

IRF Summit 2025: Addressing Global Religious Persecution

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NEW YORK NEWS
The Voice of People

From New York

Trump Administration Cuts \$4 Billion in Medical Research Funding

Scientists warn of dire consequences for lifesaving research.

Trump's Displacement Plan Threatens Gaza Ceasefire

Calls for Gaza's depopulation condemned.

Fatima Tamanna

The fragile ceasefire in Gaza is facing collapse after US President Donald Trump proposed permanently displacing Palestinians from the territory, a move experts say amounts to ethnic cleansing. While Trump has taken credit for the truce, he has repeatedly stated that the US should "take over" Gaza, contradicting the agreement's objectives. His administration has since attempted to downplay the remarks, suggesting only temporary relocation. The ceasefire, brokered before Trump's inauguration, includes Israeli troop withdrawal and Gaza's reconstruction. However, Trump's envoy has cast doubt on the rebuilding phase. Analysts warn that abandoning this stage could reignite violence. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's insistence on continuing military objectives further threatens the agreement. Experts say if phase two of the ceasefire is not upheld, the risk of renewed war and forced displacement grows.

NYN Desk

The Trump administration has implemented significant cuts to medical research funding, slashing \$4 billion in "indirect" support for universities, hospitals, and scientific institutions. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced the reduction, limiting institutions to just 15% of awarded grants for associated costs such as buildings, equipment, and support staff—down from previous allowances. The NIH defended the decision, stating, "The United States should have the best medical research in the world. It is accordingly vital to ensure that as many funds as possible go towards direct scientific research costs rather than administrative overhead." The agency also noted that in 2023, \$9 billion of its \$35 billion grant budget went to overhead costs, arguing that the new rate aligns with private foundation requirements. Supporters of the cut, including the "Department of



Image Source: Newsweek

Government Efficiency" led by Elon Musk, praised the move as a necessary reduction in government spending. However, scientists and medical professionals have raised serious concerns about the policy's consequences. Matt Owens, president of the Council on Government Relations, warned that the funding cut would cripple

HIGHLIGHT

- NIH reduces indirect research funding.
•Researchers fear setbacks in medical innovation.
Universities, hospitals lose essential support.

essential medical research. "America's competitors will relish this self-inflicted wound," he said, urging NIH leaders to reverse the decision before irreversible damage occurs. Democrats also condemned the move, with Senator Patty Murray calling the decision "catastrophic" for patients and families relying on medical

breakthroughs. "Sick kids may not get the treatment they need. Clinical trials may be shut down abruptly with dangerous consequences," she cautioned. As research institutions grapple with this new financial reality, the long-term impact on innovation, clinical trials, and patient care remains a major concern for the medical community.

Musk's DOGE Team Takes Over Education Dept.

Controversy Erupts Over Trump's Education Policy Shift.

The SHORT

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New York to Host Ekushey Book Fair 2025 page-05

Religious Leaders Unite Against Extremism at UN page-03

Mike Miller

Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) has made an unprecedented entry into the U.S. Department of Education, raising alarm among staff, lawmakers, and watchdog groups. Reports confirm that DOGE team members have administrator-level email access, enabling them to access sensitive student loan data. President Trump defended the move, stating that Musk would be "looking at



education pretty quickly." However, concerns have mounted over potential data misuse, staff intimidation, and an ideological overhaul of federal education policies.

Image Source: USA Today House Democrats were blocked from entering the department's headquarters, fueling outrage over transparency. Meanwhile, watchdog group Public Citizen has

filed a lawsuit seeking to prevent DOGE staff from accessing financial and personal data of over 42 million Americans. Amid the takeover, the department has ordered a review of all grants tied to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, raising fears that funding for programs aiding special needs students and English learners could be cut. Additionally, Title IX enforcement has been rolled back to Trump-era policies, leading to new investigations

into transgender participation in sports. The department also dropped 11 investigations into school book bans, dismissing them as a "hoax." As career staff brace for uncertainty, Musk's rapid influence over federal education policy is facing growing legal and political challenges.

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today



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Unity at UN

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Musk's DOGE

Musk's DOGE Team Takes Over Education Dept.

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Darul Uloom

Darul Uloom Students Engage in Enlightening Visit to Washington

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Young Leaders Shine at Elhaam Event

Minhaz Khan

Elhaam Academy recently hosted a successful event introducing its EA Junior Ambassador Program, an initiative aimed at fostering leadership, creativity, and teamwork among young children. The event, held on January 31st at 87-41 165th St, Jamaica, NY, brought together boys and girls aged 5 to 12 for an engaging and educational experience. Designed to provide a fun yet meaningful environment, the program offers children opportunities to develop essential life skills while participating in exciting activities.

