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NEW YORK NEWS

The Voice of People

From New York



Photo: Vice-President JD Vance greeted Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif ahead of the talks on Sunday
Image Source: Getty Images/BBC.

U.S.-Iran Talks Begin

Delegations pursue final peace deal

Alexandar Sullivan

U.S. and Iranian officials began direct negotiations in Switzerland after signing an initial agreement intended to end the war and produce a final settlement within 60 days.
The talks at Bürgenstock focused on implementing commitments that included reopening the Strait of Hormuz, ending fighting on all fronts and lifting restrictions affecting Iranian ports.
The waterway carries about 20% of the world's oil and natural gas, making its status critical to global energy markets.
Vice President JD Vance, joined by Jared Kushner and special envoy Steve Witkoff, said Washington hoped to advance discussions on Iran's nuclear program and regional activity. Iran was represented by parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, while Pakistan participated as a mediator. The talks were overshadowed by renewed fighting between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon. Iran accused the United States and Israel of violating the ceasefire and announced another closure of the strait, though vessel-tracking data showed some ships continued to pass.
President Donald Trump warned Iran to restrain its regional allies or risk renewed U.S. military action.

Fuel Crisis Hits Crimea

Authorities restrict public access

Lily Anderson

Russian-backed authorities suspended public fuel sales in occupied Crimea after Ukrainian strikes disrupted oil facilities and supply routes.
Regional leader Sergey Aksyonov said remaining fuel would be reserved for government agencies handling Crimea's "functioning and security." He said a drone attack on an oil depot in Kerch killed four people and injured 28.
Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called the strike a "just response" and said Ukraine also hit oil transport and military logistics sites near the Kerch Strait. The restrictions left residents and Russian tourists struggling to find fuel as Ukraine intensifies attacks on Russian energy infrastructure.



Photo: Cars queue at a petrol station on the peninsula in early June amid already restricted fuel sales
Image Source: Reuters/BBC



Photo: Starmer Faces Calls to Quit *Image Source: Getty / PA Media*

Starmer's Authority Weakens

Labour defeat deepens leadership crisis

Lily Anderson

Pressure intensified on Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer as government insiders suggested he could soon announce a timetable for leaving office following a sharp collapse in support within the Labour Party.
Although Starmer repeatedly said he would resist any leadership challenge, officials described a significant change in the government's mood over the previous 48 hours. Business Secretary Peter Kyle said the prime minister was considering political realities and would act in the country's best interests.
The crisis deepened after Andy Burnham won the Makerfield by-election by a comfortable margin over Reform UK, strengthening arguments that Labour needs new leadership to challenge Nigel Farage's party.
Dozens of Labour lawmakers had already called for Starmer to resign. Senior ministers, including Yvette Cooper, Shabana Mahmood and Heidi Alexander, reportedly urged him privately to step down while remaining in government, underscoring the decline of his authority.
Burnham emerged as the overwhelming favorite to succeed Starmer, though questions remained over whether a leadership contest would take place and how quickly a transfer of power could be completed. The coming days were expected to have major consequences for both Labour and the country.

Conflict Shapes Colombia Vote

Security crisis dominates presidential race

Henry Bob

Colombia's worsening internal conflict dominated its presidential election, forcing voters to choose between sharply different strategies for addressing armed violence, drug trafficking and displacement.
FARC dissidents, the National Liberation Army and the Clan del Golfo have expanded their influence, while forced displacement reportedly rose 300% between 2024 and 2025.



Photo:Escalating violence has marked Colombia's presidential campaign
Image Source: AFP via Getty Images

Left-wing Senator Iván Cepeda supported negotiations with armed groups and social programs targeting poverty and inequality. Conservative businessman Abelardo de la Espriella, backed by President Donald Trump, promised to end negotiations, build 10 mega-prisons and launch a stronger military crackdown.

HIGHLIGHT

•Armed violence and displacement dominated Colombia's presidential campaign.

