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# NEW YORK NEWS

The Voice of People

From New York

## Adams Exits Mayoral Race

Move reshapes crowded contest as Mamdani, Cuomo and Sliwa battle for New York City leadership

John Paul

New York City Mayor Eric Adams has ended his bid for reelection, dramatically reshaping the city's mayoral race less than four years after taking office. In a video posted to X on Sunday, Adams said "constant media speculation" and the Campaign Finance Board's decision to withhold millions in public matching funds had "undermined" his ability to mount a viable campaign. "This campaign was for the underserved, the marginalized, the abandoned and betrayed by government," Adams said. "Since then, it has been my honor to be your mayor." Adams' decision sets up a high-stakes three-way contest between Queens Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani, former governor Andrew

Cuomo running as an independent, and Republican Curtis Sliwa. The Democratic socialist Mamdani stunned observers in June by defeating Cuomo in the primary, energizing younger and progressive voters. The White House and President Donald Trump have loomed over the race. Trump urged candidates to consolidate against Mamdani and dispatched adviser Steve Witkoff to discuss potential roles with Adams, though no formal offer materialized. Adams entered City Hall as a former NYPD captain promising a "blue-collar" approach to leadership. But corruption scandals, resignations among top aides and mounting legal troubles sapped his political strength, leaving him polling far behind his rivals.



Photo: Eric Adams ends his reelection campaign for New York City mayor  
Image Source: Kylie Cooper/Reuters/PBS News



Photo: Donald Trump speaks with the press  
Image Source: Xinhua/Shutterstock

## Government Shutdown Looms

Trump convenes top lawmakers in last-ditch effort

Alexandar Sullivan

In a dramatic reversal, President Donald Trump will meet with top congressional leaders at the White House on Monday afternoon in a last-ditch bid to avert a looming government shutdown. The president's decision comes just days after he canceled a planned meeting with House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, accusing them of making "unserious and ridiculous demands" over spending legislation. House Speaker Mike Johnson, Trump's fellow Republican, confirmed on Sunday that the meeting would bring

### HIGHLIGHT

• Donald Trump to host bipartisan meeting with congressional leaders Monday afternoon.

• Talks aim to avert a government shutdown set to begin Wednesday morning.

together the top four leaders—Schumer, Jeffries, Johnson himself, and Senate Majority Leader John Thune—for a bipartisan discussion in the Oval Office. "The president wants to try to convince them to follow common sense and do what's right by the American people," Johnson said on CNN. The talks

come as Congress faces a midnight Tuesday deadline to approve either a full-year spending bill or a temporary stopgap measure to keep the government open. Without an agreement, nonessential federal programs could shut down as early as Wednesday morning, with hundreds of thousands of workers facing furloughs or layoffs. Democrats have insisted on extending Affordable Care Act tax credits and rolling back proposed Medicaid cuts in exchange for their support. "If we don't extend the Affordable Care Act tax credits, more than 20 million Americans are going to experience dramatically

increased premiums," Jeffries warned on CNN. Republicans, meanwhile, accuse Democrats of holding the government "hostage" to push their agenda. According to CBS News, Trump privately expressed skepticism that the meeting would succeed but believes a shutdown could allow him to wield executive power to eliminate "waste, fraud and abuse." The White House's Office of Management and Budget has already directed federal agencies to prepare layoff plans. The high-stakes meeting underscores how divided Washington remains as the shutdown clock ticks down.

## The Short

16-year-old faces murder charges in killing of 13-year-old outside Dunkin'

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## Zelensky Condemns Strikes

Russian drones and missiles kill four in 12-hour assault across Ukraine

Lily Anderson

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has condemned Russia's 12-hour bombardment of Kyiv and surrounding regions as "vile and cowardly" after nearly 600 drones and over 40 missiles struck overnight, killing at least four people and injuring more than 70. Among the dead was 12-year-old Oleksandra, crushed by debris in

the capital. A nurse and a patient were also killed when Kyiv's Institute of Cardiology was hit. Ukraine's Defense Ministry reported over 100 civilian sites damaged across Zaporizhzhia, Khmelnytskyi, Sumy, Mykolaiv, Chernihiv, and Odesa. "There was a huge explosion around 6 a.m. Everything started falling on our heads," said Lolita Isakova, 24.

### HIGHLIGHT

• Russian forces launched nearly 600 drones and 40 missiles in a 12-hour bombardment.

Mark Serhiyiv, a military chaplain, said it was the second time his home had been destroyed by Russian fire. Zelensky warned that Russia is "testing European air defences" and urged allies to halt

Russian oil imports and apply maximum pressure. "Moscow wants to keep fighting and killing and deserves only the harshest pressure in the world," he said. The assault triggered a NATO response. Poland scrambled jets and closed airspace near Lublin and Rzeszów. Denmark, Estonia, and Romania reported drone and airspace incursions. Global condemnation

followed swiftly. UK Defence Secretary John Healey pledged to "step up support" for Kyiv, while Finland's President Alexander Stubb called for tougher EU sanctions.

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Building Sustainable Cities:  
A Shared Responsibility

# COMMUNITY NEWS

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## Michigan congregation hit by gunman in coordinated attack

Staff Reporter

A horrifying attack at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Grand Blanc, Michigan, left at least 10 people shot, including one confirmed fatality, during a Sunday morning service attended by over 100 parishioners, police said. The shooting erupted at 10:25 a.m. when a 40-year-old male suspect drove his vehicle through the church's front entrance, then opened fire with a firearm. According to Grand Blanc Police Chief William Renye, the gunman then deliberately set the church on fire, triggering a five-alarm blaze that led to a



Photo: Gunman opens fire during Sunday service, killing one and injuring several  
Image Source: Jose Juarez/ The AP

partial building collapse. Authorities confirmed that the gunman was killed in

a gunfight with police who responded to the active shooter situation. Two victims

remain in critical condition, and officials fear more victims may be discovered in the fire's aftermath. "We do believe we will find additional victims once we have that scene secured," said Renye during a press conference. Emergency services extinguished the fire by 1 p.m., and the FBI and ATF have joined the investigation. The shooter's identity has not yet been released. Investigators are probing whether the incident may be linked to the death of Church President Russell M. Nelson, who passed away on Saturday at the age of 101. In a statement, Michigan

Governor Gretchen Whitmer called the attack "unacceptable," and Attorney General Pam Bondi urged prayers for the victims, calling it "a heartbreaking and chilling" act of violence in a sacred space. Faith leaders and security experts highlighted a broader trend of religious institutions being targeted. Michael Masters, a national expert on religious security, warned, "The offenders are often not distinguishing... there's the Jewish community, the Sikh community, the Annunciation Church, and now the LDS church."

