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NEW YORK NEWS

The Voice of People

From New York

Inwood Residents Demand Action on Complaints

Hamid Abdullah

Residents of Inwood are growing increasingly frustrated as quality-of-life complaints, particularly related to noisy bars and restaurants, remain unresolved. The issue has sparked outrage within the community, with many residents accusing the NYPD of failing to address their concerns. Recent reports indicate that James Caban, the brother of former NYPD Commissioner Edward Caban, is at the center of the controversy, allegedly influencing local law enforcement to halt action on the complaints. This has led to mounting tensions between the local community and the police, with residents demanding accountability for what they perceive as a lack of action. The situation has also prompted calls for transparency in how complaints are handled, especially when potential conflicts of interest arise. As the scandal unfolds, Inwood residents are calling for a thorough investigation into the involvement of the Caban family and the broader implications for law enforcement's response to quality-of-life issues in the neighborhood.

NYC Mayoral Race Intensifies Amid Political Unrest

Crime, Housing, and Corruption Dominate Voter Concerns

NYN DESK

The 2025 New York City mayoral race is shaping up to be one of the most unpredictable in recent history, with incumbent Mayor Eric Adams facing a historic indictment, low approval ratings, and a crowded field of challengers. Despite these challenges, Adams can still secure another tenure, leveraging the power of incumbency and his record on public safety and housing reforms. However, his coziness with Trump and the lingering cloud of corruption allegations have left him vulnerable.

The race has attracted a diverse array of candidates, from progressive stalwarts like Comptroller Brad Lander and Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani to moderate figures like former Comptroller Scott Stringer and Michael Blake. Lander, a Park Slope progressive, has positioned himself as a competent manager, while Mamdani, a Democratic Socialist, is pushing bold policies like rent freezes and



HIGHLIGHT

● Mayor Eric Adams faces federal corruption charges, low approval ratings, and a crowded field of challengers.
● The Democratic primary on June 24 will likely determine the next mayor of NYC.

free public buses. Meanwhile, Stringer, a seasoned political operator, is seeking redemption after a failed

2021 bid marred by misconduct allegations. Blake, a former Assembly member and Obama campaign alum, is focusing on affordability and quality-of-life issues, though he faces an uphill battle with low name recognition. Adding to the drama is the potential entry of former Governor Andrew Cuomo, whose decision to run could upend the race. Independent candidate Jim Walden, a former prosecutor

and political outsider, is also making waves with his anti-corruption platform and public-private partnership proposals. Crime, housing affordability, and corruption remain top concerns for voters, with candidates like State Senator Jessica Ramos and Zellnor Myrie emphasizing public safety and housing reforms. On the Republican side, Curtis Sliwa, founder of the Guardian Angels, is likely to run again,

though his chances in the deeply Democratic city remain slim. As the June 24 Democratic primary approaches, the race reflects the city's shifting political dynamics, with progressives and moderates battling for dominance in a city still grappling with post-pandemic challenges. The outcome will not only determine the next mayor but also signal the direction of New York City's future.

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NYC Sues Trump Administration Over \$80 Million in FEMA Fund Recoupment

Lawsuit seeks to recover vital funds for migrant support in NYC

Farhana Azmi

New York City has filed a federal lawsuit against the Trump administration, seeking the return of \$80 million in FEMA funds that were unexpectedly reclaimed. These funds had been allocated to assist the city in handling the growing number of migrants, a pressing



Image Source : New York Post

issue that has placed significant strain on local resources. Mayor Eric Adams condemned the federal government's actions, calling them an "unlawful money grab." He emphasized that the sudden withdrawal of the funds threatens the city's ability to support migrants and manage the crisis effectively. This legal action represents a significant escalation

in the ongoing tensions between the city and federal authorities over migrant-related financial support. The city argues that the federal government's abrupt decision to reclaim the funds was made without prior notice or explanation. As New York continues to grapple with the humanitarian and logistical challenges posed by the migrant influx,

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Welcome Ramadan Meeting by Bronx Bangladeshi Community