For families affected by extortion, killings and forced displacement, the election carried immediate consequences. Voters were deciding not only who would lead the country, but how Colombia would confront its long-running struggle for peace and security.

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Marwa Janini Honored

NYN Desk

The Arab American Association of New York congratulated its chief executive officer, Marwa Janini, after she was recognized as an awardee in the Arab America Foundation's 40 Under 40 program.
Janini, a Palestinian-American Muslim organizer, leads community-based advocacy supporting immigrant and Arab communities across New York City. Her work has focused on building a safer and more inclusive city while combating anti-Arab,
anti-Palestinian, anti-Asian and Islamophobic rhetoric and violence.
She holds a master's degree in Middle Eastern Studies from



Photo: AAANY leader named 40 Under 40 Image Source: Online

The CUNY Graduate Center. Her academic work examining the Palestinian diaspora in Latin America and relations between the Arab
world and Latin America has been published and recognized with multiple honors.
Janini was also ranked No. 12 on the inaugural Power of Diversity: MENA 50, which highlights Middle Eastern and North African leaders making an impact across New York.
With roots in Beit Hanina, Palestine, and Managua, Nicaragua, Janini has served on Mayor Zohran Mamdani's immigrant justice transition team and advised previous city administrations.
AAANY praised her continued leadership and commitment to underserved communities.

Lawmakers Demand NYCHA Repairs



Photo: Rep. Grace Meng and Council Member Sandra Ung tour the Latimer Gardens Older Adult Center with local residents. Image Source: Photo via U.S Rep. Grace Meng

News Correspondent

U.S. Rep. Grace Meng and Council Member Sandra Ung called on NYCHA to quickly repair the leaking roof at the Latimer Gardens Older Adult Center in Flushing, which temporarily closed on May 18 over safety concerns.
The closure has disrupted meals, activities, wellness programs and other services used by about 700 local seniors. A summer youth program has also been forced to find alternative space.
NYCHA said repeated temporary repairs were no longer enough and that the roof must be completely replaced. The agency said programs and meals were being relocated during the closure.
Meng, who secured $800,000 in federal funding for the project, described the conditions as "unacceptable" and urged the agency to reopen the facility as soon as possible.

Governor Ned Lamont announces $5 million security investment



Photo: New funding protects houses of worship

Staff Reporter

Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont joined mosque leaders and community advocates at the Islamic Association of Greater Hartford for a wide-ranging discussion on the safety, civil rights and concerns of the state's Muslim community.
During the gathering, Lamont announced an additional $5 million for Connecticut's Nonprofit Security Grant Program, strengthening protections for mosques, churches, synagogues, temples and community organizations facing potential threats. The investment is expected to help nonprofit institutions improve security and better protect the people they serve. Community advocate Farhan Memon, who attended the meeting, welcomed the governor's presence and the opportunity for direct dialogue with state leadership. Participants discussed anti-Muslim discrimination, the rights of students and residents advocating for justice in Palestine, and the continuing humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Memon said meaningful engagement required honest conversations rather than ceremonial appearances. He added that holding the meeting inside a mosque sent a powerful message that Connecticut's Muslim population is an important part of the state's civic and religious life.The gathering provided community members with a direct platform to share their concerns while highlighting the Lamont administration's investment in protecting vulnerable institutions.

Interfaith Action in Jackson Heights



Photo: Community groups help Jackson Heights residents register to vote during the Interfaith Day of Action. Image Source: Alice Moreno

Senior Reporter

An interfaith coalition brought voter outreach, cultural connection and community celebration to Jackson Heights on Saturday, June 13, helping residents register to vote on New York City's registration deadline.

Representatives from Hindus for Human Rights, the Sikh Coalition, Emgage, the New York City Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes and the New York City Commission on Human Rights organized the Interfaith Day of Action and Celebration.
Volunteers gathered at Diversity Plaza, located at 73-19 37th Road, from 10 a.m. to noon, distributing multilingual resources, checking voter eligibility and guiding residents through the registration process.
Anmol Aulakh, community development manager for the Sikh Coalition, said the event focused on building interfaith relationships while increasing awareness of voting rights and civic participation.
The outreach was followed by a celebration from noon to 2 p.m. at Shanai Restaurant and Party Hall, featuring a free communal lunch, bingo games, prizes and networking opportunities.
Volunteer Eshaan Vakil said growing political engagement had created a new sense of empowerment among South Asian communities, helping residents advocate for themselves and make their voices heard.