The event was packed with energy as children took part in interactive games, creative arts and crafts, epic dodgeball, and laser tag. Organizers ensured that the day was both entertaining and enriching, allowing young participants to learn through play. Alongside the activities, delicious food was served, creating a welcoming and lively atmosphere. The combination of physical,

HIGHLIGHT

- NY State-approved leadership program for kids.
 - Overjoyed children engaged in games and arts.
 - Parents praised the initiative's positive impact.
- Future sessions open for new enrollments.

creative, and social elements made the event a well-rounded experience for all attendees. As a NY State-approved initiative, the EA Junior Ambassador Program aligns with educational standards while emphasizing holistic development. The program is designed to help children build confidence, improve problem-solving skills, and learn the value of teamwork. Through structured yet enjoyable activities, participants gained exposure to leadership-building experiences that will benefit them in school and beyond. The importance of such

programs cannot be overstated. In an era where children are increasingly engaged with digital screens, initiatives like this provide much-needed opportunities for social interaction, physical activity, and creative expression. By encouraging teamwork and strategic thinking, the EA Junior Ambassador Program equips young minds with skills that are crucial for their future growth. Parents and educators recognize the significance of fostering leadership qualities from an early age, and this program serves as a platform to do just that.

Elhaam Academy continues to play a vital role in youth education and community engagement. With the successful launch of this program, the institution reaffirms its commitment to nurturing the next generation. Families interested in enrolling their children in future sessions can visit elhaamacademy.org or contact 866-935-4226 for more information.

Ramadan Countdown at Fultoli Center



Mahin Bhuiyan

Elhaam Academy and Save the People jointly organized "Ramadan Countdown," an awareness program at Fultoli Islamic Center to prepare the community for the holy month. The event aimed to

educate attendees about the spiritual, social, and personal significance of Ramadan, emphasizing fasting, charity, and self-discipline. Scholars and community leaders addressed the gathering, encouraging reflection, devotion,

and personal growth. Participants received guidance on maximizing the blessings of Ramadan through prayer, good deeds, and community service. The program promoted unity, mindfulness, and intergenerational learning, ensuring a meaningful and

spiritually enriching Ramadan experience for all attendees, fostering a sense of shared purpose, faith, and communal harmony. It also provided practical advice on nutrition, time management, and balancing work, worship, and family responsibilities.

Prayer Time IN New York

FAJR	DHUHR	ASR	MAGHREB	ISHA
05:40	12:10	03:00	05:24	06:40
05:39	12:10	03:00	05:25	06:44
05:38	12:10	03:01	05:26	06:45
05:37	12:10	03:02	05:27	06:46
05:36	12:10	03:03	05:28	06:47
05:35	12:10	03:04	05:29	06:48
05:34	12:10	03:05	05:30	06:49

Number 81

Inspector Abdullah Makes History as NYPD's First Bangladeshi Commander

Inspector Abdullah Becomes NYPD's First Bangladeshi Commander

Staff Reporter

Inspector Khandakar Abdullah has made history by becoming the first Bangladeshi commanding officer at the 81st precinct of the New York Police Department (NYPD), a significant milestone for both the department and the Bangladeshi community. His appointment reflects the increasing diversity within one of the world's most respected law enforcement



agencies and highlights the achievements of individuals from historically underrepresented communities. Inspector Abdullah's rise to this esteemed position underscores his exceptional leadership, dedication, and commitment to public safety.

Khandakar Abdullah, the first Bangladeshi-American to be promoted to the rank of captain in the New York City Police Department (NYPD). "I am proud to be Bangladeshi. I am proud to be [the] first Bangladeshi-American captain," Khandakar said. Congratulations Captain Abdullah!

Throughout his distinguished career, he has demonstrated the highest standards of professionalism and service, earning respect within the NYPD. This groundbreaking achievement serves not only as a personal success for Abdullah but also as an inspiration to future generations of Bangladeshi officers, illustrating that perseverance and dedication can lead to high-ranking roles in law enforcement.