NYN DESK

The Bronx Bangladeshi Community has organized a discussion meeting titled Welcome Ramadan in New York to welcome the month of mercy, forgiveness and salvation and celebrate the month with due dignity. On this occasion, the organization organized a meeting at the Al Aqsa Party Hall in the Bronx on the evening of February 19. The meeting gave special emphasis on religious seriousness, social security, physical and mental preparation, and uninterrupted

HIGHLIGHT

They talked about overall preparation for Ramadan, including physical and mental

worship during the month of Ramadan. The meeting was jointly conducted by the convener of the organizing organization A Islam Mamun and former NYPD Senior

Detective Masud Rahman. Mohammad N. Majumder, Chairman of Community Board 9 of New York City, delivered the welcome speech at the event. At the meeting, Imam and Khatib of Banglabazar Jame Masjid Maulana Abul Kashem Mohammad Yahya and Imam and Khatib of PIC Maulana Ubaidul Haque shed light on the importance, significance and virtues of the month of Ramadan in the light of the Holy Quran and Hadith. They talked about overall preparation for Ramadan, including physical and mental.

Mehdad Islam Appointed as Muslim Chaplain for Suffolk County Police Department

Staff Reporter

The Suffolk County Police Department has appointed Mehdad Islam as its next Muslim Chaplain, marking a significant milestone in community engagement



and interfaith representation within the department. Chaplain Mehdad Islam, a longtime resident of Shirley, NY, has been an active leader in the local Muslim community. Born in Manhattan, he moved to Long

Island at the age of 10 and later pursued his Islamic education at a seminary in Ajax, Canada, where he completed both his Hifdh and Alimiyah Program. Upon his return to Long Island, he furthered his academic studies at St. Joseph's University, earning a



dual undergraduate degree in Computer Science and World Religions. In addition to his new role as chaplain, Mehdad Islam serves as an Imam and board trustee at the Islamic Center of Mastic-Shirley. His dedication to faith and community

service has been evident through years of spiritual guidance and leadership. As the newly appointed chaplain, Islam will provide spiritual support, lead prayers, and serve as a religious advisor within the Suffolk County Police Department. His appointment reflects a commitment to fostering inclusivity and strengthening

ties between law enforcement and the diverse communities they serve. Beyond his professional and religious commitments, Chaplain Mehdad Islam is a devoted husband and father to three daughters. His new role is expected to further bridge understanding between law enforcement and the Muslim community in Suffolk,

Prayer Time IN New York

FAJR	DHUHR	ASR	MAGHREB	ISHA
05:23	12:09	03:12	05:41	06:56
05:22	12:09	03:13	05:42	06:57
05:20	12:09	03:14	05:43	06:58
05:19	12:09	03:15	05:44	06:59
05:17	12:08	03:16	05:45	07:00
05:16	12:08	03:17	05:46	07:01
05:15	12:08	03:18	05:47	07:02

Number 09

Kazi Zahirul Islam receives 'Icon of Time Award'

NYN DESK

The Grace Foundation has awarded the Icon of Time Award-2025 to the renowned poet, writer, and intellectual of the time Kazi Zahirul Islam. The award was presented to the poet by Grace Foundation CEO and TV personality Dima Nefertiti on the evening of February 9 at the poet's residence in Holliswood, New York. The pleasant evening organized on this occasion was attended by Mukti Zahir, President of Unbangal Sahitya Sangathan, human rights leader Kazi Fouzia, journalist Rawshan Haque, poet and reciter Sumon Shamsuddin and many others. Poet Kazi Zahirul Islam, in his speech, thanked Dima Nefertiti and her organization Grace Foundation and said that



Grace Foundation honors enlightened people of the society every year. This initiative is commendable and inspiring. Quazi J Islam was born in Brahmanbaria, Bangladesh, grew up in Dhaka city. Studied in Titumir College and Dhaka University. Quazi has been writing over 3 decades, in both Bengals (Bangladesh and India) and all around the world to Bengalee diaspora he is a popular writer. He has got 47 books published. His travelogues are very popular. He is a United Nations International professional, traveled all over the world, worked in conflict zones, his bag is full of colourful experiences.

