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# NEW YORK NEWS

The Voice of People

From New York

## Hope For Gaza, New Ties For Syria

Trump's Gulf visit ends with aid pledges and diplomatic shifts

**Farhana Azmi**

President Donald Trump concluded his Middle East tour with a massive \$1.4 trillion investment pledge from the UAE into the US AI sector. Over the four-day visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE, Trump sealed business and defense deals totaling over \$2 trillion, claiming to deliver on promises of job creation and global leadership.

In Saudi Arabia, a \$600bn agreement was reached, focusing on military and medical research. Qatar committed \$96bn in aviation deals, including orders for over 200 Boeing aircraft. The UAE not only pledged \$1.4 trillion for AI but also agreed to a \$440bn energy partnership and a \$1.4bn weapons purchase. The two countries will also build the world's largest AI campus outside the US.

Speaking in Abu Dhabi, Trump emphasized his "great friendships" with Gulf leaders, saying the Biden administration was "absent" for four years. He also called for aid to starving Palestinians in Gaza, noting, "a lot of good things are going to happen next month."

Trump confirmed that Iran had received a US proposal for nuclear talks and threatened consequences if Tehran delayed.

Notably absent from Trump's itinerary was Israel, signaling a shift toward alliances with wealthy Gulf nations amid tensions with Netanyahu.

The trip, capped with visits to Abu Dhabi's Abrahamic Family House and Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, showcased Trump's blend of business, diplomacy, and symbolism.

As he boarded Air Force One, Trump left with major deals that could define his foreign policy and re-election messaging.



Photo: WHO and UNHCR medical aid arrives at Beirut airport. Image Source: REUTERS/Louisa Gouliamaki

## WHO Faces Future Without U.S.

Global health body braces for \$600 million shortfall after U.S. withdrawal

**James Anderson**

The World Health Organization (WHO) opened its annual assembly in Geneva this week amid a deepening financial crisis triggered by President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw the United States, the agency's largest donor. Set to take effect on January 21, 2026, the U.S. exit threatens to upend the organization's structure and priorities. Historically responsible for around 18% of WHO's budget, the U.S. departure leaves a projected \$600 million shortfall for 2025, with 21% budget cuts

expected over the next two years. "Our goal is to focus on the high-value stuff," said Daniel Thornton, WHO's director of coordinated resource mobilization, emphasizing the need to preserve critical work such as outbreak response, vaccine guidelines, and treatments for diseases like HIV, cholera, and obesity. Internal planning documents reveal that the WHO is preparing to close offices in high-income countries and reduce training programs to safeguard essential services. Staff reductions in management and cuts to

non-essential spending are already underway as the agency adjusts to a leaner operational model. Meanwhile, China is stepping in to fill the funding vacuum. Under a 2022 funding framework overhaul, China's assessed contributions will rise from 15% to 20%, positioning it as the WHO's top state donor. "We have to adapt ourselves to multilateral organizations without the Americans. Life goes on," said Chen Xu, China's ambassador to Geneva. The shift has sparked debate among global health experts, some

### HIGHLIGHT

- U.S. to officially exit WHO on January 21, 2026, per Trump's executive order.

- WHO faces \$600 million budget hole in 2025 and 21% cuts over the next two years.

- China will become the largest state fee contributor, rising to 20%.

warning that it could alter the WHO's direction. Others see an opening for long-needed reform. Anil Soni, CEO of the WHO Foundation, noted the crisis has prompted scrutiny of internal inefficiencies, including document overproduction and micromanagement of logistical tasks. Private philanthropy is beginning to plug some of the gaps. The ELMA Foundation, focused on child health in Africa, recently donated \$2 million to sustain WHO's Global Measles and Rubella Laboratory Network, which connects over 700 labs globally. As the WHO advances toward a landmark pandemic preparedness agreement, its ability to navigate this financial storm remains a defining test of its global leadership.

## Pope Leo Calls for Unity

First American Pope Denounces Exploitation, Urges Peace

**Michael Thompson**

Pope Leo XIV, the first American pope, was inaugurated in a Mass at St. Peter's Square before more than 100,000 attendees. Traveling the crowd in the popemobile, he stopped to kiss a child, embodying his humility. Among guests were US Vice-President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. In his homily, Leo condemned economic exploitation and called for unity in the Church, rejecting "religious propaganda." He prayed for "just and lasting peace" in Ukraine and for Gaza's suffering. The ceremony included bestowing the pallium and fisherman's ring, symbols of his pastoral role and authority.