Faith & Peace

Religious Leaders Unite Against Extremism at UN

HWPL Event Strengthens Global Peace Efforts

Samira Umama

On February 7, 2025, religious leaders, policymakers, and civil society representatives gathered at the United Nations Headquarters in New York for a significant side event organized by Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL). Held in observance of UN World Interfaith Harmony Week, the event emphasized the crucial role of religious leaders in countering violence, extremism, and terrorism while fostering peace and unity in diverse communities. With extremism and targeted violence on the rise—particularly in conflict-prone regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia—this gathering provided a timely platform for discussion and collaboration. According to the Global Terrorism Index 2024, over 90% of terrorist attacks in the previous year occurred in conflict zones, underscoring the urgent need for proactive intervention. Recognizing this challenge, HWPL and its partners sought to equip religious leaders with the strategies necessary to prevent radicalization and promote peace within their communities. The event brought together a diverse



group of participants, including UN Member States, representatives from civil society organizations, and religious leaders from various faith traditions. Through speeches, discussions, and collaborative exchanges, the gathering explored

how religious leaders serve as trusted voices within their communities, making them uniquely positioned to advocate against violence and extremism. By engaging with their congregations, these leaders can challenge extremist narratives, encourage



HWPL
Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light

innovative approaches to leveraging religious influence for peacebuilding. Speakers highlighted

dialogue, and cultivate a culture of mutual respect and coexistence. The discussions underscored that faith should

HIGHLIGHT

- UN hosts event on countering violence and extremism..
- 90% of terrorist attacks occur in conflict zones.
- February 12 designated for preventing violent extremism.
- Organization promotes interfaith dialogue for peace.

be a unifying force rather than a source of division, and that interfaith cooperation is key to fostering global harmony. The importance of the UN World Interfaith

Harmony Week was also a focal point of the event. Established in 2010 by the UN General Assembly, this observance promotes dialogue and collaboration among different faith communities. Additionally, with the recent adoption of Resolution 77/243, the UN now recognizes February 12 as the International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism, reinforcing the necessity of global efforts to combat radicalization. One of the key takeaways from the event was the need for increased collaboration

between religious leaders, policymakers, and civil society organizations. Speakers called for targeted initiatives that integrate faith-based leaders into global peace efforts, emphasizing that religious communities are essential allies in countering extremist ideologies. Practical strategies such as educational programs, interfaith dialogues, and community-driven peace initiatives were also proposed as effective tools to prevent radicalization. HWPL's role in organizing the event highlighted its ongoing commitment to promoting peace through interfaith dialogue and grassroots activism. The organization has consistently worked to unite religious communities under a shared vision of global harmony, reinforcing the message that peace is achievable when faith is used as a tool for understanding rather than conflict. The impact of this event extends far beyond its discussions. By bringing together key stakeholders and fostering meaningful exchanges, the gathering laid the groundwork for continued cooperation and action. Religious leaders who participated will now carry these insights back to their communities.



Law & Justice



Captain Waheed Akhter Takes Charge as NYPD Muslim Officers Society President



Outgoing President Reflects on Legacy as Leadership Transition Marks New Era

Mohammed Amin

After serving as the President of the NYPD Muslim Officers Society for twelve years,

Detective First Grade Ahmed Nasser has officially stepped down, passing the torch to Captain Waheed Akhter. His leadership has overseen a historic rise

in Muslim representation within the department, leaving behind a legacy of empowerment and inclusivity. "When I joined the NYPD, there were zero

Muslim executives," Nasser reflected. "Today, we have nearly 40 in leadership roles. This is a testament to our progress and the unwavering commitment

of our community." Under Nasser's tenure, the number of Muslim uniformed officers has grown to 1,960, while civilian members stand at 1,211, making a total of 3,171 Muslim members in the NYPD. He emphasized that while stepping down as President, he will remain an active board member and always available to support the society. Welcoming the New Leadership With the transition in leadership, Captain Waheed Akhter now leads the organization for the 2025-2026 term. He will be supported by a new executive board dedicated to advancing the society's mission. The newly elected board members include:
● 1st Vice President: Sergeant Ali Hammutoglu
● Vice President: Sergeant Abdurahman Almontaser
● Treasurer: Lieutenant Shumon Syed
● Director of Outreach: Detective First Grade Mohamed Amen
● Secretary: Police Officer Samina Alam
● Recording Secretary: Detective Dilek Kahveci
● Financial Secretary: Detective Yosef Aisaa
● Corresponding Secretary: Sergeant Detective Squad Zeeshan Munawar
● Sergeant at Arms: Lieutenant Special Assignment Rafet Awad
● Event Coordinator: Sergeant Detective Squad Salah Ali
● Chaplain: Imam Tahir Kukiqi
Additionally, three past presidents—Detective First Grade Ahmed Nasser, Detective First Grade Faisal Khan, and Inspector Adeel Rana—have been named Presidents Emeritus, ensuring mentorship and continuity for the incoming leadership. The Impact of Representation in the