Suffolk County Police Hosts Ramadan Event with Top Officials Page-06

Youth

NYC Youth Engage in Global Cultures to Build Unity

Empowering the Next Generation to Challenge Hate Through Understanding

Fazlul Hoque

The "Around the World in NYC 2025" event, a culturally immersive two-day experience, successfully brought together young New Yorkers to combat hate and bias within their communities. Held on February 18th and 19th, this groundbreaking initiative aimed to foster understanding, tolerance, and unity through interactive cultural experiences. Organized by P.A.T.H. FORWARD (Partners Against the Hate), the NYC Office for Hate Crimes, Save the People, and UJA Federation, the event was designed to educate youth about different cultures while equipping them with the tools to challenge prejudice and discrimination. By engaging in a hands-on, interactive approach, participants explored various global traditions, deepening their appreciation for the diverse communities that make up New York City. Throughout the two-day event, attendees



had the opportunity to immerse themselves in a variety of cultural exhibits, performances, and workshops that highlighted traditions from different regions of the world. Activities ranged from music and dance performances to storytelling sessions and interactive discussions on combating bias. These experiences provided a powerful

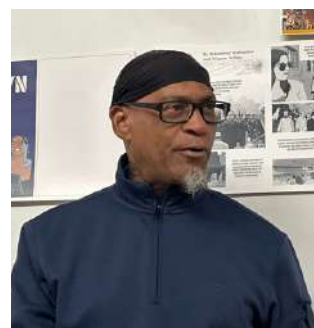
HIGHLIGHT

- Two-day immersive cultural experience aimed at combating hate and bias
- Promoted interfaith and cross-cultural dialogue to foster unity
- Encouraged young leaders to advocate for inclusivity and tolerance

reminder of the shared humanity that connects people across cultures. One of the most impactful aspects of the event was its emphasis on the real-world consequences of hate and bias. The NYC Office for Hate Crimes facilitated discussions on the rising incidents of discrimination and how young people can actively counteract

prejudice. Experts and community leaders shared their insights, inspiring participants to take an active role in promoting inclusivity in their schools and neighborhoods. A key takeaway from the event was the role of youth leadership in fostering unity. Participants were encouraged to think critically about how

they can become advocates for social justice and cultural understanding. Through hands-on activities and meaningful dialogue, young attendees gained the knowledge and confidence to challenge discrimination and stand up for their peers. By promoting education and cultural exchange, "Around the World in NYC 2025" successfully empowered NYC youth to build bridges across differences. The overwhelming attendees showcased the eagerness of young people to be part of the solution against hate. As hate crimes and bias-related incidents continue to challenge communities, initiatives like this event serve as a beacon of hope, proving that education and cultural engagement are powerful tools in combating intolerance. The event's organizers expressed their commitment to continuing these efforts, ensuring that young New Yorkers remain at the forefront of the fight against hate and discrimination.



Philanthropy

Faith Leaders, Community Unite for Meaningful Cause

Islamic Foundation of NY Unites Community at Fundraising Dinner

Ahmed Hossain

The Islamic Foundation of New York (IFNY) hosted its Annual Fundraising Dinner on Saturday, February 22, 2025, at the World's Fair Marina in Corona, NY, bringing together faith leaders, community members, and supporters to strengthen IFNY's mission of serving the Muslim community. The evening was a powerful testament to the impact of collective generosity and the shared vision of expanding IFNY's programs and services. Attendees gathered in a warm and welcoming atmosphere, eager to contribute to an organization that has long played a vital role in supporting Islamic education, community outreach, and social services. The event featured a lineup of distinguished speakers who inspired and motivated the audience. Shaikh Hasan Abunar,

the keynote speaker, delivered a compelling speech about the importance of faith-based institutions in shaping the future of Muslim communities. He emphasized the significance of generosity and how giving to such causes is a duty and an honor for those who wish to see Islamic values flourish. The evening also featured a special address by Dr. Zakir Ahmed, a well-known motivational speaker, who encouraged guests to reflect on the broader purpose of their contributions. He highlighted how their support would directly impact the community by funding programs that educate, empower, and uplift individuals from all walks of life. Mufti Yusuf Ahmed further reinforced the need for continued investment in Islamic education and community welfare, emphasizing that a strong foundation in faith