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Office of New York City  
Council Member  
**Amanda Farías**



## Districtwide Family Day!

Día familiar comunitario en Castle Hill Playground!

Join Council Member Farías for family fun activities in a local park. Unase a la Concejal Amanda Farías para actividades familiares divertidas en un parque local.

Friday, May 30th | Viernes 30 de mayo

Castle Hill Playground

Enter at Parker St. & Castle Hill Ave

3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

PARTNERS:



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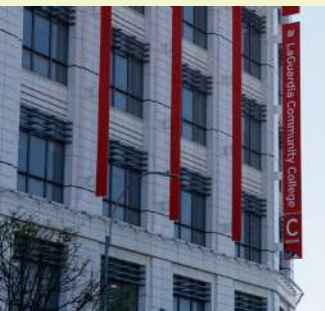


# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Visas Of 17 Bangladeshi Students At LaGuardia College Canceled

### NYN DESK

Homeland Security has canceled the visas of 17 Bangladeshi students at LaGuardia Community College in New York City. The number is for April. The letter sent to the college from the Immigration Department said that the F-1 or student visas of the mentioned students were canceled due to suspicious movements. The college authorities have sent emails regarding the visa cancellation to the institutional emails of the concerned students. After this news became known, there is panic among international students at LaGuardia Community College and other colleges in the city. The visas of 5,000 international students have been canceled in the last 3 months. LaGuardia Community College is a public community college in New York City. It is in the Long Island City neighborhood of Queens in and part of the City University of New York. LaGuardia is named after former congressman and New York City mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia. The college offers associate degrees in the arts, sciences, and applied sciences, as well as continuing education programs. LaGuardia Community College was founded on January 22, 1967, by a resolution of the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York, a New York State government agency which was the precursor to the City University of New York's board of trustees. The new college, originally designated 'Community College Number Nine', was to be comprehensive: 'The college will be oriented to the needs and interests of the community in which it is located, providing cultural activities, special services, continuing education and skills training opportunities for community residents of all ages.'



## Promotion of the 39th FOBANA Conference Held in New York

### Staff Reporter

Officials of the host committee for the upcoming 39th FOBANA Conference are actively promoting the event across North America. As part of this outreach, they visited New York on May 9, 10, and 11 to engage with local media and community leaders. On Saturday, May 10, the FOBANA Executive Committee and host committee officials held a significant meeting with representatives from various media outlets. During the session, they discussed the progress of ongoing initiatives and preparations for the upcoming conference. The media representatives offered valuable suggestions, which the organizers welcomed with appreciation.



The meeting was attended by several prominent individuals, including Abir Alamgir, Executive Secretary of the FOBANA Central Committee (New York); Nahidul Khan Sahel, Convener of the 39th FOBANA Conference (Atlanta); Mahbubur Rahman Bhuiyan, Member Secretary (Atlanta); Duke Khan, Host President (Atlanta); Kazi Nahid, Co-Convener (Atlanta); and Nargis Ahmed, Advisor to the

FOBANA Advisory Committee (New York). The 39th FOBANA Conference 2025, the largest gathering of Bangladeshi expatriates in North America, will take place at the Gas South Convention Center in Atlanta, Georgia, during the Labor Day Weekend on August 29, 30, and 31. This year's host organization is Bangla Dhara of Atlanta. A total of 87 organizations from 24 cities across North America are expected to participate. The event will draw more than 8,000 expatriate Bangladeshis, along with notable Bangladeshi business leaders from eight other countries, making it a truly international celebration of culture, unity, and community engagement.

## Shahana Hanif Is Running Again For Council Election



### Reporter

Council member Shahana Hanif is running again for a second term in the New York City Council election. The Bangladeshi American politician is running for a second term in the 39th district, which encompasses a

vast area including Park Slope, Windsor Terrace, Boerum Hill and Carroll Gardens. Shahana Hanif, who made history when she was elected in 2021, is the first Muslim woman elected to the New York City Council. She has attracted attention in her first term by

starting her journey with immigrant and progressive values. However, she faces a tough competition in this year's election. Her main rival is Maya Kornberg, a researcher at the Brennan Center for Justice and of Jewish descent. Hanif's voice on the Israeli attack on Gaza and her participation in various protests in support

of it have brought her to the center of political controversy. Incidentally, early voting for the city council election will begin on June 14 and the main election will be held on June 24. Ranked choice voting will be in effect in this election, allowing voters to select candidates from multiple choices.