NYPD The rise in Muslim officers in leadership roles marks a significant shift in the NYPD's internal diversity. The current rank breakdown includes:
● Deputy Chief: 1
● Inspectors: 2
● Deputy Inspectors: 5
● Captains: 25
● Lieutenants: 68
● Sergeants: 229
● Detectives (all grades): 139
● Police Officers: 1,468
Nasser highlighted that many more officers of Muslim faith remain unreported in these numbers. Additionally, the January 2025 NYPD class will further increase these figures. The increase in representation ensures better community engagement, stronger advocacy for Muslim officers, and a more inclusive NYPD. The Muslim Officers Society has played a vital role in these advancements, providing mentorship, support, and leadership development for officers of all ranks. Looking Ahead: The Future of the Society As Captain Waheed Akhter takes over, the society remains committed to empowering officers, strengthening community ties, and advocating for fair representation within the department. Outgoing President Nasser expressed his confidence in the new leadership: "Together, we have built a legacy of resilience, unity, and service. I am confident our new leaders will uphold and strengthen that legacy." With a strong foundation and dedicated leadership, the NYPD Muslim Officers Society is set to continue growing and positively impacting both the department and the communities it serves.

Jewish-Muslim Dialogue Event Strengthens Interfaith Cooperation

Zakir Jahid

A historic Jewish-Muslim dialogue event recently took place in Washington, D.C., bringing together religious leaders, scholars, and advocates to foster interfaith cooperation. Held on February 6 at 1515 4th St. NW, the gathering

aimed to strengthen Jewish-Muslim relations, inspired by the 60th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, a Vatican document that transformed Jewish-Christian ties. Organized by the Interfaith Center of USA and other advocacy groups, the event focused on building

alliances for peace and addressing religious misunderstandings. Participants engaged in discussions on long-term interfaith collaboration, emphasizing shared values and strategies for promoting unity. Experts highlighted the importance of education, community engagement, and policy initiatives

to combat religious intolerance. The event was supported by organizations such as the International Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation, Muslim Women Speakers, Ohr Torah Interfaith Center, and AMMVEC (American Muslim & Multifaith Women's

Empowerment Council). These groups are dedicated to fostering dialogue and mutual respect among diverse communities. Attendees praised the initiative as a significant step toward strengthening Jewish-Muslim relations in an era of global challenges. Many expressed hope

for continued interfaith efforts, emphasizing the need for ongoing collaboration. The success of the event marks an important milestone in interfaith engagement, demonstrating that unity and dialogue can pave the way for a more inclusive and peaceful society.



Entertainment

New York to Host Ekushey Book Fair 2025

Unobangal Organizes Literary Fest with 83-Member Committee

Minhaz Khan

In a significant move to uphold and celebrate the spirit of International Mother Language Day, the literary organization Unobangal has announced the Ekushey Book Fair 2025 in New York. The event is expected to be a grand literary gathering, bringing together authors, poets, and book lovers from across North America. Founded by renowned poet Kazi Zahirul Islam, Unobangal has been fostering literary and artistic activities in New York for the past 11 years under the motto "Pure Art, Deep Practice." Though Islam does not hold any formal position within the organization, his vision continues to guide its initiatives. The organization is currently led by Mukti Zahir as president. In a meeting on January 26, 2025, during Unobangal's 47th literary session, members decided to take charge of organizing this year's Ekushey Book Fair. To ensure its success, a massive 83-member organizing committee has been formed, led by Fakhrul Alam as

convener and Ahsan Habib as member secretary. Additionally, a 13-member advisory board will provide strategic guidance, with Monjur Ahmed serving as the chairman. Other committee members include **Abu Naser, Sarwar Hossaini, Kazi Fauzia, Shamsuddin Shamim, Anwar Hossain Monju, Dr. Wazed, Dr. Abul Kashem, Md. Shahidullah, Abdullah Zahid, Syed Fazlur Rahman, Ragib Ahsan, Azizul Haque Munna, Imran Ansari, Ali Saeed Tipu, Sheikh Siraj, ABM Salahuddin, Aditya Shaheen, Dima Nefertiti, Syed Rabbi, Fakhrul Islam Deloar, Wahed Hossain, Hasan Amzad Khan, Ahsan Habib, Suman Shamsuddin, GM Faruk Khan, Nurul Khan, Imam Chowdhury, Nazrul Islam, Sohel Hamid, Firoz Ahmed, Dewan Naser Raja, HB Rita, SM Mozammel Haque, Asaduzzaman Babu, Rowshan Haque, ABM Osman Gani, Farida Yasmin, Kazi Azam, Rafiq Patwari, Sohana Naznin, Renu Roja, Kawsar Parvin Chowdhury, Harun-or-Rashid Tanvir, Mushfiq Ontu, Ahnaf Alam, Nesar Bhuiyan Russell, Tutul, Munna Chowdhury,