## 16-year-old faces murder charges in killing of 13-year-old outside Dunkin'



Photo: Teen, 16, charged with killing 13-year-old in Cambria Heights.  
Image Source: NYPD (l.), Lloyd Mitchell (top) and GoFundMe (bottom)

Attorney Melinda Katz, the suspect pulled a semi-automatic handgun, pistol-whipped Samuel, and then shot him in the side of the head. The boy fled on his scooter, while Samuel was rushed to Cohen Children's Medical Center, where he died two days later. The suspect turned himself in at the 105th Precinct on September 26, accompanied by his attorney. Surveillance footage released by the NYPD had shown him fleeing the scene with a weapon in hand. He was arraigned the following day and is being held without bail. "This case is an example of the senseless gun violence that endangers public safety and takes the lives of too many of our children," said DA Katz. If convicted, the teen faces 25 years to life in prison. Samuel's family has not yet announced funeral arrangements but shared that his organs were donated to help save others.

September 22. The teen suspect, whose name is withheld due to his age, allegedly approached Samuel on a scooter, and the two exchanged words before an argument escalated into deadly violence. According to Queens District

NYN DESK

A 16-year-old boy from South Jamaica has been charged with murder following the fatal shooting of 13-year-old Sanjay Samuel outside a Dunkin' Donuts in Cambria Heights on the morning of

## Three NYPD officers hurt as police vehicle flips

Senior Reporter

Three NYPD officers are recovering after a police van overturned in East Harlem, prompting a swift emergency response and ongoing investigation into the cause of the crash. The incident occurred around 4 a.m. near the intersection of East 106th Street and Lexington Avenue, according to officials. Responding units from the FDNY and NYPD arrived quickly on the scene, where the marked police van was found resting on its side. The three officers inside were transported to Mount

Sinai Morningside Hospital for treatment. Their injuries were described as non-life-threatening, and all are expected to make a full recovery, authorities said. According to FDNY reports, the crash caused a temporary road closure in the area, affecting traffic flow well into the morning as investigators worked to assess the scene and remove the damaged vehicle. Videos from the aftermath show a heavy emergency presence surrounding the intersection. Though the precise cause of the crash remains unclear,

authorities have ruled out criminal involvement. As of Sunday evening, no new updates have been released by the NYPD or FDNY, and the investigation is ongoing to determine whether mechanical failure, road conditions, or other factors contributed to the accident. The incident is a reminder of the everyday risks law enforcement officers face, even outside active crime scenes. As the investigation continues, the department has not indicated whether disciplinary or procedural reviews will follow.

## Eric Manson spent his life saving kids from violence but couldn't save his own

Staff Reporter

A longtime Brooklyn youth mentor who has dedicated his life to keeping young people out of trouble is mourning the loss of his own son after a fatal shooting near Prospect Park. Eric Manson, who raised his sons alone after their mother's death, said he is devastated that he could not protect 24-year-old Ramel Ingram, who was shot multiple times in the chest on Sept. 17. "You can only imagine. When you can save other kids, but you can't save your own child," Manson told the Daily News. "I lost my son to this, something I've been trying to prevent." Ingram had recently started a training program at the Taj Gibson Foundation's Fort Greene Community Center to become a youth mentor himself. His father said he hoped to guide young people toward art, music, and entrepreneurship rather than the streets. "We're trying to create a safe place to keep the older kids off the street so we don't have the situation we have right now,"

Manson said. Police said Kindle Akinola, 21, opened fire on Ingram at about 8:45 p.m. outside his grandmother's apartment on Crooke Avenue near Ocean Avenue. Ingram had just finished helping his grandmother clean up when he stepped outside and was gunned down. Medics rushed him to Kings County Hospital, but he could not be saved. Akinola was arrested the next day and charged with murder and criminal possession of a weapon. He is being held without bail. Police have not yet determined a motive. Ingram, remembered as respectful, well-mannered and funny, had excelled in basketball and recently volunteered coaching his younger brother's team. He dreamed of managing artists and running his own business. "I spoke to my son every day, three or four times a day," Manson said. "I'm a full-time dad, not part-time." The killing has rattled the community and underscored the toll of gun violence on even those working hardest to prevent it.

### Prayer Time IN New York

FAJR	DHUHR	ASR	MAGHRIB	ISHA
05:36	12:46	04:06	06:41	07:56
05:37	12:46	04:04	06:39	07:54
05:38	12:45	04:03	06:37	07:52
05:39	12:45	04:02	06:36	07:51
05:40	12:45	04:01	06:34	07:49
05:41	12:44	04:00	06:32	07:47
05:42	12:44	03:58	06:31	07:46

# OPINION

## Jamaica Muslim Center: A Hub of Faith, Learning, and Community Empowerment

– Imam Shamsi Ali

The Jamaica Muslim Center (JMC) continues to stand as one of the most vibrant Islamic institutions in New York City, offering not only a space for worship but also a center for education, social engagement, and civic responsibility. Despite the ongoing major construction work for a two-floor expansion, the Center remains active, ensuring that its community programs and religious activities continue without interruption. This resilience is itself an achievement, made possible through the dedication of engineers and community members who work closely with the city's building department to uphold safety measures. The JMC's contribution to spiritual growth is evident in its consistent

schedule of weekly halaqahs. From Qur'an Tafsir and Seerah to sessions on Fiqh, Qur'an recitation, and practical religious issues, the Center provides essential knowledge for Muslims of all ages. The youth, in particular, are nurtured through dedicated boys' and girls' programs that combine religious learning with community bonding. With over 200 students enrolled in the weekend school, the Center plays a critical role in shaping the next generation of Muslim Americans grounded in faith and civic responsibility.



— Imam Shamsi Ali :  
Director of Jamaica  
Muslim Center

JMC also extends its services beyond the mosque walls by encouraging civic engagement. In the words of its leadership, voting and public participation are not only civic duties but also part of the Qur'anic command of "Amar bil-ma'ruf wa an-nahyu 'an al-munkar"—enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. By urging its members to register, vote, and remain politically active, the Center ensures the Muslim voice is heard in shaping the city's future. Equally important is JMC's global

outlook. Its leadership consistently reminds the community of their moral responsibility to advocate for justice worldwide, particularly in support of Palestinians facing oppression and violence. This balance between local empowerment and global solidarity makes JMC not just a religious institution, but a beacon of justice and compassion. The Jamaica Muslim Center embodies the holistic vision of Islam: faith, education, civic duty, and humanitarian advocacy. It is a place where hearts are nurtured, minds are enlightened, and communities are strengthened. In this sense, JMC continues to be a cornerstone of hope and leadership for Muslims in New York and beyond.