### Prayer Time IN New York

FAJR	DHUHR	ASR	MAGRIB	ISHA
04:03	12:52	04:49	08:10	09:43
04:02	12:52	04:50	08:11	09:44
04:00	12:53	04:50	08:12	09:45
03:59	12:53	04:50	08:13	09:47
03:58	12:53	04:51	08:14	09:48
03:57	12:53	04:51	08:15	09:49
03:56	12:53	04:51	08:16	09:50

## Number 31

### Elhaam Academy In Jamaica Offers Attractive Summer Camps

#### Reporter

Elhaam Academy, a respected religious educational institution serving the Bangladeshi community in New York, has announced its much-anticipated summer offer for 2025. Located in Jamaica, Queens, the academy is offering three enriching programs: Summer Camp, Summer Maktab, and Summer Hifz. Registration for all programs is currently open and will continue until May 31, with enrollment on a first-come, first-served basis. The summer sessions will be held in July and August,

**Summer Camp 2025**  
July - August | Monday - Thursday | 9:30AM TO 1:30PM  
\$599 OR \$99

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- ADJURAL HOMEWORK - AYAZ  
- ISLAMIC STUDIES - QURAN  
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- MARCHING BAND - FIELD TRIP  
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July - August | MONDAY TO 10PM  
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running four days a week from Monday to Thursday, between 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. The Summer Camp is designed to engage students in a wide range of educational and recreational activities. Participants will take part in Islamic Studies, Quran, Arabic, Islamic music, physical exercise, and learning daily prayers. In addition to classroom-based learning, students will also enjoy fun and educational field trips that promote teamwork and community bonding. The Summer Maktab program offers foundational Arabic language instruction, focusing on essential reading and writing skills. It is geared toward students who are at the beginning of their Arabic language journey and need structured guidance. Meanwhile, the Summer Hifz program caters to children interested in memorizing the Quran or reinforcing previously memorized portions. This program offers a supportive setting for focused memorization under qualified instructors. Elhaam Academy encourages early registration due to limited seating.

UNITY

Lions Celebrate Service and Democracy at Annual Convention

MD-20 Lions gather for leadership elections and fellowship in Niagara Falls

Sakin Auhin

The sound of unity, service, and leadership echoed through Niagara Falls, New York, as members of Lions Clubs District 20-R and the wider MD-20 region gathered for the 101st Annual New York State & Bermuda Lions Convention from May 16 to 18, 2025. The convention brought together delegates from across New York and Bermuda for a pivotal weekend of elections, meetings, and community building. Held at the Niagara Falls Convention Center, with accommodations provided at the nearby Sheraton Niagara Falls, the three-day convention combined democratic tradition with the Lions' mission of humanitarian service. Lions from across the region participated in formal leadership elections, discussed strategic priorities, and reaffirmed their commitment to service at local and global levels.



While the convention serves many purposes—networking, celebration, and inspiration—its primary function this year was to elect the district's new slate of leaders. Delegates cast their votes to determine the future direction of the organization, a hallmark of the Lions' democratic

structure. The outcomes of these elections will shape how Lions Clubs across the MD-20 region continue to respond to challenges and engage in community service throughout the coming year. District 20-R, which includes a diverse group of clubs known for their local initiatives and

global outreach, used the convention as an opportunity to highlight accomplishments and plan ahead. As in past years, the event also served as a celebration of the Lions' enduring values: integrity, service, and leadership. "This annual convention is more than just a formality," noted one

longtime delegate. "It's about reaffirming who we are as Lions—people who serve with purpose and lead with vision." Throughout the weekend, attendees participated in sessions that emphasized the importance of adapting to changing needs, engaging younger generations,

and strengthening partnerships with local communities and nonprofits. Fellowship was abundant, as Lions reconnected with peers, shared stories of impact, and discussed new strategies to amplify their service. The 101st convention was particularly meaningful, marking over a century of service in the region under the Lions Clubs International banner. It also underscored the continued relevance of civic leadership organizations in a rapidly changing world. As the weekend concluded and delegates prepared to return to their home clubs, the spirit of unity remained palpable. With new leaders elected and fresh momentum gained, the Lions of District 20-R and MD-20 left Niagara Falls ready to serve with renewed energy, inspired by tradition and focused on the future.



