Montgomery, the capital city of Alabama, was the leader of Atomwaffen Division in Texas, a violent, white-supremacist extremist group that prosecutors said was “linked” to several murders. Denton pleaded guilty on 2020 to conspiracy to commit interstate threats to injure and had faced up to five years in prison. 293

On July 26, PayPal Holdings Inc (PYPL.O) had partnered with non-profit organisation the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to investigate how extremist and hate movements in the United States take advantage of financial platforms to fund their criminal activities. The initiative would be led through ADL’s Center on Extremism, it would look at networks which had been spreading and profiting from antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism, anti-immigrant, anti-Black, anti-Hispanic and anti-Asian bigotry. The information collected through the initiatives would be shared with other firms in the financial industry, law enforcement and policymakers, PayPal said.294

Further in US, the tech industry’s alliance against terrorism had announced that it would begin to track content from far-right organizations in a shared counter-terrorism database used by major tech companies. The Global

Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, a nonprofit organization founded by Microsoft, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, would add manifestos, posts and links from far-right militias flagged by U.N. antiterrorist group Tech Against Terrorism to a shared database, the counterterrorism forum told Reuters on July 26. The organization, known as GIFCT, would also share content flagged by Five Eyes, a global partnership between intelligence agencies in the U.S. and other countries, Reuters reported. 295

Meanwhile, Far-right Congressional candidate Laura Loomer and her company Illoominate Media had been ordered to pay nearly USD \$125,000 to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) in what had been dubbed an “extraordinary self-own”. The decision was made on the first week of August by a federal magistrate judge in Florida after the case was bought to them by Loomer following her suspension on Twitter in 2018 after she violated the company policies on hateful conduct. Loomer claimed that CAIR, had conspired with the social media platform to block her First Amendment rights. However, the allegation against CAIR was apparently based on a prank by right-wing media figure trollers, Nathan Bernard and Chris Gillen of Bernard Media, who got in touch with Loomer where they pretended to be Twitter employees and confirmed her accusations against the Muslim group. The pair hoped to expose Loomer for her false claims about the Muslim advocacy group, however were surprised when she took her story to the Wall Street Journal who then published it. 296

On August 11, Facebook said it had permanently banned far-right Israeli political figures Baruch Marzel and Michael Ben Ari from Facebook and Instagram, the platform cited “their ongoing support for Kach and Kahane Chai — groups deemed to be terror organizations by US and Israeli law.” The social media platform said that “in order to prevent actual harm, we do not allow organizations and people who declare violent goals or who deal in violence to be active on Facebook.” According to the Ynet news site, Facebook would also remove any content that was supportive of the two and/or their actions. 297

On August 2021, TikTok removed the account of Lehava, a far-right Jewish supremacist organization. This was the third time since 2020 that Lehava, an anti-assimilation group infamous for its firebrand racial politics. TikTok, which blocked the group’s account after a complaint was filed by a left-wing nonprofit, did not officially specify the reason for the decision. However, in its response to the group, Mehazkim, hinted that the decision was made because the leader, led by Bentzi Gopstein, incites violence against Arabs and uses TikTok to spread hate speech. 298

Meanwhile, New Jersey Senator-Elect Ed Durr, had a talk with Selaedin Maksut of the New Jersey chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. Maksut requested the meeting after Durr in his tweet called Islam “a false religion.” CAIR’s national organization and another civil rights group, Muslim Advocates, had called on Durr to renounce the September 2019 tweet or to give up his Senate seat. Durr responded the next day with a statement noting, “*If I said things in the past that hurt anybody’s feelings, I sincerely apologize.*” He left the meeting with a Quran and words of tolerance: “*I stand against Islamophobia and all forms of hate, and I do commit to that.*” Selaedin Maksut described the meeting as “*a very productive conversation. We had the opportunity to really break those barriers and learn from each other.*” 299

Still in US, a group of over 30 American lawmakers led by Congresswoman Ilham Omar had introduced a bill in the House of Representatives against growing incidents of Islamophobia worldwide. The bill urged the State Department to include state-sponsored Islamophobic violence and impunity in its annual human rights reports. Also, the creation of the Special Envoy that would help policymakers better understand the interconnected, global problem of anti-Muslim bigotry. It would also establish a comprehensive strategy for establishing US leadership in combating Islamophobia worldwide. Proponents of the bill, which required the State Department to create a Special Envoy for monitoring and combating Islamophobia, had put India in the category of China and Myanmar for alleged atrocities against Muslims. Congresswoman Omar said: “*We are seeing a rise in Islamophobia*

in nearly every corner of the globe”. A press statement issued by her office said that there had been a staggering rise in incidents of violent Islamophobia. “Whether it is the atrocities being committed against the Uyghurs in China and the Rohingya in Burma (Myanmar), the crackdowns on Muslim populations in India and Sri Lanka, the scapegoating of Muslim refugees and other Muslims in Hungary and Poland, the acts of white supremacist violence targeting Muslims in New Zealand and Canada, or the targeting of minority Muslim communities in Muslim-majority countries like Pakistan, Bahrain and Iran, the problem of Islamophobia is global in scope,” it said. 300

Also, the Scott administration had canceled a rally whose speakers were to include ex-Trump advisor Steve Bannon, right-wing provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos and commentator Michele Malkin, among others. Michael Voris, founder of the Michigan-based Church Militant, said that City Solicitor James L. Shea violated the group’s First Amendment rights when he canceled the November 16 “Bishops: Enough is Enough Prayer Rally.” Planned at the MECU Pavilion on Pier Six, the rally had been timed to coincide with the annual fall meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Church Militant was known for its anti-immigrant ideology. In a story published after the 2016 election, the New York Times described Church.Militant.com this way: “The site’s right-wing stances against globalism, immigration, social-welfare programs and abortion, as well as its depiction of an existential war against radical Islam, mesh with many of the positions espoused by Mr. Trump and his inner circle.” The Southern Poverty Law Center listed Church Militant/St. Michael’s Media on the center’s watch list of hate groups. 301

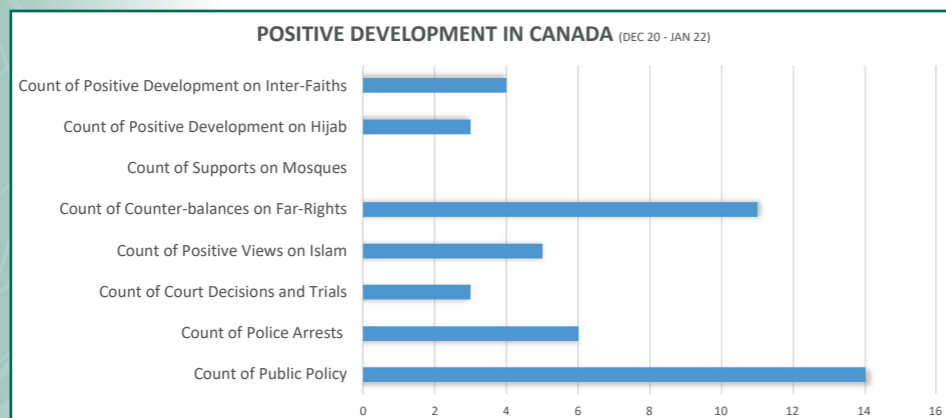
Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin signed a memo which directed commanding officers across the U.S. military to institute a one-day stand-down to address extremism within the nation’s armed forces. The stand-down came in response to the participation and the subsequent arrests of several veterans and at least one active duty service member, who along with thousands of supporters of former President Donald Trump on 6 January 2021, stormed the U.S. Capitol. Austin’s order was the latest in a

series of decades-long efforts by the military to purge the military from extremists and white supremacists. The week before, in response to the order the military issued new rules to deal with extremism that included social media usage policy updates where liking and reposting white nationalist and extremist content could result in disciplinary action. The DOD also updated the screening of recruits and was looking at how to prepare troops who were retiring from been targeted by extremist organizations. But an AP investigation found that despite the new rules, racism and extremism remained an ongoing concern in the military. The investigation showed the new guidelines did not address ongoing disparities in military justice under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the legal code that governs the U.S. armed forces. Numerous studies, including a report the year before from the Government Accountability Office, show Black and Hispanic service members were disproportionately investigated and court-martialed. The AP investigation also showed the military’s judicial system had no explicit category for bias-motivated crimes, which made it difficult to quantify crimes prompted by prejudice. As a result, investigative agencies such as the Naval Criminal Investigative Service or Army Criminal Investigative Division also did not have a specific hate crime category, which impacted how they investigate cases. 302

Meanwhile, Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene had her Twitter account “permanently suspended” on January 2, 2022. The far-right Georgia politician had pushed baseless conspiracy theories that questioned the safety of coronavirus vaccines and the efficacy of wearing face masks to mitigate the risk of infections. 303

In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro’s popularity had hit the lowest point of his time in office, a Datafolha poll showed on September 16, with 53% of respondents disapproving of him ahead of a presidential election next year. The pollster’s last survey, in July, showed 51% of respondents disapproved of the far-right former army captain. This month’s poll showed 22% rate him as good or excellent, down from 24% in the earlier poll. 304

In Canada, officials had been considering designating the Proud Boys, a far-right organization that had promoted and engaged in political violence in the United States and Canada, as a terrorist organization alongside groups like Boko Haram, Isis and al-Qaida. This development came following the role the group, founded in 2016 by the Canadian Gavin McInnes, had in the mob attack on the US Capitol on January 6. Bill Blair, Canada’s public safety minister, said his office was closely watching the Proud Boys and the “ideologically-motivated violent extremists” within the group. Blair told CTV News “They are white supremacists, antisemitics, Islamophobic, misogynist groups. They’re all hateful, they’re all dangerous ... We’re working very diligently to ensure that where the evidence is available, where we have the intelligence, that we’ll deal appropriately with those organizations.” Calls for a terrorist designation were first made the week before by Jagmeet Singh, leader of the New Democratic party, who accused the Proud Boys of helping to execute “an act of domestic terrorism” when members of the group stormed the Capitol. “Their founder is Canadian. They operate in Canada, right now,” tweeted Singh. 305



In February 2021, Proud Boys Canada had dissolved itself, and said it had done nothing wrong, according to a statement by the organization on May 2. In February, Canada said the group posed an active security threat and played a “pivotal role” in the deadly attack on the U.S. Capitol in January by supporters of then-President Donald Trump. U.S. authorities had charged several members of the Proud Boys in connection with the Jan. 6 assault.³⁰⁶ **Also in Canada**, 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. 307

Still in Canada, Meta, the company that owned Facebook and Instagram had banned Quebec far-right group Atalante from its platforms. Atalante was a far-right group based in Quebec, and its Facebook page was described as openly neo-Nazi by many experts. A spokesperson for Meta said the decision was made in accordance with its policy on dangerous individuals and organizations. The statement noted the group was removed because of its affiliation with hate groups and appropriation of hate group symbols, including Nazi symbols and salutes. The company had also deleted groups affiliated with Atalante on the platforms. Atalante’s page also featured displays of support for the Italian fascist group CasaPound. Under a post endorsing “national preference,” the idea of prioritizing natural-born citizens in the allocation of resources, multiple commentators wrote “*les nôtres avant les autres*” — “us before them.” Moreover, the group’s leader was charged with criminal harassment and intimidation, in connection with a confrontation at the Montreal offices of Vice Media in 2018. The move by Meta came two and a half years after Facebook banned several other organizations and individuals it found to be engaged in promoting hate, including Faith Goldy, Kevin Goudreau, Canadian Nationalist Strikeforce, Wolves of Odin and the Soldiers of Odin (also known as Canadian Infidels), in 2019. 308

Meanwhile, a Conservative candidate in Nova Scotia had apologized for sharing social media posts about Muslims and immigrants. “In the past I have shared social media posts without thinking about how these posts might hurt or offend others,” Central Nova candidate Steven Cotter said in a statement Saturday forwarded to CTV News by the party. 309

Somewhere in Europe, on 25-26 January 2021, The European Network of Equality Bodies (EQUINET) hosted an online workshop to tackle discrimination and intolerance against Muslims. The event was co-organised with the European Commission’s coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred. The workshop, came after a high-level political event held in June 2020, gathered civil society organisations and national equality bodies to build links and work together on topics related to anti-Muslim hatred and discrimination. Throughout the workshop, experts from both equality bodies and civil society organisations elaborated on the phenomenon and shared insights on the challenges Muslim people experience in Europe. Contributions from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE-ODIHR), the European Network against Racism (ENAR), the European Commission and Equinet highlighted the legislative framework for equality and gave an outlook on possible developments in the future. In small geographically based discussion groups, participants identified both the key challenges and practical solutions to improving the cooperation between equality bodies and civil society organisations at national level. ³¹⁰

Still in Europe, in order to support the member cities of ECCAR (European Coalition of Cities against Racism) to tackle anti-Muslim racism, ECCAR established a permanent working group led by the City of Heidelberg in December 2020 that had received funds from the European Commission for the year 2021. In June 2021, ECCAR hired Ms. Linda Hyökki as the coordinator of the working group. Ms. Hyökki was writing her Ph.D. thesis on anti-Muslim racism in Finland with the Ibn Haldun University and had previously worked as an expert with academic and public institutions. Together with ECCAR’s member cities, researchers, and civil society actors, Ms. Hyökki would work to analyze how local governments could act against anti-Muslim racism in their capacities as democratic institutions, employers, service providers, and public contractors. The project reflected the EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025, which pointed out the important role played by cities and local governments in the fight against racism and discrimination. In the context of the International Day against

Anti-Muslim Racism, ECCAR had launch the project with the member cities on June 30. At the end of the project, the policies would be collected, reviewed, categorized, and made freely accessible online. ³¹¹

In Spain, on January 30, Twitter announced that it had suspended the official account of Spanish right-wing Vox party due to a tweet that violated the policy of hate speech. The ban on Twitter came after the party warned in one of its tweets about what it described as “the dangerous Islamization of the region of Catalonia”, in the north of the country, and denounced the increasing number of Muslims residing in the second-largest multicultural region in Spain after Madrid. Vox’s post claimed that Muslims “account for approximately 0.2% (of the population) and are responsible for 93% of (police) complaints. Most are from the Maghreb.” They added that in the face of this “imported crime”, which they claimed that it had been ignored by other parties, “only Vox remains!”. Twitter, stated that they deemed the post to be “Inciting fear against a group of people because of their origin or nationality”, which they assert “has no place in our service.” ³¹²

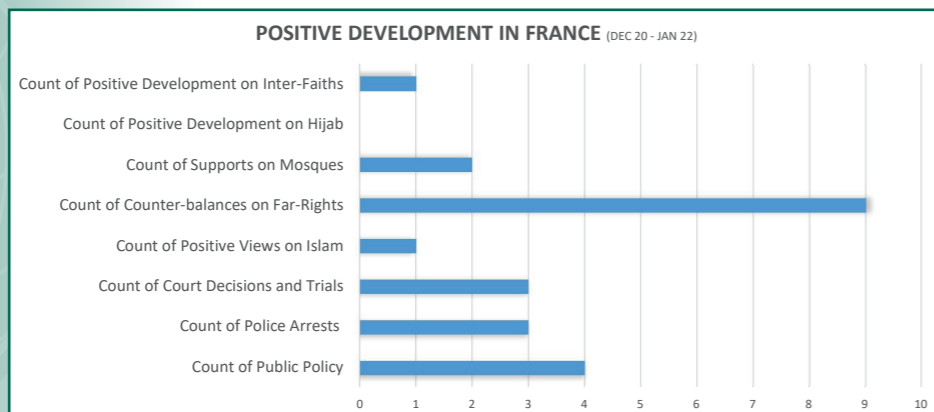
Meanwhile, Spanish leftist parties, including the governing Socialist Party (PSOE), took legal action against the far-right Vox party for what they described as an attack on migrant minors on a campaign billboard ahead of a regional election in Madrid on May 4. The message on the Vox billboard used the 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 4 May. ³¹³

In Italy, 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. 314

Also in Italy, the Union of Islamic Communities and Organizations in Italy (UCOII) had launched a crowdfunder to set up an Italian Anti-Islamophobia Network (NIA), to counter anti Muslim sentiment in the country. The network would collect reports of Islamophobia through an online portal and experts on the field. It would also launch communication campaigns and develop local training events against Islamophobia in Italy. According to a study quoted by UCOII, 65 percent of Italian Muslims claimed that they had suffered from violence, prejudice or discrimination. The same research showed that women were the most affected victims. “For example, if they wear religious symbols, they frequently become targets of verbal aggression in public and hate speech on social media. Plus, they experience difficulties in accessing the labor market,” it said. 315

Still in Italy, an effort by former Trump advisor Steve Bannon to set up a right-wing “gladiator school” in an 800-year-old Italian monastery had seemingly been derailed, the Art Newspaper reported on September 8. The Italian culture ministry evicted Benjamin Harnwell, a British Catholic conservative and Bannon’s ally, from the medieval monastery, the paper said. Bannon in March was infuriated when his group’s lease for the building — the Certosa di Trisulti — was revoked by Italy’s Council of State, which cited reasons such as poor financial planning for the move, per the Daily Beast. 316

In France, on January 18, State-approved French Muslim leaders had signed a charter in which they denounced accusations of racism against France, and pledged to recognise “equality between men and women” and to combat “political Islam.” The French Council for Muslim Worship, which was approved by the state to represent Islam in France, formally approved a “charter of principles” for Islam in France. The text, demanded by President Emmanuel Macron in November 2020 as part of his offensive against “separatism,” also affirms the compatibility of Islam with secularism. The text stated: “We reaffirm from the outset that neither our religious convictions nor any other reason can supplant the principles which found the law and the constitution of the Republic. No religious conviction can be invoked to escape the obligations of citizens ... From a religious and ethical point of view, Muslims, whether nationals or foreign residents, are bound to France by a pact. This commits them to respect national cohesion, public order and the laws of the Republic. Any signatory to this charter therefore undertakes, with respect and dignity, to work for civil peace and to fight against all forms of violence and hatred.” The charter also pledged to reject foreign funding of religious institutions and condemned accusations of racism against France. Mr. Macron said the charter offers “a clarification of how the Muslim community is organised and would also provide a framework for a new National Council of Imams that will be responsible for vetting imams practicing in the country.” 317



On January 20, The Coordination Committee of Turkish Muslims in France (CCMTF) and Milli Gorus Islamic Confederation (CMIG) along with the Faith and Practice movement, had denounced the “charter of principles” of Islam, which was approved and presented to President Emmanuel Macron. They demanded amendments to the text of the 10 point charter which Macron helmed as “foundational text for relations between the State, Islam and France.” The joint statement, said: “We believe that certain passages and formulations of the submitted text are likely to weaken the bonds of trust between the Muslims of France and the Nation. In addition, certain statements undermine the honor of Muslims, with an accusatory and marginalizing character.” The three organizations added, that the charter was approved without obtaining a full consensus of other integral components of the CFCM, including the regional and departmental councils, imams who would be affected by the decision. It cited the Great Mosque of Saint Denis de la Réunion, which was one of the founding components of the CFCM, had refused to sign this charter. 318

Also in France, Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, had issued a statement to comment on the interview conducted with the party leader of the French right-wing populist Rassemblement National (RN) Marine Le Pen, which was published in the German weekly newspaper Die Zeit on May 5. The president of the Conference of European Rabbis (CER), said: “It is not the headscarf that is a disturbance to public order, but Ms Le Pen. This is clearly the wrong signal to the Jews, Muslims and other religious minorities living in France. It expresses Ms Le Pen’s fear of foreigners. She is dividing society

instead of uniting it, ...Le Pen’s demand is nothing other than an attack on the fundamental and human right of religious freedom, which people in many places in Europe are now repeatedly trying to restrict. This is an alarming trend for all religious minorities.” 319

Meanwhile, 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%. 320

At the same time in France, security personnel had detained two far-right activists as they were discussing purchasing arms on the instant messaging application Telegram. The General Directorate of Internal Security apprehended the activists in southwestern Montauban and Gironde provinces. A preliminary investigation was initiated by the National Anti-Terrorist Prosecutor’s Office against the activists for forming a terrorist organization and “*direct provocation through an online means of communication to an act of terrorism.*” In searches at the activists’ residences, dozens of weapons and ammunition as well as equipment for making explosives were also discovered.321

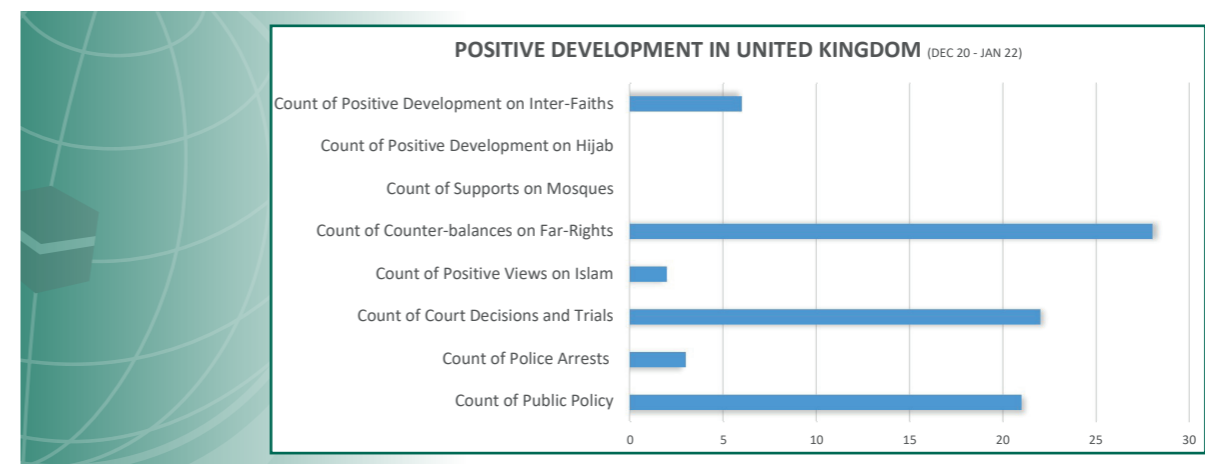
On October 22, French police arrested the far-right extremist Remy Daillet for “plans for coups d’état and other violent actions,” and “association with criminal terrorist actors.” He allegedly led a 300-person nation-wide

fascist paramilitary organisation, which had planned attacks on the Élysée presidential palace and other institutions in a coup d'état. On April 12, Daillet allegedly emailed multiple deputies and senators, threatening them with violence in response to the imposition of mandatory vaccination. *“The Republic is no longer the dominant idea,”* he said, warning that *“the hour of reckoning”* had come and that *“the popular overthrow is inevitable against a genocidal government that had promoted a vaccine that kills... It’s the last chance we’re giving you.”* The day of action would involve a direct attack on the Élysée Palace and nerve centers of the capital, including the National Assembly and the Senate. They would also take control of media in order to control live broadcasts. *“The aim would have been to control broadcasts as long as possible before police removed us, to stay at least 3-4 hours before we were removed,”* Sylvain P., one of the “captains” of the paramilitary organisation in the Ile-de-France region around Paris, said during questioning.³²²

In UK, on December 15, Julie Burchill, a British Journalist, had lost a book contract after her islamophobic comments on twitter with the journalist Ash Sarkar. In a statement, Burchill’s publisher, the Hachette imprint Little, Brown, said they “will no longer be publishing Julie Burchill’s book,” because of the indefensible language against Sarkar. Burchill, a columnist for the British newspaper the Sunday Telegraph, had “crossed a line with regard to race and religion” and book had now become “inextricably linked with those views” according to the publishers statement. On December 13, Burchill had began tweeting at Sarkar after she criticized Rod Liddle for a 2012 Spectator article, in which he claimed to have chosen against a career as a teacher because he feared he would become a sex offender. Burchill responded to Sarkar’s criticism of Liddle, writing: “Can you please remind me of the age of the Prophet Mohammad’s first wife? Thank you in anticipation!”. Sarkar, who is Muslim, responded by quote-tweeting Burchill’s comment, writing: “Julie Burchill, who once I suppose was a well-regarded journalist, has quite openly subjected me to Islamophobia on here. I’m a big girl – it’s not going to upset me – but I do find it strange that none of her colleagues or friends in the industry seems to have a problem with

it ... I just wonder if there’s some code of conduct at the Sunday Telegraph which would mean that outright racism – for instance, falsely accusing me of ‘worshipping a pedophile’ – was a bit of a no-no” according to Sarkar’s comments on twitter.³²³

On February 16, leading Human rights organisations announced that they would boycott the UK government’s review of the anti-extremist Prevent program to protest the appointment of William Shawcross as its chair. A joint statement accused Mr Shawcross of expressing “patently Islamophobic views” in the past. Human rights organisations had pointed to an appearance at the 2012 World Affairs Council, in Texas, where during a conversation about terror plots, Mr Shawcross said: “Europe and Islam is one of the greatest, most terrifying problems of our future.” The 17 groups, included Liberty, Amnesty International and the Runnymede Trust, said in the statement, that the appointment of Shawcross shows the review was there to “simply rubber-stamp” the controversial and divisive strategy, and they would not contribute to the exercise. “It is apparent that the government intends to use this review to whitewash the strategy and give it a clean bill of health, without interrogating, in good faith, its impacts on human rights and fundamental freedoms,” the statement added. The groups, said they would launch their own “parallel review” which would look at alleged discrimination and human rights violations under the Prevent strategy.³²⁴



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”.³²⁵

Also in UK, 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.”³²⁶

Still in UK, 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.”³²⁷

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.³²⁸

Meanwhile, a Muslim engineer at a supply plant for nuclear reactors received a £3,500 payout for direct religious discrimination after a false rumor, which was passed from staff to management, had resulted in counter-terror police visiting Mo Master at his home. Master, who had worked at Spring fields Fuels in Preston for 28 years, had taken a voluntary redundancy payment of around £70,000 in February 2018, in which he cited allegations about the loss of flexible working to attend Friday prayers and that a colleague had said: “we live in a Christian country who has given you permission to go and pray during working hours” which the tribunal ruled were out of time. An extension, however, was given so Mr Master could appeal the discriminatory Prevent referral, which occurred after Simon Johnson, the plant’s head of security, contacted the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), after spurious rumours persisted that Master had said that British soldiers based in the Middle East “should die”. Judge Mark Leach noted: “Had the claimant not been Muslim, this rumour would not have persisted to

the extent that it did”. Judge Leach expressed surprise that no documents or email to the ONR were generated, or even what the ONR had said in response before making their Prevent referral. 329

On April 16, Tobias Powell, a far-right sympathiser who called for a race war, shared pictures of his tattoo containing a Nazi emblem and set up an Apple ID under the name Adolf Hitler had been convicted of hate crime offences. Powell, used Twitter to claim a ‘civil war’ was needed ‘to stop the ethnic suicide of white people’. In a series of tweets, Powell, from the coastal village of Pagham, near Bognor Regis, West Sussex, showed support for banned neo-Nazi group National Action. When anti-terrorism police raided Powell’s home the found literature on white supremacy and a number of electronic devices. Powell also wrote a letter to his local MP Nick Gibbs about his concerns over Sharia Law. Detective Chief Superintendent Kath Barnes, Head of CTPSE, said: “The evidence gathered during the investigation showed that Powell had some very unacceptable views ... Whilst this was not a terrorism case, the nature of the rhetoric Powell had shared on social media, meant that it was only right for specialist officers from Counter Terrorism Policing to conduct a thorough investigation ... We know there is a fine line between hate speech and terrorism. Showing support for terrorist organisations is not acceptable and if you do that, you should expect to be investigated by us.” 330

On April 22, a teacher, named Damien Ryan, was banned from the classroom for life after he ranted against Muslim on his YouTube channel. Ryan, who worked as a teacher at Saint Pius X Catholic High School in Rotherham, said Muslims “deserve no lands” and “deserve no countries” in a series of tirades which he posted on his Twitter and on a YouTube channel named The Ryan Review. Ryan, said Islam was a “hateful bigoted fascist ideology”. The videos were first spotted by a concerned parent, which resulted in a police visit to ryan’s home. Although no criminal offences had been committed, the school were informed, which prompted an investigation. A professional conduct panel found Ryan guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may brought the profession into disrepute. In

a report published on the government website and updated on April 22, 2021, the panel said he showed some remorse, but ultimately the decision was made to hand him a lifetime teaching ban, which he can appeal in December 2022. 331

On May 7, NICOLA Sturgeon had hailed voters for rejecting a “far-right thug” at the ballot box as she held her Glasgow Southside seat with a comfortable majority. The First Minister said she was “proud” that convicted racist Jayda Fransen, former deputy leader of Britain First, managed just 46 votes. Ms Sturgeon was praised after she stood up to Ms Fransen during an ugly confrontation outside a Glasgow polling station On May 6. In a speech after she won Glasgow Southside, Ms Sturgeon said: “The far-right thug who led that confrontation got 46 votes and I am proud that once again Glasgow Southside has shown the racists and the fascists that they are not welcome in Glasgow Southside, they are not welcome in Glasgow and they are not welcome anywhere in Scotland, and let that be a note of unity.” Ms Fransen, who was standing as an independent, was found guilty 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 in Luton in November 2016. She was also convicted of another religiously aggravated harassment in 2018, which saw her sentenced to 36 weeks in prison. 332

Meanwhile, anti-fascist campaigners had been celebrating a dismal performance by far-right candidates in elections around the UK, from Scotland to council polls in England. The far-right group For Britain got fewer than 50 votes in 25 of the 47 council wards for which results were available on May 7. More than 100 votes were secured in only 10 of the wards contested by the party, which had attracted former British National party members, and argues “Islamic doctrine and freedom are entirely incompatible”. Nick Lowles, the CEO of Hope Not Hate, said the results showed how politically irrelevant the British far right had become. After the BNP’s collapse in 2010, many supporters were swept up by Ukip and then the Brexit party, he said, while some of the same voters had since switched to the Conservatives. “With [Boris Johnson’s] pro-Brexit and rightwing

populist agenda, which includes strong anti-immigration messaging and deliberate manipulation and hyping of a cultural war, there is currently very little political space for traditional far-right parties obsessed with racial nationalism and Islamophobia,” he said. Ukip was wiped out in the assembly elections in Wales, in which they lost all their members of the Welsh Senedd after the 2016 election, when it won seven seats. 333

Also in UK, 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.” 334

Still in UK, a man placed rocks with offensive messages, on top of ‘dirty’ toilet paper, at the entrance to Stirling’s Islamic Centre. Dean McGowan had appeared at Stirling Sheriff Court on June 16. Fiscal depute Rebecca Reid told the court that a witness had been walking along Burghmuir Road on August 26, 2020 when he spotted two similar rocks on walls, one of either side of the entrance to the centre. The witness noticed that scrawled on one rock was ‘F*** off’ and ‘B*****’ and that each had circles, marked in white, with crosses to represent a shooting target, said Ms Reid. The court heard they had been placed on what was perceived to be dirty toilet

paper but analysis of the paper had not yet been carried out. When police recovered CCTV from the Islamic Centre, it showed McGowan was placing the rocks on the walls. Sheriff Robertson deferred sentence on McGowan, of Beatty Avenue, Stirling, for a week to allow enquiries to be made. He said: “I want to be certain what I am dealing with here. This is strange, bizarre, behaviour”. On June 23, Sheriff Robertson sentenced McGowan to 200 hours of unpaid work as a direct alternative to custody, and placed him under social work supervision for 18 months. 335

Further, a Walsall councillor had been suspended by Labour after been accused of Islamophobia. A complaint had been made against Blakenall ward member Ian Robertson. The Local Democracy Reporting Service was told a social media post by Councillor Robertson in which he posted a photo and full address of a house suspected of breaking Covid rules, before following up with a comment about Muslims was what prompted the official complaint. 336

Meanwhile, a neo-Nazi student who created two extremist groups and promoted a “distorted and wicked cause” had been jailed. Andrew Dymock, from Bath, led the outlawed groups System Resistance Network (SRN) and Sonnenkrieg Division. A judge said Dymock was “driven by an extremist mindset” and had taken the path of “total hatred and bigotry”. He was convicted of 15 offences and jailed for seven years, with a further three years on extended license. 337

At the same time, a series of events have been launched at the Birmingham Central Mosque marking the beginning of Islamophobia Awareness Month. Founded in 2012, the month-long programme of events aimed to spread awareness around the impact of Islamophobia on British Muslims living in the UK. In the event, speakers discussed the definition of Islamophobia and the importance of the Muslim communities supporting organisations or individual targeted with hate crime. Throughout the month, the mosque arranged events like Muslim women’s self-defence classes, coffee mornings, Islamophobia workshops for the youth and a Muslim women’s panel. 338