Bosniak Leaders Meet City Officials

Community Desk

Bosniak imams and representatives of Balkan Muslim congregations met with officials from the New York City Mayor's Office in what organizers described as a historic first.
The gathering was initiated by Zara Kandić, whose community leadership helped bring religious representatives



Photo: Bosniak Community Makes History Image Source: online

and city officials together. Participants discussed stronger cooperation, mutual understanding and improved representation of the Bosniak community within New York City institutions.
Organizers said the meeting marked the beginning of a closer relationship between Bosniak congregations and city leadership, with hopes for continued dialogue and coordinated action benefiting the wider community.

Prayer Time IN New York

FAJR	DHUHR	ASR	MAGHRIB	ISHA
03:45	12:58	04:58	08:31	10:11
03:45	12:58	04:59	08:31	10:11
03:46	12:58	04:59	08:31	10:11
03:46	12:59	04:59	08:31	10:11
03:46	12:59	04:59	08:31	10:11
03:47	12:59	04:59	08:31	10:11
03:47	12:59	04:59	08:31	10:11

OPINION

Governor Ned Lamont announces $5 million security investment

Page-02

Country Roads, World Cup, and a Summer Evening in Buffalo

– Akbar Haider Kiron

The FIFA World Cup has once again captured the imagination of millions around the globe. From New York to Dhaka, from Sydney to Buenos Aires, football fever is everywhere. Yet sometimes it is not the scoreline that stays with us. It is a moment, a melody, or a feeling that lingers long after the match has ended.

I am spending a few days in Buffalo, New York, visiting my longtime friend and former Voice of America colleague, Shahadat Sabuj. Since yesterday, we have been enjoying the city, sharing stories, memories, and conversations that stretch back decades. Adding to the excitement, our friend Abid Rahman was driving nearly four hours to join us.

There was no giant screen, no packed sports bar, and none of the spectacle that one might find in New York City. Instead, we followed the World Cup match on a cellphone screen, surrounded by friendship and laughter. Sometimes the size of the screen matters less than the people beside you.

The United States and Australia played an entertaining and competitive match. As the final whistle blew and the celebrations began, something unexpected happened. Through the stadium speakers came the unmistakable voice of John Denver singing “Take Me Home, Country Roads.”

Suddenly, football seemed secondary.

The song filled the stadium and, in a way, reached beyond it. Fans sang along. Flags waved. Smiles appeared everywhere.



— Akbar Haider Kiron Senior Journalist and Writer

It was one of those rare moments when sports and music came together to create something truly memorable.

For many Americans, “Country Roads” is a beloved anthem. For immigrants like me, the song carries another layer of meaning. The words “take me home” can awaken memories of distant places, childhood villages, family gatherings, and loved ones who are no longer with us.

As the music played, my thoughts traveled thousands of miles away. I thought about Bangladesh, about my village home, about my parents, and about the many roads life has taken me on since arriving in New York more than three decades ago. That is the magic of both football and music. They have the power to transport us across time and distance. A football match can unite millions. A simple song can open the door to a lifetime of memories.

The United States earned an important victory on the field. Yet for me, the lasting memory of the evening was not the score. It was hearing John Denver’s timeless voice echo through a World Cup stadium while sharing the moment with old friends in Buffalo.

Long after the tournament ends, I suspect that is what I will remember most. Not just the game.

Not just the result. But the feeling of friendship, nostalgia, and the universal longing for home that came with the words:

“Country roads, take me home, to the place I belong.”