# YOUTH

## Future Leaders Connect with Law Enforcement

COPO Youth Career Day promotes trust, opportunity, and community empowerment



### David Mitchell

In a landmark event aimed at building bridges between law enforcement and immigrant youth, the Council of Peoples Organization (COPO) hosted its annual Youth Career Day on Saturday, May 17, 2025, at the NYPD Police Academy in Queens. The event brought together an impressive lineup of public officials, including New York City Mayor Eric Adams, NYPD

Commissioner Jessica Tisch, FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert C. Kissane, and New York State Human Rights Commissioner Denise Miranda, alongside over 30 federal, state, and city agencies. Hundreds of youth, parents, and community leaders filled the police academy for a day of learning, inspiration, and connection. Attendees had the opportunity to explore potential careers in public service—from the FBI, NYPD, and Fire

Department of New York to the United States Coast Guard Academy, U.S. Marshals Service, National Park Service, and more. "Honored to join the COPO Youth Fair alongside religious leaders, the NYPD, over 30 law enforcement agencies, and hundreds of Muslim youth to foster dialogue between law enforcement and the community. This experience will undoubtedly help build stronger mutual trust,"

said Mayor Eric Adams in a social media post following the event. The program opened with the National Anthem, performed by youth from Darul-Uloom NY, and continued with welcoming remarks by Imam Tahir Kukiqi of the Albanian Islamic Cultural Center. Key presentations addressed real-world topics such as internet safety (FBI), hate crimes (NYPD), and emergency preparedness (NYC Office of Emergency Management). Master of Ceremonies Mohammad Razvi, CEO of COPO, guided the event with a focus on empowerment and access. "This is about giving our youth the tools, confidence, and awareness they need to pursue impactful careers in public service," he noted. More than 60 partner organizations took part, including schools, mosques, advocacy groups, and cultural associations such as Save The People, Elhaam Academy, Darul-Uloom NY, Al-

Iman School, Jamaica Muslim Center, Masjid Al-Hikmah, Razi School, Yemeni American Association of NY, American Council of Minority Women, and many more. A key mission of the event was to connect underrepresented communities—especially South Asian, Arab, African, and Central Asian youth—with government institutions in a space rooted in respect, safety, and shared goals. By interacting directly with officers, agents, and recruiters, participants gained critical exposure to career paths that may have once felt out of reach. Throughout the day, attendees enjoyed a free halal lunch, received gift bags, and engaged with hands-on exhibits and information booths. Breakout conversations allowed youth to ask candid questions about careers in law enforcement, civil service, and national security. Closing remarks were delivered by Imam

Rafeek Mohammad of Al-Ihsan Academy, who emphasized the spiritual and civic responsibility of young people to contribute positively to society. The success of the event was made possible thanks to generous support from key sponsors, including News Corp, Healthfirst, Asian American Federation, Fidelis Care, and The Brooklyn Hospital Center. COPO, which has long served immigrant and Muslim communities in New York, continues to focus on equipping youth with the knowledge and access they need to succeed. "This was not just a career day—it was a statement," said one attendee. "It shows us that we belong, we are seen, and we can lead." As the event concluded, the message was clear: when communities are empowered with opportunity, understanding, and trust, the future becomes a place everyone can help build.



# YOUTH



# WOMEN

## A Community Tribute to Motherhood

### International Mother's Day 2025 celebrated with unity and gratitude in Queens

**Emily Parker**

In a vibrant celebration filled with warmth, gratitude, and community spirit, the South Asian Foundation for Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST), in collaboration with Save The People, hosted a heartfelt International Mother's Day 2025 event in Jamaica, New York.

Designed to honor women who embody motherhood not just biologically but through everyday acts of strength, compassion, and leadership, the gathering brought together community members across generations and cultures. With moving speeches, heartfelt expressions, and communal bonding over shared meals, the event stood as a powerful reminder of the vital roles that women—especially mothers—play in society. "We were honored to co-sponsor this beautiful celebration," said a representative from Save The People, reflecting on the event's



collaborative spirit. "It was incredible to be surrounded by women who serve as mothers in every sense of the word." The celebration featured remarks from several distinguished community voices, including New York State Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani, who spoke passionately about the importance of recognizing maternal contributions beyond traditional definitions. His words resonated deeply with attendees, offering a mix of political awareness,

cultural relevance, and emotional upliftment. "This is more than a celebration of motherhood—it's a celebration of resilience, guidance, and generational strength," one attendee noted, emphasizing the multidimensional roles women take on in family and community life. Organizers made it clear that the goal was not just recognition but reflection and connection. The event highlighted the experiences of South Asian women, many of whom balance multiple