Further, a few hundred students took part in November event, a show of solidarity to combat anti-Islamophobic violence. Five months after four members of a London Muslim family were run down while out for an evening walk, students at Western University took a few steps to push back. A few hundred students and supporters took part in the Shalwar Kameez walk against Islamophobia and Racism. Shalwar kameez referred to the traditional loose-fitting clothing worn by many Muslim men and women. Some of the speakers said the June 6 attack highlighted something they had long known: That being visibly Muslim can turn any follower of Islam into a target. Opiyo Oloya, newly hired associate vice-president of equity, diversity and inclusion, offered support from the campus community for students who've become targets of racism and anti-Islamic hate. 339

On October 2, Rafal Ziemkiewicz, who had been accused of anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and homophobic views, was denied entry to the UK. That's sparked a wave of online abuse against a British MP who had previously called him out. Poland had said it would summon the British ambassador to explain why controversial far-right agitator Rafal Ziemkiewicz was denied entrance to the UK, which sparked a furious response from his nationalist supporters. Rafal Ziemkiewicz, a far-right journalist and writer who campaigners had accused of pushing anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and homophobic views. On 2020, Poland's Human Rights Ombudsman accused Ziemkiewicz of anti-Semitism after he stated on public television that Jews had cooperated with Germans during the Holocaust. According to a Home Office letter, posted on Twitter by Huq, Ziemkiewicz was refused permission to enter "due to [his] conduct and views which are at odds with British values and likely to cause offence." 340

Meanwhile, the Conservative party had suspended a councillor and was investigating allegations that he had been a secret supporter of a far-right organisation. Tim Wills, a borough councillor in Worthing, West Sussex, was alleged to have been a supporter of Patriotic Alternative (PA), a racial nationalist group which sought the removal of ethnic minorities from the UK. In discussions on a PA channel of the Telegram social media app, he

was alleged to have called for the promotion of conspiracy theories such as "white genocide" and urged the group to "infiltrate and influence those in power". Calls for Wills to be expelled from the Conservative party were led by the antiracist campaign group Hope Not Hate, which published the results of an investigation into him as Boris Johnson was addressing his party's annual conference on October 6. 341

Also, on January 13, 2022, Philip Normal had resigned as a Labour councillor for Lambeth, after he was accused of racism and Islamophobia. Across a catalogue of tweets dating back to 2009 and 2014 that surfaced on January 12, 2022. Normal wondered why "Muslim women walk like penguins" and described "Muslim extremists" on the London Underground. 342

The UK's solicitor general, Alex Chalk QC, had called for far-right and Islamist extremists to be punished equally, he said there should be "no hierarchy" with terrorists. Chalk spoke after the Court of Appeal in London overturned an "unduly lenient" sentence handed down to a convicted neo-Nazi, Ben John, who as part of his punishment had been told to read novels by 18th-century writers, including Jane Austen, instead of extremist material. John was resentenced to two years in prison. The solicitor general argued for him to receive a harsher sentence, he told the Independent: "Those who reach for terrorism to advance their warped worldview, whether that's extreme right-wing terrorism or Islamist terrorism, or whether it's anarchic terrorism, need to understand that the authorities will intervene and they should expect a robust penalty." John was convicted of possessing a document which contained instructions on how to make explosives. The far-right extremist previously had been referred to the UK's counter-extremist Prevent program twice, but was found to have white supremacist, antisemitic and satanic material, including propaganda from the neo-Nazi terrorist groups National Action and Atomwaffen Division. Chalk told the Independent: "We thought that, given all the circumstances — the nature of the terrorism manual he was in possession of, plus the failure to respond to efforts to de-radicalize him through Prevent — meant that a suspended sentence didn't meet the justice of the case and was insufficient to protect the public." 343

In Germany, on May 7, German intelligence services said, they would widen their surveillance of Islamophobic protest movement Pegida in its home state of Saxony, as the group had become “extremist” and “anti-constitutional”. While Pegida had previously attracted “heterogeneous” support and taken “moderate” positions, it had developed “an increasingly right-wing extremist orientation”, Saxony’s domestic intelligence agency LfV said in a statement. “By regularly offering right-wing extremists a platform to propagate anti-constitutional ideologies, this movement acts as a hinge between extremists and non-extremists,” said agency president Dirk-Martin Christian. He added that “all people and activities” within the group would be put under surveillance, with the exception of those who took part in peaceful demonstrations. Pegida, which campaigns against what it called the “Islamisation of the West”, was born in October 2014 with xenophobic marches every Monday evening. The movement’s popularity coincided with the rise of the far-right AfD party, which entered parliament for the first time in 2017 on an anti-refugee and anti-immigration platform. Pegida had previously been declared as extremist and put under observation by spy agencies in other German states such as Bavaria. Germany’s domestic intelligence agencies monitor a range of individuals and groups from across the political spectrum who were suspected of extremist tendencies. ³⁴⁴

Also in Germany, police had arrested a man who sent dozens of threatening letters to politicians, lawyers and journalists. The letters contained “hateful, insulting and threatening content” and were signed with the acronym of a neo-Nazi group, officials said on May 4. The suspect was detained after a search of his apartment in the capital city Berlin, prosecutors said. The unemployed man accused of been behind the campaign had previous convictions for “numerous crimes, including ones motivated by right-wing ideology,” prosecutors said. Police said the suspect had sent almost 100 letters to people and organisations across Germany and Austria since August 2018. The letters were mainly addressed to public figures known for their commitment against racism and anti-Semitism, as well as to immigrants themselves. Threats were written under the pseudonym NSU 2.0 - a reference to the far-right National Socialist Underground movement that was responsible for a string of violent crimes and assassinations between 1998 and 2011. ³⁴⁵

Still in Germany, Germany would strengthen the security services, clamp down on “enemies lists” and convene a special task force on hatred which targeted Muslims as part of a major package of measures against far-right extremism. The set of 89 proposals was signed off by Chancellor Angela Merkel’s Cabinet on May 12 after a series of far-right atrocities that rattled Germany. The package included tighter gun laws, measures to tackle online hatred and closer co-operation between security services. There would be more funding for education and civil society groups and a new government-commissioned study into racism in Germany. “Never before has the government done so much to tackle right-wing extremism, racism and anti-Semitism,” said Interior Minister Horst Seehofer. One of the specific proposals was for the distribution of enemies lists, also described by the government as “death lists”, to be made a specific criminal offence. The lists were used by extremists to intimidate their enemies into silence because they feared reprisals from the far right, the government said. Measures would be drawn up to tackle extremism in the German Army after a report found hundreds of suspected cases in the security services. Another proposal envisages an Independent Expert Council on Islamophobia, which would issue a report within two years on racism against Muslims. The body was tasked with an independent look into the overlap between Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. The proposals emerged from a cabinet committee chaired by Mrs Merkel, which was set up the year before after an extremist opened fire at two shisha lounges in Hanau and killed 10 people. ³⁴⁶

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.” ³⁴⁷

On October 11, The co-chief of Germany’s far-right AfD Joerg Meuthen said that he would not seek to continue as head of the eurosceptic and islamophobic party. After six and a half “incredibly challenging” but also “enriching” years, Meuthen said in a statement that he would “no longer bear the role of federal spokesman” for the party. 348

Meanwhile, the major headlines which came out of Germany’s federal election on September 26 were about the Social Democrats’ win and the defeat of the Christian Democrats after Angela Merkel’s 16-year leadership run. Many feared that Germany might shift to the right, following countries like Austria or Switzerland, where xenophobic parties had long been powerful. Instead, Germany’s far right, anti-immigrant Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) lost 11 seats, and received about 10 percent of the vote.³⁴⁹

In Hungary, 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

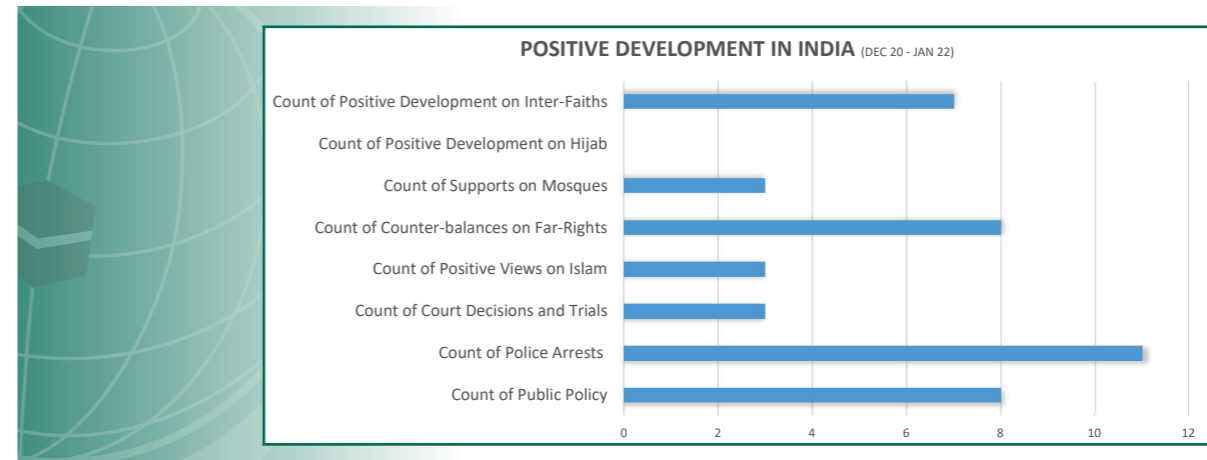
similar geographic split on China also emerged, said Nau. The researchers drew their conclusions based, in part, by digging into European Parliament voting records spanning 2014 to 2019. 350

In India, Police in Meerut, a city in the western part of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, had launched an investigation into a Hindu leader who called for an economic and social boycott of Muslims, at a gathering in the Chaudhary Charan Singh University on January 10. In a video circulated online, Swami Anand Swaroop, a Hindu leader and the president of Varanasi-based outfit Shankaracharya Parishad, said: “One who reads the Quran becomes a beast, they are no longer human. For those who wish to remain connected to India, they must give up the Quran and namaz. If we start boycotting Muslims socially and economically, they will embrace Hinduism.” He added, “We want an army of one crore Hindu youth. We don’t need swayamsevak, we need a swayam-sena now. Pick up swords, guns or whatever you have, war has been declared and it will go on till we have a Hindu rashtra.” The video was shared by a Twitter user named Md Asif Khan On January 11. On January 12, The Meerut Police said the matter was being investigated by its cyber cell and necessary action would be taken. This was not the first time that Swaroop had made Islamophobic remarks. His Twitter timeline showed similar tweets and also retweets calling Muslims and other non-Hindu practitioners ‘demons’. 351

Also in India, on February 19, The Human Rights Watch (HRW) had published a report in which they accused the Indian government of adopting laws and policies that “systematically discriminate against Muslims and stigmatize critics of the government.” HRW’s report came only days ahead February 23, which marked the first anniversary of the violence in New Delhi, where 53 people were killed, 40 of them were Muslims. The violence came after protests started against India’s Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) passed in 2019, which had excluded Muslims. “Instead of conducting a credible and impartial investigation, including into allegations that [ruling Bharatiya Janata Party] BJP leaders incited violence and police officials were complicit in attacks, the authorities have targeted activists

and protest organizers ...The authorities have lately responded to another mass protest, this time by farmers, by vilifying minority Sikh protesters and opening investigations into their alleged affiliation with separatist groups,” the report said. Since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, various legislative and other actions had been taken, which legitimated discrimination against religious minorities and enabled violent Hindu nationalism, HRW said. “These actions violate domestic law and India’s obligations under international human rights law that prohibits discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or religion, and require the governments to provide residents with equal protection of the law,” HRW said. Kavita Krishnan, an activist, and secretary of the All India Progressive Women’s Association, said in response to the HRW Report, “It is an acknowledgment of what is happening in India. I have no doubt that the government is targeting minorities and speaking the language of bigotry every day.” 352

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.” 353



On July 1, a research from the London School of Economics and Political Science, found that Christians and Muslims who were living in India were facing “imminent existential threat;” and Open Doors USA was calling on the Biden administration and the international community to hold India’s government accountable for the violence and discrimination against religious minorities. “We urge the Biden administration to immediately convene an international fact-finding commission to investigate these acts of violence and other human rights violations against religious minorities in India,” said Open Doors USA President & CEO, David Curry. Commissioned by persecution watchdog organization Open Doors, the report featured eight case studies of violence and discrimination against Christians or Muslims in India, which ranked #10 on Open Doors’ 2021 World Watch List. Data showed vigilante mob attacks, state harassment, and attempt to drive Muslims and Christians from their land and their homes, and censorship were metamorphosed in alarmed ways, and – most disturbingly – these attacks were undergirded by support from unjust government officials who look the other way or refuse to acknowledge the atrocities. Researchers found that various officials such as district administrators, lower court judges, police and local government bureaucrats used loopholes and misused procedural provisions to harass religious minority groups. The report cites dozens of specific examples of harassment, violence and perversion of justice against Christians and Muslims, which included:

- Collusion of local law enforcement with lynch mobs from the Hindu community.
- Use of legal means to threaten or arrest Christian and Muslim victims/survivors of Hindu mob attacks.

- Demand that the victims / survivors provide evidence of attacks even when the attackers had filmed the entire sequence and/or uploaded it to social media.
- Refusal by police and law enforcement to arrest or deter mobs from the physical intimidation and violation of the properties and persons of Christians and Muslims.
- Arson against places of worship for Christians; arson against the possessions – for instance books and religious texts – of Christians and Muslims.
- Intimidation and death threats against Christian and Muslim victims of Hindutva violence in order to prevent them from justice. 354

Meanwhile, BJP leader and former chairperson of Karnataka State Minorities Commission and Minorities Development Corporation Anwar Manippadi urged the government to alleviate the sufferings of Muslim minority community in Karnataka saying they were being ill-treated. In a letter to CM Basavaraj Bommai, Mr. Manippadi said, *“It is so disheartening to see our government run by a party supposed to be a party with a difference - BJP and having trust and hope in Prime Minister Modi Ji’s concept of ‘Sab Ka Saath Sab Ka Vikas’ which here in Karnataka is not being practised. It is painful to know of the sufferings of Muslims in Karnataka everywhere. I meet my Muslim brethren and they complain that BJP Government is ill-treating, harassing and threatening them with dire consequences.”* He said the Muslim community in Doddanagamangala village in Bengaluru South taluk was unable to get a burial ground despite a court order in 2005. During the pandemic, Muslims had to bury dead bodies in far-off places incurring huge expenditure. There was no Muslim burial ground in the village and up to 6-7 km in surrounding areas. The two-acre land in Survey No. 5 was not given to Muslims despite proper allotment, he said. He urged to take right decisions so that Muslims feel they were part of the nation. 355

Also, a Delhi court had laid charges of arson and rioting against a father-son duo for allegedly damaging and setting a Mosque on fire, vandalism, and stone-pelting during the February 2020 riots. Mithhan Singh and his son Jony Kumar were accused of allegedly being part of a violent mob that raised slogans Jai Shree Ram and damaged the mosque in Delhi’s

Khajuri Khas area on February 25, 2020. This prompted the complainant to climb the Fatima Masjid to save his life, and the mob then damaged the mosque and set it on fire. Mithhan Singh also exhorted his son to throw a small gas cylinder into the mosque, and along with the mob threw bottles containing inflammable material upon the houses belonging to a particular community. Communal clashes broke out in northeast Delhi in February 2020, after violence between the Citizenship (Amendment) Act supporters and its protesters spiraled out of control leaving at least 53 people dead and over 700 injured. 356

The Indian Express, a prominent nationwide English daily newspaper, was under fire for an ‘Islamophobic’ front page advertisement funded by the Uttar Pradesh government. The ad promoted the UP claimed that there were no more riots happening in the state after the BJP came to power. In an apparent reference to Muslims, the ad depicted a man with surma (kohl) applied around his eyes and a beard as the rioter. The rioter had learnt his lesson, the ad said. Frequent contributors to the daily condemned the newspaper for carrying the advertisement. Professor Apoorvanand of the Delhi University, who was a frequent columnist for the newspaper said that he was shocked by the ‘open islamophobic propaganda’. He announced disassociation with the paper as a ‘writer’ and ‘buyer’. “Shocked to see this open Islamophobic propaganda. Know the editors are secular but cannot rationalize it. In my small way, I register my protest by disassociating with it as a writer and buyer. Sad as I valued my association with it but there is something more sacred at stake,” he said in a tweet. Economist Jayathi Ghosh, a regular contributor at the Express also announced dissociation with the paper and said the daily was promoting hatred by carrying the UP govt’s ad on its front page. 357

In Australia, on December 9, Australia’s Home Affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, asked the federal Parliament’s Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security to open an inquiry into ‘extremist movements and radicalism in Australia’. The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation said recently right-wing terror accounted for up to 40 per cent of its current workload,

and that an attack was possible in Australia. The inquiry's terms of reference ask politicians to probe both far-right and Islamist terrorism. However, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate and Shadow Minister for Home Affairs, Kristina Keneally – who led the charge for the investigation – said the inquiry would focus largely on the far-right. “The responsibility we have in the parliament is to explain right-wing extremism to the community and engage the community to help us keep Australians safe,” she said. The inquiry would investigate how extremism had been affected by the COVID pandemic, which experts said it had supercharged some radical groups. It would also look at “the role of social media, encrypted communications platforms and the dark web” in fostering extremism – timely, considering the Royal Commission into the Christchurch terror attack found the Australian shooter had been influenced and radicalized by content on YouTube and Facebook. Dr Andre Oboler, CEO of the Online Hate Prevention Institute, said Australia had “room to improve” on how it deals with right-wing extremists. He welcomed scrutiny on how the internet was radicalizing or had helped in the planning of attacks, but warned the problem was bigger than simply cracking down on social media content or increasing police funding. He welcomed recent moves from Facebook to stamp out hate speech and extremist content online. However, Dr Oboler warned that radicals were simply moving to other, less-policed platforms that had sprung up as social media giants cracked down on extremists. 358

On March 22, The Britain-based neo-Nazi outfit Sonnenkrieg Division (SKD) became the first far-right organization to be **listed as a terror group in Australia**. SKD joined a list of 27 proscribed organizations, which had so far been exclusively jihadist or separatist groups. Peter Dutton, Australia's Minister for Home Affairs said in an emailed statement “SKD adheres to an abhorrent, violent ideology that encourages lone-wolf terrorist actors who would seek to cause significant harm to our way of life and our country.” The head of Australia's ASIO intelligence agency, Mike Burgess, said SKD and other right-wing groups accounted for 40% of terror-related investigations carried out in the country over the past 12 months. 359

Several Muslim associations, and grassroots advocates had written a **jointly signed letter to New South Wales (NSW) state Premier Dominic Perrottet** in Australia in which they condemned the state's Liberal Party government voting against a bill on Nov. 12, 2021, designed to protect Muslims from vilification, while similar protections already exist for Sikhs and Jewish people. The Anti-Discrimination (Religious Vilification) Bill 2021 (NSW) was defeated by a margin of four votes in the 93-member house due to votes against the bill by the state government, reported the Australasian Muslim Times (AMUST), a Sydney-based online and print community newspaper. The bill would have given NSW Muslims equal protection from vilification and hate campaigns, reports said. 360

In New Zealand, the Human Rights Commission had backed members of New Zealand's Muslim community and called for a film in development about the aftermath of the Christchurch Mosque attacks not to go ahead. “As a country, we have a responsibility to do all we can to ensure that Muslim New Zealanders are represented accurately in stories,” said chief human rights commissioner Paul Hunt. “We have an obligation to do all we can to ensure those stories come from a place of respect. It matters who is telling the stories and for whom those stories are being told, particularly when it is your story being told.” He echoed concerns raised by survivors and families of the 51 people killed in the terror attacks on March 15, 2019, particularly about a lack of consultation with the community and the “sidelining of those affected by focusing on the actions of the prime minister.... As the Human Rights Commission, we hear the Muslim community and we encourage others to hear them as well when they say this film should not go ahead,” Hunt said. The film's announcement was met with outrage, with survivors and victim's families said they had been “blindsided” and accused the producers of “white saviourism” in their concentration on the prime minister's response to the attacks. Ardern herself expressed reservations about the film. 361

Also in New Zealand, Police and the internet watchdog were working to remove offensive material about the Christchurch mosque attacks from online platforms. The content included an animation and what appeared to be grabs from the mosque attack video, Netsafe's Martin Cocker said.

They had contacted Facebook and Twitter and the provider of the GIF content, which he identified as Tenor, owned by Google. Police said they also contacted the platforms “to ensure it is removed”. “We are undertaking inquiries into its origin,” they told RNZ in a statement. The Chief Censor and Classification Office said the footage content was “a real concern” and “harmful”, particularly for attack survivors, and people should not share it.³⁶²

Still in New Zealand, a professor of Indian origin in New Zealand had been receiving abusive messages on social media for criticising “Hindutva extremism” through his work, which prompted the police to put in place plans for his safety, The New Zealand Herald reported on September 27. Mohan Dutta, the dean’s chair of communication at the Massey University, had in May published a paper on “Islamophobic elements” in the Hindutva ideology, according to the newspaper. Dutta and other academics had sought to differentiate the ideology from the “pluralist and democratic ethos” of Hinduism, The New Zealand Herald reported. “Hindutva extremism is the threat to Hinduism,” Dutta said. Hindutva is a Hindu nationalist ideology, which in India, is endorsed by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. Dutta, through his work, had called for a careful inspection of the presence of Hindutva in New Zealand, according to the newspaper. The professor had started to receive offensive messages in August after he delivered an online lecture ahead of an international conference titled, “Dismantling Global Hindutva”, The New Zealand Herald reported. ³⁶³

In The Occupied Palestinian Territory, on February 5, the international Criminal Court (ICC) had announced that it has jurisdiction in Palestine. The ICC judges rule had cleared the way for the chief prosecutor to investigate alleged atrocities despite fierce Israeli objections. Fatou Bensouda, a Gambian lawyer and the ICC chief prosecutor, had previously announced that she intends to open a formal inquiry into alleged war crimes in the occupied West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. However, due to Palestine’s status as an occupied territory rather than a sovereign country, she had waited for judges to “confirm” if the court, headquartered in The Hague, had the authority. ³⁶⁴

Public Policy

In US, on December 7, a Muslim man had made history after been appointed as the first Muslim chaplain to the California Legislature. Imam Mohammad Yasir Khan was appointed by Anthony Rendon, speaker of the California State Assembly, as the assembly chaplain for the 2021-22 session, according to a news release. In a statement Rendon said: “I’ve seen the growth of the Islamic community in my own district and have become close to both religious and civic leaders. Like them, Khan shows a strong desire to contribute to the spiritual and civic vitality of California. He has already done so in many ways.” Khan had served as a chaplain at his local county jails, sheriff’s offices and hospitals for the past six years. The main role of a State Assembly chaplain was to say a prayer at the beginning of each session, but Khan hopes to use this opportunity to bring the community closer together. The California chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-CA) had celebrated Khan’s appointment. According to CNN, Basim Elkarra, the executive director of CAIR-Sacramento Valley, said “This appointment sends a message of inclusion - that American Muslims are an integral part of our society. Despite all the hate Muslims have faced during four years under Trump’s administration, our community is resilient and continues to help and play critical roles in all aspects of society.” ³⁶⁵

On January 6, US President-elect Joe Biden had characterized the mob that stormed the U.S. Capitol as domestic terrorists. Mr. Biden said in remarks from Wilmington, Del. “Don’t dare call them protesters ... they were a riotous mob, Insurrectionists, Domestic terrorists.” Mr. Biden said he had planned to make a priority of passing a law against domestic terrorism, and he had been urged to create a White House post overseeing the fight against ideologically inspired violent extremists and increasing funding to combat them. Federal law had defined domestic terrorism as dangerous and illegal acts intended to coerce a population or influence the government. While domestic terrorism could be charged in some states, no generic federal crime exists. Domestic terrorism spans extremist ideologies, but it had been predominantly a far-right phenomenon in recent decades, according

to researchers. On January 7, Mr. Biden said, during remarks in which he formally introduced his pick for attorney general, Merrick Garland that, that his incoming Justice Department team would be independent. He added, law enforcement handled the Trump supporters who breached and vandalized the Capitol in a way that was different from how the Black Lives Matters protesters who demonstrated against racial injustice across American cities over the summer 2020 were treated. He said: “We all know that’s true.... And it’s unacceptable. Totally unacceptable.” 366

Also in US, the city of Lewiston, the second-largest city in Maine State, had added two holidays to the school calendar to mark the Muslim holiday known as Eid, which would be effective from 2021. The School Committee voted 8-1 to recognize two festivals - Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha - as significant events for the city’s Muslim community. “We will no longer have to ask kids to choose between their school and their faith,” Superintendent Jake Langlais told the Sun Journal. Kiernan Majerus-Collins, school committee member, had praised the committee’s vote and said: “This makes Lewiston a welcoming place where people will feel ownership, dignity and respect.” Ayesha Hall, equity resource officer for Lewiston Public Schools, said the change was not about days off. “It’s about celebrating the diversity of (Lewiston Public Schools). We have to make sure we are honoring diversity with action,” she said. 367

On January 20, President Joe Biden had reversed multiple immigration policies that formed the cornerstone of his predecessor’s time in the White House, including the 2017 travel ban on people from several predominantly Muslim countries. Mr. Biden had signed an executive order ending the travel ban on citizens from more than a dozen countries, including Eritrea, Yemen, Nigeria and Sudan. The ban which was criticized as a “Muslim ban” when it was first revealed, it went on to eventually include some non majority-Muslim nations. The incoming president had referred to the policy as discriminatory. The move to repeal the ban had been hailed by several civil rights organization, including the American Civil Liberties Union, which called the policy a “cruel Muslim ban that targeted Africans.” 368

On February 26, as many as 140 Democratic lawmakers had reintroduced a legislation in the US Congress to prevent future Muslim bans and prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion. The Muslim travel ban, introduced by former US President Donald Trump, targeted several Muslim-majority nations and restricted the entry of people from Iran, North Korea, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Somalia and Venezuela. President Joe Biden ended the Muslim ban on his day one in the office. In the House of Representatives, the National Origin-Based Antidiscrimination for Nonimmigrants (NO BAN) Act was reintroduced by House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler and Judy Chu, while in the Senate it was done by Senator Chris Coons. The legislation would strengthen the Immigration and Nationality Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, and restores the separation of powers by limiting overly broad executive authority to issue future travel bans.369

Still in US, Baltimore County public school leaders had removed an image depicting a negative stereotype of people who practice Islam from the school system’s online math curriculum. The lesson in question centered on a mathematical concept called radical expressions. An image featuring three adolescent girls wearing headscarves next to the words “radicals are for adding and subtracting” was included in the public school system’s online pre-college math curriculum, and had since been removed. In a statement provided by spokesman Charlie Herndon, the Baltimore County school district said it learned March 16 of the “unacceptable and harmful image” and opened an investigation into the matter. The image was placed in the learning materials following a digital rewriting of curriculum in anticipation of distance learning necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Investigators met with math department leadership and curriculum writing teams to address “the critical need for culturally responsive and sustaining curriculum which reflects and celebrates the students we serve, as well as improvements to our curriculum review and quality assurance processes moving forward,” according to the statement. School officials concluded that the incident was “unintentional, did not intend malice, and resulted from a lack of sensitivity and awareness.” 370

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. ³⁷¹

Meanwhile, a bipartisan bill introduced in the Texas House on January 20 would make it easier for state employees to celebrate Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, the two Islamic holidays. House Bill 1231 would designate the two holidays as optional employee holidays, which Muslim state employees then could observe if they worked on another state holiday instead. Texas optional holidays include Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Good Friday and Cesar Chavez Day. “This is about recognizing and affirming our fellow Texans that celebrate these holidays ... Any system we have should affirm and lift up people to practice their faith, to live their faith and that shouldn’t stop at Judeo-Christian faith sets.” state Rep. Joe Moody, the El Paso Democrat who sponsored the bill, told The Texas Tribune. Nabila Mansoor, executive director of Engage Texas, a Muslim American lobbying group that proposed the bill to Moody, said it would show the Muslim community “that they’re valued members of the Texas population.” According to the status recoded in the Texas Legislature Online website, On May 12, the bill passed in the house where it originated, and a new copy of the bill which incorporated all amendments was sent to the senate for consideration. ³⁷²

Also in US, the cities of Fargo, West Fargo, Horace, Dilworth and Moorhead put out a unified statement, in which they denounced the criminal act that took place on April 24. “Those criminal actions are completely contradictory to the values of tolerance, respect and acceptance we embrace in all of our communities. The vandalism was a heinous act of hate attacking the center during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.” said the cities in a join-

statement. “Well what I want to say is that hate has no home in Moorhead. This is unacceptable, this is not ok, this is not what our community is about. This is something is going to not make our community weak, but make our community stronger.” said Moorhead Mayor Shelly Carlson. Moorhead Police Dept. and the FBI were in the midst of an investigation, with one suspect they are looking for. A Facebook page and a GoFundMe page had been set for the clean-up efforts and over \$21,000 had been raised to help the center. ³⁷³

Meanwhile, the National Science Foundation was funding a three-year program to study hate crimes committed against Muslims in Arkansas. Two criminal justice professors at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock had been awarded a \$324,987 grant, which would enable an assessment of anti-Muslim sentiments. Muslims were ranked as the second most targeted group for hate crimes nationwide, but the professors said the extent in Arkansas was not known. Dr. Tusty ten Bensel, director of the School of Criminal Justice and Criminology, and Graduate Coordinator Dr. Robert Lytle planned to work with 30 paid undergraduate students to better understand the situation in which researchers would talk with Muslims, law enforcement and state legislators. ³⁷⁴

Still in US, Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) and other Democratic lawmakers had signed onto a letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken where they urged him to appoint a special envoy to monitor and combat Islamophobia. In the letter sent on July 20, Omar and two dozen other lawmakers cited the spike in Islamophobia seen in recent years as well as the “persecution of Muslims manifesting itself around the world.” The lawmakers also pointed to a recent annual report released by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), in which the office identified multiple countries with “patterns of mistreatment and human rights violations against either their entire Muslim populations or particular sects of Muslims.” ³⁷⁵

On January 19, 2022, US President Joe Biden nominated Nusrat Jahan Choudhury, a Muslim woman, for a federal judgeship for the first time in U.S. history as part of his administration's push to reshape the federal judiciary with diversity. Choudhury, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, was Biden's nominee for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York. If confirmed by the Senate, Choudhury would become the first Muslim woman to serve as a federal judge and the first Bangladeshi American. ³⁷⁶

In Canada, 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," Mathyseen 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. ³⁷⁷

Also in Canada, a day after Canadian lawmakers passed a motion to convene an emergency summit on Islamophobia, the Ontario government condemned Islamophobia on June 12. The actions by both levels of the federal and provincial government were spurred by the horrific murder on June 6 of four members of a Muslim family in London, Ontario, a city of 400,000 southwest of Toronto. The four died when a pickup truck drove into them in what police said was a premeditated hate crime in which they were targeted because of their religion. In the Ontario legislature, members of the

provincial parliament passed a motion which condemned Islamophobia. "In the opinion of the house, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario condemns all acts of violence and terrorism against people of the Muslim faith and reaffirms its condemnation of all forms of Islamophobia and its support for the Anti-Racism Directorate," Kaleed Rasheed, a member of provincial parliament for Mississauga East-Cooksville, read out in the legislature. It passed unanimously. ³⁷⁸

Meanwhile, Nathaniel Veltman had been charged with murder in the case of the Azfaal family in Ontario. Veltman deliberately rammed his truck into them when they were out for a stroll in early June in what police called a premeditated attack. For the first time in Canada, prosecutors said they planned to charge a person with terrorism in a case that involved an alleged Islamophobic act. Some legal experts said the terrorism charge signals a shift in how Canada prosecute those accused of terrorist activity. Canadian Muslims welcomed the news that Veltman would be charged with terrorism. "It says to the Muslim community, we value the Muslim community and we will push for accountability," said Nawaz Tahir, a spokesperson for the London mosque. Terrorism had been a criminal offense in Canada since the 9/11 attacks on the United States. The law had been used almost exclusively to prosecute people with ties to Islamist groups. ³⁷⁹

Also in Canada, Alberta, a province in western Canada, was speeding up the rollout of grants for security at facilities which served some vulnerable Albertans after the rise in hate-motivated violence and vandalism across the province. Not-for-profit organizations could apply for a one-time emergency grant of up to \$12,000, the province announced on July 6. Funds were made available after "recent multiple acts of vandalism at places of worship and the suspected arson that burned a church to the ground," said a news release. Justice Minister Kaycee Madu said Albertans from all backgrounds should feel free to worship free of violence, and the grant would protect those most at risk. Premier Jason Kenney said he was able to exercise freedom of religion in peace and security was essential. "We must all condemn hate-motivated acts of violence and vandalism," Kenney

said in the release. “That’s why we introduced the security infrastructure program ... and why we are making help available immediately for those at risk of hate-motivated crimes.” 380