translates into a more united and prosperous society. As the night progressed, attendees had the opportunity to hear firsthand about IFNY's ongoing initiatives and future goals. The organization provides a range of services, including Islamic education for children and adults, youth mentorship programs, community outreach, and religious guidance. The dinner served as a platform to showcase the tangible benefits of these programs and why continued financial support is crucial in sustaining and expanding them. A significant highlight of the evening was the heartfelt response from the community. Many guests pledged their support, making generous donations to help IFNY expand its resources and facilities. Contributions will directly fund the development of enhanced educational

HIGHLIGHT

- Keynote speaker Shaikh Hasan Abunar delivered an inspiring address.
- Dr. Zakir Ahmed and Mufti Yusuf Ahmed motivated the audience with powerful messages.
- Attendees came together to support IFNY's ongoing projects and community services.

programs, increased access to religious services, and improved community engagement efforts. The fundraising efforts demonstrated the shared commitment of those in attendance to ensuring that IFNY remains a pillar of strength for the Muslim community in New York. The event also provided a space for networking and engagement, allowing attendees to connect with like-minded individuals who share a passion for faith-based community service.

Many expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to support a cause that aligns with their values and aspirations for a thriving and united Muslim community. The positive energy in the room was palpable, as discussions centered on the importance of sustaining institutions like IFNY for future generations. Throughout the night, the Islamic Foundation of New York's leadership team expressed their gratitude to donors, volunteers, and community members for their unwavering support. They reaffirmed their commitment to using every contribution wisely to strengthen and expand IFNY's programs. The overwhelming response from the attendees served as a reminder that the success of any community-driven initiative relies on the dedication and generosity of those who believe in its mission.

The IFNY Annual Fundraising Dinner 2025 was not just about raising funds—it was a celebration of faith, unity, and the shared responsibility of building a strong and vibrant Muslim community. The generosity displayed at the event underscored the collective commitment to ensuring that IFNY continues to thrive and provide essential services for years to come. As IFNY moves forward with its ambitious plans, the contributions raised during the dinner will play a crucial role in enhancing educational opportunities, expanding outreach efforts, and strengthening the foundation of Islamic values in New York. The evening was a resounding success, proving that when a community comes together with a common purpose, meaningful change can be achieved.



Peace & Unity

Strengthening Community Relations Through Dialogue

NYPD Hosts Pre-Ramadan Conference at Police Academy

Amir Hamza

The NYPD Pre-Ramadan Conference 2025, held at the New York Police Academy, brought together law enforcement officials, Muslim officers, and community leaders to mark the beginning of the sacred month of Ramadan. The event served as a platform to foster dialogue, strengthen relationships, and emphasize the department's commitment to religious inclusion and diversity. This annual gathering, a tradition within the NYPD, highlights the importance of supporting Muslim officers as they prepare for Ramadan, a time of fasting, prayer, and reflection. The conference provided an opportunity for Muslim officers to share their experiences, discuss challenges related to fasting while on duty, and address concerns regarding religious accommodations in the workplace. Attendees included senior NYPD officials, faith leaders, and representatives from various community organizations. The presence of these influential figures underscored the



significance of interfaith cooperation and the NYPD's dedication to fostering an inclusive environment for all its officers, regardless of their religious backgrounds. One of the key discussions at the conference revolved around ensuring that Muslim officers have the necessary support during Ramadan. Topics such as shift flexibility, dietary accommodations, and spiritual well-being were addressed, with NYPD leadership reaffirming

HIGHLIGHT

- Muslim officers, community leaders, and law enforcement officials in attendance
- Focus on fostering understanding and unity ahead of Ramadan

their commitment to providing a respectful and accommodating work environment. Beyond logistical discussions, the conference also emphasized the contributions of