“

Voting and public participation are not only civic duties but also part of the Qur'anic command of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.”



Photo: Jamaica Muslim Center

Image Source: JMC Facebook Page

“

The Jamaica Muslim Center embodies the holistic vision of Islam: faith, education, civic duty, and humanitarian advocacy.”

## Building Sustainable Cities: A Shared Responsibility

– Imam Muhammad Shahidullah



As the world continues to urbanize at an unprecedented pace, cities have become the center of both opportunities and challenges. Today, more than half of the global population lives in urban areas, and by 2050, that number is projected to rise to nearly 70 percent. This reality brings into sharp focus the importance of Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG 11):

Sustainable Cities and Communities, which calls for making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The future of humanity is, in many ways, the future of cities. One of the most urgent challenges in urban life is inequality. Cities can be hubs of economic growth, innovation, and culture, but they can also deepen social divides. Affordable housing, accessible public transportation, and inclusive infrastructure remain out of reach for millions. To build truly sustainable cities, we must design spaces that value every human being—where low-income families are not pushed to the margins, where immigrants find belonging, and where vulnerable populations are protected. Sustainability also means resilience.



— Imam Muhammad  
Shahidullah  
Vice President, United  
Nations Association  
of the USA (UNA-  
USA), Queens Chapter

Cities must prepare for the threats of climate change—rising sea levels, heat waves, floods, and air pollution. Investing in green spaces, renewable energy, and disaster-resilient infrastructure is not a luxury but a necessity. It is time to reimagine urban life where clean air, efficient waste management, and eco-friendly transportation are the norm rather than the exception. A sustainable city is not built by policymakers alone. It requires the active participation of citizens, civil society, and faith leaders. Civic engagement fosters trust, builds accountability, and ensures that development reflects the needs of the people. When communities come together—whether to support affordable housing projects,

protect green spaces, or advocate for fair policies—they become partners in shaping the city's destiny. New York City, where I serve, embodies the complexities and possibilities of urban life. It is diverse, innovative, and resilient, but also deeply unequal. If we are serious about SDG 11, we must commit to making every neighborhood livable, every community empowered, and every person seen as an equal stakeholder in the city's future. This is not just about policy—it is about building a culture of justice, inclusivity, and sustainability for generations to come.



# PEACE

## From Hiroshima to Union Square: A Call for Peace

Global and local leaders commemorate history and inspire unity in New York



### James Anderson

The spirit of unity filled the Tenri Cultural Institute in New York City as people of diverse faiths and traditions came together for the Interfaith Peace

Gathering for Inner and Global Harmony on September 21, 2025, marking both the International Day of Peace and the 80th anniversaries of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Organized by the Heiwa Peace and Reconciliation Foundation of New York, with support from the Buddhist Council of New York, Interfaith Center of New York, Interfaith Center of USA, NPO

Gentle Earth, Origami Therapy Association, Unity in Harlem, and the World Yoga Community, the gathering blended solemn remembrance with forward-looking calls for peace. The program began with reflections on the Peace Pilgrimage Tour to Japan (August 1–11, 2025), which retraced steps through Hiroshima and Nagasaki, cities forever scarred by nuclear devastation. Videos and messages from mayors and survivors reinforced the human cost of war and the urgency of ensuring such tragedies never repeat. Performances by artists like Michelle & Nahoko brought music and culture into the dialogue, emphasizing how art can transcend language and unite communities.

The afternoon continued with prayers and meditations offered by representatives of multiple traditions, each underscoring the shared human yearning for compassion and harmony. Attendees noted that such moments served as reminders that peace is not the work of one community or nation but a collective responsibility. As one organizer emphasized, "Events like this show that peace begins with dialogue, respect, and the courage to work together." The program culminated with a Peace Walk from the Tenri Cultural Institute to Union Square, where participants carried their message into the heart of New York City. Walking together,

attendees symbolized the possibility of building harmony across divides — a living expression of the day's purpose. As participants departed, the sense of solidarity was unmistakable. Many reflected that the gathering had given them not only a platform to honor Hiroshima and Nagasaki but also a renewed commitment to interfaith cooperation and community healing. In the words of one attendee, "Peace is not just remembered in history books — it is something we must practice every day." The Interfaith Peace Gathering reminded New Yorkers that the path to a just and compassionate world depends on shared action, rooted in remembrance and carried forward in unity.



# INTERFAITH

## Faith Leaders Unite for Social Justice in NYC

Interfaith leaders draft compact ahead of mayoral election

**Jessica Morgan**

In the heart of Morningside Heights, religious leaders from across New York City gathered for a working lunch that carried both urgency and purpose. On September 22, 2025, the Interfaith Center of New York (ICNY) and Union Theological Seminary (UTS) hosted an event bringing clergy and community leaders together to begin shaping an Interfaith Social Justice Compact ahead of the upcoming New York City mayoral election. The gathering, held in the Stewart Room at Union Theological Seminary, was not just a meeting but a call to action. Drawing on the city's vast religious diversity, leaders sought to identify shared concerns that transcend doctrinal differences. By uniting under values



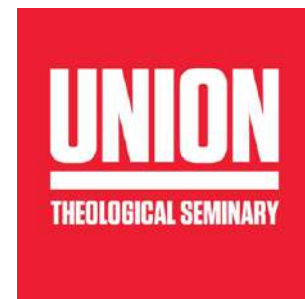
of justice, dignity, and equity, participants began drafting a platform that they intend to present to mayoral candidates in the months ahead. Organizers pointed to the 2021 Economic and Racial Justice Compact as a reference point, a document that successfully

outlined collective priorities during a previous election cycle. This new compact, however, comes at a time of pressing social challenges — from housing affordability and racial inequality to access to education and public safety. Leaders emphasized that faith communities are not

only witnesses to these struggles but active agents of change in their neighborhoods. The lunch fostered candid discussions among clergy representing many of the city's religious traditions. Attendees examined how faith voices could help shape the broader

political conversation, not through partisan endorsements but by centering the moral imperatives of compassion, fairness, and accountability. As one participant noted during the exchange, gatherings like this are vital because they “remind us that no

matter our differences, we share a responsibility for the well-being of this city.” By the end of the session, concrete steps were outlined for refining and finalizing the Interfaith Social Justice Compact, with a clear commitment to holding elected leaders accountable. The effort reflects an evolving model of interfaith collaboration in New York City, one where religious leadership works hand in hand with civic processes to promote equity and justice. For those present, the event was a reminder of the influence that faith communities continue to hold in shaping public life. It underscored that in a city as diverse as New York, unity across traditions is not only possible but essential in ensuring that leadership reflects the voices of all its residents.



