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NEW YORK NEWS

The Voice of People

From New York

Economic Hopes Face Headwinds

Early 2026 data challenges Trump's growth claims

John Paul

Economic data released in early 2026 suggests a challenging start for the U.S. economy, despite confident forecasts from President Donald Trump, who recently declared that "the roaring economy is roaring like never before." A new February jobs report showed the loss of 92,000 positions, while previous figures were revised downward, reinforcing concerns about weakening hiring trends. The unemployment rate among U.S.-born workers has also edged up to 4.7%, according to recent figures. At the same time,

HIGHLIGHT

- February 2026 jobs report showed a loss of 92,000 jobs.
- Gas prices rose 19% to \$3.45 per gallon amid the Iran conflict.
- The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell about 5% in the past month.

gasoline prices have surged 19% over the past month, reaching a national average of \$3.45 per gallon, according to AAA. Analysts link the spike to tensions following the February 28 strikes on Iran, which have disrupted global energy markets. Financial markets have also shown signs of caution. The Dow Jones Industrial Average has slipped roughly 5% over the past month, though it remains higher than earlier levels during Trump's presidency. Administration officials maintain that stronger growth could still emerge later in the year, even as economists watch closely for signs that rising energy costs and labor market softness could weigh on the broader economy.

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Photo: Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio

Image Source: Kay Nietfeld/Picture Alliance/DPA/AP

Reluctance Turns to Resolve

Trump aides move from skepticism to support in Iran conflict

Alexandar Sullivan

Senior members of President Donald Trump's national security team initially voiced reservations about a potential war with Iran, but ultimately aligned with the president's decision to launch military strikes, reflecting the dynamics inside the White House

as the conflict unfolded. Among the earliest skeptics was Vice President JD Vance, a former Marine who had built his political profile partly on opposition to prolonged foreign conflicts. According to people familiar with the discussions, Vance warned about the risks of a new Middle East war but later supported

a strategy of swift and decisive action once it became clear the president favored military intervention. The administration launched its first strikes on February 28, beginning a campaign that officials have described as "Operation Epic Fury." Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen.

Dan Caine, and other senior figures had also initially urged caution, raising concerns about the geopolitical and military consequences of attacking Iran. Despite those early doubts, advisers ultimately focused on implementing the president's decision rather than attempting to block it. "If the

president was unwilling or unable to say no, we were going to war," said Curt Mills, executive director of The American Conservative. As the conflict enters its early stages, the

HIGHLIGHT

- Vice President JD Vance and other advisers initially urged caution on war with Iran.
- The February 28 strike marked the start of the conflict.
- Top officials including Marco Rubio and Gen. Dan Caine initially raised concerns.

administration faces mounting challenges, including evacuating Americans from the region and addressing economic pressures tied to rising oil prices. Disruptions in shipping through the Strait of Hormuz have driven fuel costs to their highest national average in more than two years. White House spokesperson Taylor Rogers said Trump's national security team is working daily to ensure the success of the operation, though officials acknowledge that the long-term trajectory of the conflict remains uncertain.

Embassy Incident Under Probe

Police examine possible terror link after Oslo explosion

Lily Anderson

An overnight explosion outside the United States Embassy in Oslo, Norway, early Sunday morning has prompted a police investigation, with

HIGHLIGHT

● Explosion occurred around 01:00 local time Sunday at the U.S. Embassy in Oslo, Norway.

● Police say terrorism is one possible hypothesis, though the investigation remains ongoing.

● The blast caused minor damage but no injuries were reported.

● Authorities deployed large police resources to the embassy area.

authorities saying the incident may have been an act of terrorism.



Photo: Norwegian police and forensic experts have been deployed to inspect the site of the explosion
Image Source: Reuters/BBC

The blast occurred around 01:00 local time (00:00 GMT) near the embassy's public entrance in the Morgedalsvegen district, approximately 7 kilometers from central Oslo. According to Norwegian police, the explosion caused minor structural damage,

including shattered glass and cracks in a glass door, but no injuries were reported. "We have to be open to the possibility that there may be other causes behind what has happened," said Frode Larsen, head of the police joint investigation and intelligence unit,

speaking to NRK, Norway's public broadcaster. Larsen noted that terrorism is one possible explanation but emphasized that investigators have not reached a conclusion. Authorities deployed large police resources to the scene and conducted searches

of the surrounding area. Officers also issued a public appeal for information from anyone who may have witnessed suspicious activity before the explosion. Photos shared on social media showed broken glass scattered across snow near the entrance to the embassy's consular section. Norway's Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide called the incident "unacceptable" and stressed that protecting diplomatic missions remains a priority. He confirmed that he had spoken with U.S. embassy chargé d'affaires Eric Meyer following the explosion. The U.S. State Department said it is aware of the incident and is working with Norwegian authorities as the investigation continues.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Mayor Mamdani's proposal draws mixed reaction in Queens

NYN Desk

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani has revived long-stalled plans to redevelop Sunnyside Yards in Queens, proposing a \$21 billion project that could bring 12,000 new homes along with parks, child-care facilities, and other infrastructure. Announced on Feb. 27, the proposal calls for building a 115-acre deck over the rail yard and creating housing

with roughly half of the units under the Mitchell-Lama affordable housing program. The plan was discussed during Mamdani's recent visit to Washington, D.C., where he proposed a potential partnership with the Trump administration to support the development.



Photo: Aerial photograph of the Sunnyside Yards sit Image Source: EDC

Local leaders responded with cautious optimism while urging transparency and community engagement. A spokesperson for Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said the investment could be "transformational" if it expands affordable housing and lowers rents. Others raised

concerns about infrastructure capacity and the project's approval process. Council Member Julie Won, whose district includes the site, said any proposal "must begin with the neighbors who live here." Community figures and business leaders said the project could help address the city's housing shortage but stressed that transit, schools, and public services would need to expand alongside the development.

Iberia partnership highlights Tenerife in U.S. market



Staff Reporter

Tourism officials from Tenerife and airline Iberia have wrapped up a major promotional campaign in Manhattan, aimed at increasing travel to the Spanish island from the United States through the airline's New York-Madrid connection.

Launched in December 2025, the initiative featured large digital displays across prominent public spaces in New York City, reaching an estimated three million people. Around 50 digital screens across central Manhattan showcased videos of Tenerife's landscapes and attractions, while an additional display at Brookfield Place

near the World Trade Center generated millions of impressions among visitors. Lope Afonso, Vice-President and Tourism Councillor of the Cabildo of Tenerife, described the campaign as a key step in the island's international strategy. "Being present in Manhattan allows us to position Tenerife in a priority market with high added value, such as the United States," he said. Tourism leaders say the campaign highlights that Tenerife is "just one connection away" via Madrid, while broader marketing efforts—including airline promotions and in-flight media—aim to strengthen the island's profile among American travelers and expand its international tourism reach.