On June 25, Canada’s government added more American neo-Nazis to the list of banned terrorist groups. The additions follow Canada’s designation of the Proud Boys and other US-based far-right extremist groups as terrorists in February. The newly prohibited groups include: The Three Percenters, an American anti-government militant group with a presence in Canada, James Mason, a Colorado-based neo-Nazi who had advocated for lone actor attacks against the US government to foment a white revolution, the Aryan Strikeforce, a UK-based white supremacist group with chapters in Canada and the US that advocated for violence to overthrow governments and an ISIS affiliate based in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Bill Blair, Canada’s minister of public safety and emergency preparedness, said in a statement the designations were an important tool to help authorities keep pace with evolving threats and global trends. “Recent events should remove any doubts about the serious threat posed by ideologically-motivated violent extremism,” Blair said. 381

On June 29, Ontario province announced to provide funds for educational programs to help fight Islamophobia. Education Minister Stephen Lecce said \$225,000 was for the Muslim Association of Canada to create digital resources for educators, students and parents to raise awareness about Islamophobia. He said \$75,000 would be sent to the National Council of Canadian Muslims to help Muslim newcomers navigate their new country and to help those new students prepare for school in the fall. 382

On July 22, the Government of Canada held a virtual National Summit on Islamophobia. Organized by the Federal Anti-Racism Secretariat, and convened by the Honourable Bardish Chagger, Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, the summit provided a national platform for Muslim communities to identify concrete ways to combat Islamophobia across the country. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau reiterated the government’s

solidarity with Muslim communities across Canada and the government’s commitment to combat and denounce Islamophobia and all forms of racism and discrimination. During the summit, federal ministers, Members of Parliament, and officials from provincial and municipal governments, listened to the lived experiences of Muslim Canadians from across the country. Attendees identified ways the federal government should work with Muslim communities to implement federal anti-racism initiatives that address Islamophobia and hate-fueled violence. During the summit, the Government of Canada had committed to engage with Muslim communities on the government’s next Anti-Racism Action Plan, and the Minister of National Revenue, had requested that the Taxpayers’ Ombudsperson to conduct a systemic study to address the concerns of Muslim led charitable organizations. Minister Chagger also announced 8 projects through the Anti-Racism Action Program that address Islamophobia and aimed to remove systemic barriers faced by Muslim communities. In addition, Minister of International Trade and Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion, announced \$6 million of funds allocated for 150 projects which would support communities at risk of hate-motivated crime through the Communities at Risk: Security Infrastructure Program (SIP). 383

Meanwhile, a school district in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in Canada announced that it would implement a new anti-Islamophobia strategy, amid reports of increased hate crimes against Muslims in the country. On September 30, The Peel District School Board (PDSB), adopted a motion, which included the creation of a committee responsible for anti-Islamophobia training. “Hate crimes have been on the rise, making Muslims one of the most targeted communities in Peel Region. Such events have had a significant impact on our students, and the broader Muslim community’s sense of safety and belonging,” trustee Nokha Dakroub told the meeting. In a video posted on Twitter, Dakroub said the strategy would include mandatory training to all staff, accountability measures and regular communication with the broader community. 384

On January 28, The Canadian Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault had announced that the federal government would make January 29 a day to honour victims of the deadly 2017 attack on a Quebec City mosque. The attack which killed six people and seriously injured 19, took place when a gunman went into the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City. The day would be officially called the National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia. Guilbeault said Canadians had an obligation to remember the victims and a responsibility to combat discrimination. “This tragedy reminds us of the urgency to stand up against these hateful acts and online radicalization,” he said. The National Council of Canadian Muslims, said it would stand as a reminder of the lives lost and the work ahead to dismantle hate and racism. The shooter, Alexandre Bissonnette, had pleaded guilty to six counts of first-degree murder and six of attempted murder, and was sentenced originally to 40 years in prison without the possibility of parole. In November 2020, that time before parole was reduced to 25 years. 385

Somewhere in New York, the UN General Assembly had unanimously adopted the revised Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) and called on the international community to take appropriate measures to address terrorist threats on the basis of xenophobia, racism and Islamophobia. It also called on the UN Secretary General to report on the threat posed by such extremist and Islamophobic terrorist groups. The initiative for the recognition of Islamophobia as an emerging terrorist threat under the GCTS was spearheaded by Pakistan, together with other OIC countries.386

In Europe, On July 15, The European Union’s top court had ruled that employers might forbid the wearing of visible symbols of religious or political belief, such as headscarves. But the Luxembourg-based tribunal said that courts in the bloc’s 27 member states should weigh up whether the ban corresponded to a “genuine need” on the part of the employer. The court said: “A prohibition on wearing any visible form of expression of political, philosophical or religious beliefs in the workplace may be justified by the employer’s need to present a neutral image towards customers or to prevent

social disputes...However, that justification must correspond to a genuine need on the part of the employer and, in reconciling the rights and interests at issue, the national courts may take into account the specific context of their Member State and, in particular, more favourable national provisions on the protection of freedom of religion.” The case was brought to court by two women in Germany who were suspended from their jobs after they started to wear a hijab. Both Muslim women – a special need carer at a childcare centre in Hamburg run by a charitable association, and a cashier at the Mueller pharmacy chain – had not been wearing headscarves when they started in their jobs, but decided to do so years later after they returned from a parental leave. They were told by their respective employer that this was not allowed, and were at different points either suspended, told to come to work without it or put on a different job, according to court documents.387

Still in Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) had adopted a draft resolution against anti-Muslim hatred at a plenary session, the head of the Turkish OSCE PA delegation, Selami Altınok, said on July 8. The two-day plenary session of the OSCE PA, began on July 5 in Austria’s capital, Vienna. Mr. Altınok said “In the text, we placed phrases on fighting against anti-Muslim hatred. We removed any misconceptions about genocide. Indeed, we ensured that a draft resolution passed at the plenary session as desired by Turkey and the Islamic world”. 388

In France, the 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 gendarmerie, which was responsible for policing smaller towns rural areas, to “strengthen vigilance around Muslim places of worship ... at the dawn of Ramadan”. 389

Meanwhile, French government was rolling out a cluster of simultaneous exhibitions about Islamic art and culture as part of a wider effort to combat a rise in Islamophobic sentiment within the country. The exhibitions, which opened in 18 French cities in November would run for four months, aimed to showcase the diversity of Islamic culture. Titled “Islamic Arts: A Past for a Present,” the government initiative was being organized by the Réunion des Musées Nationaux-Grand Palais, and led by the head of the Louvre’s Islamic art department. Some 210 works borrowed from national and regional museums were on view, including 60 masterpieces loaned from the Louvre. Among the stated aims of the exhibitions was to dismantle some presumptions and clichés about Islamic culture and to showcase cultural and religious diversity in the Islamic world, demonstrating that Islamic culture went beyond the religious, was more varied than the Arab civilization, and also included figurative art and images of people, including some depictions of the Prophet Muhammad. French president Emmanuel Macron, first suggested the idea for the exhibitions in a speech in October, when he stressed that the government must encourage “another view” of Islamic culture rather than the prevailing “factionalism of radical Islam.”³⁹⁰

In UK, on November 9, The Independent Press Standards Organization (IPSO), a voluntary British press regulator, published guidance for editors and journalists on best practice for reporting matters relating to the faith of Islam and Muslim individuals or communities. IPSO had published guidance particularly under clause 1 of the Editors’ Code relating to accuracy and clause 2 relating to discrimination. IPSO said that the guidance was created after consultation with community organizations and academics, as well with the press itself. The section on accuracy reminds the press that it would not, for example, depict or refer to Muslims as a monolithic community with one culture, background and set of religious practices, nor as wholly defined or motivated by their faith. Opinion pieces and images would not be inaccurate, misleading or distorted, and where generalizations were made, the writer would be careful to distinguish between comment, conjecture and fact, and ensure that stereotypes were not presented as fact. Particular care would also be taken when repeating

claims were to be made on social media. In relation to discrimination, the guidance quoted clause 12 of the Editors’ Code which limited references to an individual’s religion to pieces where they were relevant to the story and requires that such references would not be prejudicial or pejorative. Fiyaz Mughal, Founder of Faith Matters and Tell Mama, welcomed the publication of the guidance document, and said: its “an excellent balance after much deliberation and engagement by IPSO”. He added “on issues of fact that do not have anything to do with Muslims and Islam and which are woven into stories and conjecture that maligns whole communities so that it promotes discriminatory views about them, this document makes clear that there are important guidelines that should be followed.” according to IPSO official press releases.³⁹¹

Also in UK, 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.³⁹²

On April 26, Players in an English Premier League game between Leicester City and Crystal Palace halted the match to allow a Muslim player, Leicester defender Wesley Fofana, who was observing Ramadan, to break his fast. Before the match, both teams and the referee agreed that they would pause to allow Fofana to leave the field and to drink at a suitable point in the game. That moment came in the 35th minute when the ball went out for a Crystal Palace goal kick. Rather than restart the game right away, Palace goalkeeper Vicente Guaita held on to the ball for about a minute. At that time, Fofana ran off the pitch and was seen on the touchline where he broke his fast with

a drink. The game then resumed, and in a tweet after the match, Fofana thanked everyone who agreed to pause the game to allow him to break his fast, he said such gestures were “what makes football wonderful.” After the game, Leicester manager Brendan Rodgers was full of praise for Fofana’s exertions in recent weeks while he was fasting. “I think it’s absolutely remarkable. ...I work with lots of players who have similar devotion to their faith, and I think, for a lot of the guys, it gives them strength.”³⁹³

Meanwhile, 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.”³⁹⁴

It worths to note in UK, the Football Association of Wales (FAW) had become the first footballing body to sign the Muslim Athlete Charter. By signing the pledge, the FAW would be committed to recognising Muslim needs in football for players, staff and spectators attending games. The FAW would aim to become fully accredited to the Nujum Sports Muslim Athlete Charter external-link in the future. Chief executive Ebadur Rahman said the organisation would assist the FAW to “aspire to be even more inclusive”. Rahman added: “Having signed the pledge, the FAW is joining a positive movement of solidarity, equality and recognition of the contribution

Muslims make for their respective clubs and teams... Nujum is here to support professional clubs and their players, and contribute positively to their equality and diversity agenda.” The charter was first launched in June and in addition to the FAW, BBC Sport understands six Premier League and 22 Football League sides were included in the 34 professional football clubs to sign the pledge. The FAW’s equality, diversity, inclusion and integrity manager Jason Webber told BBC Sport they were “committed to building an environment and culture that actively supports all faiths ...By utilising the Muslim Athlete Charter framework and working closely with Nujum Sports, we will ensure that Muslim players are supported in their environment to practice their faith while playing football,” he said. ³⁹⁵

In Germany, Germany’s Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, which had been constantly on the lookout for potential threats to Germany’s democratic constitutional system, and it had wide-ranging powers when it finds them. The agency had completed a two-year investigation into Germany’s largest right-wing opposition party, the Alternative for Germany, or AfD, and was expected to announce on January 2021, that it will place the entire party under surveillance for posing a threat to Germany’s political system and violating the constitution. The unprecedented move would mean that all AfD lawmakers, including several dozen in Germany’s parliament, would be put under state surveillance. Melanie Amann of the German newsmagazine Der Spiegel and the author of a book about the AfD, said the agency had identified instances of AfD politicians denigrating Muslim migrants to Germany. “They were all treated as potential terrorists,” she said. “They were dehumanized in the speeches. They were compared to animals. The [agency] report made it quite clear that these people had crossed a line.” Some AfD politicians had also trivialized Germany’s Nazi past. In 2017, the leader of the Flügel wing, Bjorn Höcke, called the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin a “monument of shame.” Thomas Hitschler, a Social Democrat parliamentarian and a member of the parliamentary committee that reviews Germany’s intelligence agencies, said: “If you look at how the AfD has been behaving for some time now, it’s clear it’s acting against our democracy and

our constitution.” says. Hitschler said the Verfassungsschutz agency had spent two years gathering evidence to inform the decision that is expected to put the entire AfD under watch. The AfD was already preparing for the decision. The party had published a position paper that represents a U-turn in how it sees immigrants, insisting that it was a party for all German citizens, even naturalized citizens. 396

On February 19, Berlin became the first German state to found an expert commission against racism targeted towards Muslims. The move came on the one-year anniversary of the racist-motivated terror attacks in Hanau in Hesse. On February 19th 2020, a man shot dead nine people of Muslim backgrounds in two Shisha bars before killing his mother and himself. The commission was scheduled to hold its first meeting in Berlin on February 26th. Eren Ünsal, head of the state anti-discrimination office, would be the moderator. “We’ve been able to put together a great panel with a lot of scientific expertise,” said Ünsal. The project was set up for one year, she said. The first task would develop a good definition of anti-Muslim racism, and then the commission would work out strategies to prevent it. “The concrete result should be tangible recommendations for administration and civil society,” Ünsal said. 397

In Switzerland, the Switzerland’s Catholic Church had joined other religious groups who opposed a proposed ban on Muslim head coverings, they argued that it would “disproportionately” restrict religious freedom. The statement was published on the bishops’ conference website amid preparations for a March 7 referendum on a law to ban “covering the face in public,” introduced by members of the center-right Swiss People’s Party. The bishops said freedom “to choose and shape ways of life, lifestyles and orientations” was a core value of Switzerland’s liberal democracy, they added that religious leaders would reject “all ideologically and sociopolitically motivated attempts” to interfere with constitutionally protected religious expressions. “This initiative claims to have public security as a goal. In reality, it is directed toward an exceedingly small minority of the population and does not resolve any problems.” the statement said. The religious leaders said the Swiss government’s counterproposal, requiring faces to be revealed for official identification, appeared “reasonable and proportionate.” 398

In India, the State Government of the Indian state of Gujarat had decided not to enact the ‘anti-love jihad’ law for the time being. The decision was made after legal experts, including the advocate general, opined that the new law might not be legally sustainable. Sources in the government said that following the adverse opinion, the government will not introduce the bill in the budget session of the assembly. After BJP-ruled states like Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh enacted the laws to curb ‘love jihad,’ the Gujarat government had expressed its resolve to introduce the law, despite the fact that the Gujarat government already had an anti-conversion law which prohibits conversion from one religion to another by the use of force or allurement or by fraudulent means. The Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat Nitin Patel had said: “We are studying the effectiveness, long-term effects, and legal standing of the laws made by UP and MP. The Gujarat government will take a decision at an appropriate time regarding such a law.”399

India, 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”. 400

Also in India, the National Commission for Women on July 8 wrote to the Delhi Police chief to seek a probe into a now-defunct website which allegedly uploaded pictures of many Muslim women where it had been put on “auction”, the NCW said. The commission had asked for a detailed action taken report within 10 days, it said. NCW Chairperson Rekha Sharma had requested Delhi Police Commissioner Balaji Srivastava’s intervention to

investigate the website that put up pictures of many Muslim women with derogatory remarks. In a statement, the NCW said it had taken suo motu cognisance of a media report which mentioned that a website called ‘Sulli Deals’ on an internet platform named ‘Github’ was uploading pictures of many Muslim women which included journalists, activists, analysts, artists and researchers with derogatory remarks and had put them up for “auction”.⁴⁰¹

In Sri Lanka, on February 10, Sri Lanka’s Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa had announced in parliament that the country would allow Muslims to bury those who died from COVID-19. Mr. Rajapaksa, gave the assurance in response to a question from a lawmaker in Parliament. Sri Lanka had required the cremation of all people who die from COVID-19, where they claimed that the virus in human remains could contaminate underground water. Since 2020, Muslims and non-Muslims had been protesting the rule, in which they called it unscientific and insensitive of Muslim religious beliefs. Muslim lawmaker Rishard Bathiudeen said “I am happy that they showed some compassion even at this stage, but it has to be implemented soon because people are dying every day.” ⁴⁰²

On February 26, Sri Lanka had cleared the burial of COVID-19 victims, reversing its nearly year-long policy of mandatory cremations. The change in the government’s position came after Pakistani PM Imran Khan’s visit, in which he urged the Rajapaksa administration to respect Muslims’ burial rights. AFP reported “While Health Minister Pavithra Wanniarachchi did not give a reason in her announcement reversing the ban, official sources said Khan had raised the subject with both President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and PM Mahinda Rajapaksa during his trip earlier this week.” Sri Lanka’s decision was also after several members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) had raised the issue, both in Sri Lanka and at international fora, including the ongoing 46th session of the UN HRC. As many as 14 OIC countries were among the 47 members of the Council, who would vote on a contested resolution on Sri Lanka. In a statement, Mr. Rauff Hakeem, Opposition MP and Sri Lanka Muslim Congress Leader said: “if not for the inclusion of this matter in the report of the

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the subsequent inclusion of the matter in the resolution on Sri Lanka tabled by the core group, the deliberate intransigence that resulted in outrageously traumatising a section of Sri Lankan people would not have been resolved.” ⁴⁰³

In December 2021, The Sri Lanka Government authorities announced that it would expand the expert committee which had been tasked to propose on the Muslim cremation issue. Dr. Asela Gunawardena, the Director General of Health Services, told Colombo Gazette that the country’s expert committee would be expanded to include more Muslims. Gunawardena said that a request had been made to expand the expert committee to make it more balanced. Questions had been raised on social media about the existing members. The expert committee had maintained that the cremation of coronavirus victims was the only option and that the burial of victims could not be approved in Sri Lanka. ⁴⁰⁴

In Singapore, the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) had banned a publication containing religiously offensive images that insulted religions from being distributed in Singapore. In a media release, IMDA said the publication titled *Red Lines: Political Cartoons and the Struggle Against Censorship* was found to be “objectionable” under the Undesirable Publications Act. The book by Singaporean academic Cherian George and graphic novelist Sonny Liew was published in August this year by The MIT Press. The book’s website described the content as exploring the motives and methods of the political censorship of cartoons around the world. It contained 29 offensive images, including reproductions of French satirical weekly newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*’s cartoons of Prophet Muhammad, which led to protests and violence overseas. The publication also contained derogatory images of Jesus Christ and Hindu deities. The reproduction of these graphics had led to unrest around the world, including in Indonesia, the Middle East and the United Kingdom. It had also resulted in violent attacks, with one even involving the original publisher’s premises and staff in 2015, where 12 people were killed. Last year, a French teacher was killed after he showed his students the caricatures of Prophet Muhammad during a

lesson. IMDA said the offensive images were identified in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs Masagos Zulkifli said that any material or media that denigrated any religion or religious figures “must be treated very carefully”, even if it was for academic purposes. “Especially when they may inflame a community to act violently against the author or producer and worse against another community,” Mr Masagos said. 405

Court Decision and Trial

In US, on December 11, Jerry Morgan, who was a disciplinary counsel for the Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility, had resigned after a Nashville lawyer he was investigating slammed him as an “anti-Muslim bigot”. In a court filing, the state board that punishes lawyers for misconduct said Morgan was “no longer employed” as a disciplinary counsel. Morgan, resignation came after Brian Manookian’s attorney argued that Morgan couldn’t do his job effectively because of multiple social media posts he made criticizing Muslims and the Islamic faith. Morgan had argued in favor of sanctions against Manookian, who was suspended from practicing law the year before, after the Board of Professional Responsibility said he violated ethics rules by sending threatening emails. However, Manookian’s attorney Daniel Horwitz said in the court filing: “Allowing an extreme anti-Muslim bigot — whom Tennessee’s Board of Professional Responsibility has inexplicably employed and permitted to maintain prosecutions on our Supreme Court’s behalf — to undertake a prosecution against an attorney who has a Muslim family shakes confidence in the integrity of this entire proceeding”. According to a November 24 court filing, Morgan made a slew of disparaging comments against Muslims on Twitter, praising President Donald Trump for “stopping Muslims” and “talking big against Muslims”. Morgan said Islam was not a peaceful religion and made comments linking the faith with violence and “Muslim terrorists,” the filing stated. 406

On December 9, a federal jury returned a guilty verdict against Micheal Hari, for his role in the bombing of the Dar al-Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington, Minnesota, on August 2017. The jury convicted Hari on all five counts of the indictment, including intentionally defacing, damaging, and destroying any religious real property because of the religious character of that property; intentionally obstructing, and attempting to obstruct, by force and the threat of force, the free exercise of religious beliefs; conspiracy to commit federal felonies by means of fire and explosives; carrying and using a destructive device during and in relation to crimes of violence; and possession of an unregistered destructive device. Hari would face a

mandatory minimum sentence of 30 years in prison. U.S. Attorney Erica H. MacDonald for the District of Minnesota said: “Michael Hari’s goal in bombing the Dar al-Farooq Islamic Center was to spread hatred, instill fear, and threaten the constitutionally protected right to freedom of religion. This act of violence, driven by hatred and ignorance, shook our community”. As proven at trial, during the summer of 2017, Hari established in Clarence, Illinois, a terrorist militia group called “The White Rabbits.” Hari recruited Michael McWhorter and Joe Morris, who had pleaded guilty in 2019, to join the militia group. On August 5, 2017, Morris used a sledgehammer to break a window, which was part of DAF’s Imam’s office, and threw a plastic container containing diesel fuel and gasoline mixture into the building. McWhorter then lit the fuse on a 10-pound black powder pipe bomb that Hari had built and threw it through the broken window. The three men sped away from the building and drove back to Clarence. When the pipe bomb exploded, it ignited the mixture in the plastic container, causing extensive fire and smoke damage to the Imam’s office, in addition to water damage caused by the building’s sprinkler system. At the time of the bombing, several congregants were gathered in the mosque for morning prayers.⁴⁰⁷

On December 16, Debbie Dingell, an American Democratic Party politician, urged Facebook to remove anti-Muslim content on the social media platform. Dingell, a U.S. House Representative for Michigan’s 12th congressional district, had led a group of 30 US lawmakers to write a letter to Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook founder and CEO, in which they said Facebook had failed to take action “in response to the abuse of your platform to dehumanize Muslims and stoke violence and genocide against Muslims around the world.” In their letter, the lawmakers were seeking six measures that span a variety of actions, including the formation of a working group on anti-Muslim bigotry, greater enforcement actions targeting militias and white supremacists, and an independent review of Facebook’s “enabling anti-Muslim violence, genocide and internment.” Scott Simpson, a director for the Muslim Advocates advocacy group, thanked the lawmakers for the letter, which he said it would work towards “holding Facebook accountable for the harm it has inflicted on American Muslims here and Muslims abroad.”⁴⁰⁸

On January 25, a federal appeals court had upheld the convictions and prison sentences of three white men who in 2016 plotted to bomb a Kansas apartment complex which was home to Muslim immigrants and a mosque. Curtis Allen, Gavin Wright and Patrick Eugene Stein were found guilty by a jury in the Kansas U.S. district court in 2018 of conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction and violating the civil rights of Muslims living in the Garden City housing complex. In January 2019, U.S. District Judge had sentenced Allen to 25 years in prison, Wright to 26 years and Stein to 30 years. Following their appeal, the court had rejected all the arguments raised by their attorneys and was not swayed by claims that the men were entrapped and the method of selecting jurors was flawed. The three-judge panel ruled that the men had not challenged the manner of jury selection within the seven-day period required under law, and would have anyway failed in that gambit if they had. ⁴⁰⁹

On April 30, An Oregon lawmaker who let violent far-right demonstrators into the state Capitol during a Dec. 21 special session was criminally charged with first-degree official misconduct and second-degree criminal trespass. Rep. Mike Nearman, a member of the Republican Party, was caught on security videos when he opened a door and allowed demonstrators to enter the building. The first-degree official misconduct charge was for allegedly he took action that constituted an unauthorized exercise of his official duties to benefit someone else, court filings read. The second charge was for allegedly he abetted another person to enter and remain in the Capitol. Surveillance video showed that once Nearman allowed demonstrators into the northwest Capitol vestibule, the group clashed with Oregon State Police and Salem police who tried to keep them out of the building. Demonstrators attempted to push past police, who rushed to eject the initial insurgents and physically block the doorway Nearman had just opened. ⁴¹⁰

Also in US, Laura Loomer was suspended by the invitation-only Clubhouse app, where she violated the platform’s “violence policy” during a discussion in which she reportedly railed against Muslims. Reports emerged on May 7 of Loomer’s suspension after she described, in chat, that she would become

a “roadkill” if Uber doesn’t vet its Muslim drivers. Salon’s Zachary Petrizzo reported on May 7 that Loomer had “doubled down” on her anti-Muslim remarks about Islamic Uber drivers, in which she demanded increased background checks. 411

Still in US, 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. 412

Meanwhile, 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. 413

Further, the US Supreme Court had agreed to hear a case which involved a

group of Muslim Americans who accused the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of illegal surveillance. On June 7, the court issued a statement which said that it would look at the FBI’s use of an informant to collect information from several Los Angeles and Orange County mosques for more than a year. The Courthouse News, a daily which focused on civil litigation, reported that the court case would start in October. The FBI argued that their primary responsibility was to protect national security and it used this and other methods to collect sensitive information. The case involves three Californian Muslims who allege the FBI paid a confidential informant to spy on Muslims in Orange County during 2006 and 2007. The Council on American-Islamic Relations, which represents a southern California imam and two other Muslims in one of several cases, rejected this argument. “The FBI infiltrated several mosques in southern California, planted informants, and targeted Muslim Americans for illegal spying solely because of their religion,” Hussam Ayloush, executive director of CAIR Los Angeles, said in a statement on June 7. 414

Meanwhile, Benjamin Stewart Enderle, a Moorhead man, was sentenced in Clay County District Court on July 30, to 40 hours of community service that would benefit a minority group after he earlier pleaded guilty to a charge of felony harassment where he vandalized a mosque in April. Enderle, said during the hearing that spray-painting racist graffiti on the Moorhead Fargo Islamic Community Center was the “stupidest thing I’ve ever done in my life” and he asked for forgiveness. Otoo Haarun, president of the mosque, provided a victim-impact statement, and stated that the vandalism had caused fear and paranoia among mosque members. He added, “We have forgiven you and hope it (the incident) is a turning point in your life.” Prosecutor Pam Foss told Judge Tammy Merkins that a restorative justice sentence was unusual in an adult case, but she said she supported the plea agreement after meeting with mosque members. “I was amazed in meeting with those individuals at their capacity for forgiveness to Mr. Enderle and their willingness to be part of the process,” Foss said. 415

On July 27, The New York City Police Department arrested and charged a man in connection with three anti-Muslim incidents in Queens. Naved Durrni, faced charges of assault as a hate crime, criminal possession of a weapon and two counts of aggravated harassment, according to the NYPD. The hate crimes took place over the course of about five weeks, according to the NYPD. On June 20, an individual allegedly followed a man and woman in Queens and made anti-Muslim statements before he punched the man in the back and pulled the woman's hijab while he punched her in the arm, police said. An hour after that incident, police said the individual allegedly followed a 64-year-old man and woman in Queens and made anti-Muslim statements before he punched the woman in the face and head several times. The woman had a fractured nose, and cuts to her head and face and was taken to a local hospital for treatment, police said. The third incident took place on July 25 when an individual allegedly followed a woman and pulled out a knife before he threatened her and made anti-Muslim statements, police said. 416

On August 10, A federal appeals court based in Colorado had reinstated the lawsuit of a Muslim man against a state correctional officer after allegedly he forced him to shave his beard — despite a policy that allowed for beards as religious expression. A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit concluded that if the claims of Tajuddin Ashaheed were true, Sgt. Thomas E. Currington infringed on Ashaheed's free exercise of his religion and acted contrary to the policy of the Denver Reception and Diagnostic Center. "When Sergeant Currington ignored the Center's religious exemption and forced Mr. Ashaheed to shave his beard, he violated clearly established law," wrote Judge Scott M. Matheson, Jr. in the panel's opinion. 417

Meanwhile, Michael Hari, the leader of an Illinois anti-government militia group who authorities said masterminded the 2017 bombing of a Minnesota mosque was sentenced, on September 13, to 53 years in prison for an attack that terrified the mosque's community. 418

Still in US, an Armenian American man who assaulted people at a Turkish restaurant in the state of California and injured five people agreed to plead guilty on September 9 to federal criminal charges in a hate crime case. According to a plea agreement filed on September 6 in the United States District Court, William Stepanyan, a Glendale city resident, had agreed to plead to one count of conspiracy and one hate crime charge. Stepanyan was expected to enter a guilty plea to the felony charges, a Department of Justice release said. 419

At the same time in US, the House selected committee investigating the Capitol riot on January 6, which would vote to recommend a criminal contempt of Congress charge against Stephen K. Bannon after he defied a subpoena. Stephen K. Bannon, a former top adviser to President Donald J. Trump, defied a subpoena in accordance with a directive from the former president. The move would escalate to be a major legal battle between the select committee and the former president over access to crucial witnesses and documents that could shed light on what precipitated the assault, when a pro-Trump mob stormed the Capitol and disrupted Congress's formal count of the votes that confirmed President Biden's election. The fight would test how far Congress was able to go in pressing forward on the investigation in the face of stone-walling by the former president. Should the House ultimately approve the referral, the Justice Department would decide whether to accept it and pursue a criminal case. So far, Biden administration had taken the unusual step of refusing to honor Mr. Trump's claims of executive privilege, which could shield White House deliberations or documents involving the president from disclosure. 420

Meanwhile, a New Jersey high school teacher was suspended after allegedly mocking a Muslim student in class and calling him a terrorist, officials and the teen's family said. Mohammed Zubi, a 17-year-old senior at Ridgefield Memorial High School, asked a teacher if he could have some more time to complete an assignment, according to his family. That's when the instructor allegedly quipped, "*We don't negotiate with terrorists,*" said Selaedin Maksut, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations

(CAIR) New Jersey, speaking on behalf of the family. The Ridgefield School District said in a statement that it *“has absolutely no tolerance for any sort of discrimination against any student or staff member and strives to create an inclusive environment where students’ and staff members’ race, religion, national origin and sexual orientation are embraced.”* The teacher had been suspended while the district investigated and intended to pursue legal remedies.⁴²¹

Also, a jury ordered far-right groups and individuals to pay more than \$25 million in damages for their part in the deadly Unite the Right rally in Virginia that happened back in 2017. The jurors concluded that all of the defendants conspired under Virginia civil law. Five of them were found responsible for violence.⁴²²

Still in US, the US House selected committee had subpoenaed the leaders of the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, far right extremist groups that responded to former President Donald Trump’s call to descend on Washington and played central roles in the attack on the Capitol, namely Proud Boys Chair Enrique Tarrío and Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes, as well as both of the organizations they lead. It also subpoenaed a lower-profile far-right group, 1st Amendment Praetorian, along with its leader, Robert Patrick Lewis. Chair Bennie Thompson said in a statement the panel sought information from those *“reportedly involved with planning the attack, with the violent mob that stormed the Capitol on January 6th, or with efforts to overturn the results of the election,”* and believed that the subpoenaed individuals and organizations had relevant information. The subpoenas demanded documents by Dec. 7 and depositions the following week.⁴²³

Meanwhile, the leader of far-right militia group the Oath Keepers had been charged with seditious conspiracy over 2021 attack on the US Capitol. Stewart Rhodes was arrested at his home in Texas, according to his lawyer. He and 10 others were charged with seditious conspiracy on Thursday January 13.⁴²⁴

In addition, **John Earnest, A California man convicted of attacking a synagogue and mosque in 2019** was sentenced to life in prison without parole, US Attorney General Merrick Garland announced on Wednesday 29 December 2021. Earnest entered the Chabad of Poway synagogue on April 27, 2019 and opened fire, killing one woman and injuring three others before he was stopped by police. Also he admitted attempting to set fire to the Dar-ul-Arqam mosque in Escondido, California, on March 24, 2019. He admitted to the two acts of violence *“because of his hatred of Muslims and the religious character of the building.”* Seven missionaries were asleep in the mosque, but none was injured, Garland said. Earnest pleaded guilty to a 113-count indictment that included 54 counts relating to hate crime, 55 counts relating to arson, and four firearms offenses.⁴²⁵

In Canada, a man had been charged with two counts of assault and one count of mischief after a *“hate-motivated”* attack on a Muslim mother and daughter in a mall parking lot in Canada, police said. The assault took place in the parking lot of the Southgate center in Edmonton on December 8. Richard Bradley Stevens, approached two Somali women who were sitting in their vehicle and began yelling racial abuse at them, Edmonton Police said in a news release. Police said the mother and her adult daughter were both wearing hijabs eyewitnesses told police the man punched the passenger-side. *“Fearing for her safety, the passenger then ran from the vehicle,”* police said in the statement. *“The male ran after the complainant, pushed her to the ground and began assaulting her”.* Sgt. Gary Willits, of the Edmonton Police Service’s Hate Crime and Violent Extremism Unit, said: *“The attack on these women is horrific and our hearts go out to them ... These individuals were targeted due to their race, therefore making this a hate-motivated crime.”*⁴²⁶