Mohammad Nasir Uddin, Abdul Kaiyum, Mizanur Rahman, Neli Islam, Jebunnesa Jyotsna, Vaila Salina Liza, Lutfa Shahana, Sheli Zaman Khan, Sayeb Khalidar, Shamsun Fauzia, Mia M Askir, Mizan Rahman, Abdul Matin, Nazmul Hossain, Khaleda Akter Ruby, J Molla Sani, Shah Alam, Mohammad Ali, Nurul Azim, Syed Jinnat Ali, Zikrul Amin Jewel, Ismail Hossain Swapan, Sheikh Haider Ali, Ameen Mehedi Babu, Kazi Selim Khan, Abdur Rashid Babu, Md. Bilal Chowdhury, Md. Saiful Islam, Kashem Abul (Babu), Sultan E Alam Bokhari, Shahidullah Kaiser, Syed Azad, Ambia

HIGHLIGHT

- 83-member organizing committee and 13-member advisory board formed
- Event to promote literature, culture, and freedom of expression
- Writers, not publishers, to take center stage

Begum, and Selim Ibrahim. The 13-member advisory board includes Dr. Mohsin Patwari, Hasan Ferdous, Dr. Ashraf Uddin Ahmed, Dr. Mostafa Sarwar, Mujib Bin Haque, Motlub

Ali, Shahida Arbi, Azharul Haque Milon, Taser Mahmud, Abdul Malek, Dr. Chowdhury Md. Sarwarul Hasan, and Engineer Altaf Chowdhury. Unlike traditional book fairs, the Ekushey Book Fair 2025 will focus on writers rather than publishers. Poet Kazi Zahirul Islam, in his statement, emphasized that this event aims to create a direct connection between authors and readers. Instead of publishers renting stalls, writers will have their own spaces to showcase and discuss their work. The three-day event will also feature literary discussions,

poetry recitations, and cultural performances to celebrate the legacy of Ekushey February—the day recognized globally as International Mother Language Day. The book fair will take place on February 21, 22, and 23, 2025, at Ilhaam Academy, 87-41 166th Street, Jamaica, New York 11462. The organizing committee has made it clear that the event will be completely free from political and religious influences, making it an inclusive space for literature lovers of all backgrounds. They anticipate a large turnout of book enthusiasts from across North America, further strengthening the Bangladeshi literary footprint abroad. With this initiative, New York's literary community is set to witness an unprecedented gathering that will not only promote Bengali literature but also foster an environment of creative exchange and intellectual dialogue. The Ekushey Book Fair 2025 is set to become a milestone in New York's literary calendar, reflecting the deep-rooted love for language and literature among expatriate Bangladeshis.





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বইমেলা

২০২৫, নিউইয়র্ক

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রক্তের দাম দিয়ে কিনেছি মায়ের ভাষা

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ইলহাম একাডেমি, ৮৭-৪১ ১৬৫ স্ট্রিট, জ্যামাইকা, নিউইয়র্ক ১১৪৩২

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Religion

IRF Summit 2025: Addressing Global Religious Persecution Government's Role in Religious Freedom

Adnan Sami

The International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit 2025, held on February 4 and 5 at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C., brought together a diverse coalition of over 90 organizations representing more than 30 distinct faith traditions. This annual two-day event has solidified its reputation as the premier global gathering dedicated to advancing religious freedom. The summit commenced with a plenary session titled "Looking Ahead – Priorities for the Next Administration," featuring distinguished speakers such as David Beasley, former Executive Director of the World Food Programme; Annie Boyajian, Co-President of Freedom House; and Scott Flipse, Director of Policy &

Media Relations for the Congressional-Executive Commission on China. Moderated by Brett Scharffs, Director of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies, the discussion centered on strategies to promote religious freedom globally under the current U.S. administration. A recurring theme throughout the summit was the alarming increase in religious persecution worldwide. Annie Boyajian highlighted that nearly 80% of the global population resides in countries with high levels of governmental or societal restrictions on religion, a figure that has been steadily rising. This statistic underscores the summit's critical importance in addressing these challenges. David Beasley



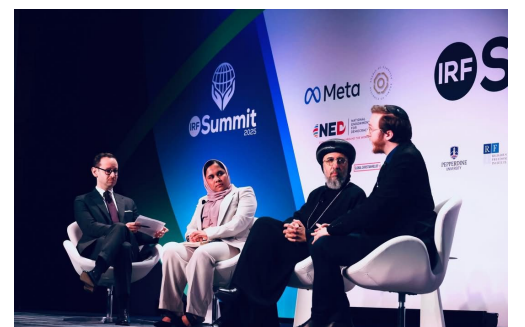
emphasized the interconnectedness of religious freedom and global stability. He noted that over the past two decades, while extreme poverty has been reduced by 75%, the number of displaced individuals has surged by 300%. This stark contrast highlights the role of religious persecution in contributing to global displacement and the urgent need for collaborative solutions. Scott Flipse expressed optimism about the current administration's potential role in promoting peace through religious freedom initiatives. He advocated for the inclusion of the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom in major policy