Former NYPD officer joins Democratic primary

Senior Reporter

Former NYPD officer Michael DeCillis has entered the Democratic primary in New York's 11th Congressional District, setting up a competitive race ahead of the 2026 midterm elections. DeCillis, a fourth-generation Staten Islander now living in Bay Ridge, announced his candidacy on Monday, sharply criticizing Republican incumbent Rep. Nicole Malliotakis and national GOP leadership. "I'm running because President Trump and Congressional Republicans... are destroying democracy at home," DeCillis said in a statement. A former police officer, 9/11 paramedic, and New York

City public school teacher, DeCillis also previously served as chief of staff to former Assembly member Mathylde Frontus and later worked with the NYC Districting Commission. He has launched two previous congressional bids in the district but ended both campaigns before Election Day. DeCillis will face longtime teacher Troy McGhie in the June Democratic primary, with the winner advancing to challenge Malliotakis in the November general election. The race unfolds as Democrats seek to regain the U.S. House majority, though NY-11, covering Staten Island and southern Brooklyn, has trended increasingly conservative in recent years.

Bronx gathering highlights achievements and mentorship



Photo: Bronx Women in Business committee members listen in on Vanessa Baijnauth's speech Image Source: Alice Moreno/Bronx Times

Community Desk

Entrepreneurs, professionals, and community leaders gathered in the Bronx on March 5 for the second annual Bronx Women in Business Empowerment Event, hosted by Orange Bank & Trust Company at F&J

Pine Restaurant on Bronxdale Avenue. The evening, described as a celebration of "women elevating women," highlighted leadership, mentorship, and resilience across industries. Participants shared experiences about overcoming challenges and

building opportunities for the next generation. Keynote speaker Melissa Aviles-Ramos, former Chancellor of New York City Public Schools, encouraged attendees to support one another and embrace their potential. "Walk in your purpose... build legacy and grab a sister so she knows she has you," she told the audience. Attendee Swannie Batista, co-founder of Paralegals FTC, said the event was inspiring. "Being in a room full of women in different industry roles... shows young women that anything is possible," she said. The event was founded by Vanessa Baijnauth, Assistant Vice President at Orange Bank & Trust, and has been sponsored by the bank since its launch in 2025, continuing its mission to strengthen connections among women professionals in the Bronx.

RAMADAN
Eid Henna Party 2026

ELHAAM ACADEMY
87 41 165TH ST.
JAMAICA, NY 11432

SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2PM -4PM

SAVE THE PEOPLE

Prayer Time IN New York

FAJR	DHUHR	ASR	MAGHRIB	ISHA
06:02	01:06	04:22	06:56	08:11
06:01	01:06	04:23	06:57	08:12
05:59	01:06	04:24	06:58	08:13
05:57	01:06	04:24	06:59	08:15
05:56	01:05	04:25	07:01	08:16
05:54	01:05	04:25	07:02	08:17
05:52	01:05	04:26	07:03	08:18

OPINION

FASTING, SINCERITY AND SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

— Imam Shamsi Ali

Among all acts of worship, fasting has a subtle uniqueness: it's almost invisible. Prayer has movement. Zakat has distribution. Hajj has crowds. But fasting happens in silence. Someone could appear fasting before people, but break it in private. No one knows, no one sees, except Allah SWT. That's why the Prophet (SAW) narrated Allah's words in a Hadith Qudsi: "Every deed of Adam's offspring is for them, except fasting. It is for Me, and I will reward it." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Here, fasting becomes the purest Madrasah of sincerity. It trains humans to worship without witnesses, without applause and praise, without social validation.

The Secret Between Servant and God Sincerity in Islamic tradition isn't just about right intention, but purifying one's orientation. It frees deeds from motives other than Allah. Sincerity is cleansing the heart from al-syirk al-khafi (hidden shirk) or hidden dependence on human praise. Fasting creates this training space concretely. When someone restrains hunger and thirst in solitude, they do it not to be seen, but aware of being seen by Allah (muraqabah). This

awareness births taqwa (God-consciousness). As stated Surah Baqarah that fasting's goal is "la'allakum tattaqun" - so that you may become righteous. Taqwa grows from sincerity. Without sincerity, fasting is just biological routine. With sincerity, it becomes a spiritual journey.

Erasing the Desire for Praise

Humans naturally crave recognition. They want appreciation, praise, acknowledgment. In today's exposure-driven world, this tendency strengthens. Every good deed can be publicized, every act displayed. Fasting isn't easily showcased. It has no striking symbols. That's precisely why it's a stronghold against riya' (showing off).

In fasting's silence, one faces themselves. There's nothing to boast about to others. Nothing to claim as social achievement. Here, the soul is trained to love Allah more than human approval.

Sincerity as Foundation of Integrity

Sincerity isn't just a spiritual value, but the foundation of integrity. Someone accustomed to doing good without



— Imam Shamsi Ali :
Director, Jamaica Muslim
Center & President,
Nusantara Foundation

witnesses will remain honest when unobserved. They don't need cameras to act rightly. Fasting trains this internal control. It builds awareness that Allah sees all, even when humans don't.

This awareness becomes a solid moral foundation. In character education, internal control is far stronger than external supervision. Societies relying on oversight crumble when it's removed. But societies built on divine awareness are more stable. Fasting is annual training to build this awareness.

From Hunger to Love

Sincerity in fasting isn't just about enduring hunger, but longing for Allah. Sincerity is the gateway to "mahabbatullah"— loving Allah. When someone fasts consciously, they feel they're withholding not just food, but themselves. They're surrendering comfort for obedience. Choosing Allah's pleasure over momentary pleasure.

The Prophet (SAW) said: "The fasting person has two joys: joy when breaking fast, and joy when meeting their Lord." (Bukhari and Muslim). The

second joy is sincerity's fruit – deeds done without witnesses, recorded by Allah. Here, fasting transforms hunger into love.

Challenges of Sincerity in Modern Times

Sincerity is a subtle struggle. It's not always easy to recognize. Someone might feel sincere, but hidden desires for appreciation remain. Fasting helps uncover these layers. When one feels tired, wants to give up, feels unappreciated, they're tested: for whom are they fasting?

In social life, sincerity is highly relevant. Many conflicts arise from personal ambition, desire for recognition, ego drives. Fasting trains humans to reduce ego, to magnify divine orientation. Sincerity isn't weakness; it's quiet inner strength.

To conclude, in a world noisy with recognition, fasting teaches silence. Amidst image culture, it teaches genuineness. Among human judgments, it calls back to one gaze: Allah SWT's gaze.