Also, 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. 427

On July 29, Nathaniel Veltman, the man accused in June’s targeted vehicle attack in London, Ont., made another virtual court appearance. Veltman, was accused of four counts of first-degree murder and one count of attempted murder, and Crown prosecutors allege that each charge constituted an act of terrorism. He remained in custody at Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre (EMDC), a jail in the south end of London, but made his latest court appearance via video conference. In a brief appearance, Christopher Hicks, said: “We are now requesting an adjournment of four weeks, to August the 26, to continue reviewing that disclosure and for continued discussions with the Crown, please”. The court ruled in favour and adjourned the matter until Aug. 25. 428

On August 16, a Hamilton man had been arrested after police said he promoted hatred against the Muslim community online. Police said the man targeted people on social media and promoted hatred against them after an attack in London, Ont., in June, where four members of a family were killed. Police said they were notified about the social media posts from the Hamilton man and investigated. He faced a charge for wilful promotion of hatred. 429

On October 4, Kevin J. Johnston was sentenced in a Canadian court to 18 months behind bars for contravening six court orders to stop making defamatory comments about restaurant owner Mohamad Fakih. Johnston, a

mayoral candidate for the city of Calgary, Alberta, was jailed by Justice Fred Myers for breaking a 2019 court order to stop defaming Fakih, something he continued to do six times after the order. “Almost all the evidence against Mr. Johnston comes from his own mouth,” Myers said in pronouncing the sentence. “Mr. Johnston’s words are classic hate speech. They draw on tropes to assign negative characteristics based on ugly stereotypes like branding Muslims as terrorists, for example.” 430

Somewhere in Europe, 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. 431

In Italy, Italy’s top administrative court had ruled against a conservative think tank affiliated with former White House adviser Steve Bannon over its use of a 13th century hilltop monastery to train future populist leaders. The Council of State ruled that the Culture Ministry was correct in cancelling the concession it had given to the Dignitatis Humanae Institute, or Human Dignity Institute. The court found that the institute had lied when it bid for the lease of the monastery in 2017, claiming it had qualifications to run the monastery which were “shown to be not true.” The ruling overturned an earlier decision by a regional administrative tribunal that had sided with the institute. Bannon and the institute had launched plans to establish an academy to train populists and nationalists at the 13th century Trisulti monastery, an abbey surrounded by a forest in the province of Frosinone south of Rome. Bannon had said he would bring in teachers and raise

money for the academy, which had been dubbed a “gladiator school” for the alt-right. The local Catholic bishop had praised the decision, they said, the Council of State had done the right thing by returning the monastery “to the people of God and to the entire community.” In a statement reported by the *Avvenire* newspaper of the Italian bishops conference, Bishop Lorenzo Loppa said the diocese would now work with the community to find a new life for this “monastic jewel,” suggesting it could be used as the headquarters of a foundation. On March 16, Bannon said the court decision was a politically motivated “joke”. Benjamin Harnwell, founder and president of the institute, had previously argued the institute was being targeted because of its affiliation with Bannon and its support for Italy’s right-wing leader Matteo Salvini and his “heroic blockade of the illegal migration into Italy.” 432

In France, on December 15, A French Court in the northern city of Lille, had convicted three members of the French far-right group Generation Identity (GI). They had been found guilty of offences which include assault and in one case, inciting terrorism, after an evidence filmed by Aljazeera was used to indict them, according to Aljazeera report. A judge at the High Court said footage from the two-part documentary *Generation Hate*, which was aired in December 2018, played a key role in establishing the verdicts. Remi Falize, a former leading member of the Flanders branch of the far-right group GI, was convicted of incitement to “terrorism” and assault. He was sentenced to eight months in prison, suspended for 18 months. Falize was filmed by an undercover Al Jazeera reporter who had infiltrated the GI’s Lille branch at the Citadelle bar in the city Centre. Falize was caught on a covert camera where he said: “The day that I find out I’ve got a terminal illness, dude, I get a weapon, and I go sow carnage....A mosque, whatever ... even a car-ramming, I take my car and bam! There we go! ... Next to that, Charlie Hebdo will be like dog’s p***.” Falize said Wazemmes market, a place popular with Arabs and Muslims, “is where all the ‘ragheads’ of Lille go. If you take your car there on a Sunday, it’ll be a massacre ... I’ll leave my ID card ... like the jihadists do ... and then bam! I f*** all your mamas ... right into 5th gear. If I manage to survive the first carnage, I’ll do it again,

I swear to you”. Etienne “Le Roux” Vanhalwyn and Guillaume Dumont St Priest were also found guilty. Nicolas Nef Naf, lawyer for SOS Racisme, a French anti-racism charity, welcomed the court’s verdicts. 433

Also in France, the 93-year-old founder of France’s main far-right party, Jean-Marie Le Pen, went on trial on August 30 over allegations of inciting racial hatred, this time with comments where he targeted a Jewish pop singer. He already had a string of hate speech convictions that eventually became too much for his daughter Marine Le Pen, who expelled him from the National Front’s leadership in 2015 in a bid to achieve mainstream respectability. Le Pen senior, however, had continued to relish the outrage prompted by his statements against Jews, Muslims, black people and immigrants. The latest trial was for a 2014 video on the party’s website in which Le Pen railed against artists who denounced his extremist stances. Asked about the French singer and actor Patrick Bruel, Le Pen referred to his Jewish origins with a pun evoking the Holocaust -- “I’m not surprised. Listen, next time we’ll do a whole oven batch!” The trial was delayed for years while Le Pen claimed immunity from prosecution as an MEP, a seat he won in 1984 and held until 2019. 434

Meanwhile, France’s Chief Rabbi called Eric Zemmour, a Jewish journalist and far-right provocateur thought to be weighing a presidential bid, an antisemite. Zemmour, who had called Muslim immigrants “invaders” and in 2016 said that most drug dealers are Arab or African, was now running second and ahead of Marine Le Pen. During an interview for France 2, Rabbi Haim Korsia was asked whether Zemmour, the son of Jewish immigrants from Algeria, was an antisemite. After first asking his interviewer whether Zemmour was Jewish, Korsia replied: “Antisemite? Certainly. A racist? Definitely.” The leaders of French Jewish institutions had expressed hostility toward Zemmour, who had endorsed a controversial reading of World War II history in which French Nazi collaborators allegedly sacrificed some Jews to save others. 435

A **French court** had found the far-right presidential candidate Éric Zemmour guilty of racist hate speech for a tirade against unaccompanied child migrants. Zemmour drew widespread outrage in September 2020 when he told the CNews channel that child migrants were “thieves, killers, they’re rapists. That’s all they are. We should send them back.” Zemmour, did not show up in court to hear the verdict, having already skipped his trial in November 2021. The court fined him €10,000 in daily instalments of €100 over 100 days. 436

In **UK**, on December 4, The Times, a British newspaper, had agreed to pay £30,000 in damages to CAGE for falsely suggesting the advocacy group supported a murder suspect. The newspaper suggested Cage and its outreach director Moazzam Begg were supporting the suspect accused of stabbing three men to death during a rampage in a Reading park in June. Khairi Saadallah had since admitted three counts of murder. The Times published a story five days after the attack, headlined: “Campaign group helps Reading suspect Khairi Saadallah”, which wrongly claimed Cage had “backed the Reading attack suspect”. The Times immediately removed the article after it was contacted by Cage but did not agree a satisfactory wording for its correction, and the organisation and Begg both subsequently launched libel claims. In its apology on Friday, The Times said: “We wrongly stated that they refused to comment on their involvement with the suspect. In fact, while they commented on police and media reaction to the attack, they had no involvement with the suspect. We apologise to CAGE and Mr Begg for these errors and for the distress caused, and we have agreed to pay them damages and legal costs.” CAGE said it will use the damages paid to “expose state-sponsored Islamophobia and those complicit with it in the press”. 437

Also in UK, Ofcom, the British TV regulatory authority, had imposed a £20,000 fine on Republic Bharat, Republic TV’s Hindi channel, for hate speech against Pakistani people in a programme broadcast on 2019. In a statement released on December 22, 2020, the TV regulator said that Republic Bharat’s Poochta Hai Bharat programme – the evening primetime show hosted by Arnab Goswami – had failed to comply with its broadcasting

rules. According to Ofcom, an episode, shown on September 6, 2019, featured “comments made by the host and some of his guests that amounted to hate speech against Pakistani people, and derogatory and abusive treatment of Pakistani people. The content was also potentially offensive and was not sufficiently justified by the context.” The show under the scanner was a 35-minute discussion that hinged upon India’s Chandrayaan mission but sought to encompass a larger narrative on how India was advanced in space science and its neighbour Pakistan, was not. Among participants were Major Gaurav Arya, Maj General K.K. Sinha, Prem Shukla of the BJP, and Omar Inam and Omar Altaf from Pakistan. “The host and the Indian guests dominated the discussion, with the Pakistani guests attempting to respond but largely being shouted down by the presenter and Indian guests,” Ofcom’s note says. The statements made in the show by guests, and including the host Goswami, said Ofcom, “conveyed the view that all Pakistani people are terrorists, including that: “their scientists, doctors, their leaders, politicians all are terrorists. Even their sports people”; “every child is a terrorist over there. Every child is a terrorist. You are dealing with a terrorist entity”. One guest also described Pakistani scientists as “thieves”, while another described Pakistani people as “beggars”.” The content “spread, incited, promoted and justified such intolerance towards Pakistani people among viewers,” found the body. As such, it said, the show violated three rules of its Broadcasting Code. Among them Rule 3.2, which stated that: “Material which contains hate speech must not be included in television... programmes... except where it is justified by the context”. 438

Meanwhile, a British schoolboy who created an online neo-Nazi group to target Muslims and other minority groups had been sentenced after admitting to terror offenses in court. The 16-year-old, from Newcastle, nicknamed himself “Hitler” and used social media to promote Islamophobia, extreme right-wing violence and racism. His manifesto outlined the group’s aims, including transforming the UK into a white ethno-state. Using the “Hitler” alias, he also designed and spread vicious anti-Muslim propaganda. He pleaded guilty to four counts of inviting support for National Action, the British neo-Nazi organization that was banned by the government in

2016. After his case was heard in a youth court, he was handed a 12-month intensive referral order. As part of his sentencing, he must notify authorities of his location and activities for 10 years. A pre-sentence expert report said the autistic teenager probably “did not see the wider ramifications of his activities.”⁴³⁹

On April 21, A High Court trial had begun for the libel case brought against Tommy Robinson by Jamal Hijazi. The family of a Syrian schoolboy who was filmed being attacked in a Huddersfield playground had to flee the town after the far-right campaigner Tommy Robinson aired “entirely distorted anti-Muslim” claim about him, a court had been told. The founder of the English Defence League (EDL) – whose real name was Stephen Yaxley-Lennon – was being sued by the family of Jamal Hijazi after he “peddled false and defamatory lies” online about the teenager. Footage of the student being pushed to the ground and had water poured on his face was watched millions of times and attracted widespread condemnation, which also included from Theresa May, in December 2018. However, after the video went viral, Robinson claimed in two videos on Facebook that Jamal was “not innocent and he violently attacks young English girls in his school”. The teenager denied the allegations. In written evidence, Jamal said he felt ashamed and depressed after Robinson’s videos went viral and that his family had been the target of threats and intimidating behaviour. They told a support worker in November 2018 that they wanted to leave Huddersfield and were relocated in early 2019. “By this point, it was unsafe to even walk to the local shops without receiving verbal abuse with a very real risk of that escalating to physical abuse,” he stated. Catrin Evans QC, who represented Jamal, told the court that Robinson’s comments “turned Jamal into the aggressor, and the bully into a righteous white knight”.⁴⁴⁰

On May 14, A group of alleged far-right extremists had appeared in court charged with terror offences and the possession of 3D-printed gun components. On May 1, the four defendants were arrested in a coordinated counter-terror operations. Daniel Wright, Liam Hall, and Stacey Salmon, all of Keighley, a town in West Yorkshire England, were accused of the possession of a 3D-printed firearm components “for a purpose connected

with the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism”. Samuel Whibley, of Menai Bridge in Anglesey, provided a service to others to enable them to obtain terrorist publications, as a direct or indirect encouragement for acts of terrorism. They were not asked to enter plea and were remanded in custody to appear at the Old Bailey on May 28.⁴⁴¹

On May 13, a man who shared explosives and firearms manuals online had been convicted of terrorism offences. Michael Nugent, from Ashford - England, ran and was active on a number of extreme right wing chat groups on the Telegram app. He used different personas, to express racist views and a hatred of ethnic minorities. Nugent also shared manuals on how to make explosives and homemade firearms and told group members about how to deliver bombs in Amazon packages. He was arrested on August 19, 2020, when an investigation by the Met’s Counter Terrorism Command linked various online accounts to Nugent’s real-world identity. Commander Richard Smith, who leads the Met’s Counter Terrorism Command, said: “Nugent was an active member of internet chat rooms where he freely shared his abhorrent extremist views with others.... He sought to influence and encourage other members to commit acts of violence, and passed on manuals detailing how to produce deadly weapons and explosive devices... This is another case which shows how harmful online extremism is”. At Kingston Crown Court, Nugent pleaded guilty to five counts of dissemination of terrorist publications and 11 counts of possession of a document which contained information that would likely be useful to prepare or commit an act of terrorism. He would be sentenced on June 23.⁴⁴²

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.”⁴⁴³

Meanwhile, 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.’”⁴⁴⁴

Still in UK, 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.⁴⁴⁵

Also, a schoolboy from Derbyshire, England, had set up a far-right chat group which encouraged fellow teenagers to launch terrorist attacks, a court had heard. The youth, set up and managed the channel on messaging app Telegram. The channel was said to be of an extreme right-wing and “openly racist nature” and the youth boasted online that his criminal record would be cleared when he reached 18. He vetted like-minded individuals before he allowed them entry to private chat groups where there was discussion about “doing something” against ethnic minorities and talk about weapons,

prosecutors said. The 15 years old, admitted at Westminster Youth Court one offence of encouragement of terrorism, one of dissemination of a terrorist publication and possession of information useful for terrorism. They would be sentenced in August.⁴⁴⁶

On July 22, Tommy Robinson had lost a libel case brought against him by a Syrian teenager who was filmed being attacked at school. The founder of the English Defence League – whose real name was Stephen Yaxley-Lennon – was sued by Jamal Hijazi, who was assaulted in the playground at Almondbury community school in Huddersfield in October 2018. Shortly after the video of the incident went viral, Robinson claimed in two Facebook videos that Jamal was “not innocent and he violently attacks young English girls in his school”. In the clips viewed by nearly 1 million people, Robinson, also claimed Jamal “beat a girl black and blue” and “threatened to stab” another boy at his school, allegations the teenager denied. At a four-day trial in April, Jamal’s lawyers said Robinson’s comments had “a devastating effect” on the schoolboy and his family who had come to the UK as refugees from Homs, Syria. The judgment delivered by Mr Justice Nicklin ruled in Jamal’s favour and granted him £100,000 in damages.⁴⁴⁷

Meanwhile, a teenager who downloaded manuals on how to make bombs and poisons had been sentenced to a 12-month referral order. The boy, from Gloucestershire, appeared at Bristol Youth Court on July 29 where he was given a 12-month referral order for offences he committed under the Terrorism Act. Far-right symbols such as swastikas were found scratched into a desk in his bedroom, Bristol Youth Court was told. Detailed guides which explained ways of killing someone were also found on his phone. Gloucestershire Police said the boy’s electronic devices contained images of him performing Nazi salutes, posing with imitation firearms and memes of mass killers such as Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik. The sentence would mean that the boy would take part in a programme of rehabilitation and would be subject to a number of strict conditions, monitored by the Probation Service and youth offending services.⁴⁴⁸

At the same time, a Muslim woman who was subjected to a string of vile racial slurs in a WhatsApp group following a work row about white privilege had been awarded nearly £25,000. Muna Abdi, wore a headscarf, was subject to ‘extreme racism’ when her colleagues called her a ‘postbox’ and ‘terrorist’ and said she smelled of curry in a WhatsApp group. The admin worker complained to her employers at Deltec International Courier Ltd, based in Middlesex, but resigned after management failed to deal with the racial abuse. At a tribunal hearing, Ms Abdi won her claims of unlawful harassment on the grounds of religion, race and sex, and Deltec were ordered to pay her a total sum of £24,945.72 within 13 days. ⁴⁴⁹

Also, a man accused of preparing to commit acts of terrorism and suggesting online that he planned to attack the Fife Islamic Centre would stand on October 4. Sam Imrie, allegedly acquired knives, nunchucks, a hammer, a baseball bat, a rifle scope and petrol, which he referred to as his “arsenal”, between June 20 and July 4 2019. He was accused of posting statements on the internet platform Telegram where he indicated that he planned to stream live footage of “an incident” and posted statements that he was going to carry out an attack on the Fife Islamic Centre in Glenrothes. It was also alleged he recorded and compiled details of terrorist attacks on places of worship.⁴⁵⁰

On October 27, Sam Imrie, a man who hated Muslims and idolised right-wing mass murderers had been convicted of terrorism charges after a two-week trial. Sam Imrie, was arrested in July 2019 after he posted messages on social media saying he was planning to set fire to the Fife Islamic Centre. Imrie was convicted on two charges of breaching the terrorism act. ⁴⁵¹

A man who posted Facebook messages where he called for arson attacks on mosques had been jailed. Police said in October 2018, Paul Shelton, used an alias, posted extreme right-wing views that included two coded messages about burning mosques. He was arrested at his home that same month and later charged. Shelton denied two charges of inciting religious hatred but on January 18 at Derby Crown Court, he changed his plea and was jailed for 20 months. ⁴⁵²

Four people accused of been members of a far-right cell “celebrated racist violence” and made pistol parts using a 3D printer, a court had heard. Daniel Wright, Liam Hall, and Stacey Salmon, all from Keighley, West Yorkshire, deny multiple terrorism-related offences. Samuel Whibley, of Derwen Deg, Menai Bridge, Anglesey, also denied terrorism offences. The trial at Sheffield Crown Court was expected to last five weeks. The prosecution said the four defendants used a Telegram channel called Oaken Hearth to exchange terror manuals, shared racist ideology and post videos of atrocities. Prosecutor Annabel Darlow QC, said the four defendants had been members of an “extreme fascist and terroristic cell” during the first four months of 2021. “They embraced extreme right-wing propaganda and celebrated racist violence and killing,” she said. ⁴⁵³

Meanwhile, an elite German police unit would be disbanded over suspicions that officers exchanged far-right content in online chat groups. Members of Frankfurt’s SEK commando unit were suspected of exchanging Nazi imagery. The case was the latest in a series of extremism allegations in the ranks of the German police and military. “During an evaluation of the suspect’s mobile phones, several chat groups where criminal content was shared by members were identified,” senior prosecutor Nadja Niesen said. Seventeen officers were suspected of sharing neo-Nazi images or content that incited racial hatred. Three senior officers were accused of obstruction of justice because they allegedly failed to intervene or sanction those involved. Of the 20 suspects, nineteen were active police officers and one was retired. The active officers had been temporarily relieved of their duties. The “unacceptable conduct” of some SEK officers made the unit’s dissolution inevitable, said Hesse state interior minister Peter Beuth. He said an “entirely new leadership culture” was needed in the Special Forces.⁴⁵⁴

In Germany, on July 30, a court sentenced a German woman to six years in prison for after she sent threats to local politicians and planned a firebomb attack against the Muslim community. The court in Munich found that the woman, an alternative medicine practitioner, had threatened the mayor and a local official in her messages. She also procured weapons and materials to construct an incendiary bomb. The activities, which were motivated by

right-wing ideas, relate to the period between 2019 and 2020. The woman had been “firmly determined” to build an incendiary device and to set it off, judge Richter Michael Hohne said. Her target had been a Muslim cleric or a member of the Muslim community. 455

In Netherlands, on July 6, The Dutch Supreme Court upheld politician Geert Wilders’ conviction for discrimination after he insulted Moroccans at a campaign rally in 2014, in a defeat for the far-right populist known for his anti-Islam rhetoric. Wilders had demanded a retrial of his case, at which no fine or prison sentence was imposed, in which he argued that it was politically motivated. The Supreme Court said his remarks had been “unnecessarily hurtful” and had crossed the boundaries of free speech. 456

In Finland, 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. 457

In Denmark, on September 2, the Eastern High Court in Denmark found Rasmus Paludan guilty of racist and insulting statements but mitigated his earlier district court sentence. The judge was ruling on Paludan’s appeal

of his 2020 conviction from Nørrebro district court, in which the Stram Kurs leader was sentenced to three months in prison for violations of the racism section of the Penal Code. He was also charged with defamation and sentenced to pay 30,000 kroner to a Somali woman for insinuating she was a prostitute during a demonstration in Nørrebro. In total he faced 14 charges, which included racism, defamation and dangerous driving. In his appeal at the High Court on August 30, he distanced himself from racist statements presented as evidence by the prosecution in videos, Twitter messages and on the Stram Kurs website. “I have had nothing to do with what was posted,” he said. Paludan’s appeal saw his three-month prison term reduced to a three-month suspended sentence. The 30,000 kroner fine was reduced to 5,000 kroner. 458

On September 11, In her speech at SF’s national meeting in Kolding, Danish Socialist People’s Party chairman Pia Olsen Dyhr had called for cartoons of Prophet Muhammad to be used freely as teaching material, as she protested against restrictions on free speech. Olsen Dyhr ventured that Denmark and the West in general had sacrificed freedom for the sake of safety. “We can see it with the issue over Muhammad cartoons, where Samuel Paty was very bestially killed because he showed the Muhammad cartoons in his teaching. It is an example of something that was the biggest crisis in Danish foreign policy for many years, that is, in recent times”, Pia Olsen Dyhr said, as quoted by Danish Radio. “In Denmark, there are teachers who don’t dare to show the Muhammad cartoons in their teaching – neither in primary school nor at the university level – for fear of violence or threats of violence. The Muhammad cartoons are one example of where we restrict our freedom of speech. There are satirists who have to live underground and fear for their safety because of a single drawing,” she said. 459

In India, on February 1, A Delhi court had ordered police to register a First Information Report (FIR) and carry out a probe into the attack on a mosque in Shiv Vihar, Northeast Delhi, by armed rioters. On February 25, 2020, rioters broke into the mosque after a power cut and set two LPG cylinders on fire, causing an explosion. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mayuri

Singh, stated that a cognizable offence was made out. “In my considered opinion, FIR is to be registered if a cognizable offence is made out. As per the allegations contained in the complaint regarding the incident of fire, etc in the Madina mosque, cognizable offence is clearly made out and a proper investigation is required as it cannot be said that all the evidences are within the reach of the complainant, even though he has named some of the persons allegedly involved in the offence,” the order said.

On March 18, the police in India’s northern state Rajasthan had registered a case against publishers and writers of a book in which a chapter linked Islam with terrorism. The case was registered with the Jaipur police station against the Rajasthan State Textbook Board, owner of Sanjeev Passbook Publication, and writers for linking Islam with terrorism, insulting and hurting the religious beliefs of Muslims, and criminal conspiracy. In all, 14 people had been booked in the case. The textbook was published by the Rajasthan State Textbook Board and Sanjeev Passbook Publication for students in grade 12 and was reportedly introduced during the previous tenure of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in the state of Rajasthan. The book was part of the curriculum in government schools. The complaint was lodged by Mohsin Rasheed, the coordinator of the Rajasthan Muslim Forum. “Earlier, they had included Islamic terrorism in B. Ed [Bachelor of Education] course. Now they are teaching in class 12. It is an attempt to create suspicion towards Muslims and promote hatred for Islam ... By directly associating Islam with terrorism and then using the word ‘Islamic terrorism,’ the book attempts to provoke Muslim students and the community and hurt their sentiments,” Rasheed told Anadolu Agency. Rasheed requested that the publisher and authors of the book be prosecuted and that “the hate material be immediately removed from the syllabus book.” In the political science textbook, the question “What is Islamic terrorism” was answered with “Islamic terrorism is a form of Islam, which has become stronger in the last 20-30 years.” 460

Still in India, seventeen people who were suspended after a raid at a Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Covid war room by Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya had been reinstated by the civic body. Sources told India Today that 17 Muslim employees at the BBMP Covid war room were asked to rejoin work after the police could not find evidence against them in the alleged bribe-for-bed scam. Top police sources said the investigation into the scam pertained to blocked beds in private hospitals for Covid patients had not revealed the involvement of those Muslims whose names were mentioned by Surya on May 4 in a live programme. BJP MP Tejasvi Surya had the week before alleged that hospitals in Bengaluru ‘blocked’ beds with fake names to make money, at a time when Covid-19 cases were rising in Karnataka. The BJP MP had alleged that hospitals in the city blocked at least 4,065 beds with fake names. A video emerged on social media in which Tejasvi Surya was seen taking names of people who he alleged were behind the scam. All those named by Tejasvi Surya out loud were Muslims. As a result, the recruitment agency went on to suspend all 17 staffers. 461 **Also,** Indian authorities had charged Yati Narsinghanand Giri, a Hindu monk, with inciting religious violence after he called for the “genocide” of India’s Muslims at a meeting of right-wing supporters, police said January 17. Senior police officer Swatantra Kumar said the monk, an outspoken supporter of far-right nationalists who also headed a Hindu monastery, was initially arrested on January 15 on allegations that he made derogatory remarks against women. The day after he appeared in a court in the town of Haridwar, where he was sent into 14 days of custody for hate speech against Muslims called for violence. Kumar said the monk Giri, whom he described as a “repeat offender,” was formally charged Monday for promoting “enmity between different groups on grounds of religion.” The charge can carry a jail term of five years. In December 2021, Giri and other religious leaders called on Hindus to arm themselves for “a genocide” against Muslims during a meeting in Haridwar, a northern holy town in Uttarakhand, according to a police complaint. 462

And, India’s Supreme Court had issued notice to a northern Himalayan state following a petition that sought to prosecute several Hindu religious leaders for allegedly calling for a “genocide” of Muslims at a closed-door

meeting on December 2021. Three Supreme Court judges on January 12, 2022, said they were notifying the Uttarakhand state government that they would investigate the case. The petition filed by retired Judge Anjana Prakash stated that the speeches made at the Hindu religious leaders' congregation "pose a grave threat not just to the unity and integrity of our country but also endanger the lives of millions of Muslim citizens," according to Bar & Bench, an online portal for Indian legal news.⁴⁶³

In Singapore, Despite been in full view of a mosque's members, Lim Beng Wei threw a raw pork bone towards the building's balcony. The Singaporean national pleaded guilty on September 9 to a charge of public nuisance. Court documents stated that Lim bought two raw pork bones, among other things, from a supermarket in Tanjong Pagar on the morning of January 14. He headed towards Masjid Al-Abrar, which was located at Telok Ayer Street, where he intended to throw a bone at the mosque. When he reached the building, he removed a bone from its packaging and flung it towards the second-level balcony of the mosque. Lim had also admitted to only being partially compliant in taking his medications then. But Dr Yap said the man was not of unsound mind at the time - he was aware of the "nature and quality of his actions".⁴⁶⁴

In Australia, Neil Erikson, a Far-right extremist had been sent to jail for a month after he disrupted a religious gathering in Melbourne. The magistrate told the court Erikson had stated he preferred to go to jail, rather than undertake a de-radicalization program as part of a community corrections order. "I have no alternative but to send you to prison," Magistrate Charlie Rozencwajg told him. In April 2019, Erikson stormed into a Muslim peace festival at Federation Square where he yelled offensive comments through a megaphone while being filmed by a friend. Magistrate Rozencwajg said the remarks were "offensive in the extreme" to those who had gathered to pray, he added that it was Erikson's intended effect. "Your actions are racist," the magistrate said, he noted his views were those held by far-right extremists and white supremacists. Erikson was resistant to a community corrections order that he considered more punitive than a fine or jail, the court heard.

The court order — to be served out in the community for a year — would have banned him from social media, kept him from within 100 meters of mosques and required him to undertake a de-radicalization program. Instead, the magistrate sentenced him to a month in jail.⁴⁶⁵

Still in Australia:— Former Australian senator Fraser Anning had been ordered to remove 141 pieces of content from the internet after a Queensland tribunal found he breached anti-discrimination laws by vilifying Muslims. The material was mainly shared on Twitter and Facebook, much of it while he was a senator for Queensland between 2017 and July 2019. Mr Anning had also been ordered to remove a press release issued on the day of the Christchurch massacre which blamed Muslim immigration for the bloodshed. The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) found Mr Anning breached state laws that ban the incitement of hatred, serious contempt or severe ridicule on the grounds of religion. The legal action was launched by the civil rights organisation Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN) and the Islamic Council of Queensland.⁴⁶⁶

Probe and Arrest

In US, the Albany Police Department in New York State arrested James Davis, after they had investigated two separate incidents involving threatening behavior. In one incident, police reported that he threatened to kill a Muslim, and in the other, they said he chased a man with a firearm. On January 19, a man had reported to police that Davis threatened to kill him because he was Muslim. The victim of the threat said he was in the corner store near Clinton Avenue and Lark Street when Davis walked into the store to harass him. Police said that when he was arrested, Davis had a loaded Sig M400 rifle concealed in his coat. Besides the rifle, police said they recovered two other firearms during the course of the investigation. Davis was charged with: fourth-degree criminal possession of a weapon, second-degree menacing and second-degree aggravated harassment.⁴⁶⁷

On January 22, Brian Christopher Miller, from U.S. Oregon state, had trashed a convenience store and threatened to gun down its clerk in a confrontation captured on viral video, while he was spewing anti-Islamic slurs. Miller was arrested on suspicion of first-degree criminal mischief and third-degree robbery, both felonies, according to Multnomah County Sheriff's Office jail records. The Portland man was booked into jail on January 22, before being released on his own recognizance on the following day, jail records showed. Seemab Hussaini, vice chairman of the Oregon chapter of Council on American-Islamic Relations, said he's been in touch with the clerk's relatives, who can't understand why Miller wasn't immediately charged with a bias crime. "When this man was arrested they (the clerk's family) were not aware this man was being released so quickly," Hussaini told NBC News. "And the charges do not acknowledge the violence the victim was subjected to. What truly upsets the family is the inability to acknowledge the true nature of the crime, at least for now." The clerk, a senior citizen and immigrant from Afghanistan, shot video of the incident before his son published it on YouTube, Hussaini said. Footage showed a mask-less man bearing a bearing a strong resemblance to Miller toppling displays, damaging the cash register, ripping down Covid-protection

barriers, throwing food at the clerk and yelling: "I'll f--king shoot you in the back ... Is that how we do things in America, Afghan? Al-Qaeda? Osama?" the menacing man said. "I don't want your f--king cigarettes now dude. But here let's call the the barter system. Five f--king dollars? You can owe me, you can owe me. You call the f--king cops. I'm an easy man to find." And he was, as police arrested Miller just outside the Chevron convenience store, officials said.⁴⁶⁸

On April 26, A man named, Benjamin Enderle, had been arrested for hate messages spray-painted on the Moorhead Fargo Islamic Center. Moorhead Police said through tips which included important information from an employee of a local business, detectives were able to take Enderle of Moorhead into custody. Reports had been forwarded to the Clay County Attorney's Office with the request of charges of felony harassment and damage to property in the second degree. "These crimes were enhanced due to hate related acts. The Moorhead Police Department appreciates the interest and compassion shown by local citizens, media, and the community as a whole in solving this crime," the department said.⁴⁶⁹

Also in US, a man was facing charges after police said he tried to stab a security guard at an Islamic center in northern Virginia. Fairfax County Police said officers responded to a report of a man with a knife at the Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Center on May 8. According to police, a suspect later identified as Jonathan Lincoln, of Falls Church tried to stab the guard and then pointed the knife at several people. No one was injured. Lincoln had been charged with two counts of assault and disorderly conduct, the department said in a post on social media.⁴⁷⁰

Meanwhile, a University of Montana computer science professor had been placed on paid leave while the university investigated now-deleted blog posts that maligned women, Muslims and people who were LGBTQ. The Montana Kaimin student newspaper was first to report the blog posts by tenured associate professor Rob Smith in which he said women begin to "lose value" after age 16, that faithful Muslims were not peaceful and that

child sex trafficking and pedophilia are driven by the sins of accepting queer and transgender people. His blog was subtitled: *“Explaining the prophecies and the scriptures to all who desire to hear them.”* 471

In Canada, an Edmonton man accused of committing a “hate-motivated” assault against two Black Muslim women had been arrested after failing to attend court. According to Court records, Richard Bradley Stevens, had a scheduled court appearance on January 5. An arrest warrant was issued when he failed to show. Cheryl Voordenhout, Edmonton city police spokeswoman, said Stevens was arrested On January 6 and was accused of assaulting a mother and daughter outside Southgate Centre on Dec. 8, 2020. He faces two charges of assault and a charge of mischief for damage to the car window.⁴⁷²