# SOLIDARITY

## Citywide Clergy Council Brings Hope Amid Tragedy

Prayers, comfort, and a commitment to peace in New York neighborhoods



Emily Parker

In a somber moment that reflected both the gravity of violence and the resilience of community, members of the Citywide Clergy



Mayor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Partnerships

Council visited Cohen Children's Hospital following the tragic

shooting of a 13-year-old boy recently. Representing the NYC

Mayor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Partnerships, four faith leaders came together in solidarity, offering prayers and comfort to the young victim's family. Hospital corridors were filled with a quiet intensity as clergy members stood alongside loved ones, expressing not only their grief but also their collective hope for the boy's recovery. Their presence served as both a spiritual embrace and a public declaration that no family should suffer such trauma in isolation. During the visit, the Council emphasized the urgent need to end the cycle of senseless violence that continues to claim young lives in New York City. They reaffirmed their commitment to stand with families impacted by tragedy, to bring not just prayers but also advocacy and support

for safer communities. The shooting, which has shaken the neighborhood, highlights the vulnerability of children in the face of escalating violence. Faith leaders underscored that addressing these challenges requires both compassion and concrete action. While prayers offer immediate comfort, systemic change—through partnerships between communities, civic institutions, and law enforcement—remains critical. Those present at the hospital spoke of the importance of interfaith solidarity at times of crisis. In their shared prayers and unified message, they reminded the community that faith has the power to heal divisions and to inspire collective resolve. "Moments like these call us to reflect

deeply on our shared responsibility," one attendee remarked, echoing the group's sentiment that solutions must be pursued together. As the day drew to a close, the visit left behind a powerful image: leaders of faith standing side by side, extending hands of compassion and voices of resolve. While the boy's condition remains uncertain, the solidarity expressed at Cohen Children's Hospital carried a message of unwavering support. For many, the visit was more than symbolic—it was a call to action. The Citywide Clergy Council reminded the city that while violence may wound communities, unity, faith, and a commitment to justice can help heal them.



# EMPOWERMENT

## Opening Doors to Service: FDNY at Darul Uloom

Presentation highlights paid training programs and pathways to public service



### William Henry

The community at Darul Uloom New York welcomed a unique opportunity for growth and service on September 23, 2025, as the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) held a special presentation on its Emergency Medical Services (EMS) paid training

program. Organized in collaboration with Save the People USA and Human Concern USA, the event brought together students, families, and community members eager to learn about career pathways in public service. The program was thoughtfully designed with separate sessions for women and men,

allowing for inclusive participation. The women's session ran from 2:00 to 3:00 PM, followed by the men's session from 4:00 to 5:00 PM. Both gatherings provided detailed explanations of the EMS training program, highlighting requirements such as a high school diploma or GED, a valid driver's

license, and the steps toward FDNY EMT certification. FDNY representatives walked attendees through the responsibilities of an EMT, the structure of the training program, and the career benefits of joining the department. Visual presentations featured the FDNY Type II Ambulance and the skills needed to excel in emergency medical response. The sessions also emphasized accessibility, encouraging students, recent graduates, and career seekers alike to consider applying when the program opens on October 1. The event was more than just informational—it was interactive. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions about eligibility, work-life balance, and long-term career development. Organizers stressed that

the program does not only prepare individuals for a stable career but also empowers them to serve their communities



in critical, life-saving ways. Community members expressed appreciation for the FDNY's outreach efforts and

the partnership that brought this event to Darul Uloom. The collaboration between FDNY, Save the People USA, and Human Concern USA, and Darul Uloom New York highlighted a shared vision: creating opportunities for young people to step into roles of service and responsibility while strengthening community ties. As applications for the EMS training program open in October, the presentation at Darul Uloom stands as a timely reminder of the power of partnerships in connecting resources to the communities that need them most. The event offered not only knowledge but also encouragement—showing students and families that careers in service are within reach, and that their contributions can make a difference in New York City's future.



# CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



## Weprin's Advisory Council Brings Voices Together

### Queens Public Library hosts discussion on community needs and updates



#### Noah Presley

At the Queens Public Library at Lefferts in South Richmond Hill, community members gathered for an evening of dialogue and updates as Assemblyman David Weprin convened the South Asian Advisory

Council on Thursday, September 25, 2025. The session, running from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, brought together residents, advocates, and leaders to discuss pressing issues affecting South Asian communities across Queens while also

receiving legislative updates from Albany. The gathering underscored the Assemblyman's long-standing commitment to representing the diverse voices of Queens, one of the most multicultural areas in the nation. Attendees had the

opportunity to hear firsthand about recent legislative initiatives and community programs while also raising questions and offering perspectives on challenges their neighborhoods face. Topics ranged from economic development and public safety to education and immigration support. Assemblyman Weprin emphasized that advisory councils like this one are critical in

platform for South Asian residents to engage directly with elected officials, the event strengthened the bridge between government decision-making and grassroots concerns. "Events like this allow community priorities to be heard and acted upon," one attendee noted, highlighting the value of open, accessible dialogue. The South Asian Advisory Council has become a recurring opportunity for mutual exchange, ensuring that immigrant communities not only receive information about legislative action but also play an active role in shaping its direction. The evening's setting within the public library further reflected the spirit of accessibility, learning, and community empowerment.

As the evening wound down, participants shared refreshments and informal conversations, building connections that extended beyond policy discussions. The atmosphere was one of collaboration and inclusion, demonstrating how civic engagement can bring neighbors together in pursuit of shared progress. By the conclusion of the council meeting, it was clear that the forum had reaffirmed both the Assemblyman's dedication to South Asian constituents and the community's readiness to participate in shaping their collective future. Events like these, rooted in dialogue and inclusivity, continue to strengthen the civic fabric of Queens.



shaping responsive policy. By providing a



# EDUCATION

## Inspiring Students, Building Connections

Elhaam Academy welcomes Human Concern International leadership



**Ashley Reed**

The halls of Elhaam Academy in Queens, New York buzzed with excitement as the school welcomed distinguished

guests from Human Concern International (HCI). On their recent visit, Mahamuda Khan, Global CEO of HCI, and Masum Mahbub, USA Country CEO,

spent the day engaging with educators and students, reinforcing the organization's ongoing commitment to education and community

development. The school's head, Saffiyah Hoosein, greeted the delegation and guided them through classrooms where students proudly showcased their learning spaces. From colorful artwork to creative classroom projects, the leaders had the opportunity to see firsthand how students at Elhaam Academy are encouraged to express themselves and develop their talents alongside their academic studies.