Sincerity without witnesses is the peak of spiritual freedom. It frees humans from dependence on creaturely approval. Fasting is the silent path to this freedom.

“

“Here, fasting becomes the purest Madrasah of sincerity. It trains humans to worship without witnesses, without applause and praise, without social validation.”



Image Source: Online

“

“Sincerity without witnesses is the peak of spiritual freedom.”

When Humanity Becomes Collateral: A Moral Reckoning for Our Time

— Akbar Haider Kiron

Across the Middle East, the headlines shift daily— airstrikes, retaliation, strategic warnings, diplomatic maneuvers. Yet beyond the geopolitical vocabulary lies a far simpler and more urgent truth: human lives are being shattered.

In the battered neighborhoods of the Gaza Strip, families search through rubble not for political leverage, but for loved ones. In Israel, civilians live under the constant anxiety of rockets and uncertainty. In Iran, ordinary citizens—especially the young—face an increasingly volatile future shaped by forces beyond their control.

Meanwhile, the role of the United States in the region remains a defining factor in the balance of power, diplomacy, and military engagement. Strategic interests are debated in policy rooms; security doctrines are articulated in careful language. But on the ground, the consequences are measured in funerals, displaced families, and interrupted childhoods. This is not merely a regional crisis. It is a global moral test.

The modern world has mastered the language of precision warfare and strategic deterrence. Yet it

continues to struggle with the language of shared humanity. When civilians—regardless of nationality or faith—bear the brunt of military escalation, we must ask: Has security become detached from compassion? Has deterrence replaced dialogue?

The people of the region, across all borders, largely desire the same fundamentals: safety, dignity, opportunity, and peace. An Israeli parent wants their child to sleep without sirens. A Palestinian mother wants her son to grow up without occupation or bombardment. An Iranian student wants education and hope—not isolation or war. These aspirations are not mutually exclusive. They are profoundly human and universally shared.

The danger of prolonged conflict is not only physical devastation but moral erosion. Each cycle of violence normalizes suffering. Each retaliatory strike hardens narratives of grievance. Each diplomatic failure deepens public



— Akbar Haider Kiron
Senior Journalist, New
York

cynicism. And as global powers align or intervene, the risk of broader destabilization grows.

History teaches us that military victories rarely resolve underlying political conflicts. Durable peace requires something far more complex: mutual recognition, credible security guarantees, accountability under international law, and sustained diplomatic courage.

The international community faces a pivotal choice. It can continue to treat crises as isolated flashpoints managed through containment and tactical responses. Or it can confront the deeper reality—that unresolved injustice, insecurity, and dehumanization inevitably reproduce conflict.

Peace is not naïve idealism. It is strategic necessity. A world connected by trade, technology, and climate vulnerability cannot afford perpetual regional war. Instability in one region reverberates globally—economically, politically,

and socially. Refugee flows, energy markets, extremism, and polarization do not respect borders.

But beyond strategy lies something even more essential: conscience. We must resist the temptation to reduce complex human suffering into simplified narratives of “us” versus “them.” We must hold space for grief on all sides without weaponizing it. We must demand that power—wherever it resides—be exercised with restraint, accountability, and an unwavering commitment to civilian protection.

The future of our world will not be secured by dominance alone. It will be shaped by whether we can re-center policy around humanity.

The question before us is not which nation prevails. It is whether humanity does.

If this century is to avoid repeating the tragedies of the last, global leadership must prioritize de-escalation, meaningful diplomacy, and a reinvestment in international norms that protect civilians above all.

Because in the end, history will not judge us by the precision of our weapons, but by the depth of our compassion.

SOLIDARITY

NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani Marks Ramadan with Citywide Iftar Visits

First Muslim Mayor Joins Diverse Communities Across New York

James Anderson

As Ramadan 2026 entered its final weeks, New York City Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani marked the occasion not with a single ceremony but through a series of visits to Muslim communities across the five boroughs, sharing iftar and suhoor meals with firefighters, teachers, sanitation workers, delivery drivers, and community advocates. For Mamdani, who recently made history as the first Muslim mayor of New York City, the gatherings carried both personal and civic significance. "Being the first Muslim mayor of New York City is a profound honor — and a responsibility I do not take lightly," he said. "Every New Yorker who serves this city should feel its embrace in return."

Throughout the holy month, the mayor accepted invitations from a wide range of organizations reflecting the diversity of New York's Muslim



population. Among them was the FDNY Islamic Society, where he joined Muslim firefighters for iftar and recognized their role in serving and protecting New Yorkers. He also attended an iftar hosted by Muslim NYPD officers, acknowledging the contributions of Muslim members of the city's largest police force.

Other gatherings highlighted the breadth of civic and social engagement among Muslim communities. SakhiNYC welcomed the mayor to an iftar focused on justice and support for marginalized communities, while Black Muslims Now hosted an evening emphasizing leadership and empowerment



NYC Office of the Mayor

among Black Muslim New Yorkers. At another event, UFT Muslim educators gathered

to break their fast while reaffirming the value of education and scholarship within the city's schools. The mayor also visited the Al Khoie Foundation, where he attended his first Friday (Jumma) prayer as mayor, and joined Los Deliveristas Unidos, an organization advocating for delivery workers across New

York's boroughs. In a particularly early morning moment of solidarity, Mamdani attended a 5:00 AM suhoor hosted by Muslim Department of Sanitation (DSNY) workers, who were preparing to begin 12-hour shifts during the city's first blizzard in a decade. Reflecting on these experiences, Mamdani said the gatherings reinforced the everyday bonds that define the city. "These moments of gathering remind us that solidarity is not abstract — it's something we practice with one another, every day." By participating in iftars and community events across different sectors of the city—from fire departments and mosques to worker organizations and classrooms—the mayor's Ramadan outreach underscored a broader message: that New York's strength lies in its diversity and the shared civic commitment of the communities who call it home.



UNITY

Ramadan Celebration at the Governor's Office

Hochul recognizes the contributions of Muslim communities across New York

Ashley Reed

Governor Kathy Hochul welcomed community members and leaders to a special Ramadan Iftar dinner this week, celebrating the holy month and honoring the contributions of Muslim New Yorkers across the state. The gathering brought together individuals from diverse backgrounds to break their fast in a spirit of unity and reflection during Ramadan, one of the most sacred times in the Islamic calendar. The event highlighted the importance of community, faith, and cultural traditions, while also recognizing the role Muslim residents play in shaping the social and economic fabric of New York State. Ramadan,



observed by Muslims worldwide, is marked by fasting from dawn to sunset, prayer, and acts of charity, with the evening meal of Iftar serving as a moment of togetherness after a day of fasting. In a message shared

following the event, Governor Hochul acknowledged the significance of the occasion and the presence of Muslim communities throughout the state. "As New Yorkers across the state broke their fast, tonight

we hosted an Iftar dinner to celebrate our Muslim neighbors and their contributions to our great state," she said. "To all those observing this holy month, Ramadan Mubarak." The evening reflected New York's long-



standing commitment to diversity and religious freedom, with guests gathering to share a meal and conversation while recognizing the spiritual meaning of Ramadan. For many attendees, the event represented more than a ceremonial gathering—it served as a reminder of the

state's inclusive values and the importance of celebrating cultural traditions together. By hosting the Iftar, the governor's office underscored the significance of Ramadan for thousands of families across the state, offering a moment for reflection, gratitude, and community connection during the holy month. As the evening concluded, participants expressed appreciation for the recognition and support shown by state leadership. Events like this, many noted, reinforce the sense that New York remains a place where diverse cultures and faiths are acknowledged, respected, and celebrated together.