Muslim officers within the NYPD. Over the years, the number of Muslim officers in leadership positions has grown, reflecting the department's increasing diversity. Speakers at the event acknowledged the dedication and service of these officers, highlighting their role in maintaining safety while staying true to their faith. A particularly moving moment came when community leaders and NYPD officials discussed the importance of strengthening

ties between law enforcement and the broader Muslim community. Initiatives promoting trust, understanding, and collaboration were highlighted, demonstrating how events like this contribute to a more united and respectful society. The spiritual significance of Ramadan was also a focal point of the discussions. Religious scholars and chaplains shared reflections on the meaning of the holy month,

emphasizing the values of patience, empathy, and service—qualities that align closely with the mission of law enforcement. Officers were encouraged to embrace Ramadan as a time of personal growth while continuing their dedication to protecting and serving New Yorkers. As the event concluded, there was a renewed sense of unity and purpose among attendees. The NYPD's commitment to celebrating and accommodating religious diversity was reaffirmed, with promises of continued engagement and support for Muslim officers throughout the department. The NYPD Pre-Ramadan Conference 2025 was not just a formal gathering; it was a testament to the department's evolving efforts to build bridges between law enforcement and diverse communities. By fostering understanding and inclusion, the NYPD continues to set an example for organizations nationwide, proving that faith and service can go hand in hand.



Peace & Unity

Suffolk County Police Hosts Ramadan Event with Top Officials

Police Commissioner, FBI, and Homeland Security show solidarity with Muslim community

Abdul Nassr

Suffolk County Police Department recently organized the Ramadan Safety Conference, bringing together distinguished officials, law enforcement representatives, and community leaders in a show of unity and inclusivity. The gathering was attended by key figures, including representatives from Homeland Security, the FBI, and various state, city, and county officials, alongside the Suffolk County Police Commissioner.

cultural and religious groups. Attendees welcomed the initiative as a meaningful step toward enhancing trust and ensuring a safe and supportive environment for Muslim residents during Ramadan. Community members expressed gratitude for the recognition of their faith and the proactive approach to safety concerns. Leaders from various backgrounds shared messages of unity, emphasizing how events like these help bridge gaps and promote a stronger,



the significance of the gathering in fostering goodwill. His remarks emphasized the role of such initiatives in creating a more harmonious relationship between government, law enforcement, and the communities they serve. As Suffolk County continues to grow as a diverse and dynamic region, events like the Ramadan Safety Conference set a strong precedent for future engagement. Recognizing and supporting religious and cultural observances in official capacities strengthens social cohesion and demonstrates a commitment to respect and inclusion.



Held in anticipation of the holy month of Ramadan, the Ramadan Safety Conference aimed to foster dialogue, promote public safety, and strengthen relationships between law enforcement and the Muslim community. The presence of high-ranking officials highlighted the importance of interfaith collaboration and mutual respect among diverse

more inclusive society. The Suffolk County Police Commissioner reaffirmed the department's commitment to engaging with diverse communities and ensuring that all residents feel represented and valued. At a time when fostering social cohesion is more important than ever, such engagements

HIGHLIGHT

- Event emphasized interfaith dialogue and community engagement
 - Muslim community members appreciated the recognition of Ramadan
 - Strengthening trust between law enforcement and local communities
- serve as a reminder that law enforcement plays a crucial role in building connections

and promoting understanding. The participation of agencies like Homeland Security and the FBI further reinforced a commitment to collaboration and public safety. Their presence reflected a broader effort to strengthen trust, encourage dialogue, and address security measures for Ramadan, ensuring that places of worship and community gatherings remain safe and welcoming. Elected officials

attending the conference had the opportunity to engage directly with community members, discuss concerns, and show support ahead of the Ramadan observance. Their presence underscored a dedication to inclusivity and the recognition of religious and cultural diversity in public life. Former New York State Senate candidate Giash Ahmed, who was among the attendees, highlighted

This event was not just a moment of reflection but a testament to the power of unity and collaboration. It showcased the positive impact that open dialogue and mutual respect can have on society, reinforcing the idea that diversity is a strength to be celebrated.