responsibilities within immigrant households, often navigating systemic challenges while supporting their families and contributing to the broader community. The inclusive nature of the event welcomed women from various backgrounds and faiths, acknowledging that the experience of motherhood transcends cultural and geographic boundaries. The event also drew attention to the importance of uplifting voices that are often unheard—those of caregivers, single

mothers, grandmothers, mentors, and community leaders who serve as maternal figures. As food was shared and stories exchanged, the celebration struck a balance between festivity and meaning. Traditional South Asian dishes were served, creating a warm, familiar atmosphere for many in attendance and reinforcing the theme of cultural pride and communal nourishment. "There was something incredibly powerful about gathering together to honor not only our own mothers but the many women who act as the backbone of our community," said a guest who attended with her family. "It was a reminder that love, guidance, and sacrifice take many forms." Community-centered events like these serve a deeper purpose beyond celebration. They foster connection, elevate shared values, and bring attention to the lived realities of immigrant families—especially the women who sustain them. In the words of one organizer, "We want to create spaces where women feel

seen, supported, and celebrated. This day was one step toward that goal." The event concluded with tokens of appreciation for the mothers in attendance and a reaffirmation of the importance of community care. Organizers and attendees alike expressed a desire to continue building spaces that uplift and celebrate the often invisible labor of women in families and society. With growing support from civic leaders, local nonprofits, and grassroots organizers, this year's International Mother's Day celebration in Jamaica, Queens was more than an event—it was a collective expression of gratitude, unity, and the enduring impact of maternal love in all its forms. As the sun set on a day filled with emotion, laughter, and reflection, one thing was clear: honoring mothers is not just about a single day—it's about recognizing the everyday leadership that shapes communities and nurtures future generations.



# BOROUGH OF QUEENS



## Cultural Pride Lights Up Borough Hall

Queens Marks AAPI Heritage Month with Color, Culture, and Community

### Christopher Scott

In a borough as vibrant and multifaceted as Queens, few events capture its spirit quite like the annual Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month celebration, which took place at Queens Borough Hall. Drawing hundreds of families and community leaders from across the borough, the event served as both a joyful celebration and a powerful tribute to the resilience and cultural richness of the AAPI community. Against the backdrop of a borough defined by its diversity, the

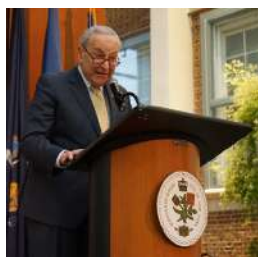
evening's festivities brought together a broad cross-section of Queens' AAPI residents—from Chinese and Korean families in Flushing, to Filipino communities in Woodside's Little Manila, to Thai and Bangladeshi neighborhoods in Elmhurst and Jamaica. The gathering was as inclusive as it was vibrant, underscoring the unique fabric that makes Queens, in the words of local officials, "The World's Borough." "Our AAPI community represents the best of what Queens stands for—resilience, creativity, and spirit," said a borough representative. "From

business owners to artists, from parents to students, the contributions of these communities are woven into every part of borough life." The evening featured cultural performances, heartfelt remarks, and culinary offerings that reflected the global flavors rooted in Queens' neighborhoods. The air was filled with music and dance, creating a lively yet heartfelt atmosphere that welcomed guests of all ages. Children in traditional dress performed regional dances while community elders shared stories of migration, perseverance,

and progress. For many in attendance, the event was more than just a celebration—it was an affirmation of identity and belonging. "In today's world, being seen and heard matters," said a local Bangladeshi-American attendee from Jamaica. "This event shows our kids that their culture is not only recognized but celebrated." The celebration also highlighted how AAPI communities continue to shape the borough's economic, cultural, and civic life. Small business owners, nonprofit leaders, and educators stood alongside public officials

in a demonstration of unity that transcended background and language. In recent years, the AAPI community in Queens has grown rapidly, becoming one of the most dynamic and influential groups in the borough. With each passing year, this heritage month event has grown in scope and spirit, reflecting both the expanding population and its deepening impact. Organizers emphasized the importance of celebrating cultural heritage while also addressing the ongoing challenges facing AAPI communities, from

language access and economic inequality to combating bias and fostering inclusion. As the evening drew to a close, there was a shared sense of gratitude and pride. The event was a clear reminder that in Queens, diversity isn't just celebrated during heritage months—it is embedded in the borough's identity every day. With Borough Hall lit up in cultural colors and the sound of celebration echoing into the night, Queens once again affirmed its place as a beacon of multicultural harmony and pride.