UNITY

Event highlights unity, diversity, and shared traditions



[Photos collected from the official website of the Governor]

CAMARADERIE

A Night of Reflection at FDNY Headquarters

Ramadan Iftar brings together firefighters, officials, and community members

William Henry

The FDNY Islamic Society hosted a Ramadan Iftar dinner on Wednesday evening at FDNY Headquarters in Brooklyn, bringing together firefighters, city leaders, and community members for a gathering that celebrated faith, service, and unity during the holy month of Ramadan. Held in the Commissioner Robert O. Lowery Auditorium, the event welcomed a wide range of guests, including NYC Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani, Fire Commissioner Lillian Bonsignore, Chief of Department John Esposito, and First Deputy Commissioner Daniel Flynn. Members of the FDNY, community leaders, and invited organizations—including representatives from BHALO—were also



present to share in the evening's observance. The program began with opening remarks from Chief Farooq Muhammad, who reflected on the mission and work of the FDNY Islamic Society and acknowledged the leadership of Captain



Abdel Aziz in fostering a supportive community for Muslim firefighters within the department. Throughout the evening, speakers highlighted the importance of service, solidarity, and compassion—values that resonate both in the firefighting profession

and during Ramadan. One of the most moving moments came during a speech by Mohammad Moaz, whose remarks about the suffering of civilians in Gaza deeply touched many in the audience. In addition to speeches, the program featured

a cultural Dabke performance, adding a celebratory and cultural dimension to the gathering. As sunset approached, attendees participated in the traditional breaking of the fast, followed by a shared dinner. The event underscored the growing diversity within the New York City Fire Department and highlighted the role of the FDNY Islamic Society in supporting Muslim members of the department while strengthening connections with the broader community. For many participants, the evening served as both a spiritual observance and a reminder of the shared values of compassion, service, and unity that guide both Ramadan and the mission of the FDNY.



INTERFAITH

Ramadan Spirit of Unity Shines at NYPD Interfaith Iftar

Mayor Mamdani and Commissioner Tisch join community gathering



month of Ramadan. The gathering, held at NYPD Headquarters in New York City, reflected the growing tradition of interfaith engagement and cooperation during Ramadan. As the sun set, attendees joined together to break their fast, sharing a meal and conversation that highlighted the importance of



K. Mamdani and NYPD Commissioner Jessica S. Tisch, whose presence underscored the city's recognition of Ramadan and its commitment to supporting New York's diverse religious communities. Leaders from civic and community organizations were also in attendance, including representatives from The Council of Peoples Organization (CPO). Members of the Pakistani American Community of Long Island (PACOLI) also joined the event. PACOLI President Atiq Qadri, along with directors and youth members of the organization, attended the gathering, demonstrating strong community engagement and the importance of building relationships

with city institutions. Throughout the evening, participants emphasized the significance of Ramadan as a time of reflection, generosity, and unity. Events such as the MOS Interfaith Iftar serve not only as religious observances but also as platforms for dialogue and partnership between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The evening concluded with a sense of shared purpose and renewed commitment to strengthening bonds across faiths and cultures. By hosting the annual Iftar at One Police Plaza, the NYPD Muslim Officers Society once again highlighted how community engagement and cultural understanding play a vital role in fostering trust and cooperation in New York City.

Jessica Morgan

In a powerful display of unity and community partnership, the Muslim

Officers Society (MOS) of the New York City Police Department recently hosted its 18th Annual Interfaith Ramadan Iftar at One

Police Plaza, bringing together city leaders, law enforcement officials, and members of diverse communities to observe the holy

mutual respect and collaboration across communities. Among the notable guests were New York City Mayor Zohran



INTERFAITH

Muslim Officers Society hosts Ramadan gathering with city leadership



HARMONY

Faith, Solidarity, and Service Mark NYC Public Advocate Iftar

City leaders and residents gather for a meaningful Ramadan evening

Emily Parker

In the spirit of reflection and togetherness that defines the Holy Month of Ramadan, the Office of the NYC Public Advocate recently hosted a community Iftar gathering, bringing together residents, community leaders, and supporters for an evening centered on unity, peace, and shared values. The event provided an opportunity for attendees to break their fast together while reflecting on the deeper meaning of Ramadan—a month dedicated to prayer, compassion, and service to others. As the sun set, participants gathered in an atmosphere of



warmth and solidarity, emphasizing the role of faith and community in strengthening the social fabric of New York City. In a message shared

following the gathering, the office highlighted the importance of Ramadan as a time for collective reflection and hope. “Ramadan is a time

of solidarity. We pray for the safety of our families and for peace. We pray for an end to violence and hate, and an embrace of empathy,

understanding, and the unity felt in breaking the fast together.” Community members expressed appreciation for the initiative, noting that such events help bring people of diverse backgrounds together while fostering greater cultural awareness. By hosting the Iftar,



NYC Office of the Mayor

the Public Advocate’s Office underscored its commitment to recognizing the traditions and contributions of Muslim

New Yorkers. Beyond the shared meal, the gathering also served as a reminder of the values Ramadan promotes—generosity, compassion, and a renewed commitment to justice and understanding. In a city known for its diversity, the event reflected how moments of cultural and religious celebration can create opportunities for dialogue and connection. As Ramadan continues to be observed across New York City, events like this community Iftar demonstrate how public institutions and local communities can come together to promote unity, empathy, and hope for a more inclusive future.



GENEROSITY

Breaking Fast Together in the Spirit of Ramadan at Darul Uloom NY Iftar

Zakat Foundation of America sponsors meal for 500+ attendees



Noah Presley

In a spirit of generosity and unity that defines the Holy Month of Ramadan, the Zakat Foundation of America (ZFA) sponsored a large community Iftar at Darul Uloom NY, bringing

together more than 500 attendees for an evening of prayer, reflection, and fellowship. The gathering welcomed families, community members, faith leaders, and public officials who came together to break their fast at sunset.