Election

Mayoral Hopefuls Engage Muslim Leaders At Queens

Mamdani & Blake Lay Out Their Vision for a More Inclusive NYC

Kaniz Fatima

Elhaam Academy in Jamaica, Queens, became the center of political discourse on February 17, 2025, as two leading mayoral candidates, Zohran Mamdani and Michael Blake, took the stage to engage with Muslim leaders and community members in an in-depth interview session. The event, aimed at fostering dialogue and accountability, allowed candidates to share their visions while addressing the pressing concerns of New York's Muslim community. The session began at 6:30 PM with Zohran Mamdani, a progressive politician known for his advocacy on housing rights, criminal justice reform, and economic equity. Mamdani presented his plans for a more inclusive NYC, emphasizing his dedication to minority communities. He highlighted the need for stronger policies against Islamophobia, increased representation of Muslims in city government, and ensuring equitable access to housing and education. Mamdani fielded direct questions from Muslim



leaders, tackling issues such as surveillance of Muslim communities, challenges in religious accommodations in workplaces and schools, and the lack of representation in city governance. He reiterated his commitment to standing against discrimination, supporting small businesses, and ensuring that Muslim voices are heard in policymaking. His responses resonated with many attendees, who appreciated his grassroots activism and

HIGHLIGHT

- Muslim community leaders engage candidates in discussions on policy and representation.
- Key topics included civil rights, education, and community engagement.
- Candidates emphasize their commitment to diversity and inclusion.

policy-driven approach. At 8:00 PM, Michael Blake took the stage, bringing his experience as a former Assemblyman and a leader with a history in public service. Blake, recognized for his work in economic development and youth empowerment, emphasized his plan to bridge gaps between city leadership and diverse communities. He spoke about expanding opportunities for minority-owned businesses, improving public education, and

ensuring stronger community-police relations. Blake also addressed concerns about racial profiling, affordable housing, and economic disparities that disproportionately affect immigrant and Muslim communities. He underscored his belief in building coalitions to enact meaningful change, stating that NYC must be a city where every faith and background feels valued and protected. Throughout the event, both candidates were

pressed on their positions regarding foreign policy, civil rights, and religious freedoms. Many community leaders in attendance emphasized that NYC's mayoral office must actively work toward protecting religious freedoms and fostering a city where Muslims can practice their faith without fear of discrimination. The engagement at Elhaam Academy reflected the growing political mobilization of Muslim New Yorkers, who are increasingly involved in shaping the city's future. The forum not only provided a platform for candidates to address community concerns but also underscored the importance of civic participation among Muslim voters. As the city gears up for the 2025 mayoral election, events like this serve as a reminder of the power of dialogue and the significance of representation. Both Zohran Mamdani and Michael Blake left an impression, but the decision now rests in the hands of the voters who are looking for a leader that will genuinely champion their needs and values.



Faith

Religious Leaders Discuss Social Work, Quran Distribution

MUNA Hosts Ulama Meeting and Dinner in New York

Osama Khalid

The Muslim Ummah of North America (MUNA) held a special gathering in New York on Tuesday (18th February) to honor local Imams and Islamic scholars. The event, organized by MUNA's Ulama Division, took place at the Baitul Mamur Mosque auditorium and featured discussions on key community initiatives, followed by a dinner for attendees. The meeting was presided over by Maulana Dr. Ruhul Amin, President of the Ulama Division and MUNA's National Assistant Executive Director. The event was conducted by Janab Abu Obaidah, another National Assistant Executive Director of MUNA. The chief guest of the evening was MUNA National President Imam Delwar Hossain, who addressed the gathering of religious leaders and highlighted the organization's ongoing efforts to serve the community. During his speech, Imam Delwar Hossain outlined MUNA's five-point program,



emphasizing initiatives such as social work and the distribution of the Quran in multiple languages. These efforts aim to spread Islamic knowledge and strengthen the spiritual foundation of the Muslim community across North America. He encouraged imams and scholars to play an active role in these initiatives and collaborate in fostering positive social change.

