

Headlines:

- **Anger over Pork Sausages at Germany Islam Event**
- **Reports of Theresa May's Demise May No Longer be Exaggerated**
- **Afghan Peace Talks may hinge on Tentative US-Pakistan Thaw**

Details:

Anger over Pork Sausages at Germany Islam Event

Germany's Interior Ministry has said it regrets serving pork sausage at a conference on Islam in Berlin earlier this week. The ministry said the food selection had been designed for the "diverse religious attendance" at the German Islam Conference in Berlin. But it apologised "if individuals felt offended in their religious feelings". The event was led by Interior Minister Horst Seehofer, who in March said Islam "does not belong in Germany". Most of the attendees at the Islam conference were Muslims, local media reported. Under Islamic law, Muslims are forbidden to eat pork. The type of sausage on offer was blutwurst - or "blood sausage" - which is made of ingredients including pig's blood, pork and bacon. German journalist Tuncay Özdamar wrote on Twitter: "What signal does Seehofer's interior ministry want to send? A little respect for Muslims, who don't eat pork, is needed." At the start of the conference, Mr Seehofer reportedly said that he wanted to see a "German Islam". But Özdamar added that Mr Seehofer's "elephant in a china shop" behaviour "would never gain the support of a majority of Muslims in Germany". In its response the Interior Ministry added that it had served 13 dishes, including halal, vegetarian, meat and fish dishes and said that all food in the buffet had been clearly marked. [Source: [BBC](#)]

This was no mistake. It is clear that Germany wants to reform Islam, so that Muslims are forced to adopt Western values. In this respect, there is very little difference between Germany of today and policies of the Spanish inquisition in the 15th century.

Reports of Theresa May's Demise may No Longer be Exaggerated

Next week, Britain's House of Commons will vote on whether Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit deal should go ahead. Given that May's Conservative party has no overall majority and too many of her own members of parliament are against it, she was already braced for defeat in that vote. But after extraordinary scenes in the Commons on Tuesday evening, that likely defeat could also mean the end of her premiership. In little more than an hour on Tuesday, the government suffered three defeats on its Brexit plans. The first two were embarrassing enough: MPs voted that the government was in contempt of parliament, the first time that's happened in British history. By refusing to publish in full the legal advice on the Brexit deal agreed with the European Union last month, ministers were found to have breached the

sovereignty of parliament -- and parliament has fought back and reasserted its control. The third defeat, while more technical, was still hugely significant because it means that next Tuesday, MPs from all parties can decide not only to reject May's deal but instruct the government on what to do next. Until now, the Prime Minister has warned MPs that voting down her Brexit plans will mean a no-deal departure from the EU by default. That scenario is relished by some hardline Brexiteers who want out of the EU at any cost. But it has spooked financial markets, businesses and the Bank of England, who have warned that it will come at a severe economic price to Britain. But Tuesday's scenes made one thing clear: MPs are likely to use their new-found power to block a no-deal outcome. The hardest of all Brexits seems off the table. After that, everything seems up for grabs. Proposals are already being put forward for a softer Brexit. For example, Britain could adopt a model similar to Norway, which is not a member of the EU but pays for access to its single market. The campaign for a second national referendum, or People's Vote, is gathering momentum -- one that could lead to no Brexit at all. But the likely defeat next Tuesday could also see the opposition Labour party call for a vote of no confidence in the government. If May lost that vote, a general election could follow. On Wednesday, when the government was forced to publish that legal advice in full, it became clear that the DUP was right to be wary. Under the "backstop" or insurance arrangement, Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK would be subject to separate customs arrangements, and goods passing between Britain and Northern Ireland would have to undergo customs checks. The DUP, a staunchly unionist party, see this as effectively breaking up the union between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Since taking over as Prime Minister in July 2016 after the turmoil of the Brexit vote, May has portrayed herself as a dutiful, businesslike leader acting in the national interest. Despite several ministerial resignations and letters of no confidence from her MPs, the PM has been resilient in the face of such turbulence. Her aides have long insisted May is not the type to quit when the going gets tough. Those around her are also fearful that if she were to resign, her successor would be someone who wants a harder Brexit -- such as Boris Johnson, the former Foreign Secretary, or backbench Euroskeptic Conservative MP Jacob Rees-Mogg. She has much more to protect than her own reputation. After her government has been held in contempt, and with such a crushing defeat on the most important policy of her premiership, it is hard to see how May would be able to remain in Downing Street. [Source: CNN].

The Conservative Party has a long history of ousting its leaders. Churchill was removed soon after the triumph of WW2. For the Conservative Party the party comes first, and May will soon find out where she stands.

Afghan Peace Talks May Hinge on Tentative US-Pakistan Thaw

A fresh effort by the Trump administration this week to seek Pakistan's help in arranging Afghan peace talks has produced no signs of progress but suggests that the chill between the longtime security allies may be starting to thaw. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan met here Wednesday with the U.S. special representative for the Afghanistan peace process, Zalmay Khalilzad; Khan's office later said the prime minister had assured his visitor that Pakistan had "always wanted a peaceful end to

the Afghan conflict” and that “reconciliation is the only solution.” There was no public statement from U.S. officials on the meeting, and Khan’s words were carefully vague, making no mention of the U.S. request that Pakistan use its influence with the Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan to help bring them to the negotiating table. But there were numerous reports that a delegation of four Taliban officials from the group’s political office in Qatar arrived here several days ago to hold meetings. Several Pakistani news outlets, citing unnamed Taliban officials, reported that the private visit was likely an effort to coordinate a response among insurgent leaders for future meetings with Khalilzad, who is expected to visit Qatar this month. The Taliban has been publicly contemptuous of the Afghan government’s peace outreach and has repeatedly said it will negotiate only with U.S. officials. But it has continued to insist that if all foreign troops and bases are not removed from Afghanistan, it will continue fighting. Khalilzad’s arrival in Pakistan on Tuesday came just after Khan said he had received a letter from President Trump, written in sincere and cordial language, asking for the prime minister’s help in arranging peace talks. Its tone contrasted sharply with past actions and exchanges. Trump last year suspended \$300 million in military aid to Pakistan, accusing it of failing to take sufficient action against Taliban militants operating from its side of the border with Afghanistan. Last week, Trump publicly accused Pakistan of “not doing a damn thing” to help the United States despite huge amounts of American aid. Khan responded with an indignant tweet saying that the “record needs to be put straight on Mr. Trump’s tirade against Pakistan,” which he said had suffered more than 75,000 casualties in the fight against terrorism. The United States, he said, should “stop making Pakistan a scapegoat” for its failure to win the war in Afghanistan. On Tuesday, Pakistan’s top military spokesman declared that after years of Pakistani forces targeting violent extremist groups, “not a single militant organization” is operating or being protected inside Pakistan today. The spokesman, Maj. Gen. Asif Ghafoor, told a group of foreign journalists that Pakistan strongly supports ending the Afghan conflict, in large part because it has had a destabilizing effect on Pakistan. He noted that Pakistan has been building a high fence along the 1,800-mile border with Afghanistan to disrupt the movement of militants. “We want peace to come. . . . An unstable Afghanistan is not good for anyone,” Ghafoor said, adding that Pakistan’s greatest worry is that U.S. forces will leave Afghanistan, potentially creating a vacuum and causing “chaos” in the impoverished and ethnically divided nation. [Source: Washington Post].

Imran Khan has publicly criticized America for its wanton disregard of Pakistan’s interests and yet IK’s government is entertaining a fresh bout of peace talks. IK’s duplicity is sure to backfire, just like his other policies.