During the visit, students interacted with the visitors, sharing their enthusiasm for learning and the pride they take in their work. The presence of international leaders created a sense of recognition and encouragement, leaving students inspired to continue striving for excellence. For teachers and staff, the visit underscored the importance of their role in shaping the next generation and highlighted how community partnerships can amplify educational impact. The exchange also fostered dialogue between the school and Human Concern International about the shared values of education, empowerment, and service. While the visit was informal in nature, it carried significant weight, symbolizing

HCI's recognition of the role institutions like Elhaam Academy play in nurturing young minds and preparing them for future leadership. As the day concluded, the sense of connection was evident. For Elhaam Academy, the visit was not only an opportunity to showcase the work of its students but also a moment to strengthen relationships with a global humanitarian organization that shares its vision of uplifting communities through knowledge and creativity. The visit by Mahamuda Khan and Masum Mahbub served as a reminder that education is a bridge that connects local efforts with global perspectives, reinforcing the idea that investing in children today is an investment in a brighter tomorrow.



# EXHIBITION

## “Echoes of Peace” Exhibition Wraps Up in New York

### Mostafigur Rahman’s photographs spotlight Bangladesh’s culture and humanity



#### Alex Mason

The weeklong solo photography exhibition “Echoes of Peace” by acclaimed Bangladeshi photographer Muhammad Mostafigur Rahman came to a close in New York, leaving audiences deeply inspired by its message of harmony and humanity. Organized to commemorate the International Day of

Peace, the exhibition was hosted at the Save the People USA Auditorium of the Peace Center on Hillside Avenue, Jamaica. Featuring 40 striking photographs, Rahman’s work captured the breathtaking landscapes, cultural vibrancy, rural life, and interfaith harmony of Bangladesh. The images, while visually captivating, carried a

deeper resonance—depicting the resilience of human spirit and the enduring pursuit of peace. Visitors described the collection as both thought-provoking and uplifting, a visual reminder of the power of art to transcend borders. At the closing ceremony on Friday evening, distinguished leaders and cultural figures shared their reflections.

Dr. Toshikazu Kenjitsu Nakagaki, UN Interfaith Leader and President of the Heiwa Peace and Reconciliation Foundation of New York, praised the exhibition, noting, “These photographs are not only about aesthetics;



they deliver powerful messages of peace, humanity, and harmony.” Dr. Mahatapa Palit, Director of the Sri Chinmoy Oneness

Center, echoed similar sentiments, reminding the audience that division lies at the root of global unrest. “Yet we are all children of the same Earth. Coming together is our responsibility, and these photographs echo that very call for unity,” she said.

The event drew a diverse range of speakers, including climate change expert Richike Lipikouiz, filmmaker and peace activist Dima Nefartiti, news presenter Sadia Khandkar, photographer and researcher Dr. Obaidullah Mamun, cultural personality Tahrina Parvir Preeti, and photographer Sajid Hossain. Rahman’s wife, Kazi Jebun Nahar, also shared heartfelt words on the impact of his work. In his concluding remarks, Mostafigur Rahman expressed gratitude to the organizations that made the exhibition possible, including Save the People USA, the United Nations

Association of the USA – Queens Chapter, the Peace Center of USA, the Interfaith Center of USA, and the GNRC. The final day transformed the venue into a vibrant gathering place for expatriate Bangladeshis, photographers, and art enthusiasts, underscoring the exhibition’s role in both cultural diplomacy and community building. The closing ceremony was moderated by Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah, CEO of Save the People USA, who emphasized the importance of using art to foster peace. As organizers and attendees reflected on the success of “Echoes of Peace,” many expressed hope that the exhibition would not only elevate Bangladesh’s image on the international stage but also contribute meaningfully to spreading the universal message of peace and unity worldwide.



# UNITY

## Global Voices Unite at Humanity Transformation Conference 2025

Faith leaders, officials, and citizens gather in New York for peace and compassion



**Daniel Matthew**

In a time of deep global division, the Humanity Transformation Conference 2025: Wisdom and Compassion in a Fragmented World brought faith leaders, community advocates,

and global citizens together for a day of reflection and unity at the BMCC Tribeca Performing Arts Center in New York City on Sunday, September 28, 2025. Organized by the Middle Way Institute (MWI), the gathering welcomed

participants both in person and virtually from around the world. The program combined spiritual reflection, cultural performances, and practical dialogue aimed at addressing pressing challenges, from climate change and social fragmentation to

the strains of the digital era. The conference opened with welcome remarks by partner organizations, followed by an address from Mayor Eric Adams, who presented citations to event partners and emphasized New York's role as a beacon of diversity and interfaith cooperation. His presence underscored the importance of civic leadership in advancing peace and compassion. One of the most powerful moments came during the Interfaith Prayer, where leaders from five major traditions each offered a one-minute invocation. Imam Muhammad Shahidullah, representing the Muslim community, joined this collective call for peace, standing alongside leaders of other faiths to highlight unity across differences. This spiritual moment set the tone

for the Global Peace Meditation that followed, encouraging participants to embrace inner calm as a foundation for outward harmony. The ceremony reached a symbolic high point with the Global Peace Lighting, where interfaith leaders and key partners lit the Peace Ball together, a visual reminder that cooperation across communities is essential in confronting humanity's shared challenges. Music and performances throughout the morning, including the Global Peace Singing and inner peace exercises, reinforced the atmosphere of reflection and joy. Beyond symbolism, the event carried a clear call to action. The Inner Peace Forum and panel discussion encouraged dialogue on fostering resilience and

compassion in societies facing polarization and uncertainty. Speakers urged communities to recommit to shared values of justice, dignity, and equity. As the gathering concluded with a Loving-Kindness Meditation and closing remarks, attendees left with a renewed sense of hope. Organizers and participants alike emphasized that peace begins within individuals but must extend outward through collective responsibility and action. The Humanity Transformation Conference 2025 not only showcased the vibrancy of interfaith collaboration but also reaffirmed that wisdom and compassion remain powerful tools to guide humanity in a fragmented world.



## SPOTLIGHT

## Tales of Light and Shadow: A Conversation with Photographer

## Carlos Stewart

For more than two decades, Muhammad Mostafigur Rahman, widely known by his pen name Mustafiz Mamun, has chronicled the spirit of Bangladesh through his lens. A veteran photojournalist based in Dhaka, Rahman has documented the country's people, culture, landscapes, wildlife, environmental challenges, politics, and celebrations with an eye for both beauty and truth. His signature theme, "Beautiful Bangladesh," runs through much of his work, offering a narrative of resilience and pride.