discussions, ensuring that faith considerations remain central to international diplomacy and conflict resolution. The summit also featured a Town Hall session where leaders like Nadine Maenza, President of the IRF Secretariat, and Myal Greene, CEO of World Relief, discussed the importance of strategic collaboration. Maenza emphasized the need for convening diverse groups to develop cohesive strategies, while Greene highlighted the unprecedented number of refugees and displaced individuals globally, many of whom are victims of religious persecution. A poignant moment was provided by Amjad Khan, National Director of Public Affairs for the

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA, who challenged attendees with the question: "Can you speak as passionately for another faith community as you can for your own?" This call to empathy and advocacy resonated deeply, reinforcing the summit's mission to foster mutual respect among diverse religious groups. The IRF Summit 2025 not only highlighted the escalating challenges to religious freedom but also served as a catalyst for action. By bringing together policymakers, faith leaders, and advocates, the summit underscored the necessity of unity and strategic collaboration in combating religious persecution. As global restrictions on religious freedom continue to rise, the summit's role in galvanizing efforts to protect this fundamental human right becomes increasingly vital. In conclusion, the IRF Summit 2025 reinforced its position as a cornerstone event in the fight for global religious freedom. Through insightful discussions, strategic planning, and a shared commitment to justice, attendees left with a renewed dedication to advocate for those persecuted for their beliefs and to promote a world where religious freedom is universally upheld.

HIGHLIGHT

- Over 90 organizations convened in Washington, D.C.
- 0% of the world faces religious restrictions.
- Millions forced to flee due to faith-based oppression.
- Calls for prioritizing religious freedom in policy.



Education

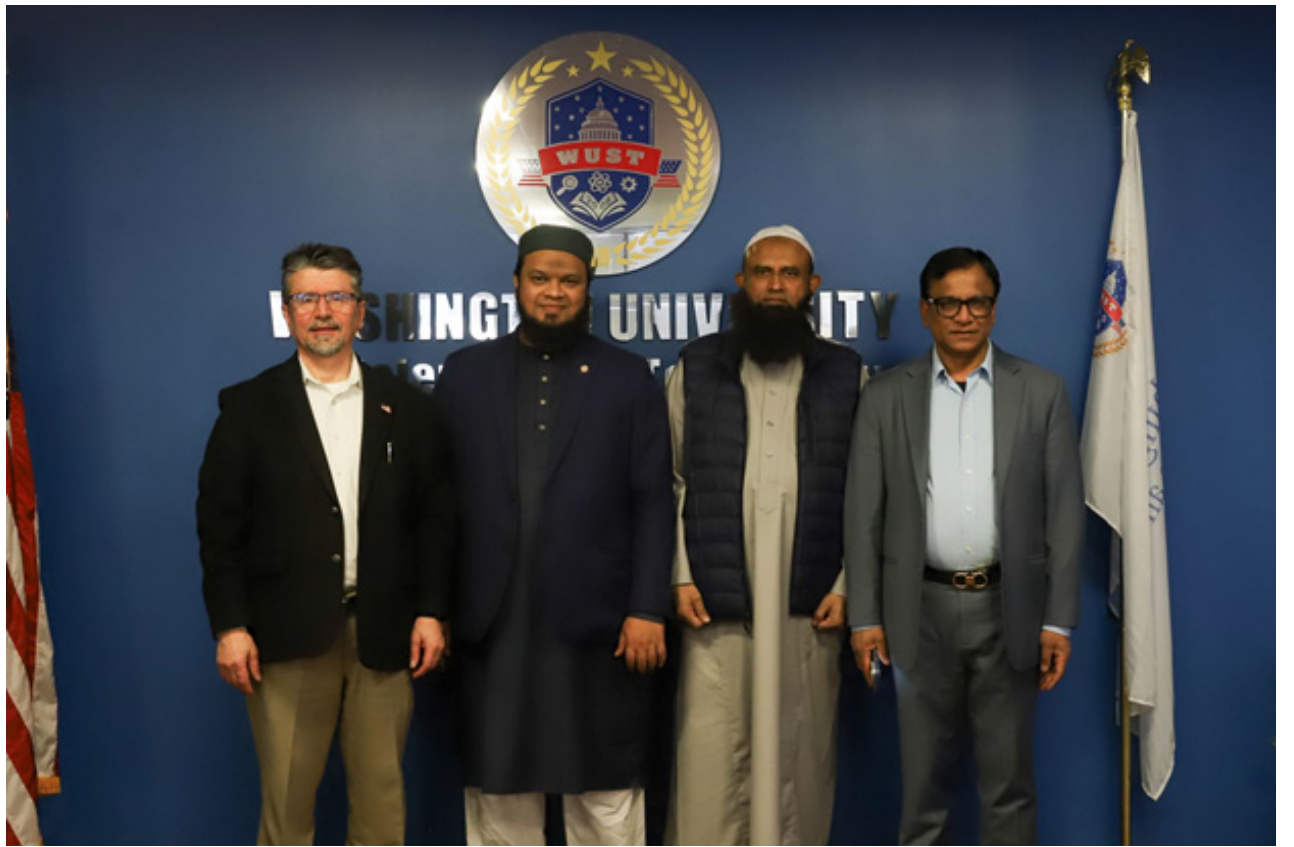
Darul Uloom Students Engage in Enlightening Visit to WUST