## Queens Chamber of Commerce Welcomes New Leadership

District Attorney Melinda Katz Officiates Swearing-In Ceremony

### Tamzida Mushfiq

In a show of collaboration between public service and business leadership, Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz recently officiated the swearing-in ceremony for the new officers of the Queens Chamber of Commerce, reaffirming the shared commitment to driving economic progress across the borough. Held in a spirit of partnership, the

event recognized the Chamber's pivotal role in nurturing Queens' economic ecosystem—from championing small businesses to attracting new investment and strengthening the local workforce. Katz, a longtime advocate for community and economic well-being, praised the Chamber for its continued dedication to creating a thriving business environment. "The Queens Chamber of Commerce has been instrumental in

promoting economic growth and a healthy business environment in the borough," said Katz. "It was a pleasure to swear in their new officers as we continue to work together to ensure a prosperous economic future in Queens." With roots stretching back over a century, the Queens Chamber of Commerce remains one of the city's most influential business organizations. It serves as a bridge between

private enterprise and public policy, helping businesses navigate regulations, access resources, and foster connections that drive long-term success. In today's evolving economic landscape, leadership within institutions like the Chamber is more vital than ever. The swearing-in of new officers marks a continued commitment to advocating for local businesses, improving job opportunities, and fostering sustainable

development throughout the borough. The ceremony also served as a reminder of the importance of cross-sector collaboration. With elected officials like District Attorney Katz lending support, the business community is better positioned to address not only economic goals but also public safety and civic engagement. For both seasoned entrepreneurs and emerging business owners, the message

was clear: in Queens, growth and safety go hand-in-hand—and cooperation between public servants and business leaders is essential for both. The new leadership of the Queens Chamber of Commerce steps into its role with renewed purpose, backed by community allies and driven by a shared vision for a stronger, more prosperous borough.



# EDUCATION

## A Walk Down Memory Lane at DU

Batch 98–99 reunites at TSC in an emotional mega reunion after 25 years

**Mirza Hasib**

Dhaka University, one of South Asia's oldest and most iconic academic institutions, transformed into a vibrant landscape of nostalgia and joy as the Batch of 1998–99 returned to the TSC premises for their Mega Reunion 2025 on Friday, May 16, 2025. Organized with great enthusiasm and precision, the event brought together former classmates, many of whom were meeting after more than two decades, to celebrate friendship, memory, and the passage of time. From early morning, the TSC grounds began to fill with familiar faces—some marked by age, others seemingly untouched, all lit up by the joy of reconnection. The day began at 9:00 AM with registration and breakfast, setting the tone for a full day of heartfelt exchanges and cheerful reminiscences. The program officially commenced at 11:00 AM with the national anthem, followed by a moment of silence in memory of batchmates who had passed



away. Emotions ran high as names were remembered and the shared silence turned into a symbolic embrace across time and distance. A colorful rally then circled from TSC to the Aparajeyo Bangla sculpture and back, sparking a spontaneous outburst of song and laughter. The lyrics of “echoed across the campus—an anthem that perfectly captured

the spirit of the day. Former students posed for group photos, organized by department, residential hall, and workplace. Two dedicated photo booths were set up to help preserve memories that had been decades in the making. As one attendee noted, “Just being back on campus makes us feel young again. The years fall away the moment you see an old friend.” Israfal Aulia,

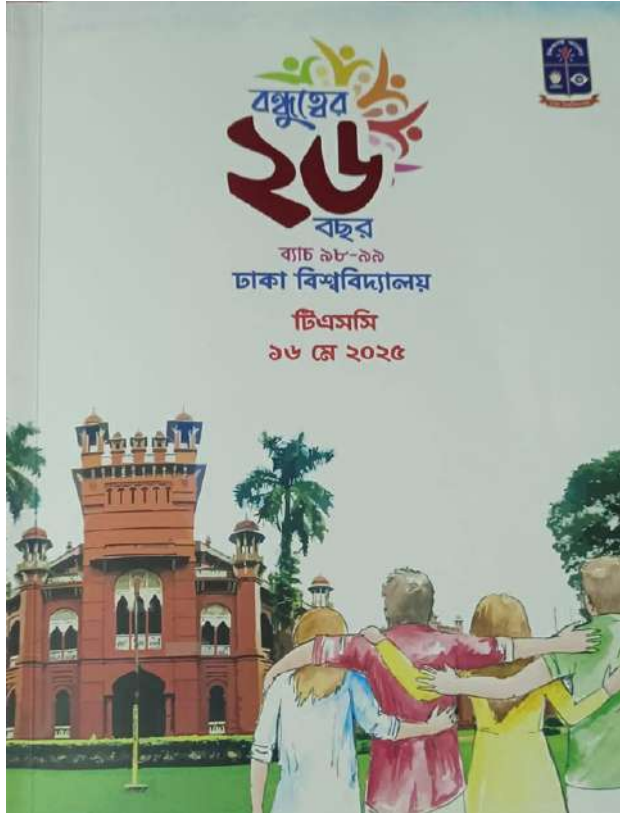
an alumna from the Economics Department and a current official at Bangladesh Bank, attended for the first time. “This event gave me the chance to reconnect with my roots,” he said. “University life is something we often drift away from in the hustle of our careers. Today, it feels like we never left.” The afternoon unfolded with lunch, a souvenir unveiling, a raffle draw,