Currently serving as Head of Photography at bdnews24.com, the nation's first digital news platform, Rahman has traveled across nearly every corner of Bangladesh. From the Sundarbans to the bustling streets of Dhaka, his photographs capture not only moments but also stories—stories that bridge divides and speak universally. Beyond Bangladesh, he has also explored international landscapes and cultures, with travel photography emerging as one of his key specialties. Rahman's commitment extends beyond the



Mostafigur Rahman

camera. As an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Television, Film, and Photography at the University of Dhaka, he mentors aspiring visual storytellers,

sharing lessons from his own remarkable journey. His academic background includes a postgraduate degree in Political Science from the University of Dhaka and a diploma from the prestigious Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, renowned globally for visual storytelling. His influence reaches readers as well. Under his pen name, he writes about travel and photography in newspapers and magazines, expanding on the themes found in his images. He has authored four travel books, including Dekhun Bangladesh, a

comprehensive guide to the nation's 64 districts, and Dekhun Sundarban, dedicated to the country's famed mangrove forest. His photography book Celebrating Colors of Bangladesh, published in Milan, Italy, further solidified his international standing. Over the years, Rahman's work has been showcased in solo and group exhibitions in Bangladesh, Italy, Mexico, Bahrain, the UK, and Japan, among others. His achievements have earned him prestigious national and international awards, including the Reader's

Digest Asia Unseen Asia Award (2013) and the Grand Prize from the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) in Washington (2017). His photographs are not simply images; they are testimonies of human resilience, environmental struggles, and the everyday lives that often go unseen. They invite audiences to look closer, reflect deeper, and discover Bangladesh anew. Following the conclusion of his acclaimed solo exhibition Echoes of Peace in New York, Rahman sat down for a conversation about his life, inspirations, and vision for the future.

## The Story Behind the Lens: An Interview

## The Interview

**Q:** Where did your journey into photography begin?

**Mamun:** As a child, I used to buy foreign magazines from bookshops to cover my schoolbooks. Those pages were filled with mesmerizing photographs from distant lands. I was deeply drawn to them. That's when the dream was born—I wanted to take pictures like that one day.

**Q:** Do you remember the first time you held a camera?

**Mamun:** In fifth grade, I first held a friend's father's Yashica Electro 35. But the real journey began in seventh grade when I discovered a dusty Pentax MG-1 in my aunt's cupboard. I repaired it myself, and that's how I truly started taking pictures.

**Q:** The early days must have been difficult?

**Mamun:** Absolutely. A roll of film cost 10 taka, and another 10 to develop. I would save my lunch money just to buy film and take photos. Eventually, I even learned to develop the film myself. It was hard, but the joy outweighed the struggle.

**Q:** When did you realize photography would become your profession?

**Mamun:** After enrolling at Dhaka University, I joined the University Photographic Society and received formal training. Soon after, I began working for newspapers. Later, I was admitted to Pathshala—South Asian Media Institute—which inspired me deeply with its specialized courses. That's

when I decided my life would be dedicated to photography.

**Q:** What were some of your most dangerous experiences in the field?

**Mamun:** In 2015, while photographing honey collectors in the Sundarbans, I was nearly killed in a massive bee attack. In 2013, a monkey attack in Lawachhara Forest sent me to the hospital. Since 2000, I have covered almost every major political event, conflict, and disaster in Bangladesh—often from the frontlines. Looking back, I see those struggles as part of my achievements.

**Q:** How did your first international recognition feel?

**Mamun:** In 2013, I won the Reader's Digest Asia Unseen Asia Award for a photograph of a pineapple-laden bicycle in Madhupur, Tangail. For the first time, a photo of Bangladesh was recognized on an international stage—it was pure joy. Around the same time, I also received the first prize in SAARC Photography and two other awards.

**Q:** Among all the awards, which one has given you the greatest joy?

**Mamun:** In 2017, I won the Grand Prize of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) in Washington. That photo featured honey collectors in the Sundarbans. I felt blessed to be able to present their struggle to the world.

**Q:** Why do rural life, nature, and the Sundarbans dominate your work?

**Mamun:** I believe that to truly know Bangladesh, one must know its people and its nature. My camera tries to tell that story.

**Q:** What was it like to showcase your work internationally?

**Mamun:** Recently, I held my

solo exhibition Echoes of Peace in New York to mark the International Day of Peace. In 2024, I also held a solo exhibition titled Peaceful Bangladesh in New York. Earlier, in 2023, I had Celebrating Colors of Bangladesh in Milan, Italy. My photographs have also been exhibited in joint shows at Reforma Avenue in Mexico, Colima University, the Querétaro Museum, in Manama and Muharraq in Bahrain, and in group exhibitions across the UK, Italy, and Japan. I've realized that photography transcends language. Images don't speak words—they tell stories. And those stories connect people everywhere.

**Q:** You've also published several books. How was that experience?

**Mamun:** My four travel books—Dekhun Bangladesh, Dekhun Sundarban, Dekhun Samudra Soikot, and Bone Berai—are all fact-based explorations. Among them, Dekhun Bangladesh is a comprehensive travel guide covering all 64 districts. My photography book Celebrating Colors of Bangladesh was published in Milan, Italy. Through books, I want to share the Bangladesh I see through my camera with the world.

**Q:** What advice would you give to young photographers?

**Mamun:** The camera itself is not the most important thing—your eyes and perspective are. Take photos every day, and look at as many pictures as possible. Patience and dedication are what will take young photographers forward.

**Q:** What is your dream for the future?

**Mamun:** To keep taking photographs until my last breath. To show the world the beauty of Bangladesh. And one day, to publish a large book featuring images from countries around the globe.