On March 8, 2021, a man named Shane Edward Tremblay had been charged in connection with three “hate-motivated” attacks in south Edmonton on women, two of whom were wearing head coverings. Tremblay, would face three counts each of uttering threats and assault. “The actions of this individual have traumatized these three women and created a significant level of fear in our community,” Sgt. Gary Willits of the hate crimes and violent extremism unit of the Edmonton Police Service, said in a news release. Tremblay was well known to police and Edmonton Transit for “multiple related incidents over the last few years,” Willits said. The news release described “three recent hate-motivated incidents involving women” on Edmonton streets. The first was a 19-year-old woman wearing a hijab was waiting inside the University of Alberta Transit Centre when she was approached by a man uttering racial slurs, police said. The man became aggressive, posturing as though he was about to assault the woman. He fled after a transit employee became involved. The second incident occurred 30 minutes later when a man ran across the road and stopped on the sidewalk in front of a 27-year-old Black woman wearing a burka. The man began swearing and yelling insults. He crossed the street away from the woman, then crossed back and pushed her from behind while making threats to kill her and tear off her burka. The third incident which took place on January 18, involved a Black woman outside a convenience store where she was followed into the store, and assaulted. 473

Meanwhile, Edmonton police had arrested and charged a man after a road rage incident in the city’s northwest quadrant that officers believe was racially motivated. Police said on April 25, a family was travelling in their vehicle northbound on 82 Street when a man in the lane next to them made a profane gesture to the woman in the front passenger seat, who was wearing a hijab, and allegedly threatened the rest of the family in the car. The family ignored the aggressor, but the man drove radically, around the family’s car. Eventually, police said this caused a small collision between the two cars. When the two cars, plus a third car who witnessed the event, pulled over and tried to exchange insurance information, the aggressive driver apparently refused and threw religious slurs at the family. Police said the accused then assaulted the witness and took off before police arrived on scene. The witness was taken to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries and police later arrested the man at his home. He was charged with assault causing bodily harm and careless driving among other things. The Hate Crimes Unit had also recommended the courts consider increased sentence due to the events been hate-related. 474

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. 475

Also in Canada, Canada Revenue Agency’s (CRA) taxpayers’ ombudsperson launched a probe after Muslim and other minority charities submitted a complaint about been unfairly targeted for audits, the Canadian Press reported on August 6. Francois Boileau said he would address the issues

and concerns expressed by Muslim charities and other charities led by people of color. The ombudsperson’s office asked the charities in question to share their experience with the CRA and the agency’s efforts to combat discrimination. His office was expected to provide National Revenue Minister Diane LeBouhillier an update by Jan. 1, 2022, the CP reported. 476

Still in Canada, Toronto police had arrested two people who allegedly tried to enter a Toronto mosque and threatened staff on June 15, according to a press release. A man and a woman tried to enter the main and side door of the Islamic Institute of Toronto in Scarborough, but both doors were locked, according to Fareed Amin, chair of mosque’s board of directors. They threatened to detonate a bomb and shoot people, Amin said he was told by two staff members who worked on the lawn. Amin commended the police, both the man and women were arrested, according to Toronto police. “They were believed to be under the influence of illicit drugs,” according to a police press release. 477

In France, a teen extremist who idolizes Adolf Hitler was arrested for planning to attack a high school and a mosque, media reports said on October 2. French daily Le Parisien said the man, who the newspaper called “Simon,” planned to attack the high school he attended and a nearby mosque in the Seine-Maritime region in the northwest of the country. He was detained few days before by the General Directorate for Internal Security (DGSI) and brought before a counterterrorism judge on October 1. The paper said Simon had planned to execute the attack on April 20, Hitler’s birthday, and before the second round of presidential elections in France.478

In UK, 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 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. 479

Also in UK, a Sheffield primary school had apologized after a picture of the Prophet Muhammad was shown in an assembly. A member of staff from Hunter’s Bar Junior School showed the picture during the holy month of Ramadan. But the move had sparked outrage from some members of the Muslim community and one parent had even called for other Muslim parents to pull their children from the school, the Daily Mail reports. Headteacher of Hunter’s Bar Junior School, Michael Watson, said in a statement issued on May 5 that he was aware of the offence caused. Watson, had offered his “heartfelt apology” and said that an investigation would be launched to find out how and why this happened. He said: “We are aware and understand fully how offensive this is to our Muslim community and I offer my heartfelt apologies for the upset caused...I want to reassure our Muslim community that we are doing all we can to find a fair and just way forward that rebuilds trust and faith in our school, so you can be confident that our pupils, families and staff understand, support and celebrate our diverse community that we are so proud of”. This apology had been rejected by one parent at the school, who had suggested that he and other members of the Muslim community will protest. However, the Federation of Mosques has asked that parents accept the school’s apology and said that they “see no benefit in external elements getting involved”. 480

Further in UK, Girlguiding, the UK’s charity for girls and young women, had apologized after an external audit uncovered instances of racism and Islamophobia among girl guides and staff. The probe, which took evidence from over 200 members, staff, parents and carers, revealed instances of discrimination that saw young people of colour been called racial slurs and a Muslim girl been asked to remove her hijab during a trip. Racialised “jokes” and micro-aggressions such purposefully mispronunciation of names had all been cited as common, offensive experiences by staff members within the organization. In another instance, a girl aged under 7 was told by another child that she didn’t want to hold her hand because she ‘is dirty’ and her parent reported that they felt “too worried about backlash” to raise this with the leader. Lack of diversity had been acknowledged as a serious issue within the charity from the top down. Some ethnic minority staff told auditors

that white staff only greet other white staff and ignored their non-white colleagues, while other employees within the external communications team told the auditors that they had experienced resistance when they wanted to post things around Islamic holidays. It had been reported that ethnic minority staff members had been asked to do administrative or menial tasks even if more junior white staff were available to do it. Angela Salt, the charity's chief executive said: "On behalf of Girlguiding, I am deeply sorry to anyone who has ever felt unwelcome, unsupported or uncomfortable or who has been subject to discrimination or exclusion of any form at the charity... This will see us implement changes across the whole organisation. The leadership team and I are fully committed to tackling the problems head-on and we will change. In light of the audit, the charity had launched a plan to enhance diversity and inclusion that includes action-points such as training for volunteers and staff on race-equity. 481

Meanwhile, two teenagers were arrested in Wolverhampton, England after reports of an Islamophobic and racial attack on a Muslim family emerged on August 1, according to police. "We have arrested two teenagers tonight (Monday) following reports of a racial attack on a family at a park on Park Road West, Wolverhampton on Saturday evening," West Midlands Police said in a statement. The arrests came after a video went viral on social media which showed two teenagers verbally and physically attacked and threatened members of a Muslim family in a park. One of the teenagers was seen to have shouted "I will stab you myself," he was heard in the video. 482

In Germany, on December 1, More than 180 police officers raided homes in three German states, after the German government banned a far-right group, the interior ministry said. The homes of 11 members of the far-right group Wolfsbrigade 44 were searched in Hesse, Mecklenburg West-Pomerania and North Rhine-Westphalia to confiscate the group's funds and far-right propaganda material, the German news agency dpa reported. Germany's Interior Minister Horst Seehofer said: "There's no place in this country for an association that sows hatred and works on the resurrection of a Nazi state." The members of the group want to re-establish a Nazi

dictatorship and abolish democracy, the interior ministry said. The 44 in their name stands for the fourth letter in the alphabet, DD, and is an abbreviation for Division Dirlewanger. Oskar Dirlewanger was a known Nazi war criminal and commander of a Nazi SS special unit. The far-right group, founded in 2016, was also known for its anti-Semitic and racist ideology as well as its violent and aggressive appearances in public and on social media.483

Also in Germany, a man had been arrested in connection with a racist attack on a teenage refugee in the eastern city of Erfurt that was captured on video, officials said on April 26. The video which was circulated on social media showed that a man standing over the seated victim in which he repeatedly insulted and spat at the victim, and then kicked him in the face. Erfurt police said the 17-year-old victim from Syria, suffered minor injuries in the attack, which followed a verbal argument. The governor of Thuringia state, where Erfurt was located, called the attack that took place on April 23 in one of the city's trams "simply disgusting." "The perpetrator has been caught... Such a cowardly person, strong and aggressive against someone who was defenseless." the governor, Bodo Ramelow, wrote on Twitter.484

Still in Germany, a company of the German military's honor guard battalion had been suspended from official duty amid an investigation of initiation rituals, suspected sexual abuse and far-right incidents, the German Defense Ministry said on October 8. The company had been suspended from official events "until further notice" while the allegations were being investigated, ministry spokesman Arne Collatz told reporters in Berlin. He stressed that the ministry was pursuing a "no-tolerance" policy. The guard battalion, which had nearly 1,000 members, provided military honors during state visits and other formal events. Collatz said the internal investigation covers "several dozen" soldiers and the alleged incidents came to light as a result of reports by fellow battalion members.485

Also, German police had arrested a suspect after several shots were fired at a mosque in the eastern city of Halle on Sunday January 23, 2022. At least three bullets hit the windows of the mosque run by the Islamic Cultural Centrum of Halle, but no one was injured in the incident, police said in a statement. A man, who lived in an apartment across the mosque, was identified as a possible suspect, after the police received information from several witnesses. Police had found a long gun and a gas pistol, during searches at the suspect's apartment. 486

In India, on February 6, the Singanallur police had arrested M. Jaishankar, a Hindu Munnani functionary, on the charges of making remarks insulting Prophet Muhammad during a public meeting. According to the police, Jaishankar, district general secretary of Hindu Munnani, made the remarks on February 1, during a meeting held near Singanallur Bus Terminus, in Coimbatore, a city in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Based on a complaint lodged by Uppilipalayam Village Administrative Officer Banumathi, the Singanallur police had registered a case against him under sections 143 (Punishment for unlawful assembly), 341 (Punishment for wrongful restraint), 270 (Malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) and 153 A (Promoting enmity between different groups on ground of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony) of the Indian Penal Code against Jaishankar.487

On March 14, Ghaziabad police confirmed the arrest of two men following a violent assault on a 14-year-old Muslim boy, named as Asif, who entered a Hindu temple to drink water. Footage of the incident, which occurred, on March 11, in Ghaziabad in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, sparked outrage after it was widely shared online. In the video, the boy could be seen being physically assaulted by a man as a second person films it. Some Hindu temples in India do not permit entry to non-Hindus, and the site in Ghaziabad had a sign which stated that it was “forbidden” for Muslims to enter, The Indian Express newspaper reported. Asif's father told The Indian Express that his son “was in the area when he felt thirsty... he saw a tap at the temple and began drinking”. Ghaziabad police had named the suspect as Shringi Nandan Yadav, a resident of the city of Bhagalpur in the

state of Bihar and a caretaker at the temple where the alleged assault took place. Another man, named only as Shivanand, had also been arrested in connection with the filming of the incident. 488

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. 489

At the same day 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.⁴⁹⁰

Still in India, 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. Meanwhile, 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.⁴⁹¹

Further in India, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) had filed a petition in the Allahabad High Court against the demolition of Masjid Garib Nawab, also known as Tehseel Wali Masjid, in Ram Sanehi Ghat area of Barabanki. The Sunni Central Waqf Board had also filed a writ petition in the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad high court against the demolition of the mosque on May 17. AIMPLB’s General Secretary Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani said, “The action taken by the district administration and police in the dark of the night on May 17 was illegal. The mosque was registered under the UP Sunni Central Waqf Board. The mosque was on waqf land, therefore, no magistrate or any other officer can take indiscriminate action. The waqf board was formed through the Waqf Act and its matters have to be taken up by the waqf tribunal.”⁴⁹²

On August 10, The Delhi Police had arrested six people, which included advocate and former BJP spokesperson Ashwini Upadhyay, in connection with the anti-Muslim slogans allegedly raised during a protest at the Jantar Mantar here, officials said. “Six people have been arrested after

an FIR was registered at the Connaught Place Police Station related to provocative sloganeering at a programme held near Bank of Baroda,” Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Deepak Yadav said. They were arrested from different parts of the Delhi-National Capital Region.⁴⁹³

Meanwhile, two Muslim girls were allegedly attacked and assaulted by over 40 people from pro-Hindu organisations. The incident was reported at KRC Circle in Shanivarsanthe. Meanwhile, the accused had been booked under the POCSO Act and two arrests had been made by the police. The father of one of the girls said, “*My daughter and her friend were physically assaulted by boys from the Sangh Pariwar as they attended the classes in her college. They had to remove the burqa before entering the classes. Meanwhile, my daughter’s friend lent her burqa to a Christian girl from the same college in the morning. Further, my daughter and her friend were waiting for this Christian girl to return the burqa in the evening. However, while the burqa was being returned, my daughter and her friend were attacked by over 40 goons.*” He said that the girls were locked up, beaten, abused and assaulted. The burqa of a girl was torn and they suffered injuries on their back including scratch marks. The girls were later admitted to Kodalipet Hospital. Meanwhile, the accused have released a video on social media ‘policing’ the girls for handing over the burqa to a non-Muslim girl.⁴⁹⁴

On January 5, 2022 Indian police said they had arrested three people involved in an online app that shared pictures of Muslim women for a virtual “auction” in an apparent case of communal harassment. Pictures of dozens of women had been used without their consent and doctored to create an open source app called ‘Bulli Bai’ - a derogatory term to describe Muslim women - on the GitHub platform before it was taken down. Police in the western city of Mumbai, which was investigating the case, said they had arrested three people, two men and a woman. “We are investigating whether this was a part of a larger conspiracy,” Mumbai’s Police Commissioner Hemant Nagrale told reporters.⁴⁹⁵

Also, Mumbai police had arrested three persons from Haryana in connection with the chat on the Clubhouse app, in which obscene comments were allegedly made against Muslim women, an official said on January 21, 2022. The Delhi police had written to the Clubhouse app and search engine Google, to receive details about the organiser of the alleged audio group chat in which “obscene comments were made against Muslim women”. Official sources had said that the police had also identified some members of the group audio chat, which included men and women from both communities, as part of the investigation. 496

In Sri Lanka, the military had launched an investigation after social media posts showed soldiers were forcing minority Muslims to kneel on the streets as a punishment because they allegedly broke the lockdown rules. Armed soldiers ordered Muslim civilians to hold their hands in the air while kneeling on a road in the town of Eravur, about 300km (190 miles) east of the capital Colombo, AFP news agency reported on June 20. Officials acknowledged that troops had no power to mete out such punishments. The victims were on their way to two restaurants to buy food. “An initial Military Police investigation has already commenced after certain photos went viral depicting an alleged harassment in the Eravur area,” the army said in a statement. It said the officer in charge had been removed and the soldiers involved ordered to leave the town. 497

In Singapore, on January 27, Singapore’s Internal Security Department (ISD) had announced the detention of a 16-year-old Singaporean student under the Internal Security Act (ISA) for planning to attack two mosques and kill worshippers in Singapore on March 15, 2021 on the second anniversary of the Christchurch terror attacks. The teenager, who was identified as a Protestant Christian of Indian ethnicity, was the first detainee to be inspired by far-right extremist ideology and the youngest person detained under the ISA for terrorism-related activities, said the ISD. The secondary school student had made detailed plans and preparations to conduct terrorist attacks using a machete against Muslims at two mosques, Assyafaah Mosque in Sembawang and Yusof Ishak Mosque in Woodlands, the ISD

said. “He was self-radicalised, motivated by a strong antipathy towards Islam and a fascination with violence. He watched the live-streamed video of the terrorist attack on the two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand and read the manifesto of the attacker, Brenton Tarrant,” said the ISD. The investigation results indicated that the youth had acted alone. 498

New Zealand:— On December 24, A man had been arrested in connection to upsetting posters plastered at a Islamic Centre which had officially opened its doors on December 11. The unidentified man appeared in the Queenstown District Court, charged with possession of a knife, Southern District Commander Superintendent Paul Basham said in a statement. According to a witness, the posters bore images of Islam’s prophet Muhammad, taken from satirical French magazine Charlie Hebdo, and reportedly included sexist and anti-Islamic messages. The posters, which had appeared at the Gorge Rd site on December 22, were quickly removed by locals. Basham said: “We know incidents like this are upsetting for our community and we’d like to thank Queenstown residents for the information they have provided to assist our enquiries”. Jim Boulton, Queenstown Mayor, described the alleged offender as “disgusting”. “I’m extremely disappointed and unhappy that there’s people out there who think this is okay,” Boulton told Newshub on December 23. Boulton added: “We are a very inclusive community - there are 47 different nationalities in our high school here. Our community enjoys and embraces the fact we have so many different beliefs and nationalities here, so this is foreign to us.” 499

Still in New Zealand, police had arrested two people following a threat made online to the Linwood Islamic centre and Al Noor mosque, the sites of the two Christchurch shootings in 2019. The alleged threat, which was made on the first week of March, were followed up by police after they had received credible information from the public regarding “concerning communications on the 4chan site”. Canterbury district commander Supt John Price Said: “We take all threats of this nature seriously and we are working closely with our Muslim community...Any messages of hate or people wanting to cause harm in our community will not be tolerated – it’s not the Kiwi way.” 500

Positive Views on Islam

In the UN, on December 18, the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, warned that the world was witnessing a “retreat from the values of enlightenment and a rise in hate speech”. The UN Chief, who was addressing the German parliament, said “It is clear that the way to win the future is through an openness to the world. Yet, in too many places, we see a closing of minds and retreat from the values of enlightenment,” he said. “A dangerous drift to the false refuge of irrationality. And the rise in hate speech, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry and other forms of discrimination. History teaches that politics driven by anger, distortion is always, always a recipe for disaster,” he added. 501

Further in the UN, on March 17, The Secretary-General of United Nation, António Guterres, had said, in a pre-recorded video broadcast during a high-level virtual event to commemorate the first ever “international Day to combat islamophobia” organized by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), “Anti-Muslim bigotry is sadly in line with other distressing trends we are seeing globally”. The Secretary-General cited UN’s Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief report, submitted on March 4, to the UN Human Rights Council, which found that suspicion, discrimination and outright hatred towards Muslims had risen to “epidemic proportions”. The UN chief called for safeguarding the rights of minority communities, “As we move toward evermore multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies, we need political, cultural and economic investments to strengthen social cohesion and tackle bigotry,” he stated. The Secretary-General underscored that fighting discrimination, racism and xenophobia was a priority for the United Nations. During the virtual event, Miguel Ángel Moratinos, the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) High Representative, had said “Despite progress made in building bridges of understanding through the promotion of intercultural and interfaith dialogue, manifestations of anti-Muslim hatred persisted and morphed into different forms...Islamophobia cannot be seen in isolation from the worrying increase in xenophobia and hate speech against minorities including immigrants and other faith

communities.” For the President of the UN General Assembly, Volkan Bozkir, had urged countries to re-commit to the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other related instruments, in which he expressed hope that they would lay the foundation for national laws to end hate speech and hate crimes. “Today our conversation is focused on Islamophobia, but the source of this scourge is a source that imperils us all. The answer is solidarity, equality, and respect for the equal dignity and entitlement to fundamental human rights of every individual”, he said. 502

Still in the UN, 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. 503

On January 12, 2022, **The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues**, Dr Fernand de Varennes, condemned the surfacing of a hate app on which doctored photographs of hundreds of Muslim women were uploaded for “auction” and said such incidents need to be prosecuted as soon as they occur. In a tweet, Varennes said, “Minority Muslim women in India are harassed and ‘sold’ in social media apps, #SulliDeals, a form of hate speech, must be condemned and prosecuted as soon as they occur. All Human Rights of minorities need to be fully and equally protected.” 504

Also, **The United Nations had voiced concern at recent incidents of hate speech and incitement to violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia**, fearing inflammatory acts would escalate ahead of elections in 2022. Bosnian Serbs celebrated their national day on January 9, 2022, which marked the creation of the Republika Srpska (RS). In a statement on January 14, the spokeswoman for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said the UN was “deeply concerned” by incidents that saw individuals “glorify atrocity crimes and convicted war criminals, target certain communities with hate speech, and, in some cases, directly incite violence”. Liz Throssell said people had chanted the name of convicted war criminal Ratko Mladic during torchlight processions, sung nationalistic songs which called for the takeover of locations in the former Yugoslavia and in one incident, individuals fired shots in the air outside a mosque. ⁵⁰⁵

Inflammatory rhetoric was leading to a spread in hate incidents in Bosnia-Herzegovina, rights and security watchdog **the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)** said on January 12, 2022. A spate of security incidents occurred across Bosnia-Herzegovina’s Serb Republic in the days before, with Serb nationalists encouraged by their leader’s rhetoric provoked their Muslim neighbors. Shots were fired near mosques during prayers and nationalist songs glorifying convicted war criminals were sung during street celebrations around the Orthodox Christmas and Sunday’s banned holiday of the autonomous Serb Republic. “The growing use of inflammatory, divisive rhetoric by some officials in Bosnia-Herzegovina, including in recent days in Republika Srpska, is contributing to the proliferation of such incidents The mission cautions against any and all acts that carry the potential to incite conflict and lead to the destabilization of peace and security in Bosnia,” the OSCE mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina said in a statement. Serb nationalist leader Milorad Dodik, who had been pushing for the secession of the Serb Republic from Bosnia-Herzegovina and its integration with Serbia, had also used ethnic slurs against Muslim Bosniaks, degraded them to a religious group without ethnic identity and ascribed them the “colonial mentality.” ⁵⁰⁶

On January 13, 2022, **Amnesty International USA, Genocide Watch, and 17 other human rights organisations in the USA** expressed concern at the plight of Muslims in India. While deliberating on the ruling dispensation hatred for Muslims at a Congressional briefing, the various groups discussed the calls for genocide made at the recent Haridwar hate conclave. Experts present at the meeting spoke about how the country was likely to witness mass violence and massacres of Muslims if the situation worsens. “The fact that Keshav Prasad Maurya, a leader of Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the deputy chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, had defended the open incitement and hate from the dharma sansad in an interview to the BBC speaks to the current atmosphere of peak hatred and bigotry against India’s Muslims,” said Govind Acharya India/Kashmir specialist with Amnesty International, USA. “According to research from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, India is at high risk – number two in the world – for a genocide... We call on all of you to recognize that the hatred being expressed in India is at a very serious level. We can’t let the Biden Administration repeat the mistakes of the past,” said the press note. ⁵⁰⁷

In Canada, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the leaders of Canada’s federal parties traveled to a mosque in London, Ontario, on June 8, and joined thousands at a vigil for a Muslim family run down on June 6 by a driver in a pickup truck. “Islamophobia is real. Racism is real,” Trudeau told the crowd about the hit and run that killed three generations of a family. Leaders from all levels of government attended the vigil, and listened to members of the city’s Muslim community express frustration over the lack of action to address Islamophobia. Mustafa Farooq, chief executive officer of the National Council of Canadian Muslims, urged all levels of government to organize a national summit on Islamophobia. Trudeau and his federal counterparts each took turns where they addressed the crowd, and expressed solidarity in their grief. ⁵⁰⁸

In France, twenty-five non-governmental organisations from eleven different countries had signed an unprecedented letter to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, in which they called for France to be

investigated by the European Court of Justice. The signatories included representatives of CRAN, the French Council of Black Associations, the Swiss Central Islamic Council, the Islamic Council of Victoria in Australia and the London-based Muslim Public Affairs Committee. The signatories alleged systematic, state-sponsored discrimination against Muslims. The letter urged for an immediate action against the French government for what the signatories called “state-sponsored Islamophobia” and for imposing the allegedly discriminatory charter of republican values. The letter to the European Commission leader said the legislation was inherently discriminatory. They accuse France of violating the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which guarantees freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and flouting the European Convention on Human Rights.⁵⁰⁹

In Germany, a politician slammed the far right AfD (Alternative for Germany) Party over islamophobia and how they had exacerbated the situation in the country with its racist policies. Helge Lindh, who represents the Social Democratic Party (SPD), in a speech to the Bundestag, said: “You are playing a devastating game for democracy. Those who play with democracy play with people. And these games have victims, and Muslims definitely are the victims of these treacherous games. Don’t play with democracy. This is what the AfD does.” In his speech, the lawmaker apologized to Muslims who were victims of islamophobia incidents. Lindh advised Members of the Federal Parliaments to educate themselves to better understand Muslims. “If we tell Muslims what we expect from them, how they should behave, we will humiliate them and reap hatred. Let’s not go on telling Muslims what modern Islam is. Try to understand what it means to find a job as a trained covered woman. Only then can we venture more into discussing Islam.” he said.⁵¹⁰

In India, the trust responsible for the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi and the Kashi Viswanath Temple Trust had gone for a land swap, which was the result of almost two years of negotiations between both the sides. Meetings between various Muslim leaders and representatives of the Kashi Viswanath Temple Trust (KVTT) began sometime around November 2019

and culminated in the land swap in July 2021. The Anjuman Intezamiya Masajid (AIM), the administrative body of the Gyanvapi mosque who were custodians of the land, gave the KVTT 1,700 square feet of land, in exchange they had got 1,000 square feet of land in the Bansphatak area of Varanasi.⁵¹¹

In New Zealand, on March 13, New Zealand marked the second anniversary of March 15 2019 terrorist attack, when 51 worshippers were killed at two Christchurch mosques by a white supremacist gunman. NZ’s Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, had addressed several hundred people who had gathered at the Christchurch Arena, and told the crowd that she had been lost for words while preparing her speech because nothing she could say could “change what happened”. She said the Muslim community had experienced hatred and racism even before the attacks and words should be used for change. “There will be an unquestionable legacy from March 15,” Ardern said. “Much of it will be heartbreaking. But it is never too early or too late for the legacy to be a more inclusive nation.” The service, which was similar to the service planned last year that had to be cancelled due to coronavirus, was also livestreamed for those not able to make it to the event. The names of all 51 people who lost their lives that day were read aloud at the service, and the efforts of police and medics were also commemorated.⁵¹²

On Inter-Faiths

In US, the First United Methodist Church of Denton, north of Dallas-Fort Worth, had started a GoFundMe campaign to help the city's only mosque, the Islamic Society of Denton, pay for repairs needed and recover from the devastating snowstorms that hit the area the week before. The church's initiative came after a video showing water pouring from burst pipes in the mosque's ceiling went viral on social media, the church launched a GoFundMe campaign to fund repairs, which had been expected to take weeks to complete. By February 25, nearly \$55,000 out of a targeted \$100,000 had been raised. "Your friends at First United Methodist Church of Denton and Open Worship are with you ... We send you prayers and love and support. Please let us know how we can help further. As-salamu alaykum!" wrote Jonathan Perry, a minister at the church, on the GoFundMe page. Perry told the Denton Record-Chronicle "the church has a longstanding friendship" with the mosque and that the two congregations have "been there for each other at important times." 512

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.'" 513

In Canada, 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. 514

Also in Canada, after what police believe was an attack fueled by hate that left four members of a Muslim family dead in London, Ont., more than 60 Manitoba faith leaders and members had signed a statement where they expressed their unified support against Islamophobia. "As leaders and members of various local faith communities, we are shocked and distressed about the hate-provoked, targeted attack on the Muslim family in London," the statement says. "We stand with Muslim communities both in grief and in resolve to do all that we can to counter Islamophobic hate and violence." Authored by Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd, the reverend at Westworth United Church in Winnipeg, the signatories to the statement include representatives from various Christian denominations as well as Jewish,

Buddhist, Sikh, and Hindu and Jain leaders. MacKenzie Shepherd said she and many other faith leaders felt compelled to show unified support for the Muslim community. 515

Still in Canada, Toronto Maple Leaf alumni faced off at Budweiser Gardens in London, Ont. on October 3 to show how sports could bring a community together even when faced with adversity. The game followed the Toronto Raptors’ annual open practice at Budweiser Gardens on Oct. 2. It was all part of a weekend of events hosted by Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment, organized with the aim of standing up against hate in the wake of a fatal attack on a Muslim family in June. At the end of the game, former Leafs captain Wendel Clark reflected on the importance of sports as way to overcome division. “It’s looking out for one another,” he said. “It doesn’t matter whether you’re on the ice or in the community, it’s about being a good community person, and being a good team player.” 516

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In Vatican, in a message which wished Muslims a peaceful and fruitful month as they fasted Ramadan and the celebration of Id al-Fitr when Ramadan was over, leaders of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue Said Christians and Muslims share a conviction that God calls them to be “witnesses, restorers and builders of hope” both in this life and for the life to come. The officials focused on the religious value of hope

amid the coronavirus pandemic. The message was signed March 29, before Ramadan began, by Cardinal Miguel Ángel Ayuso, council president, and Msgr. Indunil Janakaratne Kankanamalage, council secretary. The Vatican released the message April 16, three days after the Ramadan fast began. In addition, they wrote, “hope also carries with it belief in the goodness present in the heart of every person. Many times, in situations of difficulty and despair, help, and the hope it brings, can come from those whom we least expect.” 518 **In UK,** 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. 519

Also in UK, 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. 520

Still in UK, Liverpool’s politicians and faith leaders had urged solidarity in the face of division after reports of Islamophobic attacks following a suspected suicide bombing in the city. Multi-faith representatives delivered a joint statement of solidarity outside Liverpool women’s hospital, where a car was blown up two days earlier. The Rev Canon Dr Crispin Pailing, the rector of Liverpool, said the attack had “*shocked people of every faith – and*

those of no faith – across the city”. Leyla Mashjari, an associate director of Al-Ghazali Multicultural Centre, representing Liverpool’s Muslim community, said: “*At this difficult time let us remember that there is more that unites than divides us.*” She said she had heard reports of Islamophobia since the weekend. Kim Johnson, the Labour MP for the area where police investigating the bombing said that her team had heard about incidents where women wearing hijabs had faced abuse. 521

In Netherland, on April 13, a Dutch Jewish Commission based in Amsterdam had spoken out against threats against Muslims and prevalent Islamophobia. The Liberal Jewish Community of Amsterdam (Liberale Joodse Gemeenschap Amsterdam) published a letter on the first day of Ramadan. In its letter, the community’s dialogue committee denounces recent threats against mosques in the Netherlands, in which they said Dutch intolerance had reached an “all time low.” The Jewish community emphasized how current threats against mosques and rhetoric drenched in Islamophobia were “in the past used against Jews and now applied to threaten Muslims.” The Jewish group highlighted how the Jewish community was all too familiar with the possible consequences of Dutch intolerance, in which they hinted at rampant antisemitism in the Netherlands in the 1930s. “We will fight this form of hatred with every fiber of our being,” the letter stated as it announced that the Jewish group would raise the issue of Islamophobia in the media and national politics. 522

In Switzerland, the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities and the Platform for Liberal Jews in Switzerland said the ban, which passed with 51% of the vote on March 7, “restricts and violates several conditions of religious freedom.” In their joint statement, the groups also said they were “concerned that further legislative or federal popular initiatives could further undermine religious freedom in the future.” The Swiss “have a long history of trying to curb migrations through banning religious practice,” Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, the president of the Conference of European Rabbis and a Zurich native, wrote in a separate statement. “We fear that this attack against religious freedom further weakens the ability to practice one’s

faith, a basic freedom and human right which is fundamental to a liberal democracy,” Goldschmidt wrote. He called it “ironic” that the ban, which would not apply to face masks, was coming at a time when most people were covering their face regularly to avoid spreading the coronavirus. 523

In Austria, 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. 524

In India, a group of Muslims helped a Hindu man cremate his father in Sagar in Madhya Pradesh after his neighbours and relatives refused to join due to the fear of coronavirus. Ullas Belapurkar, an employee of a local government engineering college, died on April 24 reportedly of pneumonia, while his coronavirus test report was still awaited, his son Madhur said: “My household comprises my mother, wife and I. Since women do not take part in funerary arrangements, I was left alone, without any help from my neighbours and relatives who were afraid to cremate my father due to the fear of coronavirus,” he said. However, some members of the Muslim community came forward and helped carry out the last rites as per Hindu rituals at the local crematorium on April 24, Madhur added. 525

Also in India, 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. ⁵²⁶

Still in India, in the newly formed Malerkotla district, a Sikh man had donated his ancestral land to seven Muslim families to construct a mosque. The historic town of Malerkotla had been upgraded as the 23rd district of Punjab. In Moga district, Sikhs opened the doors of the local gurdwara to help Muslims organise the foundation stone laying ceremony of a mosque nearby. Pala Singh, the sarpanch of Bhaloor village in Moga district, told *The Wire*, that on June 13, when Muslim villagers had gathered to lay the foundation stone to rebuild the century-old, dilapidated mosque, it was raining. The mosque’s premises were around 1.5 acres. “As it started raining, Muslims from the village approached Gurdwara Sri Satsang Sahib. There, they held the foundation stone laying ceremony. Villagers gathered within minutes and made all the necessary arrangements, including langar, and also raised funds to the tune of Rs 2 lakh on this occasion,” Pala Singh said.⁵²⁷

