

Headlines:

- **Europe's Football Pride and Islamophobia**
- **Nawaz Sharif, Ex-Pakistani Leader, Is Sentenced to Prison for Corruption**
- **Red states will Lose the Most in Trade War with China: Citigroup**

Details:

Europe's Football Pride and Islamophobia

As Austria takes over the European Union chair for the next six months, get ready for even more signs of European pride and prejudice. Europe's leaders — with a few exceptional exceptions — seem to be in the midst of an extraordinary anti-migrant frenzy as they seek to clamp down on the entry of some of the world's most hapless people. Austrian Prime Minister Sebastian Kurz is the proud leader of the pack. The anti-foreign hysteria stands in contrast to the celebration of diversity in European football. Most European football teams competing in the ongoing World Cup are multicultural, multi-coloured and multi-racial. Many of Europe's leaders make no secret of their wish to keep the continent white and Christian. But Europe's most exciting footballers are a fascinating mix of colours, religions and ethnicities. Many come from deprived immigrant communities. Many are Muslim. Others are black or of Arab descent. National football managers like Spain's Roberto Martinez who coaches the Belgian Red Devils are hired on the basis of their competence, not their nationality. EU leaders, on the other hand, are on an anti-Muslim roll. "The main task of the new government will be to preserve Hungary's security and Christian culture," Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said in May this year after winning the vote to form a new government. Northern League leader Matteo Salvini, who is now Italy's interior minister has warned that Islam is "incompatible" with Italian values, a theme repeated by his German counterpart, Horst Seehofer who believes "Islam does not belong" in Germany.

Austrian Prime Minister Sebastian Kurz sees his country joining Germany and Italy in an "axis of the willing against immigration". His "Vissegrad 4" allies from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland are also engaged in an embarrassing game of "guess who can be tougher on immigration". Like US President Donald Trump, Europe's populists have discovered that being tough on foreigners and especially anti-Islamic rants, are great vote winners. And in Europe there's always another election around the corner. Still, the number of refugees coming to Europe has gone down. And for all their swagger, Europe's populists overall have so far only succeeded in securing 15 per cent of the overall vote. But populists, or illiberals as they prefer to be called, are in power in several Central and Eastern European states, prompting Hungary's Orban to envision setting up an alliance of "illiberal democracies". [Source: The Dawn]

The truth of the matter is that the vitriol towards Islam runs deep in the veins of Europe's elite. It does not matter how many Muslim football stars contribute to the success of the national team, Islam and Muslims will always be considered foreigners.

Nawaz Sharif, Ex-Pakistani Leader, Is Sentenced to Prison for Corruption

Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was convicted and sentenced to prison in absentia by a Pakistani anticorruption court on Friday, in a verdict that is likely to further disrupt an already chaotic campaign for national elections this month. The sentence, 10 years in prison and a fine of 8 million pounds, or \$10.6 million, came almost a year after Pakistan's Supreme Court removed Mr. Sharif from office and less than five months after the court barred him from holding office for life. The case stemmed from the so-called Panama Papers leak that disclosed expensive and undeclared property owned by the Sharif family in London. The verdict marked a further fall for Mr. Sharif, who has been Pakistan's prime minister three times but never completed a term. He has been a towering figure in modern Pakistani politics who now stands as an exemplar of two of

the country's most central issues: as a staunch defender of civilian governance amid military manipulation, and as a symbol of a venal Pakistani elite that has alienated much of the public. From the start of Mr. Sharif's legal troubles in 2016, his supporters have accused the country's powerful military establishment of pressing the case against Mr. Sharif, whose first term ended in resignation under military pressure and whose second was cut short by an army coup. Mr. Sharif's daughter Maryam Nawaz Sharif and her husband, Muhammad Safdar, were also convicted, with Ms. Sharif sentenced to seven years in prison and a fine of 2 million pounds and Mr. Safdar sentenced to one year in prison. The court also ordered the seizure of the Sharif family's four apartments at Avenfield House, a luxury building next to Hyde Park in London. The conviction also bars Maryam Sharif from contesting the July 25 elections, in a blow to Mr. Sharif's ambitions for his daughter to play a leading role in national and party politics. Ms. Sharif has emerged in recent months as a powerful voice for civilian rule and against the military's interference in politics. Mr. Safdar, the son-in-law, is in Pakistan but was not in court when the verdict was announced. He is campaigning in his hometown of Mansehra in the country's northwestern Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province and was expected to hold a news conference later on Friday. Mr. Sharif and his daughter have said that they are not afraid to go to jail, but it remains to be seen whether they will return to Pakistan before the elections. Political opponents have already said that the Sharif family is in an unannounced exile. [Source: New York Times]

Too little too late, justice has not been done. Nawaz Sharif and his family have been handed mediocre fines and sentences at the behest of the army. The way is now open for the military to prevent PML-N from winning votes in crucial provinces. For Pakistan to survive both the civil and military leaderships need to be expunged from the Pakistani landscape.

Red states will Lose the Most in Trade War with China: Citigroup

States won by President Donald Trump in the 2016 election stand to lose the most as a trade war between the U.S. and China kicks off, according to Citigroup research. The U.S. officially implemented tariffs on \$34 billion worth of Chinese imports, including water boilers, airplane tires and X-ray machine components. China responded with its own set of tariffs on U.S. pork and soybeans, among other goods. This tit-for-tat trade war would mostly impact states that voted "overwhelmingly" in favor of Trump in 2016 — relative to the states won by Hillary Clinton — as they possess "jobs and output significantly affected by tariffs," Dana Peterson, Citi's North America economist, said in a note Thursday evening. Peterson pointed out that so-called red states have 3.9 million jobs linked to foreign trade, far more than the 2.5 million in blue states. She added that "80 percent of 'red' states produce goods subject to retaliatory tariffs totaling 10 percent or more of GDP, compared to 10 percent of 'blue' states." The tariffs on U.S. and Chinese goods come after months of posturing by both countries. Back in March, Trump announced tariffs on all steel and aluminum imports into the U.S., to which China — along with other key trade partners — threatened to retaliate. "US external trade actions are backfiring, risking a reduction in global trade," Peterson said. "US tariffs on imported goods are designed to encourage a rebalancing of trade that benefits domestic firms and US exporters. The Trump Administration's goal of opening closed markets and establishing reciprocal trade abroad has alternatively been met with reciprocal retaliatory tariffs and complaints to the WTO." "The dollar value of the US and reciprocal tariffs are nominal, but the tit-for-tat could escalate into a trade war that reduces global, and thereby US trade," she said. Trade tensions have also been rising ahead of the U.S. midterm elections in November, when Democrats appear primed to gain seats in the House and possibly a majority.

The trade war is a symptom of America's decline, as other major powers look to challenge Washington for supremacy in different parts of the world. The Trump administration is trying to rescue American interests from the failing liberal order fashioned in the aftermath of World War 2.