## Moments Captured by Muhammad Mostafigur Rahman



# ORGANIZATION

## Community Comes Alive at MusCare's Picnic in the Park

Food, fun, and family festivities bring Queens together



**Issac Andrew**

The late-summer air at Valley Stream State Park buzzed with laughter, music, and the smell of fresh barbecue as MusCare hosted its much-anticipated "Picnic in the Park" on Sunday, September 28, 2025. Families from across

the community gathered for an afternoon filled with food, games, and cultural celebrations, turning the park into a vibrant hub of togetherness. The picnic, designed to bring people closer while celebrating tradition and joy, offered something for everyone. Children

lined up eagerly for games, prizes, and face painting, while adults relaxed over freshly brewed chai and conversations. One of the day's highlights was the colorful henna artistry by Hennaxsanaa, which drew a steady stream of participants. Guests also



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enjoyed the much-loved Chai Chief station and a wide array of delicious food, including BBQ favorites and authentic

dishes prepared by Shahi Kitchen NYC. Organizers emphasized that the event was more than just a picnic; it was a celebration of community spirit. The atmosphere reflected a true blend of cultural pride and family-friendly fun, as people of all ages found ways to participate—whether through games, enjoying the chai station, or simply sharing stories on picnic blankets spread across the park. The success of the event was made possible by the generous support of sponsors DHCare, A&F Pharmacy, and NSR Tax & Accounting, whose contributions helped create a warm and welcoming environment for attendees. Their partnership underscored the importance of collaboration

in strengthening community ties. By the time the afternoon sun began to set, the park echoed with the joy of a community that had come together not just to eat and play, but to celebrate unity, laughter, and shared values. Many left with henna designs on their hands, prizes in their arms, and smiles that reflected the heart of the day. The MusCare Picnic in the Park served as a reminder that in busy city life, moments of togetherness are what create lasting memories. As families returned home, they carried with them not only full stomachs and colorful designs but also the spirit of connection that continues to bind the community together.



# UNITED NATIONS

## UNGA 2025: Calls for Peace, Justice, and Reform Amid Rising Global Tensions

Major addresses highlight urgent demands for reform and accountability

**Jeremy Phillip**

The 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) entered its final days this week with speeches that underscored the global body's growing fractures and the urgency of its mission. Leaders used the platform to defend national policies, criticize adversaries, and push for reforms, while also exposing the deep divisions that have come to define world politics. Among the most closely watched addresses was that of Donald Trump, returning to the iconic UNGA podium in his second presidential term. His speech was marked by characteristic defiance and controversy, including complaints of "triple sabotage" after escalator and teleprompter mishaps earlier in the week. Trump used his remarks to reinforce his America-first vision, taking swipes at critics both foreign and domestic. His combative style again sparked tensions, reflecting the polarization that has accompanied his leadership on the world stage. That sharp rhetoric spilled over into a very public feud with London Mayor Sir Sadiq Khan, who Trump derided as a "terrible mayor" while suggesting London was heading toward "Sharia law." Khan quickly hit back,



Photo: 80th United Nations General Assembly

labeling Trump "racist, sexist, misogynistic and Islamophobic." The exchange highlighted how personal rivalries played out on the UN platform, drawing attention away from pressing global issues and fueling debate over the tone and tenor of international diplomacy. If Trump drew headlines for disruption, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu commanded attention for his defiance. Addressing a hall emptied by dozens of diplomats staging a walkout, Netanyahu rejected calls for a Palestinian state and vowed to "finish the job" in Gaza. He accused Israel's critics of weakness, dismissed international recognition of Palestine as a "mark of shame," and stressed his nation's determination to resist pressure. He also

unveiled a QR code pin that directed viewers to graphic images from the October 7, 2023, Hamas attacks, a controversial move meant to justify Israel's military campaign. Other leaders struck different notes. India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar delivered one of the most detailed interventions of the week, calling the UN "in a state of crisis" and urging structural reforms, particularly an expansion of both permanent and non-permanent Security Council membership. He also emphasized India's commitment to ending hostilities in Ukraine and Gaza, zero-tolerance for terrorism, and its role as a "voice of the Global South." On the sidelines, Jaishankar pressed BRICS nations to defend multilateralism against rising protectionism,

underscoring India's growing ambition to shape the global order. Adding to the regional dynamics, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif used his UNGA address to appeal for renewed dialogue with India, while also praising Donald Trump's role in mediating past tensions. He framed talks as essential to easing South Asia's volatility, even as India dismissed Pakistan's position in its right of reply. The speech underscored how South Asia's rivalries continue to echo through the Assembly, with competing narratives on terrorism, sovereignty, and reconciliation shaping the debate. In contrast, Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus offered a message rooted in reconciliation and

reform. Speaking at multiple engagements during UNGA, Yunus invoked the "extraordinary power of ordinary people" who drove his nation's July 2024 uprising and emphasized the responsibility of leaders to rebuild through inclusion, transparency, and accountability. He highlighted Bangladesh's efforts to recover assets stolen under past regimes, its commitment to climate action, and the urgency of resolving the Rohingya crisis. Stressing the need for global cooperation, he warned of "extreme nationalism" and "indifference to human pain" as forces eroding humanity's progress. Meanwhile, tensions between blocs continued to shape the assembly. The IBSA grouping—India, Brazil, and

South Africa—issued a joint condemnation of Israeli attacks on Gaza, criticizing the "use of starvation" as a method of warfare. At the same time, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov pushed back against NATO and the West, warning that any aggression toward Moscow would meet a "decisive response." These exchanges reinforced the divisions between Western allies and other power centers that have defined much of the global security landscape.

The week's debates unfolded against the backdrop of the Assembly's theme, "Better together: 80 years and more for peace, development and human rights." But the tenor of many speeches revealed just how difficult that ideal remains. Leaders used the moment to call for reform, air grievances, and assert sovereignty, often talking past one another rather than finding common ground. As the General Debate continues into its closing sessions, the UN faces familiar questions: can it overcome political paralysis, or will it remain, in Jaishankar's words, "gridlocked" at a moment of global crisis? The sharp divides on display this week suggest that while the need for multilateralism has never been greater, the path toward it is as fraught as ever.



Photo: Trump demands investigation into UN 'triple sabotage' after escalator, teleprompter, and audio glitches  
Image Source:Online



Photo: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel  
Image Source:Online



Photo: At UN, Muhammad Yunus urges world leaders to 'invest in your young citizens'  
Image Source:Online



Photo: Sir Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London  
Image Source:Online



Photo: EAM Jaishankar addresses 80th UNGA in New York.  
Image Source:Online

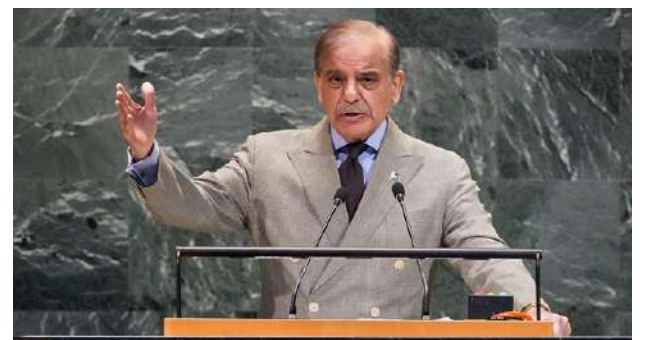


Photo: Pakistani PM Shehbaz Sharif  
Image Source:Online



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## Tropical Storm Imelda Shifts Course

Storm tracks away from Southeast coast, hurricane still expected

### Nassr Al Shams

Tropical Storm Imelda officially formed over the Bahamas on Sunday afternoon, bringing with it heavy rain and sustained winds of 40 mph. While the storm was initially projected to threaten the U.S. Southeast coast, updated forecasts show it veering eastward and likely avoiding a direct landfall.