The event reflected

Ramadan's core values of compassion, charity, and service, as participants shared a meal and strengthened community ties. Representing the Zakat Foundation of America, Sr. Sarah Khan and Mursheda Mira attended the event, underscoring the organization's ongoing commitment to humanitarian support and community outreach. Through initiatives such as sponsoring large Iftar gatherings, ZFA continues to promote the spirit of giving and solidarity during Ramadan. The program was moderated by Imam Muhammad Shahidullah, who guided the evening's

proceedings and helped facilitate a meaningful atmosphere of reflection and dialogue among attendees. Among the notable guests present was Phil Bracey, Associate Commissioner of Special Projects at the New York State Division of Human Rights, whose attendance highlighted the broader civic engagement surrounding the event. The gathering brought together individuals from diverse backgrounds, demonstrating how Ramadan celebrations can serve as a bridge between faith communities and public institutions. As the evening unfolded, attendees shared

conversations about the importance of community support and the values of generosity that Ramadan encourages. Events like this provide not only nourishment for those observing the fast but also an opportunity to strengthen relationships within the wider community. With more than 500 people participating, the Iftar at Darul Uloom NY stood as a powerful example of how charitable organizations and community leaders can work together to foster unity, compassion, and a shared commitment to serving others during the blessed month of Ramadan.



INCLUSION

Ramadan Spirit Reflected at NYC Department of Correction Iftar

MECCA and Bengali American Boldest Association host meaningful gathering

Carlos Stewart

Members of the New York City Department of Correction (NYCDOC) recently came together to observe the Holy Month of Ramadan through a special Iftar gathering organized by the Muslims Employed in City Corrections Association, Inc. (MECCA) in collaboration with the Bengali American Boldest Association. The event provided Muslim staff members and their colleagues an opportunity to break the daily fast together while reflecting on the spiritual significance of Ramadan—a sacred time of prayer, self-discipline, and compassion observed by Muslims around the world. Traditional meals were shared among participants, creating an atmosphere of warmth and camaraderie. Ramadan is widely recognized as a period



when Muslims focus on strengthening their faith, practicing generosity, and building community connections. Within the NYCDOC, the gathering served as a meaningful reminder of the agency's diverse workforce and its



commitment to fostering a respectful and



inclusive environment for all employees.



Organizers noted that events such as the Ramadan Iftar help strengthen bonds among staff members while promoting mutual understanding across cultures and faiths. By bringing colleagues together to share a

meal and observe an important religious tradition, the event also reinforced a sense of unity and support within the department. The gathering reflected the agency's broader efforts to recognize and celebrate the cultural and religious diversity of its members. For many participants, the evening served as both a moment of spiritual reflection and an opportunity to connect with fellow employees in a welcoming setting. As Ramadan continues to be observed throughout New York City, the Iftar hosted by MECCA and the Bengali American Boldest Association stands as an example of how workplaces can foster community, respect, and shared values—strengthening relationships not only within an organization but across the broader city it serves.



CELEBRATION

Community Iftar in Brooklyn Celebrates Unity and Cultural Pride

Arab American Association of New York brings together leaders and residents during Ramadan

Daniel Matthew

A vibrant evening of faith, unity, and community spirit unfolded on Friday, March 6, 2026, as more than 300 community members gathered for a large Ramadan Iftar dinner at the Beit El Maqdis Islamic Center, 6206 6th Avenue, Brooklyn, New York. The event was organized by the Arab American Association of New York (AAANY) and generously sponsored by Dr. Habib Joudeh, President and Board Chair of the organization, along with his family. The gathering brought together residents, faith leaders, and public officials to break the fast and celebrate the spirit of Ramadan. Among the distinguished guests was New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, whose political journey began in Bay Ridge, home to one of the largest Palestinian communities in New York City.



Other public officials in attendance included Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez, State Senator Andrew Gounardes, and Denise Miranda, Commissioner of the New York State Division of Human Rights. Representatives from the New York State Attorney

General's Office, along with several city and state leaders, also participated in the evening. The program opened with welcome remarks from Dr. Habib Joudeh and Marwa Janini, Executive Director of the Arab American Association of New



York, who highlighted the importance of

community gatherings during Ramadan and the role of local organizations in fostering unity and civic engagement. The evening included a Qur'an recitation by Imam Ahmed Amin of Beit El Maqdis Islamic Center, followed by reflections from Dr.

Imam Mohammad Elbar of the Islamic Society of Bay Ridge. The program was hosted by Dr. Ramsey Joudeh, who served as the event's master of ceremonies. The Brooklyn District Attorney's Office and the office of Governor Kathy Hochul presented proclamations recognizing the work and impact of the Arab American Association of New York and its contributions to the community. As attendees shared a traditional Ramadan meal, the event served as more than just a gathering—it became a powerful reminder of the strength of community, cultural pride, and civic collaboration in Brooklyn's Bay Ridge neighborhood. Organizers expressed gratitude to everyone who attended, noting that moments like these help reinforce the bonds of understanding, compassion, and shared purpose that define the spirit of Ramadan.



CELEBRATION

City leaders join Arab American Association of New York for evening of unity



ALL photo Credit : AAANY & Dunya International

ENGAGEMENT

Breaking Fast Together at the 107th Precinct

Faith leaders and residents gather to strengthen trust and partnership

Issac Andrew

A spirit of unity and cooperation filled the NYPD 107th Precinct in Fresh Meadows, Queens, as community leaders, faith representatives, and law enforcement officials gathered for a special Ramadan Iftar event. The evening brought together members of the public and police officers to break the fast and reflect on the values of compassion, service, and mutual respect during the holy month. The gathering was presided over by Community Council President Carolann Foley, while Captain Michael Black-Larkins, the Commanding Officer of the 107th Precinct, welcomed attendees and emphasized the importance of maintaining strong relationships between



the police department and the communities they serve. The program was moderated by Imam Muhammad Shahidullah, who guided the evening's proceedings and highlighted Ramadan's emphasis on patience, generosity, and unity. Community members joined officers in sharing a traditional Iftar meal, reinforcing the spirit of fellowship that defines the holy month.



The event was supported by the Shah Nawaz Group, with Chairman Shah Newaz, President and CEO of

Golden Age Homecare, present as a sponsor partner. During the gathering, Shah Newaz addressed attendees, noting the importance of cooperation between civic institutions and local communities in building a safer and more harmonious neighborhood. A special spiritual moment came when Pir of Sarsina Sharif, Shah Muhammad Saifullah Siddiki, offered dua and munajat, praying

for peace, community harmony, and the well-being of all residents. Among those present were Tim from Community Affairs, Mc Arthy, and Shah Nawaz Group DGM Anik Raj, along with other community activists and local leaders who joined the evening in solidarity and reflection. Their participation underscored the growing tradition of Ramadan gatherings that bring together

diverse groups to foster dialogue and understanding. Events such as this Iftar at the 107th Precinct highlight how cultural and faith-based observances can serve as powerful platforms for community engagement. By sharing a meal and conversation, police officers and residents strengthened the bonds of trust and cooperation that are essential to maintaining safe and welcoming neighborhoods across Queens, New York. As Ramadan continues, gatherings like this demonstrate how shared traditions and open dialogue can build bridges between communities and the institutions that serve them, reinforcing a spirit of unity and mutual respect throughout the city.



