



Iran May Force Non-Muslims to Wear Colored Badges in Public

Posted GMT 5-19-2006 21:9:28

(AFP) -- The Canadian and Australian prime ministers expressed concern at unconfirmed reports that said Iran may force non-Muslims to wear colored badges in public so they can be identified.

The National Post newspaper reported Friday, citing human rights groups, that Iran's parliament passed a law this week that sets a public dress code and requires non-Muslims to wear a special insignia.

Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians would be forced to wear a yellow, red or blue strip of cloth, respectively, on the front of their clothes, according to the newspaper.

"Anything of that kind would be totally repugnant to civilized countries, if it's the case, and something that would just further indicate to me the nature of this regime," Australia's Prime Minister John Howard told reporters during an official visit to Ottawa.

"It would be appalling," he added.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper said he had "only seen reports" about the law but commented he would not be surprised by them.

"Unfortunately, we have seen enough already from the Iranian regime to suggest that it is very capable of this kind of action," he said.

"It think it boggles the mind that any regime on the face of the earth would want to do anything that could remind people of Nazi Germany," he added.

"The fact that such a measure could even be contemplated, I think, is absolutely abhorrent."

Earlier, Harper's parliamentary secretary, Jason Kenney, told the House of Commons that Canadian officials were trying to verify the claims and said Ottawa is "deeply concerned".

"Should these reports turn out to be true, this government will condemn in the strongest terms possible this kind of revisiting of the darkest period of the last century. It is something that the entire civilized world should condemn," Kenney said.

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