On July 4, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat said there was a need to guard against fear mongering that the Sangh was against minorities or that Islam was in danger in India. He spoke at a book launch event organised by the Muslim Rashtriya Manch, the Muslim wing of the RSS, Bhagwat said the Sangh had always believed that the DNA of the people of India was the same and that both Hindus and Muslims were one entity. “When people speak about the need for Hindu-Muslim unity, we say we are already one, we are not separate... If anyone says that Muslims should not stay in India then he is not a Hindu,” he said. He went on to add that his presence was not an attempt to get votes for the next elections. “We are not interested in party politics. We have a view but we are not in anyone’s favour but in the country’s favour. We support those who speak for

the country. This is not a political exercise or vote bank politics. We can do this (politics), but we will not. There are some things that political parties cannot do,” he said. ⁵²⁸

Meanwhile, to bridge the gap, and promote brotherhood and maintain unity between communities, non-Muslims on August 29 were invited to Jama Masjid, Vidyutnagar, in new MIG BHEL. About 15 non-Muslims, which included local residents, visited the mosque along with Patancheru MLA Gudem Mahipal Reddy, who was the chief guest on the occasion. The MLA said he was impressed by the teachings of Islam. “It is good to hear that Muslims bless the person whom they meet with the ‘Salam’. We were unaware of that. I had visited many mosques since my childhood, but I am unaware of the meanings and importance of ‘Namaz’, ‘Quran’ and ‘Salam.’” “Such activities will help maintain peace and brotherhood among both communities. The activities and interactions should continue to understand each other. Once we understand each other we can stand together in society,” he added. ⁵²⁹

In New Zealand, 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. ⁵³⁰

Supports on Mosques

In US, on April 26, about 400 people descended on Moorhead Fargo Islamic Community Center, a Mosque in Minnesota, armed with mops, buckets, power-washing equipment and goodwill, to scrub off the anti-Muslim, racist graffiti, which was sprayed on the building on April 24, reported the news site InForum. There were so many helpers that people had to take turns, InForum reported. But they had an abundance of volunteer-supplied pizza, doughnuts and beverages to tide them over while they discussed the hate that had spawned it. “It is an ugly incident, but it has united us,” said Cani Adan, chairman of the Moorhead Human Rights Commission. “Hate will not have a home in Moorhead,” Moorhead Mayor Shelly Carlson said after the damage was discovered. The volunteers came from both Moorhead city in Minnesota State, and Fargo city in North Dakota state, which were on either side of the states’ shared border. A GoFundMe page raised more than \$30,000 for the center, and the mayors of Fargo and three surrounding cities issued a statement where they expressed their support for the Muslim community. 531

Also in US, the CEO and National Director of the Anti-Defamation League had apologised to the Muslim community for the organisation’s stance on a proposed mosque after 9/11. Johnathan Greenblatt said the ADL were “wrong” for opposing plans for a mosque, community centre and cultural space to be developed near Ground Zero in Lower Manhattan in 2010. At the time, Daisy Khan, who along with her husband Feisal Abdel Rauf had put forward the proposition for the Park51 Islamic Community Center & Mosque, said its goal was to “repair the breach and be at the front and center to start the healing.” In a climate still rife with Islamophobia the plans triggered immediate controversy, with baseless rumours flying around that Cordoba House, as the project was originally known, was being organised by “terrorist sympathisers.” In the face of overwhelming opposition, the plans did not come to fruition. The ADL did not outright attempt to block the project, but advocated for a location change, an action Mr Greenblatt says the group now regrets. On September 5, in an opinion piece for CNN

he wrote: “Through deep reflection and conversation with many friends within the Muslim community, the real lesson is a simple one: we were wrong, plain and simple... We can’t change the past... But we accept responsibility for our unwise stance on Cordoba House, apologize without caveat and commit to doing our utmost going forward to use our expertise to fight anti-Muslim bias as allies.” 532

Still in US, Islamic Center of Tacoma was set on fire and being investigated as an arson after a witness reported seeing someone believed to have started the fire fleeing the scene, Pierce County Sheriff’s Department spokesperson said. The following day, the church hosted the Islamic community’s meeting to address the incident. Donations and calls of support flooded to the Islamic center over \$225,000 been garnered. Tacoma faith leaders had offered up their own churches and space for Islamic services and Tacoma Mayor had also reached out with support. 533

Meanwhile, East Dearborn looked forward to a new mosque and prayer space thanks to the efforts of community members to develop an extension of the long-running Islamic Institute of Knowledge (IIOK) on Schaefer Road. The new mosque would carry the name of the Prophet Muhammad, included Islamic house of worship architecture, provided a call to prayer for the area and provided much needed prayer space for worshippers. The IIOK was founded in 1983, opening its current facility on Schaefer in 1998. In 2001, the institute also opened the American Islamic Academy, a K-12 school next door to the mosque. The institute provided essential programming on education and youth and includes a Husseiniyya, or social hall, and an extensive library, classrooms and industrial kitchen. With a growing base of worshippers, the need for a dedicated prayer space arose. The Mosque of the Prophet project had taken five years. 534

The city of Horn Lake, Mississippi, had been ordered to permit two Muslim men to build a new mosque, as well as banned from delaying permits to do so. U.S. District Judge Michael P. Mills filed a consent decree, on January 3, 2022, in favor of the plaintiffs, Maher Abuirshaid and Riyadh Elkhayat, for

whom the American Civil Liberties Union filed a discrimination lawsuit. The consent decree was filed with agreement from both plaintiffs and city officials. The lawsuit claimed that when the city denied a zoning request for what would become the first mosque in DeSoto County, Mississippi, Horn Lake officials had done so due to anti-Muslim prejudice. 535

In the UN, on April 27, the United Nations had strongly condemned an anti-Muslim attack on a mosque in Moorhead, Minnesota that took place during the holy month of Ramadan. “The High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos, strongly condemns the anti-Muslim signs and racial graffiti that were spray-painted on the façade of the Moorhead-Fargo Islamic Community Center in Minnesota and discovered on Sunday morning,” a written statement from the U.N. said. The statement noted that the “vicious attack” took place in the middle of Ramadan, the U.N. said that the center served as a mosque and a community gathering place in Moorhead. According to the statement, Moratinos stressed that no community should experience “this kind of toxic hatred” and reiterated that all forms of discrimination and acts of violence, targeting religious sites and places of worship as well as worshipers, regardless of their religion or belief, were unacceptable and unjustifiable. 536

In France, Patrick Floquet, the mayor of the Montmagny town in northern France, had lashed out against the government’s “Islamist separatism” campaign after a mosque in his jurisdiction was accused and shut down to combat radicalism. The mosque was among Muslims’ nine places of worship closed by the Interior Ministry Mr. Gerald Darmanin. Among the reasons the mosques were closed were non-compliance of safety standards, disseminating radicalized speeches or practicing separatism, according to the daily *Le Figaro*. The mayor however said that he verified that the mosque had followed up with works related to safety norms, which a security commission in a routine inspection in December 2020 had ordered it to do within a month, in order for the place to receive 476 people as authorized by the commission. “It’s a mosque that has never been talked

about. A security commission has nothing to do with a connotation of radical Islamism. Five years ago a place of worship had been closed at the request of the prefecture, because of the remarks made there. But this site has no connection with the current mosque,” Floquet said.

In Germany, Germany’s largest mosque was permitted to broadcast the call to prayer over loudspeakers on Friday October 8, after an agreement between the city of Cologne and the Muslim community to ease restrictions, the city said on October 11. All 35 mosques in Cologne would be permitted to broadcast the call to prayer for up to five minutes on Fridays between noon and 3 p.m., under a two-year initiative. That includes the Cologne Central Mosque, which was opened in 2018 after it became a flashpoint for anti-Muslim sentiment from far right parties. “Permitting the muezzin call is for me a sign of respect,” Cologne Mayor Henriette Reker wrote on Twitter.⁵³⁷

In Nepal, on December 12, Yogesh Bhattarai, Nepal’s Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, said the mosque is an epitome of religious tolerance and goodwill. Bhattarai, made the statement during the inspection of the Pancha Kashmiri Takiya Masjid at local Ghantaghar. On the occasion, the Minister for Culture opined that it was the government’s responsibility to protect and promote every religion and culture. The minister announced that the government had allocated budget for the mosque, he said it was the government’s job to conserve and protect the 500 years old Pancha Kashmiri Takiya that was intricately related to history. President of the Muslim Commission, Samim Miya Ansari said the Muslim community was elated with the government allocating money for its uplift and support. Director General at the Department of Archaeology, Damodar Gautam shared on the occasion that the Pancha Kashmiri Takiya Mosque built in the 15th century was one of the oldest mosques of Nepal. According to Khabarhub report, the financial support provided by the government would be used for reconstruction, painting and construction of a traditional gate at the Mosque.⁵³⁸

In South Korea, on October 1, The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) said that a mosque construction project in Daegu, which had been suspended due to complaints, should be allowed to resume, as the decision on the suspension was based on discrimination and prejudice against Muslims. The human rights watchdog expressed the opinion in response to a petition filed by the Darul Emman Kyungpook Islamic Center, against the Buk District Office that had issued the administrative order to halt the mosque's construction. The Islamic community in the Buk District of Daegu, the nation's third-largest city, located in the southeastern region of the country, launched the construction of the place of worship in Daehyeon-dong in December 2020, after they received a construction permit from the local district office on September 2020. The mosque was to be built on a site where Muslims were previously holding religious gatherings. But some residents, who worry that the mosque might lead to a larger Muslim presence in the neighborhood, had fiercely opposed the construction. The residents and other political activists had been staging multiple rallies in front of the construction site and hanging up banners in protest. They filed a petition with the district office where they called for an administrative order to halt construction. The district office ordered the site owner to stop the construction on February 16, and the project had been on hold indefinitely ever since. The human rights commission stated that such a decision was based on discrimination and prejudice against Muslims, and recommended that the local government "take the necessary measures to allow construction to resume." 539

Positive Development on Hijab

In US, Students at Camino Real Middle School came together to support a seventh-grade student who was bullied for wearing her hijab at school. The seventh-grader confided in social studies teacher Janice Adams after several students at Camino Real called her a "terrorist," and verbally assaulted her using other Islamophobic language. One student was even dared to rip her hijab off, but he did not go through with it. The day after the bullying occurred on Sept. 22, the leadership class, the student council, members of the football team and members of the volleyball teams organized to escort the seventh-grader to class between classes. The teacher put together pictures from the student escort of around 100 kids, and posted a video on TikTok with the caption "*We are Camino Wildcats! Way to show we are one! We don't tolerate bullying!!*" 540

In Austria, on December 11, an Austrian court had overturned the ban on religious headscarves in schools as judges declared the rules discriminated against Muslims. Austria's constitutional court struck down a law introduced in May 2019, after a challenge from two children and their parents. The law, which had prevented girls younger than ten from wearing the headscarf in primary schools, was passed under the previous coalition of the centre-right People's Party (OeVP) and the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ), just days before that government collapsed. The OeVP-FPÖ government, had said at the time, that the patka head covering worn by Sikh boys or the Jewish kippa would not be affected. In a statement explaining the decision, the court said the law "contravened the principle of equality in relation to freedom of religion, belief and conscience". The People's Party which had been in coalition with the Green Party since January 2020, had still intended to extend the headscarf ban up to the age of 14. Heinz Fassmann, Austria's Education Minister, said: "I regret that girls will not have the opportunity to make their way through the education system free from compulsion". In its statement the court said that far from promoting integration, "the ban could... lead to discrimination as it runs the risk of making it more difficult for Muslim girls to access education and socially excluding them". The

IGGOe, the body officially recognized as representing the country’s Muslim communities, welcomed the judgement and said the court had ended ‘the populist politics of bans’.⁵⁴¹

In Switzerland, on January 19, The Swiss government had recommended voters to reject a proposal in a planned March 7 referendum to ban full facial coverings such as burqas and niqabs worn by some Muslim women, the government said the move would hurt tourism. Under Switzerland’s system of direct democracy, any proposal to change the constitution would go to a popular vote if supporters were able to raise more than 100,000 signatures. The government said in a statement: “Very few people in Switzerland wear a full facial covering. A nationwide ban would undermine the sovereignty of the cantons, damage tourism and be unhelpful for certain groups of women”. The group which had been behind the burqa ban proposal - the “Egerkinger Komitee” had included members of the right-wing Swiss People’s Party (SVP). The group was also behind the 2009 move to ban minarets, which was approved by nearly 60% of voters.⁵⁴²

In South Africa, on January 28, South Africa’s military had changed its dress policy to allow Muslim women to wear hijabs with their uniforms. Maj Fatima Isaacs, had led a three-year legal battle for her religious right to wear a headscarf beneath her military beret. The change in policy came after the military dropped charges the week before against Maj Isaacs for wearing one. She had faced dismissal for “wilful defiance and disobeying a lawful command” for refusing to remove it. Maj Isaacs, who had been working as a clinical forensic pathologist at a military hospital, told the Cape Times “there should be no discrimination with regards to religious beliefs. I believe religion is the foundation of a moral state/country. This is an important victory.” After military charges were dropped, the Legal Resource Centre (LRC), a rights group which took up Isaacs’s case in 2019 filed an application at the Equality Court, where they argued that the dress code of the South African Defence Force (SANDF) was unconstitutional. This had resulted in the defence force “amending its religious dress policy to allow Muslim women to wear their hijab with their military uniform”, the LRC tweeted.⁵⁴³

In New Zealand, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern had apologized to New Zealand’s Muslim community for failings by authorities in the lead up to a white supremacist’s attack on two mosques in Christchurch on 2019 that killed 51 worshippers. Ardern’s apology followed the publication of a 792-page public report on December 8 after a public inquiry. The report found that the security services did not pay enough attention to the threat posed by rightwing terror while placing an “inappropriate” focus on Islamist extremism. It also identified shortcomings in gun control laws and made a series of recommendations aimed at preventing massacres. “On the matters of how the attack occurred and what could have been done to stop it, the commission found no failures within any government agencies that would have allowed the terrorist’s planning and preparation to be detected,” she said. However, the Prime Minister, accepted that they were lessons to be learned and said: “these were failings nonetheless, and for that, on behalf of the government, I apologise.” A minister was appointed to oversee the implementation of the report, which included reforms to hate speech, changes to firearms licensing laws and the creation of a national security and intelligence agency. The inquiry was headed by William Young, a Supreme Court judge, and former diplomat Jacqui Caine. It interviewed more than 400 people and received 1,100 submissions during its 18-month investigation.⁵⁴⁴

ANNEXES

ANNEXES

Incidents Related to Mosque and Islamic Center

Germany: Mosque Targeted in Racist Attack— On Mid December, an unidentified extremist had attacked the Fatih Mosque of the Turkish Islamic Union “Ditib”, in the state of Baden-Württemberg, southwestern Germany. The attackers drew a cross on the walls of the mosque and wrote racist slogans. The head of the Al-Fatih Mosque Association, Ali Ozdemir, expressed his deep sorrow over the attack, he said: “We have been living in Sontheim for 30 years in the midst of relations of mutual respect. We enjoy full transparency here, and we want everyone here to live in peace”. Ozdemir, added that the mosque was subjected to a similar attack in 2019, and that the perpetrators had not been arrested so far, he called on the authorities to arrest the attackers.



See: IQNA News' entry, in: <https://iqna.ir/en/news/3473453> & <https://www.uae71.com/posts/89745>, retrieved on 21.10.2020

Netherlands: Mosque in Netherlands target of Islamophobic attack— On December 12, the Ulu Mosque in the Netherlands' Utrecht province, which was linked to the Diyanet Foundation of Holland Netherlands: Mosque in Netherlands target of Islamophobic attack— On December 12, the Ulu

Mosque in the Netherlands' Utrecht province, which was linked to the Diyanet Foundation of Holland (HDV), suffered an Islamophobic attack, the mosque's board of management announced. The statement said that in addition to Muslim insults being written on the mosque's entrance and wall, a cross was painted. The announcement responded by saying that the attack was met with sorrow and that even though words of hate spark fear and anxiety in society, the foundation will remain unified and continue its services. The written statement pointed out that two synagogues were also attacked the same night in the same district and underlined that the foundation condemns all types of violence. "We have to be aware that there are persons having serious hateful emotions towards Muslims and that could carry out far serious attacks. Therefore, we urge the Justice and Security Ministry to take extra security measures around mosques," the statement continued. According to local media outlets, police had arrested a man but were not sure if he conducted the three attacks on his own.



See: Daily Sabah News' entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/eu-affairs/mosque-in-netherlands-target-of-islamophobic-attack/>, retrieved on 15.12.2020

Germany: Mosque attacked twice in 2 weeks in Germany's southwest—

On January 1, a mosque in Germany's southwestern Baden-Wurttemberg city was attacked for the second time in two weeks, according to an official. Ali Ozdemir, chairman of the Fatih Mosque in the town of Sontheim, said "In the recent two weeks, this has been the second attack on our mosque," Ozdemir added that the community of the mosque and foundation's members were worried. The attack had caused material damages. The window and a wooden bank outside the mosque, run by the Turkish-Muslim umbrella group DITIB, were broken, Ozdemir said. The incident had been shared with the police who launched an investigation. Earlier in another act of vandalism, a cross was drawn on the wall of the mosque.

See: Anadolu Agency News' entry, in: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/mosque-attacked-twice-in-2-weeks-in-germanys-southwest/2095894>, retrieved on 05.01.2021

Georgia: Muslims attacked over new prayer space in western Georgia—

A dispute between two communities in the Buknari village in the southwestern Georgian region of Guria had escalated when local Christians protested local Muslims using a house they had purchased as a place to gather and pray. On January 12, the disagreement descended into the physical violence, which had resulted in at least three injured members of the Muslim community. The authorities confirmed that two young men, including one minor, were hospitalised with non-life-threatening head injuries after they were hit with a stone in Buknari. "This is a secular state. No one's religious rights can be curtailed. However, all this should be organised in a religious building with an agreement and in line with the law", Chokhatauri Mayor Irakli Kuchava told Muslim protesters in Buknari on 12 January. After the mayor's comments, Tbilisi-based rights group EMC reminded authorities in Guria that believers did not have to hold prayers in a specially designated building and were free to congregate and hold religious rituals in a private home and it did not need an additional permit as long as related construction was not planned. In their 13 January statement, the Georgian Muslims' Union called the recent attack in the village of Buknari 'extremely alarming' adding that it 'reflected the government's attitude towards religious minorities'. 'The sense of impunity encourages more crime', the statement warned. Georgian Public Defender Nino Lomjaria agreed with

the sentiment, noting on 12 January that the ‘very unfortunate’ incident in Buknari was a ‘vivid example’ of the discriminatory treatment of Muslims in Georgia. In recent years, Georgia had witnessed at least seven high-profile Christian-Muslim disputes and anti-Muslim incidents throughout the country.

See: Open Caucasus Media News’ entry, in: <https://oc-media.org/muslims-attacked-over-new-prayer-space-in-western-georgia/>, retrieved on 21.01.2021

India: Clashes break out in Indore village as rally by Hindu outfits chants slogans outside mosque— On December 29, 2020, Clashes had erupted in a Muslim-dominated village in Indore district when members of right-wing Hindu groups, who were participating in a rally to collect donations for the construction of Ram Temple, had stopped in front of a mosque and chanted slogans. The confrontation came only three days after similar clashes erupted in Muslim-dominated Begum Bagh neighbourhood of Ujjain when a rally been taken out by Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha chanted slogans, led to stone pelting. The December 29, clash took place in Chandankhedi village under Gautampura police station when the rally of around 200 people stopped outside the mosque and chanted slogans. Senior police officials said this resulted in heated exchanges between members of the two communities leading to stone pelting. Some local residents claimed that those participating in the rally chanted Hanuman Chalisa outside the mosque while prayers were been offered inside. The situation turned violent when some of them – holding saffron flags and chanting “Jai Shri Ram” slogans – climbed atop the mosque and tried to damage the minaret. A total of 15 people had been arrested, of whom five had been booked of under National Security Act and 10 others had been booked for attempt to murder and rioting. All the 15 arrested were residents of Begum Bagh. No one from among those who took out the rally had been arrested.



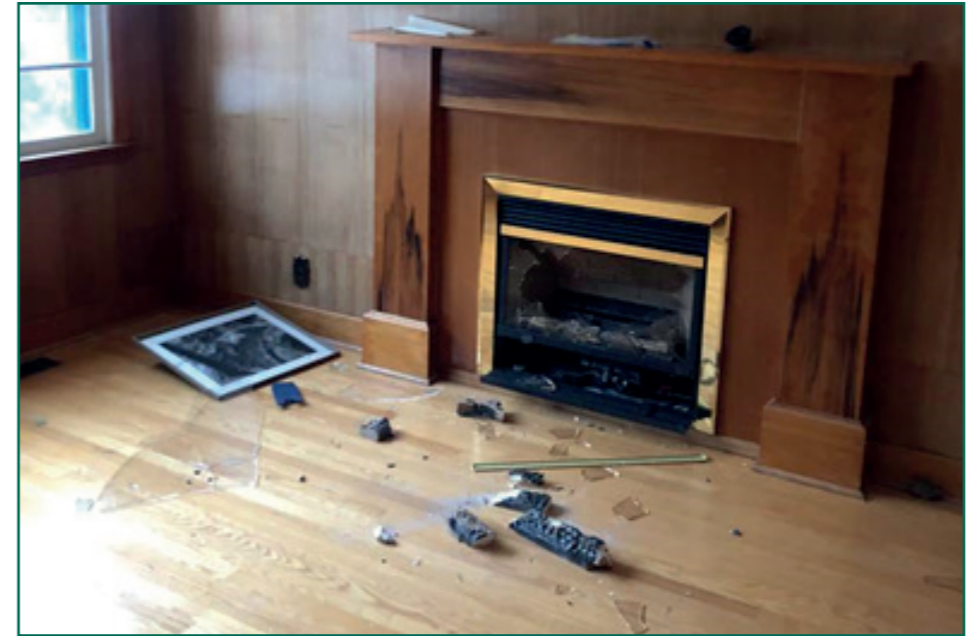
See: Indian Express News’ entry, in: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/clashes-break-out-in-indore-village-as-rally-by-hindu-outfits-chants-slogans-outside-mosque-7125515/>, retrieved on 13.01.2021

India: ‘Muslims Being Targeted during Fund-raising for Ram Temple’: Digvijaya Demands Inquiry, Compensation— On January 8, Congress Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh said Muslim localities in Madhya Pradesh were been targeted during fund-raising rallies for construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya and sought an inquiry by a retired chief secretary or director general of police into the violence. “I am saddened today at the manner in which (violent) incidents are taking place. During fund-raising, weapons, lathis (sticks) and swords are on display, inflammatory slogans are being shouted, particularly targeting Muslim localities,” Singh told reporters. His statement came after he and Congress MLA Arif Masood met Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains and Director General of Police VK Johri on this issue. Singh Said: “Incidents of Ujjain, Mandasaur and Indore should be investigated thoroughly. The collectors and SPs should be held responsible and must be removed. Why have they given permission for the rallies? It is strange that police cases are being registered against people whose houses were torched, tractors and vehicles damaged, and who sustained bullet wounds.” He called for an inquiry into the violence and said it should be carried out by a “retired CS or DG with an unblemished track record” and those who had sustained losses must be compensated.



See: News18 entry, in: <https://www.news18.com/news/politics/muslims-being-targeted-during-fund-raising-for-ram-temple-digvijaya-singh-demands-inquiry-compensation-3263501.html>, retrieved on 13.01.2021

India: Uttar Pradesh: Shahi Idgah Committee Raises Objections Over Plea Seeking Removal Of Mathura Mosque — On January 7, the Management Trust Committee of Shahi Idgah in Mathura moved an application in the district court objecting to the admission of an appeal filed against the dismissal of a civil suit seeking ownership of 13.37-acre land near the Krishna Janmasthan temple and removal of Shahi Idgah mosque. The suit, filed by Lucknow resident Ranjana Agnihotri and five others, had claimed that the Shahi Idgah mosque was exactly where Krishna was born and they had sought the ownership of the entire 13.37 acre land. It also sought cancellation of a compromise decree between the governing body of the temple complex and the management trust of the mosque in 1968. In its plea, the committee stated that the appeal was non-maintainable. The next hearing was set for mid-January.



See: The Times of India News' entry, in: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agra/uttar-pradesh-shahi-idgah-committee-raises-objections-over-plea-seeking-removal-of-mathura-mosque/articleshow/80158504.cms>, retrieved on 14.01.2021

Canada: Minors cause 'painful' damage to new mosque in Newfoundland— A mosque been constructed in Conception Bay South was attacked and many items damaged in an act of vandalism. An estimated \$15,000 worth of damage was done to the former house being renovated into a mosque. Omer Sajeed Mallhi, the mosque administer, said the damage was “painful and stressful .. The perpetrators were minors and broke in and did a lot of damage ...A huge window was broken, a fireplace destroyed, lighting fixtures, a sump pump, a dehumidifier and so much more.” He said, the provincial police service for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador identified the minors. Sajeed added they had “forgiven the perpetrators of this act of vandalism and hope to use the incident to help build bridges of understanding and tolerance,” The Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (MANAL), had issued a news release condemning damage and destruction “caused to any establishment, especially places of worship.”

See: The Chronicle Herald Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/canada/minors-cause-painful-damage-to-new-mosque-in-newfoundland-548130/>, retrieved on 04.02.2021

Spain: Community condemns attack on mosque in Spain— On February 21, a mosque was attacked in the small Spanish town of San Javier, Murcia. According to local Spanish media, at around 4 a.m. an explosion was felt by residents living near the place of worship. “I heard a loud noise and felt the floor move,” Francisca Chuecos told local daily La Verdad. The fire and explosion caused damage to the building’s windows and facade. Police discovered that one or more perpetrators, had spray-painted “death to Islam” on the mosque’s windows. The spray paint can was then lit on fire causing an explosion, likely with the intention of burning down the mosque. In a released statement, the San Javier city hall had strongly condemned the violent attack and insisted that the community took pride in the “harmonious way that San Javier has become an intercultural town in recent years.”

See: Daily Sabah News’ entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/europe/community-condemns-attack-on-mosque-in-spain>, retrieved on 25.02.2021

Sweden: Stockholm Grand Mosque threatened with suspicious object — On January 30, A suspicious object was placed on the doors of the Stockholm Grand Mosque. The mosque administration notified the police, and explosives expert examination of the object discovered that it was not dangerous and that it was only intended to intimidate. Mahmoud al-Khalfi, director of the Islamic Center and Stockholm Grand Mosque, told “Alcombs, “not a week goes by without us finding threatening messages and offensive phrases about the mosque. Today, at about six in the morning, I saw on the staff door a device connected to three wires attached to the door.” Al-Khalfi pointed out that the surveillance camera outside the mosque detected the person who placed the foreign object at three in the morning. He said that his features were not clear, but he appears in his forties.

See: Alkompis News’ entry, in: <https://alkompis.se/news/%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%AC%D8%B3%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A8%D9%88%D9%87-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%88%D9%83%D9%87%D9%88%D9%84%D9%85>, Also: See: the mosque administration’s statement on Instagram, in: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CKoNxEeFWF2/>, retrieved on 03.02.2021

US: YouTube bans Steve Bannon’s War Room podcast channel— On January 8, the video sharing platform, YouTube announced that it banned the channel of Steve Bannon’s War Room podcast, after it repeatedly violated the platform’s rules. The ban came hours after the former White House chief strategist had Rudy Giuliani, President Donald Trump’s personal lawyer, on the program following the violent insurgency at the US Capitol on January 6. “In accordance with our strikes system, we have terminated Steve Bannon’s channel ‘War room’ and one associated channel for repeatedly violating our Community Guidelines,” a YouTube spokesman said in a statement. In addition to the War Room channel, YouTube said it took down another one associated with Bannon.

See: CNET News’ entry, in: <https://www.cnet.com/news/youtube-bans-steve-bannons-war-room-podcast-channel/>, retrieved on 15.02.2021

Canada: Canada labels far-right Proud Boys a terrorist entity— On February 3, the Canadian government had formally labeled the Proud Boys, the far-right extremist group, as a terrorist entity. As a recognized “terrorist entity,” property and other belongings connected to the group might be seized by the government, and financial institutions “are subject to reporting requirements with respect to an entity’s property,” under terms of Canada’s Anti-Terrorism Act. “The Proud Boys consists of semi-autonomous chapters located in the United States (U.S.), Canada, and internationally ... The group and its members have openly encouraged, planned, and conducted violent activities against those they perceive to be opposed to their ideology and political beliefs.” according to a statement by Public Safety Canada. The Proud Boys were a self-described “Western chauvinist” organization, that were willing to use violence to move their nationalistic, Islamophobic, transphobic and misogynistic ideals forward, according to the Anti-Defamation League.

See: NBC News entry, in: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/canada-labels-far-right-proud-boys-terrorist-entity-n1256615>, retrieved on 07.02.2021

Spain: Spanish prosecutors probe hate speech against Muslims, Jews— On February 16, The Barcelona province prosecutor’s office in Spain had launched two separate investigations which involved the Vox party, and extremist neo-Nazi sympathizers for possible hate crimes against Muslims

and Jews, respectively. Prosecutors said they were looking into the recent campaign in a regional Catalan election by Vox, a far right party that mixes Spanish nationalism, populism and an uncompromising stance against illegal migration, after they had received complaints from several Islamic communities. The groups, which represented more than 300 mosques in the northeastern region, argued that Vox’s social media campaign under the tag #StopIslamization, which included a video mixing news about Muslims and an extremist attack in 2017, was slanderous toward Muslims in Catalonia. Barcelona prosecutor Pilar López told The Associated Press that the initial probe, which would be protected by judicial secrecy, could last up to six months before they were able to decide whether the campaign had incited hatred against Muslims.

See: The Associated Press News’ entry, in: <https://apnews.com/article/race-and-ethnicity-media-social-media-barcelona-crime-9babe2c97e7be859f139789be3a0ea22>, retrieved on 22.02.2021

France: French mosque vandalized with Islamophobic graffiti— On February 23, Milli Gorus Islamic Confederation (CIMG), a French Muslim organization, had strongly condemned vandalism of an under-construction mosque in Strasbourg with Islamophobic graffiti. The words, “No to Islam, go back to your village” were sprayed across the fence on the site of the Eyyub Sultan Mosque, which once completed will be Europe’s largest Muslim place of worship. In a video statement, CIMG, the group overseeing construction of the mosque, expressed disappointment at the Islamophobic and racist message. “There is no material damage but the symbolism is strong ... this incident reflects the deleterious climate that France is going through today. Indeed, the trivialization of remarks targeting Muslims in media discourse demeans the enemies of living together,” said a tweet from the official handle of the mosque. According to French daily Derniers Nouvelles d’Alsace (DNA), Strasbourg prosecutor’s office said, A man had been detained by police, and later released before his next appearance on prior admission of guilt. The motive behind the vandalism was unknown.



See: The Muslim News entry, in: <http://muslimnews.co.uk/news/islamophobia/french-mosque-vandalized-islamophobic-graffiti/>, retrieved on 09.03.2021

India: Mosque vandalised in Gorakhpur village— On February 19, a mosque was found vandalised, in the village of Kona Sonbarsa, in Gorakhpur district of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. As news of the vandalism spread, people assembled outside the mosque. Several police teams went to the spot to keep the situation under control. “We found that someone had removed the mike from the holder and kept it on the floor. When we fixed the mike found it was working. Few religious books were found burnt,” said Additional Superintendent of Police (North) Manoj Kumar Awasthi. The police had filed a case against unidentified people at the Jhangha police station based on a complaint by a villager identified as Jawed Ansari. The case had been registered under IPC sections 452 (house-trespass) 427(causing mischief and damage) and 295 (defiling place of worship with intent to insult the religion of any class), said the police.

See: Indian Express News’ entry, in: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/mosque-vandalised-in-gorakhpur-village-7196217/>, retrieved on 01.03.2021

India: Mosque Break-in, Burn Down Sacred Books in Gujarat’s Songadh— On January 27, an unknown perpetrator had broke open the lock of a large halls used by local Muslims for prayers and religious gatherings in the historical town of Songadh in southern Tapi district of Gujarat, and burnt down several copies of Quran, and other religious books. Police

inspector H C Gohil told Clarion India that no one had been arrested but a police report had been lodged against ‘unknown’ persons for the “first such incident” in the tribal-dominated, peaceful town known for its 16th century fort built during the Maratha empire. Mujahid Nafees, convener of the Minority Coordination Committee, Gujarat, said in a letter to Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, that “Such incidents which trigger panic and tension are an insult to our Constitution which guarantees freedom of religion to all Indians.”



See: Clarion India News’ entry, in: <https://clarionindia.net/goons-break-open-lock-of-makeshift-mosque-burn-down-sacred-books-in-gujarats-songadh/>, retrieved on 01.03.2021

UK: Two men charged after windows broken at Derby mosque—Two men had been charged in connection with criminal damage at a mosque in Derby, England. Derbyshire Police were called to the Faizan-e-Madina mosque in Malcolm Street in the early hours of March 21 after reports that windows had been broken. Scott Mouser, and Jason Mouser, were charged with religiously aggravated criminal damage. The men appeared before a magistrates court the following day and were out on bail pending the next court date, and bail conditions would prevent them from going within 100 meters of the mosque.