All Photo Credit Neher Siddiquee

LEGISLATION

NYC Leaders Push Safe-Access Legislation as Debate Over Protest Rights Intensifies

Interfaith rally precedes contentious City Hall hearing on hate and public safety

Marcos Alonso

A coalition of city leaders and interfaith advocates gathered at City Hall to support a package of bills aimed at protecting safe access to houses of worship and schools, as Speaker Julie Menin and Councilmember Dr. Yusef Salaam framed the legislation as a necessary response to rising hate across New York City.

“In less than an hour, the Committee to Combat Hate will have their first hearing on a package of bills,” Menin said at the rally, calling the proposals “vital for ensuring that New York remains a place where freedom of religion is protected and basic security is assured.” She added that “freedom of speech is truly sacrosanct,” but said the city “will not allow people to... abuse that freedom to harass and intimidate others outside religious and educational institutions.” Salaam, who chairs the newly formed Committee to Combat Hate, described the legislation as part of a broader effort to confront bias in all its forms. “These are not just statistics,” he said of recent hate



crimes. “These are real people, real lives, and real stories of pain and suffering that we cannot ignore.” He also announced he is exploring a youth academy to combat hate through education and outreach. The package under consideration includes proposals requiring the NYPD to publish response plans related to risks near religious sites

and schools, create clearer standards for potential buffer zones, establish a hate crime hotline, improve hate crime data reporting, and address online bias and cyber-hate. Menin later said the measures are intended to protect both safe access and constitutional rights. Supporters have argued that in a city where synagogues, churches, mosques, and other

institutions often serve not only as places of worship but also as centers of counseling, charity, education, and community support, people should be able to enter them without fear of harassment or intimidation. Supporters at the rally included elected officials and faith leaders across traditions. Imam Muhammad Shahidullah said his support for the

bills was rooted in the lessons of Ramadan, stressing “safety, security, and peace.” Eric Goldstein of UJA, Mark Treyger of JCRC, Scott Richman of the ADL, and religious leaders from Muslim, Catholic, and Protestant communities also backed the effort, arguing that no New Yorker should fear entering a school or place of worship.

Their message echoed a broader interfaith view that reasonable protections near entrances can preserve both peaceful expression and safe access. But the later hearing, which stretched nearly 10 hours, revealed sharp disagreement. While many testified in support, others — including some Black, Brown, Palestinian, and civil liberties advocates — warned that the proposals could chill lawful protest, expand police power, and create new risks for demonstrators. The result was a day that underscored both the urgency of combating hate and the complexity of balancing public safety with free expression in a deeply diverse city. As Menin later wrote, the council was “standing with faith leaders — Jewish, Muslim, and Christian — to combat hate in all its forms,” while also aiming to uphold “all New Yorkers’ free speech and religious rights.” The debate made clear that while there is broad agreement that hate must be confronted, New Yorkers remain divided over exactly how to do it.



FAITH AND UNITY

BHALO Iftar Strengthens Community Bonds During Ramadan

Community leaders and families gather for reflection and connection

Phillip D'Costa

A spirit of gratitude, unity, and community service marked the BHALO Community Iftar and Dinner 2026, where residents, leaders, and supporters gathered during the holy month of Ramadan to break their fast and celebrate the values of compassion and solidarity.

The event, organized by BHALO (Bangladeshi Humanitarian Aid and Leadership Outreach), brought together members of the local community along with civic leaders to share a traditional Iftar meal, fostering connection and reflection during one of the most significant times of the year for Muslims worldwide. Among those in attendance was New York City Councilmember Nantasha Williams, who recognized the organization's



contributions to the district and expressed appreciation for its continued service. "It was a pleasure joining BHALO for their community iftar," Williams noted. "Organizations like BHALO play an important role in our district, providing workshops, trainings, food drives, and other resources that respond



community bonds. The gathering served not only as a meal to break the fast but also as a moment for neighbors to come together in gratitude and mutual support. Community advocate Adama Bah shared a message of appreciation during the event, highlighting the spirit of support that defines gatherings like this. "My

brothers, as a sister I just want to say how grateful I am for your support," she said. "The way you uplift, protect, and stand beside me means more than words can express. May Allah bless you for the strength and kindness you show." BHALO has long been known for its grassroots initiatives aimed at empowering

families and addressing local needs. Through community programs, training sessions, and food distribution efforts, the organization continues to play a vital role in supporting diverse residents across Queens, New York. Events like the BHALO Iftar and Dinner highlight the broader significance of Ramadan as a time for reflection, generosity, and unity. By bringing together neighbors, community advocates, and local officials, the gathering reinforced the idea that strong communities are built through collaboration, compassion, and shared traditions. As the evening concluded, attendees left with a renewed sense of connection and purpose, embodying the spirit of Ramadan and the enduring commitment to uplift and support one another across the community.



FAITH AND UNITY

NYPD Traffic Enforcement District Hosts Iftar in Queens



All Photo Credit: Neher Siddiquee

COMMUNITY IFTAR

Faith and Community Come Together at New York Ramadan Iftar

Shah Nawaz Group organizes evening of prayer, dialogue, and unity

Tulip Armstrong

A spirit of reflection and unity marked a special Ramadan Iftar and Dua Mahfil organized by the Shah Nawaz Group, bringing together community leaders, elected officials, and members of the broader public in New York during the holy month of Ramadan. The event was held on Thursday, March 5, at Gulshan Terrace in New York, where attendees gathered to break their fast and take part in prayers for peace and prosperity. Organized by the well-known business organization Shah Nawaz Group, the evening provided an opportunity for members of the community to reflect on the spiritual significance of Ramadan while strengthening social and civic ties. The program was hosted by Imam Muhammad



Shahidullah, who guided the evening's proceedings and welcomed guests from diverse professional and community backgrounds. Throughout the gathering, speakers briefly addressed attendees, highlighting the values of patience,



generosity, and compassion that define the holy month. Several prominent public officials were present

at the event, reflecting the strong relationship between community organizations and civic leadership in New York City. Among those attending were Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar, New York State Senator John Liu, and Queens Borough President Donovan