HIGHLIGHT

- MUNA organizes an interactive session and dinner for New York's imams and scholars
- National President Imam Delwar Hossain presents a five-point community action plan
- Event focuses on social work, Quran distribution, and strengthening community ties

The meeting saw participation from Imams, Khatibs, and Islamic scholars from various mosques, many of whom delivered brief remarks on the importance of unity and active engagement in community service. They stressed the need for continuous dialogue and collaboration among religious leaders to address pressing social and religious issues. The event began with

a recitation from the Holy Quran by Imam Junaid Hossain of the BIC. Prominent figures in attendance included former MUNA National President Dr. Saidur Rahman Chowdhury, MUNA National Executive Director Janab Arman Chowdhury, CPA, and MUNA New York South Zone President Maulana Emdad Ullah. Former MUNA South Zone President Janab Safayet

Hossain Safa and several other notable community leaders were also present. The meeting served as a platform for religious leaders to exchange ideas and strengthen relationships, reinforcing the importance of collective efforts in addressing the needs of the Muslim community. At the conclusion of the event, a dinner was arranged for all attendees, further fostering a spirit of brotherhood and unity among the participants. MUNA's initiative highlights the growing need for structured collaboration among Islamic scholars and religious institutions to support the Muslim community in North America. The event underscored the significance of outreach programs, social service initiatives, and Quran distribution efforts in spreading knowledge and reinforcing faith-based values. Moving forward, MUNA aims to continue engaging with religious leaders and expanding its efforts to serve the community more effectively.



Extremism

Hate Has No Home: Shahana Hanif Condemns Islamophobia

Community Leaders Rally Against Religious Intolerance

Abdullah Hamid

Council Member Shahana Hanif has strongly condemned an Islamophobic incident at Masjid Nur Al-Islam in Kensington, calling it a blatant act of hate that threatens the safety and well-being of the local Muslim community. The mosque, which has long served as a spiritual and cultural haven for immigrant families, elders, and youth, became the target of an anti-Muslim attack, raising concerns about rising hate crimes in the city. Hanif expressed deep outrage over the incident, stating, "I am deeply disgusted by this flagrant act of Islamophobia at Masjid Nur Al-Islam, a local mosque in my district. My office is working with the 66th Precinct to file a report and support the community." She emphasized that this

was not an isolated case but part of a troubling pattern of hate-driven incidents targeting religious minorities. According to Hanif, the perpetrator has ties to Betar US, a group with a history of anti-Muslim sentiment. This connection has heightened fears among the community and strengthened calls for stronger actions against hate groups. Hanif urged fellow city officials to stand in solidarity against all forms of hatred, including Islamophobia and antisemitism. The attack has sent

HIGHLIGHT

- Islamophobia Strikes Kensington Mosque, Officials Respond
- Perpetrator linked to anti-Muslim group Betar US
- Emphasis on unity and safety for all communities



Shahana Hanif
CITY COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT 39

shockwaves through Kensington, a diverse neighborhood where Muslims and Jews coexist peacefully. Hanif

highlighted that no community should live in fear and stressed the importance of protecting people's right to worship

freely and safely. "Jews in Boro Park and Muslims in Kensington deserve to live, pray, and walk about their

neighborhoods safely and without fear," she added. In recent weeks, there has been a rise in incidents targeting places of worship and religious communities. Such acts, Hanif warned, not only harm those directly affected but also create fear, division, and instability among the larger community. She called on law enforcement to conduct a thorough investigation and for city leaders to take proactive measures in preventing further attacks. As investigations continue, Hanif remains committed to advocating for policies that protect all New Yorkers from discrimination and violence. Her message is clear: Islamophobia, antisemitism, and all forms of hate have no place in a city that prides itself on diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect.



