

Headlines:

- **Half of Britons Think Islam is a Threat to the West**
- **US says it has 11,000 Troops in Afghanistan, more than Formerly Disclosed**
- **Former Pakistan Leader Musharraf Declared Fugitive in Bhutto Murder Case**

Details

Half of Britons Think Islam is a Threat to the West

More than half of Britons believe Islam “poses a threat to the West,” despite the UK becoming more tolerant and open overall, a new study has claimed. Following recent Islamist-inspired terrorist incidents in Westminster, Manchester and London’s Borough Market, 42 percent of people say they now have less trust for Muslims in Britain, while 52 percent believe Islam poses a threat, the Populus poll published by campaign group Hope not Hate shows. The figures also reveal that a quarter of English people think Islam is a “dangerous religion that incites violence.” Older people are more likely to express Islamophobic views, the poll finds, “painting a worrying set of views” which Hope not Hate said would require “significant effort” to address. The increase in negative attitudes towards Muslims comes despite an overall improvement in attitudes among Britons towards different groups in society. The report found that two-fifths of the population have a liberal outlook, compared to 22 percent six years ago. It found responses to Brexit had left Britain more divided, with attitudes towards race and faith becoming increasingly polarized since the last poll in 2011. But the survey saw more positive views towards immigration since Brexit, with more than half of respondents saying they believe immigration is good for the country - up by 15 percent in five years. Islamophobia monitoring group Tell MAMA said in a statement the poll is “both heartening but also worrying.” It said a “slippery slope” could be ahead if changes are not made. “[The poll] shows a divide between the wider public and British Muslim communities, and with the divides becoming stark. “If we are to ensure that community tensions, extremism and marginalization are to be tackled in our country, we have to find ways which address the concerns of the wider public, whilst also ensuring that British Muslims feel like they have a future and a space in the United Kingdom. “If we don’t collectively make a change, there is a slippery slope ahead which does not bode well,” it added. [Source: Russia Today].

The views expressed amongst the British are no different to the views of the average European towards Islam. Ever since the crusades, European rulers have deliberately fed an Islamophobic narrative to their population, which they choose to modulate the intensity whenever it suits their domestic and foreign policy interests.

US says it has 11,000 Troops in Afghanistan, more than Formerly Disclosed

The United States has about 11,000 troops in Afghanistan, the Pentagon said on Wednesday, acknowledging for the first time publicly that the total forces there are higher than formally disclosed in recent years. Previously, Defense Department officials had said 8,400 troops were in Afghanistan as part of NATO’s Resolute Support mission. An additional 2,000 American troops, which military officials have not publicly acknowledged, are in Afghanistan to help local forces conduct counterterrorism missions. The new count includes covert as well as temporary units, defense officials said. The disclosure came after Defense Secretary Jim Mattis expressed frustration with how troops in war zones were counted. To get around Obama-era restrictions on the number of troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, commanders sometimes resorted to ad hoc arrangements. “The secretary has determined we must simplify our accounting methodology and improve the public’s understanding of America’s military commitment in Afghanistan,” said Dana W. White, the Pentagon’s chief spokeswoman. Before Mr. Mattis sends 4,000 more troops to Afghanistan, as he is expected to do under President Trump’s new strategy

for the war there, he has said he wants to know how many troops are on the ground. "The first thing I have to do is level the bubble and account for everybody who's on the ground there now," Mr. Mattis told reporters last week. "The idea being that we're not going to have different buckets that we're accounting for them in, to tell you what the total number is." In announcing the new numbers, Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, the director of the staff of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, called the move "not an attempt to bring more forces in." Rather, he said, "it is an attempt to actually clarify a very confusing set of reporting rules that has the unintended consequence of forcing commanders to make readiness trade-offs." In one example, helicopters and pilots from an aviation brigade deployed to Afghanistan while its mechanics stayed behind, Gen. John W. Nicholson Jr., the top American commander in Afghanistan, told lawmakers this year. [Source: New York Times].

Troop numbers is not the only thing the US has lied about. The US has also not fully disclosed the number of contractors working for Pentagon in Afghanistan, the missing billions of dollars, the true cost of the war and the number of dead US soldiers. Concealing such information underscores how worried the US leadership is about their public finding out and demanding a curtailment of foreign misadventures.

Former Pakistan Leader Musharraf Declared Fugitive in Bhutto Murder Case

A court in Pakistan on Thursday named Pervez Musharraf, the country's former President and army chief, a fugitive from justice in the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who was killed while campaigning in 2007. But the court's decision to drop charges against five members of the Pakistani Taliban linked to the killing has sparked anger from some supporters of Bhutto. The court ordered Musharraf's property to be seized in what his attorney, Faisal Chaudhary, described as a "disappointing and a flawed judgment." Musharraf was indicted in 2013 on charges of murder, criminal conspiracy to murder and facilitation of murder, but his health problems delayed the case. He was allowed to leave the country to seek treatment in 2016. Musharraf has lived in self-imposed exile in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, since then. Sen. Farogh Naseem, a legal expert and former counsel to Musharraf, dismissed the court's action, telling CNN it was "not a verdict against Gen. Musharraf since his case has not proceeded against him or in his favor as he is not in the country." On Thursday, the court sentenced two senior police officers, Saud Aziz and Khurram Shahzad, to 17 years in prison. They were among seven men indicted for conspiracy to commit murder in 2011. The two officials were accused of security breaches and covering up evidence by hosing down the crime scene. At the specially adjourned Anti-Terrorism Court in Rawalpindi, judges also dismissed charges against five members of the Pakistani Taliban. The group, which the United States has designated as a foreign terrorist organization, had previously been linked to Bhutto's death. The court cited a lack of evidence linking the men to the crime. Their release sparked anger among supporters of Bhutto. Her son Bilawal tweeted that Thursday's decision was "disappointing and unacceptable" and described the men as "terrorists." Sen. Sherry Rehman, a member of Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, told CNN that while the police officers had been convicted and "there is a tightening of the circle around Gen. Musharraf, this is not enough." She described the court's decision to drop charges against the Taliban members as "a shock to our party." "Benazir was more than just a party; she meant so much to the Pakistani people," said Rehman, who was a close friend of the late prime minister's. [Source CNN]

Pakistani justice has a rich tradition of letting the rulers off the hook. Yesterday it was Nawaz Sharif and today it is Musharraf. However, the real travesty of Justice lies in the fact that Musharraf openly killed thousands of Pakistani citizens during his tenure for instance the Lal Masjid incident, and in Baluchistan. The height of Musharraf's treachery was signing up to so called America's war on terror in which millions of Pakistanis fell victims to Musharraf's policy of supporting America. Musharraf needs no trial, he is guilty and the time is not far off when the Muslim Ummah will have its revenge.