Richards Jr. Community and civic representatives were also present, including Shamsul Haque, Mollah Sany, and Ataur Rahman Selim, President of the Bangladesh Society. The gathering further included diplomatic representation with the presence of Mr. Muhammad Mozammel Haque, Consul General of the Bangladesh Consulate in New York. The evening's spiritual highlight came with a special dua and munajat led by Abu Jafar Beg, Imam of the Jamaica Muslim Center, who offered prayers seeking peace, unity, and prosperity for the country, the community, and the global Muslim ummah. Also present were respected religious figures including Pir of Sarsina Sharif Shah Muhammad Saifullah

Siddiki and Imam Kazi Qaiyum, whose presence added to the spiritual atmosphere of the gathering. Events such as this Ramadan Iftar demonstrate how community institutions and local leaders come together to celebrate shared values while strengthening bonds among residents of diverse backgrounds. By combining spiritual reflection with civic engagement, the gathering served as a reminder of the role faith and community cooperation play in fostering harmony across New York's multicultural landscape. As Ramadan continues, such gatherings help reinforce a spirit of unity, compassion, and mutual respect—values that resonate far beyond the dinner table and into the broader life of the community.



COMMUNITY IFTAR

Prominent civic and community leaders join gathering in Queens



COMMUNITY IFTAR

Event highlights the spiritual significance of the holy month



All Photo Credit: Neher Siddiquee

SISTERHOOD

Sisters Qiyam Night Brings Spiritual Reflection to Jamaica Muslim Center

MusCare and partner organizations host overnight Ramadan program for young women

Abdul Azim

A night of faith, reflection, and sisterhood unfolded at the Jamaica Muslim Center (JMC) in Jamaica, New York, where young women gathered for a special Sisters Qiyam Night during the holy month of Ramadan. The overnight program, held on Friday, March 6, 2026, brought together participants for a meaningful experience centered on worship, learning, and community connection. Sponsored by MusCare, the event was organized in partnership with Elhaam Academy, Jamaica Muslim Center (JMC), and Jamaica Young Muslims (YM). The program began after Taraweeh prayers and continued until Fajr, providing attendees with an opportunity to engage in spiritual reflection while building lasting bonds with peers.



The gathering was designed as a space where young women could step away from the distractions of daily life and focus on personal growth during Ramadan. Throughout the evening, participants

took part in a variety of activities including group reflections, discussions about faith, and interactive games that fostered a sense of community and belonging. Organizers described the event as both uplifting and memorable for the attendees. The program included dinner and suhoor, ensuring participants could share meals together while preparing for the early morning prayer. The combination of worship, conversation, and social activities created an atmosphere of encouragement and spiritual renewal. The initiative also highlighted the importance of youth engagement within the Muslim community. Programs like Sisters Qiyam Night offer young people opportunities to strengthen their connection to faith while forming friendships

and support networks that extend beyond the mosque. Community leaders and volunteers from the participating organizations worked together to create an environment that balanced spiritual reflection with fellowship. Their collaboration demonstrated the strength of partnerships among local institutions in supporting youth development and community wellbeing. As Ramadan continues, events like this serve as a reminder of the power of shared experiences in strengthening faith and community ties. By bringing together young women for a night of worship and reflection, the Sisters Qiyam Night at Jamaica Muslim Center helped foster a sense of unity, empowerment, and spiritual growth that resonates far beyond a single evening.



UMR

Ramadan Giving, Year-Round Impact: A Nonprofit's Multi-Country Push

UMR's campaign paired emergency aid with longer-term health, education, and protection efforts.

Alex Mason

During Ramadan 2026, United Mission for Relief & Development (UMR) leaned into the heightened spirit of giving while underscoring a broader point: the needs it responds to do not begin with the crescent moon—or end when the month closes. The registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, which works both in the U.S. and internationally, framed its Ramadan campaign as an acceleration of year-round relief and sustainable development—an approach it says is guided by values of unity, neutrality, integrity, transparency, excellence, and dignity. The most visible impact came through food assistance for families uprooted by conflict. In posts summarizing its Ramadan distributions, UMR reported feeding over 1,000 Sudanese refugees in Egypt, with 1,200 food boxes and 2,000 hot meals delivered to households forced to flee their homes. The organization described these deliveries as a reminder that displacement is not a momentary emergency but a



Taiz, and Al-Hodeidah, alongside surgical equipment delivered to specialized hospitals to expand lifesaving care. Separate updates also pointed to support for orphans and vulnerable families in Lebanon, including efforts tied to school rehabilitation and improved learning spaces. Behind the Ramadan push is an organization that traces its beginnings to a student-led effort at George Mason University before formally launching as a nonprofit in October 2013 through a merger with Muslims Without Borders, later opening field offices in 2015 and rebranding in 2018 to emphasize development alongside relief. That long arc shaped its Ramadan appeal this year, including a strong emphasis on faith-based giving: UMR urged supporters to fulfill Zakat through its dedicated program, stating it carries 0% operational costs—directing 100% of Zakat to eligible beneficiaries for food, water, and essential aid—while encouraging continued donations beyond Ramadan to sustain the same lifelines throughout the year.

sustained hardship—and that consistent support can protect families' ability to endure with dignity. UMR also highlighted fresh food basket distributions for displaced households in Gaza, saying the effort reached thousands of people and prioritized



families of orphans

and widows. The baskets, according to the organization, included staples meant to restore a measure of normalcy—vegetables, fruits, and fresh meat—at a time when access to reliable food has become increasingly fragile. Health programming was

another major Ramadan focus, reflecting UMR's emphasis on building systems that last beyond emergency windows. The organization reported shipping new medical kits that reached tens of thousands of patients in Yemen, with supplies distributed to facilities in Aden, Lahj,



EVERY 7 SECONDS
a child under 5 dies.
Many of these deaths are preventable.

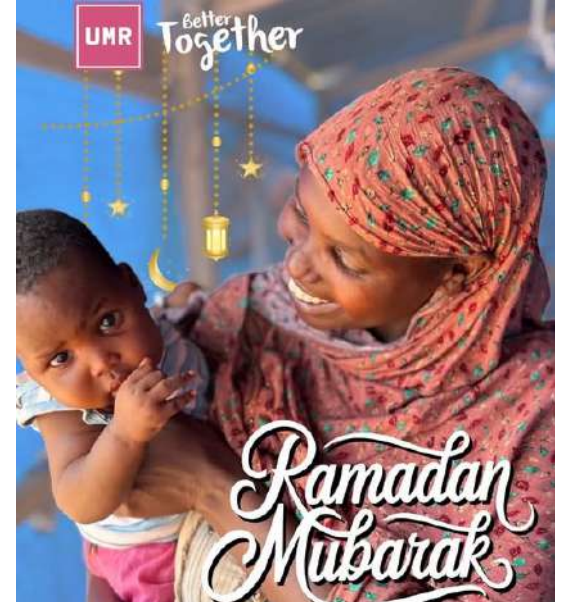
EVERY MINUTE
a child dies from malaria.
Malaria is preventable and treatable.