and cultural programs that brought together generations of shared memories. Alumni laughed over old jokes, and danced to the rhythms of their youth. The highlight came in the evening when the celebrated band Different Touch took the stage, sending waves of energy through the crowd and making it feel like the early 2000s all over again.

As the sun set and the final performances concluded around 9:00 PM, emotions were high but so was the sense of unity. What could have been just a day of gathering became something more: a celebration of resilience, friendship, and the lasting bonds formed in the classrooms, canteens, and corridors of Dhaka University. “Batchmate means a friend for life”—the reunion’s theme—resonated deeply throughout the day. Whether through the raucous laughter of old jokes, the quiet tears shed for lost friends, or the warm embraces between classmates, the sentiment held strong. In the words of Sheikh Selim Reza, convenor of the organizing committee, “This wasn’t just a reunion; it was a reaffirmation of who we are and where we began.” Indeed, for those few hours, the university was more than a campus—it was a living memory, a place where time stood still, and the friendships of youth shone brighter than ever.



# EDUCATION



# FOOD

## Countdown to Curry Awards 2025

Global culinary talents gather in New York for a first-of-its-kind event

**Ashley Reed**

With global anticipation mounting, the inaugural American Curry Awards is set to take place on Saturday, May 24, 2025, at the prestigious Terrace on the Park in Queens, New York. Organized jointly by Khalil Group of Industries and Asha Group, the event aims to celebrate the cultural, creative, and entrepreneurial excellence of the curry culinary world—from professional chefs to passionate home cooks. The awards come on the heels of a successful Best Home Chef competition, which was held on Sunday, May 18

at Khalil Biryani House in the Bronx. Dozens of home chefs showcased their culinary skills in three categories: appetizer, main course, and dessert. Winners from this segment will be honored at the May 24 gala, where they'll receive the Best Home Chef Award, joining industry professionals on one of the most inclusive stages in the culinary world. The final event promises to be an extravagant celebration of flavors and community. In addition to the home chef category, awards will be given in eight professional categories: Best Restaurant, Best Chef, Best

Food Blogger, Best Entrepreneur, Chef of the Year, Personality of the Year, Curry Legend Award, and Lifetime Achievement Award. At a press conference held on May 14 at Khalil Biryani House, co-founders Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, of Khalil Group, and Akash Rahman, of Asha Group, detailed the extensive planning behind the event. "Though this is the first time we're hosting the American Curry Awards in the U.S., our goal has always been to make this a world-class event," said Akash Rahman. "We're proud of the diversity and talent this platform is bringing

together." Also unveiled at the press conference was the official American Curry Awards trophy, which received widespread praise for its unique and elegant design. "This trophy reflects the prestige of the award itself," noted Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, who rose to national fame with the launch of Biden Biryani and has continued to push boundaries in the culinary space. The judging panel includes renowned names such as Chef Tony Karim Khan, Dr. Izzat Husain (India), Rossahm Bin Rusli (Malaysia), Montaser Masoud (Saudi Arabia),

Sylvester Rozario (Bahrain), Mahmoud Yassin (Jordan), Oli Khan MBE (UK), and Md. Golam Mostofa (USA). Notable Bangladeshi culinary personalities such as Rahima Sultana Reeta, Shaheda Yasmin, Mareena Khandokar, and Lobbi Rahman are also part of the esteemed jury. Adding star power to the ceremony, Bangladeshi food influencers Adnan Faruq Hillol and Nusrat Islam (Zoltan BD) are expected to attend, alongside dignitaries, lawmakers, and guests from across the United States. Special appearances are also expected from figures

like Dr. Sabur Khan, Chairman of Daffodil International University in Bangladesh. While the May 18 cook-off energized the community and revealed promising talent, all eyes are now on the May 24 awards ceremony, which is shaping up to be a landmark event for the global South Asian culinary community. With registration closed and preparations complete, the stage is set for a night that promises to blend culinary artistry, cultural pride, and international celebration—proving that curry, in all its forms, continues to bring the world to the table.