As of 5 p.m. ET Sunday, the storm was located about 355 miles southeast of Cape Canaveral, Florida, according to the National Hurricane Center. Imelda is expected to intensify into a hurricane by late Monday or Tuesday, but models now show it turning sharply east away from the U.S. mainland.

Despite the shift, residents along the Florida, Georgia, and Carolina coasts are still being warned to prepare for gusty winds, heavy surf, and possible coastal flooding early in the week. Rainfall totals in the Bahamas and eastern Cuba could range from 4 to 12 inches, with 2 to 6 inches forecast for the coastal Carolinas. The development of Hurricane Humberto, now a Category 4 storm, has played a significant role in steering Imelda away from the U.S. coast. Meteorologists say Humberto is outpacing Imelda in a “tug-of-war” with a Southeast U.S. weather pattern that had threatened to pull Imelda closer to shore.

Officials, including South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster, had declared states of emergency ahead of the storm. Preparations are ongoing, but the risk of severe wind impacts has decreased. Meanwhile, Bermuda could feel the effects of both Imelda and Humberto later this week. A tropical storm watch has been issued there as the Atlantic remains highly active. Residents across affected areas are urged to monitor updates closely, even as the immediate threat to the U.S. appears to be easing.

# Global Backlash Grows

## Israel faces diplomatic and cultural isolation amid Gaza war

### Amkel Nourush

Israel is facing mounting isolation on the international stage amid the ongoing war in Gaza, with a wave of condemnation now extending beyond diplomacy into economics, culture, and sports. The backlash follows an intensification of military operations, including a recent ground assault on Gaza City and a controversial strike against Hamas leadership on Qatari soil.

An independent UN inquiry last week concluded that Israel committed genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, a finding that aligns with assessments from human rights groups. Israel has categorically denied the



Photo: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu  
Image Source: Nathan Howard/Pool/Reuters

allegations. The European Union, Israel's largest trading partner, proposed partial sanctions on its free trade agreement, while France, Italy, the UK, and others issued arms embargoes. In August, Norway's sovereign wealth fund announced divestments due to the

worsening humanitarian crisis.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu acknowledged the growing isolation, stating the country may face years of economic and diplomatic strain. He suggested Israel must reduce its reliance on external trade and strengthen its defense sector—comments he later narrowed to focus on defense industries. Meanwhile, the cultural sector has reacted strongly. Broadcasters in Ireland, Spain, and the Netherlands pledged to boycott Eurovision 2026 if Israel participates. A Belgian festival canceled a performance by Israeli conductor Lahav Shani, citing unclear positions on Israel's actions. In sports, disruptions range from a canceled

bike race involving Israeli's team to Israeli chess players being barred from using their flag. Media reports warn of potential suspension from European football competitions. Inside Israel, public protests are growing, while the BDS movement gains global momentum. This rising pressure recalls the boycotts imposed on apartheid-era South Africa.

At the UN General Assembly, countries like Canada, France, and the UK recognized a Palestinian state. A UN genocide report also revived calls for ICC prosecution of Israeli leaders. Despite these developments, the United States continues its steadfast support of Israel.

### HIGHLIGHT

●UN inquiry accuses Israel of genocide, fueling international condemnation.

●EU and Western nations impose sanctions, with divestments and arms embargoes.

## Meryl Streep Steals the Show in Milan

### Iconic character Miranda Priestly returns for “Devil Wears Prada 2” scene



Photo: Meryl Streep and Stanley Tucci at Dolce & Gabbana's Milan show.  
Image Source: Claudia Greco/Reuters/CNN

### Julian Alvez

In a moment that blurred the line between fashion and film, Meryl Streep stunned audiences by appearing in character as Miranda Priestly at Dolce & Gabbana's Milan Fashion Week show on Saturday. The scene, filmed for the upcoming “Devil Wears Prada 2”, marked a rare crossover of cinema into a live runway event. Streep, wearing Priestly's signature sunglasses and a glossy Dolce & Gabbana vinyl trench coat, was flanked by Stanley Tucci, reprising his role as art director Nigel, as they observed the Spring-Summer 2026 collection from the front row. Their interactions were

captured for the sequel, currently filming in Milan, and are expected to feature in a pivotal scene. The runway show echoed the film's iconic fashion tone, featuring rhinestone-accented pajamas, lace lingerie, and opulent jackets. As models strutted past, real-world fashion icon Anna Wintour—the rumored inspiration for Priestly—sat directly across from Streep. The scene drew cheers and social media buzz as fans and fashion insiders flooded the runway post-show for photos. The sequel to the 2006 classic is scheduled for release next spring, promising to deliver another stylish chapter in cinematic fashion history.



Photo: Armoured vehicles were on display at one of the militia exercises in Caracas  
Image Source: Nicole Kolster/BBC

## U.S. Strikes Spark Venezuelan Militia Mobilization

### Civilians called to arms following deaths in Caribbean operations

### Adrian Smith

Tensions between the United States and Venezuela have escalated sharply after U.S. Navy forces killed 17 people during strikes on boats allegedly transporting drugs from Venezuela through the South Caribbean. In response, President Nicolás Maduro activated the National Bolivarian Militia, a civilian defense force originally created in 2009 by the late President Hugo Chávez. Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino described the strikes as an “undeclared war,” while Maduro mobilized thousands of civilians to undergo weapons

training. The militia, often comprised of older volunteers from low-income communities, is now being trained with Russian-made rifles and battlefield tactics in Caracas neighborhoods like Petare. “I'm ready to serve whenever they call me,” said Edith Perales, a 68-year-old long-time militia member in 23 de Enero, a traditional pro-government stronghold. The move follows worsening diplomatic ties under President Donald Trump, whose administration declared Maduro's 2024 re-election illegitimate and designated the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua a terrorist group. The U.S. has

since doubled its reward for information leading to Maduro's capture to \$50 million. Critics, including political analyst Benigno Alarcón, argue that the militia's true role may be to serve as a “human shield” to deter further U.S. military action by increasing the likelihood of civilian casualties. Despite the rising rhetoric and street-level training, daily life in much of Caracas appears unaffected. As Maduro's government intensifies its preparation for potential conflict, much of the population continues on, wary but largely disengaged from the growing military spectacle.