Shahana Hanif
CITY COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT 39

Statement from Council Member Shahana Hanif on Islamophobia at Masjid Nur Al-Islam in Kensington
Thursday, February 20, 2025

"I am deeply disgusted by this flagrant act of Islamophobia at Masjid Nur Al Islam, a local mosque in my district in Kensington—a space that has long served as a haven for immigrant elders, families, and youth who have every right to feel safe. My office is working with the 66th Precinct to file a report and support the community," **said Council Member Shahana Hanif**

"This is not an isolated incident. The perpetrator is linked to Betar US, an anti-Muslim group. We must be united in condemning all forms of hate, and I urge my colleagues to speak out against this dangerous bigotry. Islamophobia, antisemitism, or any form of hate have no place in our city or country. Jews in Boro Park and Muslims in Kensington deserve to live, pray, and walk about their neighborhoods safely and without fear. The attacks we've seen this week don't just harm those directly involved but instill fear, sow division, and endanger innocent bystanders. Every New Yorker should be able to live their lives free of hatred, threats, and violence."



Ekushey February: A Global Tribute to Language and Identity

How the World Commemorates International Mother Language Day

Osman Khan

Every year on February 21, people across the globe come together to honor the sacrifices made for language rights and cultural preservation, commemorating the historic events of Ekushey February (21st February). Recognized as International Mother Language Day by UNESCO, this day highlights the importance of linguistic diversity, the protection of endangered languages, and the ongoing struggle for language rights. The observance not only serves as a reminder of the tragic events of 1952 but also as a platform to advocate for the recognition and celebration of mother tongues worldwide. The struggle for the recognition of Bangla as a state language began with the people of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) protesting against the imposition

of Urdu by the Pakistani government. On February 21, 1952, students in Dhaka demanded that Bangla be recognized as an official language. The protest turned tragic when police opened fire, killing several students. This event became a symbol of the fight for linguistic and cultural rights, leading to the recognition of Bangla as a state language and the eventual declaration of February 21 as International Mother Language Day by UNESCO in 1999. The celebration takes different forms across the globe. In Bangladesh, people gathered at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka, offering floral tributes to the martyrs who fought for the recognition of Bangla. Schools and universities held poetry recitations, musical performances, and discussions on language preservation. In India, particularly in West Bengal,

processions and cultural programs were organized to celebrate the deep bond between Bengali-speaking communities. In Kolkata, literary events and musical tributes were held to reflect on the historical struggle for language rights. Across Europe, Bangladeshi expatriates and multicultural organizations marked the occasion with language awareness campaigns. In Paris, UNESCO's headquarters hosted discussions on the importance of multilingualism and linguistic inclusion, emphasizing the significance of language rights in a globalized world. Similar events took place in London and Berlin, bringing together diverse communities to celebrate linguistic diversity.

In Australia, Bangladeshi communities and multicultural groups

HIGHLIGHT

- The historical struggle behind February 21, 1952
- The role of education in preserving mother tongues
- “Shommilito Mohan Ekush Udjapon 2025” held in New York

organized cultural events, discussions, and art exhibitions to highlight the importance of linguistic diversity. Cities like Sydney and Melbourne saw gatherings at community centers where participants paid tribute to the language martyrs through poetry recitations, traditional songs, and panel discussions on language preservation. Educational institutions also held special programs, emphasizing the need to protect and celebrate mother tongues in a multilingual society. In North America, Bangladeshi

communities in Canada and the United States observed the day with parades, cultural programs, and educational workshops. In Toronto, a symbolic march to a replica Shaheed Minar was held, while in Washington, DC, language activists participated in panel discussions about the importance of mother tongues and their role in preserving cultural heritage. In New York, one of the most significant celebrations was the Shommilito Mohan Ekush Udjapon 2025, organized by the Dhaka University Alumni Association of the USA in collaboration with various cultural and alumni groups. The event featured performances, children's creative competitions, and discussions, culminating in a midnight floral tribute at a replica Shaheed Minar. Participants, including community

leaders, activists, and artists, reflected on the historical significance of Ekushey February and its relevance in preserving language and cultural identity. These worldwide celebrations reaffirmed the universal importance of linguistic rights and the enduring legacy of Ekushey February. What began as a struggle for the recognition of Bangla has evolved into a global movement advocating for the preservation of endangered languages and the promotion of inclusive language policies. The day serves as a powerful reminder that language is not just a means of communication but a fundamental part of identity, culture, and unity. As people across the world continue to observe February 21, its message grows stronger—honoring the past while inspiring future generations to cherish and protect their mother tongues.