PRESENTS

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# END PAGE

# Crystal Palace Stuns Manchester City in FA Cup Final

Eze's first-half strike seals first major trophy in club history.

William Harris

Crystal Palace etched its name into English football history with a stunning 1-0 victory over Manchester City in the FA Cup final at Wembley Stadium, securing the club's first major trophy. In a performance built on discipline, resilience, and a moment of attacking brilliance, Eberechi Eze scored the decisive goal in the 16th minute, sending the South London club into a state of euphoric celebration and condemning Pep Guardiola to his first trophyless season in seven years.

Despite entering the match as overwhelming underdogs, Oliver Glasner's side executed their game plan to perfection. The winning goal came via a textbook counterattack — a signature of Glasner's approach — that sliced through City's high line with remarkable precision. After Jean-Philippe Mateta held the ball up near midfield, he released Daniel Muñoz down the right flank. The Colombian full-back delivered a low cross into the box,



Photo: Crystal Palace beat Manchester City 1-0 in the English FA Cup final on Saturday.

Image Source: Andrew Boyers/Action Images via Reuters

## HIGHLIGHT

•Crystal Palace wins its first major trophy, defeating Manchester City 1-0 in the FA Cup final.

•Eberechi Eze scores the decisive goal with a clinical finish in the 16th minute.

where Eze, timing his run impeccably, met the ball and swept it into the

far corner. The finish was calm, composed, and symbolic of a player who has been central to Palace's transformation. Though Manchester City dominated possession and pressed relentlessly before and after the goal, their efforts went unrewarded. Their best chance came shortly after falling behind when Bernardo Silva was brought down in the area by Tyrick Mitchell, earning a penalty. But Dean Henderson, whose performances

have grown in stature throughout Palace's cup run, produced a crucial save to deny Omar Marmoush from the spot. The stop preserved the lead and ignited belief in Palace's supporters, who had packed Wembley in hope of witnessing history. The second half unfolded with increasing tension as City threw numbers forward, but Palace's defensive unit held firm. Henderson again proved instrumental, making

several key interventions as time ticked down. While City's stars searched for a breakthrough, Palace's determination never wavered. Each block, clearance, and save was met with roars from the stands, and as the final whistle sounded, decades of waiting gave way to jubilation. For Crystal Palace, the triumph marks the end of a long pursuit of silverware. The club had never previously lifted a major trophy in its history, and the win is not only a crowning achievement for its players and staff but also a moment of pride for generations of loyal supporters. "It's special," said match-winner Eze in a post-match interview with BBC Sport. "I don't even know what to say." The impact of the win stretches beyond the domestic stage. With the FA Cup title comes qualification for European competition — a first for Palace — adding another layer of significance to an already unforgettable evening. Defender Chris Richards, speaking before the final, had

underscored the sense of purpose within the squad. "We can do something nobody in Crystal Palace history has done," he told CNN Sports' Darren Lewis. Following the victory, his teammate lived up to the billing. "He does things out here that nobody would expect," Richards said of Eze. "He's one of those guys who leads by example." Meanwhile, for Manchester City, the defeat is a rare blemish in an era of dominance. Winners of six Premier League titles since 2017-18, along with multiple other domestic and international trophies, City was widely expected to add another cup to their cabinet. But on this occasion, they met a team with hunger, belief, and an unshakable desire to make history. The celebrations for Crystal Palace will echo across South London and beyond. A first trophy, a ticket to Europe, and a night that will forever be remembered — it was, by every measure, a storybook ending to a dream FA Cup campaign.



Photo: Eberechi Eze (middle) scored the only goal of the game as Crystal Palace beat Manchester City in the FA Cup final.

Image Source: Justin Setterfield/The FA/Getty Images



Photo: Manchester City's Omar Marmoush has his shot saved by Crystal Palace's Dean Henderson from the penalty spot

Image Source: Andrew Boyers/Action Images via Reuters



Photo: Manchester City will finish a season trophyless for the first time since the 2016-17 campaign.

Image Source: Nick Potts/PA Wire



Photo: Crystal Palace wins the English FA Cup

Image Source: AFPpix