See: Tell Mama UK News’ entry, in: <https://tellmamauk.org/two-men-charged-after-windows-broken-at-derby-mosque/>, retrieved on 29.03.2021

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

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

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>

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.ryGmxej0HO.html>, retrieved on 14.04.2021

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See: Teller Report News' entry, in: <https://www.tellerreport.com/tech/2021-04-10-nantes--the-door-of-a-mosque-destroyed-by-a-fire.ryGmxej0HO.html>, retrieved on 14.04.2021

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 Boultam, 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

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

US: Homecrest Mosque Tagged with Anti-Palestine Graffiti on Eid—

On May 13, A Brooklyn mosque was vandalized with the words “Death 2 Palestine”, during the Eid-al-Fitr holiday that marked the end of Ramadan. Officers responded to a 911 call at the Tayba Islamic Center at 2165 Coney Island Avenue, NYPD spokesperson Detective Annette Shelton said. Upon arrival, they were informed that an unknown individual had spray painted the phrase near the front door of the mosque. The NYPD’s Hate Crimes Task Force was investigating the incident. The attack also attracted the attention of Mayor Bill de Blasio, who called it “an attack on all New Yorkers.”

See: Bklyner News’ entry, in: <https://bklyner.com/homecrest-mosque-tagged-with-anti-palestine-graffiti-on-eid/>, retrieved on 26.05.2021

France: New Islamophobic, Racist Graffiti on Muslim Center in Rennes Sparks Uproar in France—

Police opened an investigation after anonymous individuals put Islamophobic graffiti on the walls of the Avicenna Islamic Cultural Center in Rennes, northwest France. The incident took place on April 29. “We warned you... Immigration kills,” one of the graffiti sprayed on the wall of the center said. The graffiti also included #Rambouillet, a hashtag which referenced the murder of Stephanie Monfature, a policewoman who was fatally stabbed on April 23 in the Rambouillet police station on the outskirts of Paris. The French Council of Muslim Worship (CFCM) in Rennes strongly condemned the Islamophobic attack against the Muslim center. “The CFCM strongly condemns the racist and Islamophobic inscriptions to which the Avicenna Muslim center in Rennes was once again a victim.” The incident comes after Muslims found Islamophobic graffiti just 15 days ago on the center’s walls. On April 11, members of the center discovered the graffiti that included Islamophobic attacks on the Prophet Muhammad and Islam.



See: Morocco World News entry, in: <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2021/04/341116/new-islamophobic-racist-graffiti-on-muslim-center-in-rennes-sparks-uproar-in-france/>, retrieved on 10.05.2021

UK: Investigation launched into attack outside London mosque— Police in London had launched an investigation into a suspected Islamophobic attack on a group of worshippers in the city during Ramadan. Several people were pelted with eggs and stones outside the Ilford Islamic Center in the east of the city on May 4, witnesses claimed that items were thrown from a car driven by a white man with a shaved head. The car carried at least three other passengers. The Metropolitan Police said it had received a report of a racially aggravated incident, which included criminal damage. The Federation of Redbridge Muslim Organizations said five people had been struck by objects, but reported no serious injuries. The incident stirred a strong political response, Sam Tarry, MP for Ilford South, said he was “shocked and saddened” at what had happened. “These disgraceful acts of violence and hatred have no place in Ilford, and I hope that the perpetrators face justice as soon as possible,” he said on his Twitter account. “Solidarity with the victims.” The leader of Redbridge Council, Jas Athwal, said: “Racist incidents like this have no place in our borough and we will work with our friends and neighbors at Albert Road Mosque (Ilford Islamic Center) and the police to ensure the safety of all worshippers.” Detective Chief

Superintendent Stephen Clayman said: “We take all reports of hate crime very seriously and have launched an investigation ... Incidents like this will not be tolerated and my officers will be undertaking enhanced patrols in the area to provide reassurance to the local community and visitors to the mosque”.

See: Arabnews Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1855216/world>, retrieved on 11.05.2021

India: Mosque razed in BJP-ruled Indian state, Muslim body to move court— On May 17, Officials in India’s northern state of Uttar Pradesh had allegedly bulldozed an old mosque, which triggered anger and anguish among the Muslim minority, with a prominent community organisation said it would approach the high court over the matter. The Ghareeb Nawaz Al Maroof Mosque, which residents in the state’s Barabanki district said was nearly 100 years old, was demolished by the local administration after hundreds of policemen surrounded the area and halted the movement of people to prevent any protest. Since 2017, Uttar Pradesh – India’s most populous state with nearly 220 million residents, almost one-fifth of them Muslim – was governed by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with a controversial saffron-robed monk Yogi Adityanath, known for his anti-Muslim hate speech, as the state’s chief minister. On May 18, the Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board, a Muslim body that looks after mosques and other community assets in the state, condemned the demolition and said it was done in defiance of a court order to halt demolitions of alleged “illegal structures” until May 31 in view of the coronavirus pandemic. In a statement, the board termed the act an “illegal and high-handed action of the administration” and said it would seek judicial remedy. “This act is against the law, misuse of power and utter violation of clear orders passed by the high court. We will immediately approach the high court demanding restoration of the mosque, high-level judicial inquiry and action against the guilty officers,” the board’s chairman Zufar Ahmad Faruqi said. In another statement, Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rehmani, general secretary of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), said the demolition was undertaken “without any legal justification”.

See: Aljazeera News’ entry, in: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/19/mosque-razed-in-bjp-ruled-indian-state-muslim-body-to-move-court>, Also: Photo from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/18/indian-mosque-bulldozed-in-defiance-of-high-court-order>, retrieved on 27.05.2021

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 its 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

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

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

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 haddemolished 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

Netherland: Mosque in Netherlands vandalized for second time— On July 4, The Hagia Sophia Mosque in the Netherlands’ Amsterdam was vandalized for the second time since last year. According to the National Vision Federation, the windows of the mosque, which was affiliated with the federation, were broken with a beer bottle. In December 2020, a masked assailant threw rocks at the windows of the mosque shortly after the evening prayers and escaped under the cover of darkness. The statement called on security forces and the country’s administration to oppose such racist

attacks without discrimination and to take the necessary precautions. “We expect security forces and politicians to take deterrent measures against such attacks,” Gazi Cırık, chairperson of the board of the Hagia Sophia Mosque Foundation, told Anadolu Agency (AA).

See: Daily Sabah newspaper entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/eu-affairs/mosque-in-netherlands-vandalized-for-second-time>, retrieved on 05.07.2021

France: Muslim institute in France vandalized with Islamophobic slurs— A Muslim institution in the French capital Paris was vandalized with Islamophobic and racist graffiti, a report said on July 4. Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin condemned the act as “unacceptable degradation” and promised to find the perpetrators of these acts. The incident took place at the Al Ghazali Institute of the Grand Mosque of Paris campus in the southern city of Martigues. The Great Mosque of Paris strongly expressed “concern over the increase in acts of intolerance” and urged the “authorities to reinforce in a concrete and consistent way the security of religious places in France.”

See: Daily Sabah News’ entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/islamophobia/muslim-institute-in-france-vandalized-with-islamophobic-slurs>, retrieved on 29.07.2021

Spain: Mosque vandalized in latest anti-Muslim attack in Spain’s Murcia— A mosque was vandalized in Murcia on July 7. The mosque in the Cabezo de Torres town, inaugurated in 2018, was spray-painted with the phrases “no to Islam,” “stop the invasion” and “Spain’s sovereignty cannot be negotiated.” The vandals also left a pig’s head with a knife in it outside of the mosque.



See: Daily Sabah News’ entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/europe/mosque-vandalized-in-latest-anti-muslim-attack-in-spains-murcia>, retrieved on 30.07.2021

New Zealand: Fresh threats against Al Noor Mosque as country debates hate speech laws— As the country prepared to debate proposed hate speech reforms, Al Noor Mosque was targeted with fresh threats of violence. Police had received three reports related to the Christchurch mosque that a senior minister describes as “serious”. The matters were reported to police either at or from a representative of Al Noor Mosque, said Canterbury metro area commander superintendent Lane Todd. He said all three reports were been “actively followed up”. They were not connected to one another. Federation of Islamic Associations chair Abdur Razzaq was responsible for one of the reports after he drew police attention to an offensive image on the online forum 4chan. The image was a selfie of a masked man posed in a car parked outside Al Noor Mosque, with comments that threatened violence to those inside. “Immediately we contacted the police, the police were onto it within eight minutes. ...So we are happy with that kind of quick response time but [racism is] still there, it’s still there.” The image first appeared on the encrypted app, Telegram, and was no longer available on the 4chan website.

See: The New Zealand Herald newspaper entry, in: <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/fresh-threats-against-al-noor-mosque-as-country-debates-hate-speech-laws/USQ2EJSC3PG24VM2NBCMPCAZZY/>, retrieved on 14.07.2021

Canada: “Islam is evil” graffiti spotted in Surrey’s Newton neighbourhood: RCMP— Surrey RCMP had been investigating multiple instances of anti-Muslim graffiti found in central Newton. There had been several reports of incidents related to these hate graffiti since July 5, and the RCMP believe that the incidents were linked. On July 14, members of the public spotted graffiti on a refuse bin, on business property, as well as on a utility pole near a mosque in the area of 72 Avenue and King George Boulevard. “Islam is evil” could be seen spray-painted on the refuse bin. “Hate crimes and hate-motivated criminal activity has no place in Surrey, and our officers are working diligently to identify those responsible for these incidents,” added Cst. Sangha. Surrey RCMP officers were under the impression that the same person or people were behind the different incidents.

See: The Daily Hive newspaper entry, in: <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/anti-muslim-graffiti-under-investigation-surrey-rcmp>, retrieved on 04.08.2021

UK: Northumbria Police investigating ‘Islam is Evil’ and ‘funds terror’ graffiti— Anti-Muslim and Islamophobic graffiti that re-appeared on a charity bin in Fenham, close to Nuns Moor Park, was a subject to a police

investigation after a member of the public contacted Tell MAMA. The graffiti identified read “Islam is evil”, and below was written “and funds terror”, which the member of the public lamented as ‘depressing’ to see such harmful remarks appear in the area again. Tell MAMA had reported the incident to Northumbria Police to investigate.



See: Tell Mama UK News’ entry, in: <https://tellmamauk.org/northumbria-police-investigating-islam-is-evil-and-funds-terror-graffiti/>, retrieved on 11.08.2021

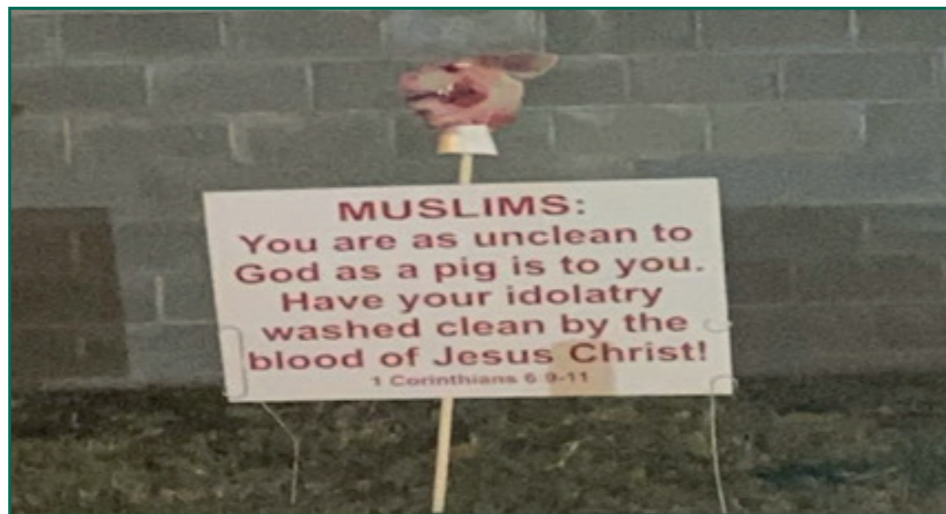
India: Mosque in Indian capital’s Rohingya camp bulldozed— Police and civil authorities in the Indian capital had demolished a makeshift mosque in a Rohingya camp, said the refugees, weeks after a massive fire had engulfed the settlement. The mosque, made up of tarpaulin sheets and bamboo sticks, was bulldozed on July 22, at the camp located in New Delhi’s Madanpur Khader area in the city’s south, which bordered Uttar Pradesh state. Nearly 300 refugees, most of whom fled a brutal military crackdown in Myanmar, told Al Jazeera the structure was demolished despite their appeals to the authorities not to do so. The Muslim-majority Rohingya said they had been left without a place to worship.

See: Aljazeera News’ entry, in: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/22/mosque-in-india-capitals-rohingya-camp-bulldozed-refugees>, retrieved on 08.08.2021

Fiji: 3 people in custody for allegedly setting a shop and mosque on fire in Taveuni— Three people were in police custody for allegedly setting fire to a shop and mosque in Taveuni on July 24. Police confirm the three were been questioned for alleged arson.

See: The Quint News’ entry, in: <https://www.thequint.com/news/india/gyanvapi-mosque-kashi-vishwanath-temple-dispute-what-it-took-to-give-1700-sqaure-feet-land>, retrieved on 09.08.2021

US: Pig mask, hate sign found outside Islamic center on anniversary of 9/11— The Austin chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations said a pig mask and hate sign were found outside an Islamic Center and school on Saturday, the 20th anniversary of September 11. Officials at the Islamic Center of Greater Austin and Austin Peace Academy took a photo of a bloodied pig’s head mask that was staked into the front lawn of the mosque along with a sign that read: “Muslims: you are as unclean to God as a pig is to you. Have your idolatry washed clean by the blood of Jesus Christ.”



See Fox 7 Austin News’ entry, in: <https://www.fox7austin.com/news/pig-mask-hate-sign-found-outside-islamic-center-on-anniversary-of-9-11>, retrieved on 16.09.2021

US: Man tosses shovels of garbage, urine onto front door of Long Island mosque— Nassau police were looking for the man who threw urine and garbage onto the front door of a mosque in Hicksville. Surveillance video from the Faizan-e-Aisha mosque showed a man walk up to the front door of the mosque on Heitz Place twice and toss shovels of garbage and urine onto the front door. The refuse landed in the area where mosque members leave their shoes to go into the mosque to pray. The incident happened August 13. Members of the mosque did not report it to police until August 26 because they said the same man returned and threatened people outside who came to the mosque to pray. “We’re not sure if he said, don’t bomb the place or bomb the place,” said a mosque member, who did not want his

name printed. “Nevertheless, there’s a threat.”

See: The Hans India News’ entry, in: <https://abc7ny.com/10980952/>, Image Source: <https://www.newsday.com/long-island/crime/hicksville-mosque-vandalized-1.50346466>, retrieved on 05.09.2021

US: Vandalism At Nassau County Mosque Being Investigated As Bias Crime, Police Say— Trash mixed in with human waste that was tossed into a Long Island mosque was been treated as a bias crime, authorities announced. On Friday, August 13, a man was caught on camera walking up to the front door of the Faizan-e-Aisha mosque on Heitz Place in Hicksville twice, where he thrown shovels of garbage and urine near the front door. According to reports, the package landed in the area of the mosque where congregants would leave their shoes before heading inside to pray. Though the incident happened in August, it was not reported to the Nassau County Police Department until the week before. They reportedly held off on alerting the authorities because the same suspect returned to the mosque and made Islamophobic threats. A spokesman for the department said that “the incident was caught on video, showing an unknown male, and it appears that this person was shoveling garbage into the doorway on the night of Aug.13.”

See Daily Voice News’ entry, in: <https://dailyvoice.com/new-york/nassau/news/vandalism-at-nassau-county-mosque-being-investigated-as-bias-crime-police-say/815502/>, retrieved on 08.09.2021

Canada: RCMP investigate threatening, racist letter sent to Langley mosque— Members of the Langley Islamic Centre were “shocked” and “disappointed” after they received a threatening and racist letter. The letter was mailed anonymously on August 26 and made a threatening demand for the centre to close in two months. It made reference to the Christchurch mosque attack, where a white supremacist killed 51 worshippers at two mosques in New Zealand, on March 15, 2019. “The feeling that came back originally was of disgust and shock. I don’t think people believe we live in a world where things like this still exist. Some people are upset, some people are furious,” said Imam Fawad Kalsi of the Langley Islamic Centre.

See Yahoo News’ entry, in: <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/rcmp-investigate-threatening-racist-letter-012155394.html>, retrieved on 09.09.2021



Canada: Police investigate mosque vandalized in Scarborough, multiple break-ins— Toronto Police were investigating after a Scarborough mosque was broken into and vandalized on August 22. The vandalism at the Baitul Jannah Islamic Centre at Kingston Road and Brimley Road was discovered when the mosque opened at around 5:30 a.m. Sunday for morning prayer. Multiple prayer rooms were vandalized, several copies of the Quran thrown to the floor, two donation boxes were smashed and the office was ransacked.

See: CTV News entry, in: <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/police-investigate-mosque-vandalized-in-scarborough-multiple-break-ins-1.5557091>, retrieved on 20.09.2021

UK: Manchester mosque arson investigated as a hate crime— On September 10, an arson attack targeted a mosque in a Manchester suburb and was being investigated as a hate crime, police had said. Police and fire crews were called to Didsbury mosque five minutes before midnight after two passersby spotted the flames. The door of the mosque was damaged, with two burnt canisters recovered from the scene. No one was injured. Mosque leaders said they were “so grateful” to neighbours who tried to put to extinguish the blaze with their coats. They added that they had received threats to burn the mosque “for a couple of years, but now the attempt has come”. Inspector Shoheb Chowdhury, from GMP’s south Manchester district, said: “This is a dreadful incident which will no doubt have caused concern in the community and we are doing all we can to find who was responsible and continue to engage the mosque and those concerned in the community. Hate crime will not be tolerated. We’re fortunate in that Greater

Manchester is a diverse place that our communities call home and those who wish to commit a crime motivated by hate will be brought to justice.”

See Inews News’ entry, in: <https://inews.co.uk/news/manchester-mosque-arson-investigated-as-a-hate-crime-1194612>, retrieved on 12.09.2021

UK: Newcastle mayor ‘infuriated’ by mosque firework attack— Newcastle’s mayor had said he was left “infuriated to the core” after his mosque was attacked by youths shouting racist abuse and hurling fireworks. Habib Rahman said worshippers were nearly struck by rockets when the building was targeted by up to eight teenagers on September 4. Inspector Andrew Stephenson, of Northumbria Police, said: “This type of behaviour, committed by the overwhelming minority, is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Not only have they damaged property but they could have seriously injured someone.”

See: BBC News’ entry, in: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-tyne-58468926/>, retrieved on 16.09.2021

The Occupied Palestinian Territory: Muslims restricted from accessing Ibrahimi mosque on Jewish new year— The Israeli authorities had banned Muslims from praying at Ibrahimi mosque on September 7 and September 8 in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron as people of the Jewish faith marked their new year, Wafaa News Agency reported. For the second time in less than a week, Israeli authorities hindered Muslims from entering Hebron’s Ibrahimi Mosque. The Israeli authorities closed the mosque to Muslim worshippers on September 2 and 3 on the occasion of the Jewish new year. As per the media reports, the mosque was only opened for the Jewish community, who were allowed to perform Talmudic rituals under police protection. The director of the Ibrahimi Mosque, Sheikh Hafez Abu Sneina, told the local media, that Israeli forces prevented the Palestinians from reaching the holy site and its squares, as the “illegal settlers” prepared for the Jewish New Year.

See The SIASAT News’ entry, in: <https://www.siasat.com/muslims-restricted-from-accessing-ibrahimi-mosque-on-jewish-new-year-2189704/>, retrieved on 16.09.2021



India: Tripura: Statewide attacks on mosques, houses of Muslims during rally against Bangladesh violence— On October 22, Mosque in Panisagar in North Tripura district was burnt by Hindu violent mob at 1am. At least six mosques and over a dozen of houses and shops which belonged to Muslims were vandalized by Hindutva groups RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal across Tripura during protests against Bangladesh violence on October 21. Photos and videos accessed by Maktoob showed violent right wing mobs who wear saffron and carry swords raised anti-Muslim slogans during protests organized by Viswa Hindu Parishad, Hindu Jagran Manch, Bajrang Dal, and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Safiqur Rahman, an activist associated to Students Islamic Organization (SIO) said to Maktoob that at least six mosques were attacked by Hindutva assailants since Wednesday, October 20. A mosque was burnt in Maharani Region in Gomathi district's Udaipur, he confirmed to Maktoob. A government order said Section 144 imposed in the region following call for anti-Muslim violence by Hindutva groups. Mosques in Krishnagar, Dharmanagar, Panisagar, Chandpur were also vandalized by saffron wearing youths on Thursday October 21. According to Tripura Infoways website, participants of a rally brought out by Vishwa Hindu Parishad broke window glasses and CCTV cameras of Krishnagar Jama Masjid. In Kailashahar, a locality near to Tripura's capital city Agartala, a mob surrounded the mosque and shouted "Jai Shri Ram" and placed a saffron flag. "These all happened during the protests against communal violence in Bangladesh," Rahman said.

See: Maktoob Media News' entry, in: <https://maktoobmedia.com/2021/10/22/tripura-statewide-attacks-on-mosques-houses-of-muslims-during-rally-against-bangladesh-violence/>. Also See the video, in: <https://twitter.com/maktoobmedia/status/1451267145849991168>, retrieved on 23.10.2021

France: Under construction mosque in northeastern France receives threat letter— An under-construction mosque in the French city of Strasbourg had received a death threat letter, an official of the country's Islamic community said. The letter, which was received on October 12, titled "Declaration of War," and argued that Islam had no place in France. The anonymous note said Muslims of France would have to make a choice between Islam and Christianity. "Considering most of you will choose Islam, you have no place in France. Get ready, you will be attacked in your mosques!" the letter said.

See: Anadolu Agency News' entry, in: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/under-construction-mosque-in-northeastern-france-receives-threat-letter/2385802>, retrieved on 17.10.2021

US: Minneapolis mosque on edge after vandalism of security cameras— Abdifatah Abdi, director of the Dar Al Qalam Cultural Center in Northeast Minneapolis, reported vandalized security cameras and car break-in. The mosque had called for authorities to open a hate-crimes investigation. He said that a vandal climbed onto a dumpster outside the building in Northeast Minneapolis and damaged three security cameras and knocked several others offline. Safety had been a top concern for Minnesota Muslims following the 2017 firebombing of the Dar Al Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington. Judge in September sentenced the leader of that attack to 53 years in federal prison.

See: Sahan Journal news entry in: <https://sahanjournal.com/policing-justice/minneapolis-mosque-dar-al-qalam-vandalism/>, retrieved on 23.11.2021

US: Oldest mosque in San Francisco vandalized. 'We feel like our home was attacked'—A vandal threw a beer bottle through one of the windows of San Francisco's oldest mosque, leaving members of the local Muslim community shaken. Police responded to the Islamic Center of San Francisco about 11:48 p.m. Friday, November 12. The suspect ran away after throwing the bottle through the window. Friday is a prayerful day in Islam and is usually a busy day for mosques, which hold prayers and services throughout the day. There were people inside the mosque when the vandalism occurred, and one person said that he and others heard the sound of glass breaking at the time.

See: Sacbee news entry in: https://www.sacbee.com/news/nation-world/national/article255845341.html?utm_source=pocket_mylist, retrieved on 17.11.2021



France: Muslim Community in France Condemns Islamophobic Vandalism—The Coordination Committee of Muslims in France condemned the Islamophobic acts targeting mosques in the small cities of Montlebon, Pontarlier, and Roubaix. The statement came after unknown people painted “Cross of Lorraine” tags on the mosques late at night on November 6. France 3 said that the vandalism acts targeted the mosques of the Turkish-Islamic Union of Religious Affairs. As the Lorraine cross symbolized French resistance to Nazi occupation in the 1940s, the report suggested, its use by some activists and sympathizers of far-right in France bear echoes of the Islamophobic argument that waves of Muslims were ‘invading France’ to eventually colonize it. Earlier, Muslims in Rennes expressed frustration after discovering on the walls of their mosque “shocking” tags that were insulting of Islam and Prophet Muhammad. “Catholicism is the state religion” and “no to Islamization” were some of the messages vandals left on the mosque in Rennes. Despite the growing normalization of such instances of Islamophobia, many observers maintain that the most worrying development had been President Emmanuel Macron’s apparent embrace of some far-right talking points on “Islamist separatism” to score national security points in hopes of boosting his re-election campaign.

See: Morocco World news entry in: <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2021/11/345416/muslim-community-in-france-condemns-islamophobic-vandalism>, retrieved on 8.11.2021



France: Mosques Targeted in France’s Rising Islamophobic Vandalism—Two mosques in Besancon were vandalized in November 2021. The attackers used red paint to draw on the walls of the mosques, the crosses of Lorraine which symbolized French resistance to Nazi occupation in the 1940s. French local official denounced the use of the Cross of Lorraine. “It is a symbol of the resistance movement against Nazi occupation. It is very inappropriate to use the cross of Lorraine to mark opposition to Islam.” The unidentified vandals also targeted some cars parked near the mosques. See: Morocco World news entry in: <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2021/11/345676/mosques-targeted-in-frances-rising-islamophobic-vandalism>, retrieved on 20.11.2021

The Occupied Palestinian Territory: Israeli troops raid al-Aqsa’s Dome of Rock after razing mosque—The Palestinian Ministry of Endowment and Religious Affairs had condemned the Israeli regime over demolition of a mosque in the northern part of the occupied West Bank, describing the move a “clear attack on the holy sites and religious places for Muslims”. Husam Abu al-Rub, undersecretary of the ministry, slammed the demolition, saying it “violates international and humanitarian norms. This act is a clear challenge to the feelings of Muslims, and it requires us to take a serious stand to prevent its recurrence and the expansion of this occupation that spares no opportunity to push the entire region into a religious war, in its continuous encroachment on our Islamic sanctities,” he said in a statement. Abu al-Rub called on the international community and religious institutions to prevent further violations of ‘our’ sanctities and places of worship. According to a

Palestinian official who monitored Israeli settlement activities and settler aggression in the West Bank, Israeli forces escorted a bulldozer into the town of Douma and razed the mosque to the ground. He noted that Israeli forces also destroyed farm roads in the southern part of the town. Head of the local council in Douma, said the demolished mosque spread over 60 square meters, and residents of the town frequently visited the mosque for prayers. The official said the Israeli army razed the mosque on the ground on an area classified as Area C without a permit. Area C of the West Bank constituted about 61 percent of the territory, and under the 1995 Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA), control of the area was supposed to be gradually handed over to the PA, but Israel retained total control until today.

See: Press TV news entry, in: <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2021/11/05/669972/Palestine-slams-Israel%E2%80%99s-mosque-demolition-as-clear-attack-on-holy-sites-for-Muslims>, retrieved on 5.11.2021

US: Woman captured on video vandalizing Islamic Center in Waterloo— on 28 December 2021, a woman had vandalized the Al-Noor Islamic Community Center in Waterloo, the Courier reported. The security video showed that the woman had first used snow to draw crosses on the mosque's windows before graduating to scrawling profanities aimed at Islam and Muslims on the mosque's walls using some type of oil-based substance. She used outright hate speech: "F--- Islam," "F--- Muslims," according to Al-Noor Imam Ahmed Abouzid, who filed a report with Waterloo Police when he discovered it later.

See: The Courier News' entry, in: https://wcfcourier.com/news/local/woman-captured-on-video-vandalizing-islamic-center-in-waterloo/article_a61c2e31-1f73-5666-b924-fa4a7c9b1710.html, retrieved on 06.01.2022

US: Arizona synagogue and mosque vandalized in separate attacks— Police said they had arrested a man in connection with the vandalism of a Tucson synagogue and were investigating an attack at a local mosque. Detectives announced on 29 December 2021 they arrested a man on suspicion of aggravated criminal damage after they reviewed surveillance video taken Kol Ami Tucson. Tucson police said they were also investigating vandalism and an assault on several worshippers in a separate incident at

an area mosque.

See: AP News entry, in: <https://apnews.com/article/tucson-arizona-crime-arrests-vandalism-26d95ce2b05d6037e9cb5e6632f44f11/>, retrieved on 04.01.2022

Germany: 'Attack on Muslim cemetery— About 30 headstones at a Muslim cemetery in Iserlohn had been damaged, police said January 1, 2022. The incident was thought to have occurred late Friday or early Saturday, according to a statement by prosecutors and the Hagen police department. Authorities issued an appeal for information from anyone who witnessed the vandalism or has information that could help the investigation.

See: The Daily Sabah Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/eu-affairs/attack-on-muslim-cemetery-new-sign-of-rising-islamophobia-in-europe>, retrieved on 04.01.2022

Germany: Arson suspected at Turkish mosque in Germany's Saxony— German authorities launched an investigation after a fire was reported in the backyard of a mosque in the city of Chemnitz, police said on January 16. Police suspect that the fire, which took place in the backyard of Fatih Mosque at around 10 p.m. GMT Saturday January 15, could be arson, and launched a multi-pronged operation to probe the incident.

See: Daily Sabah newspaper entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/eu-affairs/arson-suspected-at-turkish-mosque-in-germanys-saxony>, retrieved on 20.01.2022

Netherlands: foundation condemns sending of Islamophobic letters to mosques— The Dutch Religious Foundation issued a statement, on Monday January 3, which condemned the sending of letters to several mosques in the Netherlands with Islamophobic content. The mosques, which were affiliated with the foundation, also known as Hollanda Diyanet Vakfi (HDV), received the letters the week before, which included cartoons insulting the Prophet Muhammad and Islam.

See: Turkish Press News' entry, in: <https://turkishpress.com/netherlands-foundation-condemns-sending-of-islamophobic-letters-to-mosques/>, retrieved on 06.01.2022

Incident Targeting Muslim Individual

UK: Muslim boy, 4, referred to UK anti-extremism program over video game comment— On January 31, The Observer, a British newspaper, had reported that a Muslim boy aged 4 was referred to the British government’s anti-extremism program (Prevent Program) in September 2019 by his after-school club for talking about the video game “Fortnite.” It was stated that the boy said his father had “guns and bombs in his shed.” Following the child’s referral to prevent, it was quickly established that he was with his father the night before he made the comments; and his cousin was playing the video game. The boy’s mother told The Observer about her distress after the police visited the family home at 10:30 p.m. to discuss her son’s case. She said: “The office sent me all the information, including the transcript of that conversation. It is quite clear he mentioned Fortnite ... He is just a little boy with an imagination. The teachers should know ... I do think that if it was a white boy, they wouldn’t have actually gone to that extreme of referring him to the Prevent scheme.” The mother added that the police officer who visited the family home appeared uneasy, as though he did not think the visit was necessary, but explained he had to “follow the Prevent flowchart.”

See: Arab News entry, in: <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1801411/world>, retrieved on 03.03.2021

New Zealand: Christchurch mosque attack survivor Wasseim Alsati’s barber shop targeted by vandals— The barber shop owned by Wasseim Alsati, a survivor of the Christchurch terror attacks, had been targeted by vandals. Alsati and his daughter, aged just 4, suffered multiple gunshot wounds in the March 2019 attacks. He reopened his mobile barbershop, Wass’ Barbers in the central city in September 2020, for the first time since the shootings. When he arrived to work on Tuesday, March 23, he found his van covered in graffiti, which he feared was racially motivated. Alsati said the truck was sprayed with a “very difficult, bad word” and some patterns and numbers which he believe were linked to white supremacy. “It’s quite scary and it’s disappointing. I don’t know what to say.” He said.

See: New Zealand Herald newspaper entry, in: <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/christchurch-mosque-attack-survivor-wasseim-alsatis-barber-shop-targeted-by-vandals/OK43SL3VYPR6DQSTAHOSF3I72Q/>, retrieved on 28.03.2021

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

Albania: Mosque Stabbing in Albania Raises Questions on Rise of Islamophobia— On April 19, A man attacked five Muslim worshippers in Albania’s Dine Hoxha Mosque in the capital city of Tirana. Rudolf Nikolli, entered the mosque after the end of the afternoon prayer and stabbed five men. All victims were immediately transported to a local hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. According to Tirana authorities, one victim had undergone surgery in his abdomen while the hospital had discharged the other four victims. In a statement to local media outlet Balkanweb, the suspect’s father stated that Nikolli had been depressed due to loss of opportunity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. After the police apprehended Nikolli, he exclaimed, “All Muslims should be punished”.

See: Morocco World News’ entry, in: <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2021/04/340205/mosque-stabbing-in-albania-raises-questions-on-rise-of-islamophobia/>, retrieved on 06.05.2021

UK: woman wearing a burqa assaulted in Exeter shop— On April 22, a woman who was wearing a burqa was assaulted in a shop on Exeter’s High Street, in southwest England. Officers said they were investigating the report of racially aggravated common assault.