A Step Towards Shared Knowledge

Faruk Ahmed

A group of students from Darul Uloom recently visited Washington University of Science and Technology (WUST) as part of the Save The People Leadership program titled Educational Leadership 2025. The visit featured an engaging session that fostered intellectual exchange and strengthened academic ties, providing students with valuable exposure to higher education environments. The session was designed to introduce students to diverse perspectives and explore areas where traditional Islamic education intersects with contemporary academic discourse. Faculty members and students from WUST welcomed the delegation, facilitating discussions on topics ranging from interfaith dialogue to modern educational methodologies.

During the visit, students had the opportunity to engage with professors and scholars, asking thought-provoking questions and sharing their insights on various subjects. The discussions encouraged critical thinking and highlighted the importance of bridging religious scholarship with broader academic disciplines. "The visit was an eye-opening experience for our students," said a representative from Darul Uloom. "It allowed them to see how academic institutions function while also sharing their own knowledge and



perspectives. Such exchanges help foster mutual respect and deeper understanding." University representatives also expressed their enthusiasm for the initiative, emphasizing the importance of academic collaboration. They noted that engaging with students from diverse backgrounds enriches the learning environment

HIGHLIGHT

• **Engaging discussions and interactive learning experiences**
Strengthening connections between religious and academic institutions
 and promotes meaningful dialogue.

Beyond discussions, the visit also included a tour of the university's facilities, giving students a firsthand look at the resources available in higher education institutions. The experience inspired many to consider further academic pursuits and explore new areas of study. The success of this visit has sparked

interest in organizing similar initiatives in the future. Both institutions expressed a willingness to continue building bridges between religious and secular education, fostering greater academic engagement. By bringing together students from different educational backgrounds, the event underscored the value of collaboration and dialogue in shaping well-rounded, informed individuals. The visit not only broadened the perspectives of the Darul Uloom students but also reinforced the importance of knowledge-sharing across disciplines.



Washington University of Science and Technology





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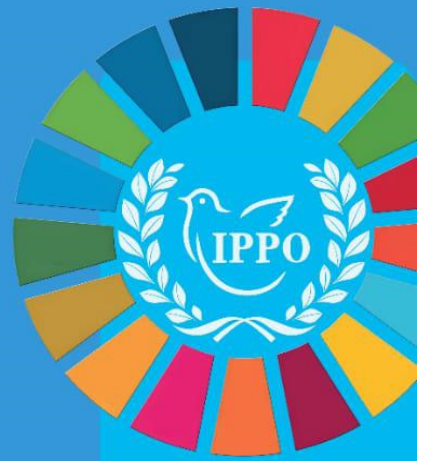
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Event Details:

 **Date:** Thursday, March 6, 2025

 **Time:** 5:30 - 7:30 PM

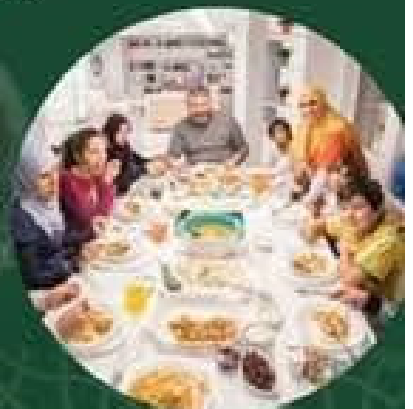
 **Venue:** Dreiser Loop Community Center, 177 Dreiser Loop, Co-op City, NY 10475

RSVP:

muslimadvisorycouncil@gmail.com

Inquiry:

718-822-5555



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The Statue of Liberty: A Timeless Symbol of Freedom

