



Headlines:

- **Rise of Saudi Prince Shatters Decades of Royal Tradition**
- **No More Prayer Times! China Bans Schools and Parents in Muslim Province from Spreading Religion to Young People**
- **Pakistan Bans All Indian Content on TV and Radio over Kashmir Crisis**

Details:

Rise of Saudi Prince Shatters Decades of Royal Tradition

He has slashed the state budget, frozen government contracts and reduced the pay of civil employees, all part of drastic austerity measures as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is buffeted by low oil prices. The rise of Prince bin Salman has shattered decades of tradition in the royal family, where respect for seniority and power-sharing among branches are time-honored traditions. Never before in Saudi history has so much power been wielded by the deputy crown prince, who is second in line to the throne. That centralization of authority has angered many of his relatives. He has a hand in nearly all elements of Saudi policy — from a war in Yemen that has cost the kingdom billions of dollars and led to international criticism over civilian deaths, to a push domestically to restrain Saudi Arabia's free-spending habits and to break its "addiction" to oil. He has begun to loosen social restrictions that grate on young people. His seemingly boundless ambitions have led many Saudis and foreign officials to suspect that his ultimate goal is not just to transform the kingdom, but also to shove aside the current crown prince, his 57-year-old cousin, Mohammed bin Nayef, to become the next king. Such a move could further upset his relatives and — if successful — give the country what it has never seen: a young king who could rule the kingdom for many decades. But last year, Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's deputy crown prince, saw a yacht he couldn't resist. While vacationing in the south of France, Prince bin Salman spotted a 440-foot yacht floating off the coast. He dispatched an aide to buy the ship, the Serene, which was owned by Yuri Shefler, a Russian vodka tycoon. The deal was done within hours, at a price of approximately 500 million euros (roughly \$550 million today), according to an associate of Mr. Shefler and a Saudi close to the royal family. The Russian moved off the yacht the same day. [Source: New York Times]

Prince Salman's behavior only confirms the decades old tradition of the royal family in usurping the oil wealth and using it to enrich themselves. However, with declining oil prices the writing is on the wall the Saudi government faces an existential crisis, as young Saudis struggle to fend themselves.

Pakistan Bans All Indian Content on TV and Radio over Kashmir Crisis

Pakistan is banning Bollywood films and all other Indian content from its television and radio as tensions between the two countries worsen over Kashmir.

It follows an announcement by award-winning Indian film director Karan Johar that he will no longer use Pakistani actors in his films. A major Indian cinema group had earlier said it would not screen films with Pakistani casts. The media has become the latest battleground for tit-for-tat retaliations between the two sides. Pakistani cinemas have already stopped

showing Bollywood films, but this latest move goes much further. The complete ban for television and radio channels will start at 3pm on Friday, said Muhammad Tahir, spokesman for the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA). It means an end to the current law which allows the screening of a maximum of 86 minutes every day of Indian programmes on channels in Pakistan. Cable operators and entertainment channels in Pakistan have often ignored the law, showing Indian films and soap operas which are hugely popular in both countries. The ongoing dispute over the Kashmir region claimed by India and Pakistan has been the catalyst for the media row. Two wars have been fought over it, and this year has seen an escalation in violence. [Source: Sky News]

Kashmir needs liberation not the banning of Indian soaps and Bollywood movies. Has the Pakistani government lost its mind? Is the blood of Muslims in Kashmir equivalent to the song and dance of Indian actors?

No More Prayer Times! China Bans Schools and Parents in Muslim Province from Spreading Religion to Young People

China has banned parents and guardians in its heavily Muslim region of Xinjiang from encouraging their children into religious activities. The government unveiled new education rules on October 12 meaning that those who encourage or force their children into religious activities will be reported to the police. Previous rules have already banned beards for men and head coverings for women in a province that is home to over ten million Muslims. China claims that the legal, cultural and religious rights of Muslims in Xinjiang are fully protected. However many Muslim Uigur people resent increasing restrictions on their culture and religion and complain they are denied economic opportunities amid an influx of Han Chinese into the province. The new education rules come into effect on November 1 and forbid parents and guardians from forcing minors to attend religious activities, reports Xinjiang Daily. The rules also ban religious activities in schools and state that if parents cannot guide their children away from harmful extremist ways then they can apply to have their children sent to specialist schools to receive 'rectification'. The government has called for people to report the banned activities to the police. In recent years, hundreds of people have died in unrest blamed by the Chinese government on Islamist militants. Previous rules in the province ban men from growing beards and women from wearing a veil. In April 2014, the Global Times reported that officials in Xinjiang offered rewards of up to 50,000 yuan (£6,066) for those who tipped police off with information on separatist activities which included growing facial hair. While in 2015, Radio Free Asia reported that Uygur imams in Kashgar were forced to tell children that prayer was harmful for the soul and to declare that 'our income comes from the Chinese Communist Party, not from Allah.' [Source: Daily Mail]

Intellectually bereft of ideas, the Chinese government has to resort to bullying tactics to curb the rise of Islam. Each year the Chinese government introduces new measures to stop Islam and in predictable fashion, these initiatives fail. Muslims in China are resilient to such terror tactics, and their perseverance will prevail in the end.