See: Devon Live News’ entry, in: <https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/police-want-speak-man-after-5382383>, retrieved on 11.05.2021

UK: New extremism chief appointed by Priti Patel dismissed ‘Islamophobia’ and ‘violent extremism’— Britain’s commissioner for countering extremism had dismissed the use of the word “Islamophobia,” and urged the government to “push back” on it, it could be revealed. Robin

Simcox, who previously worked for a US think-tank with close links to Donald Trump’s administration, was appointed to the post by Priti Patel on March 31. In a September 2019 article, he called for the prime minister to “push back on ‘Islamophobia’” and be “wary” of calls for an internal Conservative Party review. In the same article, Mr Simcox said Extinction Rebellion, Unite Against Fascism and the far left “need monitoring”. Earlier that year, in a piece headlined “Left’s Use of Islamophobia a Cynical Ploy to Shut Down Disagreement”, he wrote: “Muslims’ concerns about the prejudice they face in society cannot be ignored. Those concerns, however, must be addressed without throwing around accusations of Islamophobia, a word used to narrow the parameters of legitimate debate.” A spokesperson for the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), - the UK’s largest umbrella organization for mosques, schools and Islamic charities – said “It is far-right extremists who have the most to gain from refusing to recognize the lived experience of Islamophobia Muslims face today... And it is far-right extremists who are benefitting from the willful misrepresentation of Islamophobia as a word that allegedly limits free speech.”

See: The Independent Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/extremism-commissioner-robin-simcox-islamophobia-b1832832.html>, retrieved on 17.05.2021

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

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

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

US: NYPD Releases New Surveillance Video of Suspect in Anti-Muslim Attacks— Police had released a surveillance video of the suspect in two anti-Muslim attacks in Queens. Police said, a man made anti-Muslim statements while following a Muslim couple near Liberty Avenue and Lefferts Boulevard. Police had released another surveillance video of the suspect in two anti-Muslim attacks in Queens that happened on June 20, 2021. The man allegedly punched the man in the back, then tugged on the woman’s hijab and punched her in the arm. About an hour later, the same man allegedly made anti-Muslim statements while he followed a 64-year-old man and a woman near Inwood Avenue and Liberty Avenue. Police said the man punched the 64-year-old in the face multiple times before he ran away. The victim was taken to a local hospital to be treated for a fractured nose and small cuts to his head and face.

See: CBS New York News’ entry, in: <https://newyork.cbslocal.com/2021/07/01/queens-anti-muslim-attacks-new-surveillance-video/>, retrieved on 26.07.2021

Canada: Muslim Man Stabbed, Has Beard Cut as Assailants Yelled About His Clothing, Religion— A Muslim man said he was stabbed and had his beard cut by assailants as they yelled about his religious clothing in an unprovoked attack. Muhammad Kashif said he was attacked in an alley on June 25 morning in Saskatoon, Canada. He said he was near his parked car when another car drove up behind him. “They attacked... on my back with a knife or something,” Kashif told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. “Using F-word and saying ‘Why you are here? We don’t like you are Muslim, why are you wearing this dress? And then one guy held my hands and the other guy cut my beard,” he added. He said he was stabbed in the arm and knocked unconscious after been hit over the head with a cane he walked with. When he regained consciousness, Kashif said his attackers were gone and so were his keys and phone. He eventually flagged down a car and had the driver call authorities. Kashif was taken to a local hospital where he received 14 stitches to close the wound on his arm and police came to take a statement from him. Saskatoon police said in a statement “The Serious Assault Unit is investigating with support from the Equity and Cultural Engagement Unit,” “The investigation is in its preliminary stage”. Kashif said “I am 12 years old when I came to this country and they are telling

me, ‘why you are here?’” “Why do they have to cut my beard?” he told CBC.

See: Newsweek Magazine News’ entry, in: <https://www.newsweek.com/muslim-man-stabbed-has-beard-cut-assailants-yelled-about-his-clothing-religion-1604809>, Image Source: <https://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/i-hate-muslims-attackers-stab-taunt-cut-beard-of-saskatoon-man>, retrieved on 12.07.2021

Canada: A Muslim former intelligence officer says systemic racism at CSIS is a threat to national security— A Muslim woman who worked as a senior intelligence officer at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) said the systemic racism and lack of diversity she experienced firsthand at CSIS constitute a national security threat. Huda Mukbil, said she was treated as an insider threat and interrogated about her religion during her 15-year career at CSIS. Mukbil said she was forced to cut ties with Muslim organizations, ostracized at work and treated like a second-class citizen. She left the intelligence agency in 2017 after she helped to launch a civil lawsuit against CSIS over claims of discrimination. “It’s the reason why individuals in the Muslim community don’t feel they can trust the organization to tackle far-right threats ... The lack of trust is because of the lack of diversity. We don’t have officers like me who are going out and speaking to people who can relate to their experiences. There’s a moment now to do something.” Mukbil told CBC News. The spy agency’s director David Vigneault admitted, the year before, that CSIS had an internal racism problem. “Yes, systemic racism does exist here, and yes there is a level of harassment and fear of reprisal within the organization,” he said, based on a transcript of a 2020 meeting. Mukbil said she went to work in CSIS’s counter-terrorism section in 2002. She said she was, to her knowledge, CSIS’s first ever hijab-wearing Black-Arab intelligence officer. Initially, she said, she was well received at Ottawa headquarters. But two years into her job, she said, everything changed. The perceived source of the terrorist threat in Canada in 2004 shifted from al-Qaeda to young, second- and third-generation Canadian Muslims, she said. Mukbil said she suddenly found herself treated as an insider threat as well. “I myself felt like I was being targeted at CSIS” she said.

See: CBC News’ entry, in: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/racism-descrimination-claims-canadian-security-intelligence-service-1.6083353>, retrieved on 11.07.2021

India: Muslim man attacked, India police charge journalists for tweets—

Several press bodies had condemned police in the northern Uttar Pradesh state for the cases against journalists and a news portal for their tweets and reports on the attack of an elderly Muslim man. On June 5, Abdul Samad Saifi, a 72-year-old resident of Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad, an industrial town on the outskirts of capital New Delhi, was reportedly offered a ride in an auto rickshaw by some men, then he was taken to an isolated spot and allegedly beaten for hours as he crouched on a cot, squirmed in pain. The men also allegedly forced him to chant Jai Shri Ram (hail Lord Ram) and Vande Mataram (I praise thee, Mother), which are rallying calls for Hindu far-right groups, who enjoy patronage from the governing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and frequently target India's Muslim minority. In a two-minute video clip that was widely shared on social media, the men could also be seen when they cut the elderly man's beard with scissors. However, the Uttar Pradesh police denied the attack was motivated by religious hatred and said Saifi was beaten because he had sold the men an amulet that did not work. Saifi's family had contested the police claim and said it was a hate attack. A police officer in Ghaziabad, on condition of anonymity, told Al Jazeera on Friday that nine people, had been arrested so far while police were looking for two more suspects. But the police action against the journalists – all Muslims – had outraged press bodies across the world, who demanded an immediate withdrawal of the FIRs against them. In a statement on June 15, the Editors Guild of India (EGI) said it “condemns the filing of the FIRs by the Uttar Pradesh government against The Wire and several journalists” for their tweets on the June 5 assault.

See: Aljazeera News' entry, in: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/6/18/ghaziabad-muslim-man-attacked-india-police-journalists>, retrieved on 08.07.2021

US: A Muslim family tried to befriend their neighbor – he ended up smearing bacon on their house and screaming at their security cameras— A Las Vegas man had been arrested on charges of harassment, after allegedly he smeared bacon on the house of a neighboring Muslim family and screamed at their security cameras. Local news outlets KLAS and KTNV reported that Ricky Uwich was accused of the harassment of the family, which included their two young children, in an apparent hate crime. The

Muslim family said that they attempted to befriend Uwich several months ago, and even cooked him meals. However, he “was not happy with the efforts.” Uwich reportedly told police that the family was “constantly” bothering him. The family showed police surveillance camera footage of Uwich when he smeared their door, doorknob, handrails and wall with raw bacon on June 19. A few days later, Uwich allegedly placed a piece of bacon on the family's car. Uwich told police that he did not like the family because they are Muslim and accused them of been terrorists.

See: The Raw Story News' entry, in: <https://www.rawstory.com/anti-muslim-hate-crime/>, retrieved on 26.07.2021

**US: CAIR-MN Calls For Investigation After Car Was Vandalized Outside**

Mankato Mosque— The Minnesota Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations had called on authorities in southern Minnesota to investigate a possible bias crime on July 31, which targeted worshippers at a Mankato mosque. According to CAIR-MN, officials with the Mankato Islamic Center reported that two vandals spray-painted offensive words on a car belonging to one of the mosque's members. Surveillance video captured the vandalism. According to the Mankato Islamic Center's Facebook page, the footage showed a man and a woman were vandalizing the car. The video was turned over to law enforcement.

See: CBS Minnesota News' entry, in: <https://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2021/08/02/cair-mn-calls-for-investigation-after-car-was-vandalized-outside-mankato-mosque/>, retrieved on 11.08.2021

France: Imam in France fired over verses recited during Eid prayers—

An imam of a mosque in France's Loire region was fired after verses and hadiths he recited during his Eid al-Adha prayer sermon which were considered "contrary to the values of the Republic" by Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin. Mmadi Ahamada, the imam of the Great Mosque of Saint-Chamond, who was of Comoros origin, shared a hadith and Surah Ahzab verses which addressed the wives of the Prophet Muhammad in his sermon. After Isabelle Surply, a member of the Municipal Council of the Republican Party, shared a video of the sermon online, Darmanin asked the Loire Governor's Office to dismiss the imam and ensure that his residence permit was not renewed, on the grounds that "he finds these statements unacceptable" and "sees them against gender equality." Ahamada, told the Le Progres website, that some of the statements and verses in the sermon were taken and used out of context. In a message on social media, the mosque administration announced that the imam had been dismissed. The Loire Governorate said that they were working on not renewing the imam's residence permit. Another imam sacked in Hauts-de-Seine Imam Mahdi, whose criticism of the dressing style of some Muslim women in a sermon he gave on June 4 at the Gennevilliers Mosque in the province of Hauts-de-Seine was also terminated by Darmanin's order.

See: The Daily Sabah newspaper entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/europe/imam-in-france-fired-over-verses-recited-during-eid-prayers>, retrieved on 08.08.2021

UK: Racist dog walker targeted Muslim joggers in Hounslow —

Two Muslim women were out jogging in a park in Feltham when a racist woman targeted them with abuse and set their dog towards them. The attack occurred on the evening of July 20. Sahar, who contacted Tell MAMA and wanted to go public about this anti-Muslim and Islamophobic attack, described the fear for her friend, who was wearing hijab. Her friend was left shaken in the immediacy of the attack but felt better after that. They described the perpetrator as a white woman in her mid-to-late fifties.

See: Tell Mama UK News' entry, in: <https://tellmamauk.org/racist-dog-walker-targeted-muslim-joggers-in-hounslow/>, retrieved on 15.08.2021

India: Bhopal: Four Muslim Men Targeted by Bajrang Dal outside

College Garba Event, Then Detained by Police— On October 10, Four young Muslim men, in Bhopal were taken into police custody on Sunday night after members of the Hindu right-wing Bajrang Dal decided to "catch them" and hand them over to the police, the Indian Express reported. The men were outside a garba organised by Oxford College, where two of the men – Adnan Shah and Kadir Mansoori – were students. The other two – Umar Khalid and Sayyad Sakib – were their friends, according to the newspaper. The Bajrang Dal members reportedly claimed that the garba event was being held in violation of COVID-19 norms and also promoted "love jihad". Superintendent of Police, Indore West, Maheshchand Jain admitted to the Indian Express that the action against the four young men was "unfair" and that he had recommended that they not be detained. Malharganj SDM Parag Jain, however, said the four had been charged for creating a "public nuisance", and were sent to jail as their families didn't furnish bail bonds. An eyewitness told the Indian Express that the Bajrang Dal members targeted the four because of their religious identity. "Ye unwala hai (He is one of theirs)," BCom student Habib Noor quoted the Bajrang Dal members.

See: The Wire News' entry, in: <https://thewire.in/communalism/bhopal-mp-bajrang-dal-garba-muslim-men-targeted>, retrieved on 12.10.2021

India: Two men thrashed by cow vigilantes in Mathura—

On September 22, Two men, identified as Ayub and Mausim, were intercepted and beaten up brutally by a mob in Mathura because they carried meat through an area where a ban on the food item was in place, after an announcement earlier by UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath. For 16 minutes, the right-wing outfit went live on Facebook, where they recorded their assault — the men were kicked and slapped repeatedly — and asked viewers to share the video. At least 15 people had gathered to beat up the men. Ayub and Mausim, were crouching on the ground as the mob rained blows on them. "Ayub runs a licensed meat shop at Raya town and was taking meat there," said a Muslim leader who didn't want to be named. Ayub, Mausim and the driver of the vehicle they were in, Bahadur, had been arrested for "defiling place of worship and cow slaughter".

See: Times Of India News' entry, in: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agra/2-men-thrashed-by-cow-vigilantes-in-mathura-video-streamed-live-on-fb/articleshow/86435577.cms>, retrieved on 29.09.2021

UK: Picnic marred by ‘racist and Islamophobic’ attack— A family picnic had been marred by a “racist and Islamophobic” attack, according to the organiser. Zahra Kosar tweeted that children were chased and terrorised while some parents were assaulted in St George Park, Bristol on September 25. She said they were all traumatised by what appeared to be a “racist and Islamophobic attack”. Police had said they were treating the incident as a suspected hate crime.

See: BBC News’ entry, in: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-58699238>, retrieved on 03.10.2021

UK: “It was one of the worst days of my life,” Muslim man assaulted, robbed along Leeds and Liverpool Canal— A Muslim man had been assaulted, and robbed along Leeds and Liverpool Canal, he told Tellmama caseworker. He witnessed the perpetrator flee the scene in his vehicle as he urged a female member of the public to call the police as an ambulance soon arrived to treat him. The who wished to remain anonymous, was a South Asian, he described the men who assaulted him as a white male in their mid-to-late twenties. The ongoing police investigation had so far been unable to trace his stolen car or wallet – the loss compounded by the news of the use of their card in two transactions – that included the purchase of alcohol.

See: Tell Mama UK News’ entry, in: <https://tellmamauk.org/it-was-one-of-the-worst-days-of-my-life-muslim-man-assaulted-robbed-along-leeds-and-liverpool-canal/>, retrieved on 14.10.2021

UK: Racist slammed car door against Muslim woman strapping their child in — A racist man slammed a Muslim woman’s car door onto her, which injured her as she almost fell onto her young child, and told her, “I’m fed up of you foreigners,” before he fled the scene by driving off. The anti-Muslim and Islamophobic attack was under investigation from the Met and occurred on September 19.

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Palestine: Brazenly inhumane: Israel demolishes Muslim graves near Al-Aqsa— On October 10, Israeli authorities had destroyed Muslim graves near the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the illegally occupied eastern Jerusalem. The

Israel-administered Jerusalem Municipality desecrated several graves at the Al-Yusufiye Cemetery near Al-Aqsa and used the municipality’s engineering vehicles in the Old City. By the time the Palestinians reached Al-Yusufiye Cemetery amid reports of bones found at the graveyard, the municipality vehicles had already left the scene.

See: The Correspondent News’ entry, in: <https://www.thecorrespondent.pk/2021/10/11/brazenly-inhumane-israel-demolishes-muslim-graves-near-al-aqsa/>, retrieved on 12.10.2021

US: Off-duty cop attacked drunken driver while hurling racist insults: police sources— On January 16, Riggs Kwong, An off-duty cop spewed racist insults and assaulted an alleged drunken driver in an incident recorded by the officer — who then handed the footage over to authorities, police sources told The Post. Motorist Abdul Motalab tried to pop a U-turn in his car on Church Avenue near Ocean Parkway in Kensington, according to sources. Kwong, an NYPD officer, was in his car and allegedly blocked Motalab from turning, caused him to get out of his car to start taking pictures and hit the off-duty cop’s vehicle, sources said. Kwong then got out of his car, knocked the other man to the ground and started pummeling him, sources said. “Terrorist! “Al Qaeda! Mohammed! ISIS!” Kwong yelled, according to sources. Kwong was charged with assault and suspended. The motorist, Abdul Motalab, was charged with DWI.

See: NY Post News’ entry, in: <https://nypost.com/2022/01/17/nypd-cop-goes-on-racist-rant-in-road-rage-assault-in-brooklyn-sources-say/>, retrieved on 20.01.2022

India: Mob beats up Muslim man for travelling with Hindu woman in Ujjain— Members of a right-wing organisation thrashed a Muslim man for travelling with a Hindu woman in Madhya Pradesh’s Ujjain, police said on January 18, 2022. According to the police, the incident took place on January 14 came to light after a video of the incident went viral on social media. In the video, one Pintu Kaushal, who claimed to be a member of a right-wing organisation, along with a few others, was seen dragging a man out of a train and thrashing him at the Ujjain railway station. The woman, who was travelling with the victim, a resident of Mhow in Indore district, could be seen following the mob. Kaushal later claimed that the married Hindu woman was “misguided” by the Muslim man, who was also

married and had a child, and they were heading to Ajmer for marriage. “We received information and brought them out of the train. We handed them over to GRP, Ujjain for police action as it was a case of ‘Love Jihad,’” said Kaushal. However, GRP Ujjain superintendent of police Nivedita Gupta said, “The man and woman were family friends and the woman’s mother has confirmed the same. We allowed them to go.”

See: Hindustan Times News’ entry, in: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/mob-beats-up-muslim-man-for-travelling-with-hindu-woman-in-ujjain-101642532034860.html>, retrieved on 20.01.2022

India: Hindutva Group Members ‘Kill’ Muslim Man Hours After Giving Anti-Muslim Speech— Sameer Subhansab Shahpur and his friend Shamseer Khan Pathan, were going to a barber shop on a bike when they were attacked, allegedly by members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Bajrang Dal on Monday, January 17, 2022. The alleged attack came only hours after the accused had delivered anti-Muslim speeches in Karnataka’s Gadag district. Ten to 12 Hindutva workers in Nargund town allegedly stabbed Shahpur in the chest with a knife and hit Pathan in the back with a knife as well as a rod. Shahpur succumbed to his injuries at the Karnataka Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) in Hubli at around 6 am on Tuesday while his friend, Pathan remained there in critical condition. Shahpur’s brother Sahil, told The Wire, “My brother had no enmity with anyone. A few months ago, there were Hindu-Muslim fights between students in the college. Some Hindus had slid knives in a Muslim student’s bag and later accused Muslims of carrying knives. That time, Samseer clicked pictures of the incident; he was their target. My brother had nothing to do with it.”

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Incident Targeting Copies of the Holy Qur’an

Sweden: Anti-Islam Activist Holds Draw Mohammed Demonstration in Sweden— On May 20, Danish anti-Islam far right, Rasmus Paludan held a demonstration on the outskirts of the Swedish multicultural city of Malmo, in which he called on members of the public to draw cartoons of Prophet Mohammed. Paludan held his demonstration nearby to the Öresund Bridge which linked Denmark and Sweden after local police denied him permission to hold the event in the no-go area of Rosengard. At the protest, Paludan was wearing a bulletproof vest, and he called on members of the public to draw pictures of the Islamic prophet Mohammed but, according to a report from the newspaper Sydsvenskan, he was unable to find any volunteers. The newspaper noted that the only people who turned up for the demonstration were members of Paludan’s entourage and members of the media. A large number of police officers were also present during the demonstration, with an estimated 20 police vans on site. A counter-demonstration of around 50 people had also gathered but both sides were kept apart by the officers on the scene.



See: Breitbart News’ entry, in: <https://www.breitbart.com/europe/2021/05/24/anti-islam-activist-holds-draw-mohammed-demonstration-in-sweden/>. Also: Photo from: <https://beta.sydsvenskan.se/2021-05-20/rasmus-paludan-manifesterade-i-utkant-en-av-malmo> retrieved on 26.05.2021

US: Man rubbed ham on Quran, cartoons of Muslim prophet he hung at Wichita Islamic sites— A local man who took a gun to a Wichita mosque and yelled Islamophobic comments at a Muslim man pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor counts of disorderly conduct over the incident where he also rubbed ham on cartoonish posters of the Prophet Muhammad and a copy of the Quran. Dustin Arterburn was immediately sentenced to probation with an jail term of 90 days after he entered the plea on May 25, Sedgwick County District Court records show. The plea came ahead of the bench trial. Arterburn was required to write letters to the Islamic Society of Wichita and a Muslim man, to apologize for his actions and “any fear he caused or disrespect shown” when he went to the Masjid An Noor Mosque and the Islamic Society of Wichita on Oct. 30, 2020, court documents show.

See: The Wichita Eagle newspaper entry, in: <https://www.kansas.com/news/local/crime/article252040128.html>, Image Source: <https://www.kake.com/story/42854152/police-man-yelled-racial-comments-showed-gun-outside-wichita-mosque>, retrieved on 02.08.2021



Sweden: To provoke the Muslims of Sweden.. A Danish politician throws Copy of the Holy Quran to the ground— On September 3, the leader of the Danish extremist “Hardline” party Rasmus Paludan threw a copy of the Holy Quran on the ground in Stockholm, to provoke the feelings of Muslims in Sweden. Anadolu Agency reported that the leader of the extreme right-wing party, stood in front of the large “Vitja” mosque of the Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs, where he held a copy of the Holy Qur’an, amid strict security measures. Police excluded Paludan from the

scene after the increased frequency of criticism. According to the reporter, Paludan carried out similar provocative actions in other Muslim-majority neighborhoods of the Swedish capital, Stockholm, such as Rinkeby, Scherholmenen and Tensta.

See: Amman Today News’ entry, in: <https://amman.today/2021/09/04/world/to-provoke-the-muslims-of-sweden-a-danish-politician-throws-the-holy-quran-to-the-ground/>, Image Source: <https://www.livik.net/2021/09/04/provocation-from-a-danish-politician-in-front-of-a-turkish-mosque/>, retrieved on 05.09.2021

Incident Targeting Most-referred Figure in Islam

UK: Two young Muslims attacked in Dublin suburb— Two young Muslim women were assaulted by a number of teenagers in Dundrum, south Dublin in August 2019. A video had emerged online which appeared to show two girls being thrown to the ground and pelted with eggs and physically assaulted by a large group. The incident happened in Dundrum village near the local shopping center. The individual who shared the video online claimed to be the sister of one of the victims and insisted that the attack was unprovoked and that the girls' hijabs were removed during the attack. Text attached to the video reads, "My sister and my cousin were attacked yesterday evening in Dundrum village. I can't believe this! I am so disgusted and angry that I was not there to protect them. Please help share this to find these sc**bags to prosecute them and bring them to justice....They remove my cousins hijab and kick her while she is down then attack my sister and bring her to the ground to kick her! This should not be happening to anyone nomatter who they are! What world do we live in!!!" In the footage, someone could be heard shouting "get off her" and "she's only a child." The police launched an investigation into the incident as many online call for swift and decisive action against the culprits.

See: The Irish Central News' entry, in: <https://www.irishcentral.com/news/irishvoice/young-muslims-attacked-dublin-suburb>, retrieved on 22.8.2019

UK: Petition in support of Batley Grammar School teacher reaches 50,000 signatures— The Grammar School in Batley, near Bradford West Yorkshire in England, had been facing calls to reinstate the teacher after a petition in support of him reached more than 50,000 signatures on March 28. The petition came after the school had apologized, on March 25, to parents who protested after a teacher used cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad as teaching material. The school headteacher apologized for the inappropriate use of the cartoons, which was taken from the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo, during a religious studies lesson, which sparked a protest outside the school on Thursday March 25.

See: The Standard Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/robert-jenrick-batley-west-yorkshire-bradford-french-b926659.html>, retrieved on 30.03.2021

UK: Batley head apologises for teacher using Charlie Hebdo cartoons— On March 25, Gary Kibble, The headteacher of Batley Grammar School in Yorkshire (England), had apologized to parents who protested after a teacher used cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad as teaching material. Kibble apologised to parents for the inappropriate use of the cartoons, which was taken from the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo, during a religious studies lesson earlier in the week, which sparked a protest outside the school on Thursday morning March 25. "Upon investigation, it was clear that the resource used in the lesson was completely inappropriate and had the capacity to cause great offence to members of our school community for which we would like to offer a sincere and full apology," Kibble said in an email sent to parents that promised further investigation. Images on social media showed about 30 to 40 protesters outside the school, with police at the entrances to the school grounds and the road outside. The Huddersfield Examiner reported from the school that the protests were peaceful. Kibble said the school had removed the images and course content, and would undertake a review of its religious studies course to ensure no other inappropriate resources were used.

See: The Guardian newspaper entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/mar/25/batley-head-apologises-for-teacher-using-charlie-hebdo-cartoons>. Also, See: The metro newspaper entry, in: <https://metro.co.uk/2021/03/28/50000-support-teacher-who-showed-prophet-muhammad-cartoon-14317899/>, retrieved on 28.03.2021

Incident Related to Hijab

Canada: Hijab-Wearing Mother and Daughter Attacked by Man in Mall Parking Lot — A man had been charged with two counts of assault and one count of mischief after a “hate-motivated” attack on a Muslim mother and daughter in a mall parking lot in Canada, police said. The assault took place in the parking lot of the Southgate center in Edmonton on December 8. Richard Bradley Stevens, approached two Somali women who were sitting in their vehicle and began yelling racial abuse at them, Edmonton Police said in a news release. Police said the mother and her adult daughter were both wearing hijabs eyewitnesses told police the man punched the passenger-side. “Fearing for her safety, the passenger then ran from the vehicle,” police said in the statement. “The male ran after the complainant, pushed her to the ground and began assaulting her”. Sgt. Gary Willits, of the Edmonton Police Service’s Hate Crime and Violent Extremism Unit, said: “The attack on these women is horrific and our hearts go out to them ... These individuals were targeted due to their race, therefore making this a hate-motivated crime.”

See: Newsweek’s entry, in: <https://www.newsweek.com/hijab-wearing-mother-daughter-attacked-man-mall-parking-lot-1553797>, retrieved on 13.12.2020

Canada: Third Black Muslim woman attacked in South Edmonton within a week, outside Southgate LRT— On December 15, A Muslim woman was attacked at the Southgate LRT station. Edmonton Police Service said, in an email sent to the community group, the attack was motivated by racism and hatred. The incident, which took place during the daytime, was the third in a week against a Black Muslim woman. “The victim, a 23-year-old Black female, is safe and has been offered assistance through the EPS Crime and Trauma-Informed Support Services,” according to Edmonton Police. The attack came after a similar incident in the same area. On December 8, Richard Stevens was arrested and charged with two counts of assault and one count of mischief after he had assaulted, a mother and daughter, who were wearing Hijab at the Southgate center.

See: Edmonton Journal News’ entry, in: <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/third-black-muslim-woman-attacked-in-south-edmonton-within-a-week-outside-southgate-lrt>, retrieved on 17.12.2020

UK: Muslim woman subjected to sustained assault, hijab pulled by a woman when out driving — On February 16, A Muslim women, who wished to remain anonymous, told Tell Mama UK, that she was assaulted by a white woman who had shouted racist abuse at them, as another vehicle had attempted to run them off the road. She described how she had been on a driving lesson with her father in north-west London, noting that the targeting from the first vehicle started for several minutes (including flashing lights and the tossing of objects towards their car) in a 20-mph zone. She stayed, however, in the same lane until another vehicle, containing the perpetrator and her male partner, had overtaken them and forced them to stop after almost running them off the road. After observing the female perpetrator exiting the passenger-side door and shouting obscenities and abuse, the Muslim woman did not anticipate the violence that would follow as the white woman had forced open the driver’s door, punching her repeatedly, spitting at her, and grabbing her hijab. To further protect their identity, Tell Mama UK had not disclosed the precise location of the attack.

See: Tell Mama UK News’ entry, in: <https://tellmamauk.org/muslim-woman-subjected-to-sustained-assault-hijab-pulled-by-a-woman-when-out-driving/>, retrieved on 24.02.2021

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

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 being investigated.

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

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 being 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: HIIRAAN News’ entry, in: https://www.hiiraan.com/comments/comments7.aspx?fname=man_with_knife_attacks_2_women_wearing_hijabs_outside_edmonton_rcmp_say&month=Jun&year=2021&id=183025, retrieved on 11.07.2021

US: Muslim woman punched on airplane on 9/11 after landing in Michigan— A civil rights group was advocating for hate crime charges against a white woman who allegedly attacked a Black Muslim woman on an airplane on September 11. Aicha Toure, a “visibly Muslim woman who wears an Islamic head scarf,” traveled from Atlanta to Detroit Metro Airport on Saturday

- the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attack - via Spirit Airlines, according to a news release from the Council on American-Islamic Relations. After landing in Detroit, Toure was allegedly attacked by a white woman who had been “acting belligerently” throughout the flight. The suspect allegedly initiated altercations with minority crew members during the flight, the release states. Then, after landing in Detroit, she allegedly began harassing and intimidating an elderly woman who appeared to be of Asian descent. At that point, Toure asked the suspect to stop. The suspect allegedly called Toure a “Muslim terrorist,” made other Islamophobic comments and used profanity, according to the release. When the suspect realized she was being recorded, she allegedly punched Toure.

See Michigan Live News’ entry, in: <https://www.mlive.com/news/2021/09/muslim-woman-punched-on-airplane-on-911-after-landing-in-michigan.html>, retrieved on 15.09.2021

US: Teacher accused of forcibly removing Muslim 2nd grader’s hijab— A school district in Essex County, New Jersey, was investigating an allegation of discrimination by a teacher against a 7-year-old Muslim student. Cassandra Wyatt’s family is Muslim. Her 7-year-old daughter Sumayyah and her sister had been wearing the hijab, since they were very young. “I try to teach them modesty and teach them about what God wants us to do and what is our purpose here,” Wyatt said. Wyatt said Sumayyah’s 2nd grade teacher at Seth Boyden Elementary School in Maplewood, New Jersey, forcefully removed the hijab from her head on October 6. “She said, ‘Yes, Mommy, she pulled my hijab off... She walked up to me saying you can’t wear that in here, and then, she pulled it off.’ And when she went to pull it off, Sumayyah was trying to hold it... and then, she finally got it off, looked at her hair and said, ‘Well, your hair is nice.’ Sumayyah said, ‘Oh, thank you’ and put her hijab back on. And the whole entire class seen it,” Wyatt said. The New Jersey chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations, had called for the teacher’s removal.

See: Yahoo News’ entry, in: <https://news.yahoo.com/jersey-teacher-accused-forcefully-removing-160811016.html/>, retrieved on 11.10.2021



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Austria: Muslim woman attacked for wearing hijab in Vienna— A Muslim woman living in the Austrian capital Vienna was spat on by a woman in an Islamophobic attack. Digital creator Baraa Bolat said the woman verbally harassed her after she got off a city bus. The woman pulled off her hijab, which caused the pin attached to the veil underneath her chin to wound her. Ms Bolat said the worst part was that no one helped her. The assailant only stopped when Ms Bolat started filming her. She shared the incident on social media to raise awareness of such attacks.

See: The Independent Newspaper entry, in: <https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/muslim-woman-attacked-hijab-vienna-vafef1bf8/>, Also: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/muslim-woman-attacked-in-austria-for-wearing-hijab/2375507>, retrieved on 21.10.2021

Germany: German elections: Hijab-wearing woman turned away from voting booth— On September 26, a Polling station assistants in the western German town of Bergheim initially refused to allow a Muslim woman wearing a hijab and a protective mask to cast her ballot during Germany's elections. The poll workers reportedly cited a ban on face coverings for not allowing her to vote, according to the local WDR public broadcaster. The law said those who wish to vote must be identifiable. She was later allowed to vote after researched the law and complained to city officials. The town's elections board said she was allowed to wear her headscarf and vote, while they added that restrictions on face coverings apply to more conservative forms of dress such as the burqa or niqab.

See: DW News' entry, in: <https://www.dw.com/en/german-elections-hijab-wearing-woman-turned-away-from-voting-booth/a-59343162>, retrieved on 03.10.2021

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With the adoption of the Ten-Year Program of Action in 2005 at the historic 3rd Extraordinary Islamic Summit in Makkah, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation has pursued a vision of moderation for the Muslim World, and at the same time prescribed on the establishment of the OIC Islamophobia Observatory, in order to monitor all forms of Islamophobia, to report to all Member States, and to cooperate with Governments, and NGOs.

The Islamophobia Observatory monitors manifestations of Islamophobia on daily basis in fulfilment of such mandate, reading the trend, and drawing maps on how the situation related to Islamophobia develops from time to time, being presented in this Report to all Member States, along with policy recommendation to address the issue.



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