Exploring Its Legacy, Significance, and Visitor Experience

Ahmed Hossain

A Gift of Friendship and Freedom
 Standing tall in New York Harbor, the Statue of Liberty has welcomed millions of immigrants and visitors since its dedication on October 28, 1886. Designed by French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi and engineered by Gustave Eiffel, the statue was a gift from France to celebrate the United States' centennial and symbolize the nations' shared values of liberty and democracy. Constructed in France and shipped to America in 350 pieces, the statue was assembled on Liberty Island, where it remains one of the most iconic landmarks in the world. Over the years, it has become an enduring emblem of freedom, inspiring generations who arrive on U.S. shores in search of new opportunities. **Symbolism and Historical Significance**
 The Statue of Liberty stands 305 feet tall from base to torch, with a green patina



Image Source: worldatlas.com

formed from years of oxidation on its copper exterior. The statue's right hand holds a torch, symbolizing enlightenment, while the left hand carries a tablet inscribed with "JULY IV MDCCLXXVI" (July 4, 1776), marking the Declaration of Independence. The broken chains at her feet

HIGHLIGHT

- A gift from France, the Statue of Liberty was dedicated in 1886.
- Represents freedom, democracy, and the American dream.

signify the abolition of oppression and tyranny. For decades, the statue served as a beacon of hope for immigrants arriving at nearby Ellis Island, the nation's busiest immigration processing center until 1954. Today, it remains a global symbol of human rights and democracy, attracting

millions of visitors annually.

How to Visit the Statue of Liberty
 The Statue of Liberty is accessible only by ferry, with departures from Battery Park in Manhattan and Liberty State Park in New Jersey. The journey offers stunning views

- Located on Liberty Island, accessible via ferry.
- Ticket prices range from \$25.50 to \$75.50 depending on access level.

of the New York skyline and the harbor. Visitors can explore the statue's pedestal, museum, and even climb to the crown with a special ticket. Tickets can be purchased through Statue City Cruises, the official ferry operator. General admission includes access to Liberty Island and the Statue of Liberty Museum, while pedestal and crown access require advance reservations. The cost varies:
 • General Admission: \$25.50 for adults, \$16.50 for children (ages 4-12)
 • Pedestal Access: \$25.80 (+\$0.30)
 • Crown Access: \$26.10 (limited availability)
 • Ellis Island Hard Hat Tour: \$75.50 (includes ferry ticket)

Visitors can also take a combined tour of Ellis Island, home to the National Immigration Museum, for a deeper understanding of America's immigration history. A Must-Visit Landmark
 More than just a tourist attraction, the Statue of Liberty stands as a powerful reminder of America's ideals. Whether admiring it from afar or experiencing its grandeur up close, a visit to this iconic monument is an unforgettable journey into history, hope, and the enduring spirit of freedom.



Image Source: Experience NYC



Image Source: NIST

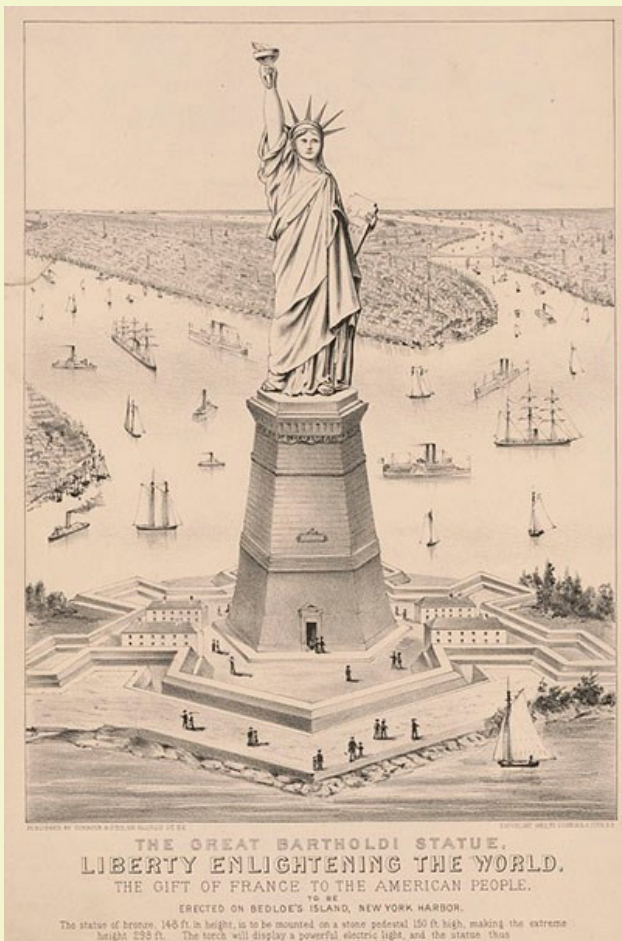


Image Source: National Park Service



Image Source: HWNY