EVERY 2 MINUTES
a woman dies during childbirth.
Access to safe care saves lives.

EVERY 10 MINUTES
a child in Yemen dies.
Malnutrition is a leading cause.

PREVENTABLE DEATHS HAPPEN EVERY MINUTE WORLDWIDE

UMR Better Together





Demonstration Leads to Arrests

Tensions rise outside mayoral residence in Manhattan



Photo: Police Probe Protest Incident

Image Source : Online

Amkel Nourush

A protest and counterprotest outside Gracie Mansion on March 7 led to multiple arrests as police moved to contain escalating tensions near the official residence of New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani. Authorities said about 20 demonstrators

gathered for an anti-Islam rally organized by far-right activist Jake Lang, while roughly 120 to 125 counter-protesters assembled nearby. As the two groups confronted each other, officials said the situation escalated after pepper spray was allegedly discharged into the counterprotest. Police Commissioner

HIGHLIGHT

● **Protest and counterprotest took place on March 7 near Gracie Mansion in New York City.**

● **About 20 demonstrators were met by roughly 120 to 125 counter-protesters.**

Jessica Tisch said investigators are also reviewing an incident in which a counterprotester allegedly lit and threw a taped device containing nuts, bolts, and screws toward the demonstration area. Officials said it was not immediately clear whether the device was functional or a hoax. In all, six people were reported arrested, including individuals accused of using pepper spray and smoke-producing or other improvised devices. No injuries were reported, and officials said Mayor Mamdani was not believed to be at the residence at the time. The confrontation underscored the heightened tensions that can surround opposing public demonstrations in the city, as police continue their investigation.



Photo: Some in Cyprus feel the presence of British bases there is placing them at risk
Image Source: Jessica Parker/BBC

Cyprus Base Strike Debate

Drone attack reignites tensions over UK military presence

Julian Alvez

A drone strike on the RAF Akrotiri airbase in Cyprus has reignited debate about the United Kingdom's long-standing military presence on the island, prompting protests and renewed scrutiny of the strategic facilities. The attack, which occurred about a week ago, punched a hole in a hangar at the base on Cyprus's southern coast. British officials believe the drone may have been launched from Lebanon by the Iranian-backed militia Hezbollah, though the UK says it has not taken part in direct strikes on Iran. In response, roughly 200 to 300 demonstrators gathered outside the presidential palace in Nicosia, carrying

signs reading "British Bases Out." Protesters argued that the military installations make Cyprus a potential target during regional conflicts. "I think that we'd be a lot safer without them here," said protester Shona Muir. The UK retained the Akrotiri and Dhekelia bases under a 1960 treaty following Cyprus's independence from Britain. Today the 98-square-mile Sovereign Base Areas remain strategically important for operations in the Mediterranean and Middle East. British officials defended their presence, saying the bases help protect regional security and support allies, while Cypriot leaders emphasized that the drone targeted a UK facility, not Cyprus itself.

Deadly Tornadoes Strike Midwest

Storms in Michigan and Oklahoma leave six dead

Adrian Smith

Powerful tornadoes tore through parts of Michigan and Oklahoma on Friday, leaving at least six people dead, including a 12-year-old boy, and injuring more than a dozen others as severe storms battered communities across the region. In southern Michigan, authorities confirmed four fatalities and

multiple injuries. Silas Anderson, 12, died from weather-related injuries in Edwardsburg, according to the Cass County Sheriff's Office. Three additional deaths and several injuries were reported near Union City in Branch County, where homes and large structures suffered major damage or were destroyed. "Multiple large structures... sustained

damage ranging from major structural impacts to complete destruction," officials said. In Oklahoma, two people were killed after a tornado carved a four-mile path of destruction through Okmulgee County, south of Tulsa. Emergency crews worked to clear roads and reach affected areas. Governors Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan

and Kevin Stitt of Oklahoma declared states of emergency in several counties as rescue and recovery operations continued. The National Weather Service warned that severe weather, including thunderstorms and potential flash flooding, could continue across parts of the Great Plains and Texas through the weekend.

Secrets Beneath Caribbean Waters

Scientists uncover reefs, ridges and rare creatures near British territories

Nassr Al Shams

A groundbreaking deep-sea expedition has uncovered a hidden world beneath the waters of the Cayman Islands, Anguilla, and Turks and Caicos, revealing underwater mountains, a vast blue hole, and coral reefs that appear largely untouched by climate change. Working around the clock for six weeks aboard the RRS James Cook, scientists from CEFAS and the three island territories surveyed depths of up to 6,000 meters. Along the way, they documented nearly 14,000 individual specimens and 290 kinds of marine life, including unusual creatures such as a



Photos: NASA's Artemis II SLS rocket and Orion spacecraft roll back to the VAB at Kennedy Space Center, Feb. 25, 2026.

Image Source: CEFAS/BBC
glowing-tailed pelican eel, a barreleye fish, and a possible new

type of swimming sea cucumber. Among the most striking

discoveries were a steep 70-kilometer underwater ridge near Turks and Caicos, a possible contender for the deepest blue hole in the Caribbean, and a vibrant reef near Anguilla containing ancient black coral. Researchers also identified one of the region's healthiest deep-water reef systems near Little Cayman. "This is the first step into environments people have never seen," said expedition leader Dr. James Bell. Scientists say the findings could help island governments improve conservation plans, support sustainable fishing, and strengthen efforts to protect 30% of the world's oceans by 2030.

More Settings, Less Protection

Analysts question whether digital privacy can still be reclaimed

Charles Lewis

Even as privacy tools and regulations multiply, many experts say personal privacy online has never felt more fragile. That tension is at the center of a growing debate over how much control users truly have over their digital lives in 2026. Thomas Bunting, an analyst at Nesta, argued that online privacy has become "a luxury, not a right," while noting that younger users often see data sharing as the price of participating in modern internet life. Veteran privacy advocates say that resignation carries real consequences. Prof. Alan Woodward of Surrey University warned that privacy is not about hiding wrongdoing but

about protecting "freedom of thought, experimentation, dissent and personal development without permanent surveillance." He argued that when people assume they are always being watched, they begin to censor themselves. The concern persists despite an expanding marketplace of encrypted apps, tracker blockers, password managers, and privacy settings. Critics say those defenses are often too complicated, too limited, or tied to premium products. Dr. Carissa Veliz, author of Privacy is Power, said many people feel powerless rather than indifferent. The result is a modern paradox: more privacy controls than ever, but less confidence that privacy can actually be preserved.

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