> **“Sometimes the size of the screen matters less than the people beside you.”**



> **“A football match can unite millions. A simple song can open the door to a lifetime of memories.”**

Racism is America's Original Sin

– Imam Shamsi Ali

There's an evident paradox in America. On one hand, we pride ourselves on being champions of human rights, justice, and equality, promoting these values globally. On the other hand, we're witnessing a dark chapter in our nation's history. The Trump administration's policies towards immigrants, particularly Hispanics and non-Whites, are a stark example of cruelty and racist behaviors of the Trump administration. Additionally, the Trump administration efforts to suppress pro-Palestinian voices on American campuses are also evidence of high and systemic racism under the Trump administration.

As a member of a minority community, this treatment of the administration doesn't surprise me or many others. However, I've long defended America, arguing that racial profiling cases don't represent the nation's true face. I admire the Constitution and universal values America promotes worldwide.

The Roots of Racism

I've previously stated that the "sickness of racism" in America could be considered its original sin. Racism isn't a new phenomenon; it's been part of America’s history since the very beginning. The real Native Americans, known today as "Indians” were the original inhabitants of this land. All others, including European immigrants, are immigrants and have no right to claim to be the "native/real) Americans.

History tells us that when Europeans arrived, they were welcomed by Native Americans, who even celebrated Thanksgiving together. However, this celebration shifted to commemorate European immigrants dominance over Native Americans, leading to their marginalization and virtual annihilation. African Americans, brought to this country through slavery, have faced similar injustices and discriminatory treatment.



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

This mistreatment has continued throughout history, from the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King Jr. to the present day. Japanese Americans were treated poorly after World War II. Today, Hispanic, Asian, and particularly Muslim communities are deeply facing discrimination and different forms of mistreatment.

The Current Reality

The election of the current administration has certainly emboldened racists and anti-non-Whites, leading to a rise in White Supremacy and White Nationalism. Islamophobia and hate against minority. Mistreatments of Muslims are not new and have a long history in America, predating 9/11 in 2001 and beyond.

Our Shared Responsibility

The current climate under the Trump administration should remind us of our shared responsibility to address racism and injustice. Remember, justice is equivalent to life itself, and living with injustices is death. Racism is equivalent to the devil, and we must rise and fight against it collectively.

All Americans must stand up against racism and defend their Constitution and values. Leaders have a moral obligation and constitutional responsibility to ensure justice and equality. We need courage and honesty to address this societal sickness.

Despite the challenges, I remain confident in America's greatness and beauty. By upholding highly our Constitution and values we all proud of, will enable us give us ti create a better America. And with our collective efforts and determination, we can overcome the darkness of racism and build a brighter future for all.

Happy Juneteenth to America!

New York City, June 19, 2025

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Guinea's UN Envoy Visits Elhaam Academy

Junior Ambassadors explore diplomacy, leadership, and global citizenship with Mohamed Dabo

James Anderson



A classroom at Elhaam Academy became a window to the world as students welcomed His Excellency Mohamed Dabo, Permanent Representative of Guinea to the United Nations, for a thoughtful and inspiring Junior Ambassador Program session organized by Save The People USA (STPUSA).

The visit gave students a rare opportunity to speak directly with an international diplomat and learn how global leadership works beyond textbooks. During the session, Elhaam Academy's Junior Ambassadors explored the meaning of diplomacy, public service, global citizenship, and the role of the United Nations in addressing challenges that affect people across borders.

Students asked questions about some of the world's most pressing issues, including world hunger, education, peacebuilding, and international cooperation. Their questions reflected curiosity not only about global problems, but also about how young people can grow into leaders who serve others.

Ambassador Mohamed Dabo discussed the importance of dialogue, cooperation, and responsibility in international affairs. His presence helped students understand that leadership is not limited to titles or offices, but is rooted in service, empathy, and the willingness to work for the common good.

The program also highlighted Elhaam Academy's commitment to giving students meaningful learning experiences beyond the traditional classroom. By connecting young learners with leaders from the global stage, the school encouraged students to think critically about their place in the world and the responsibilities that come with knowledge.

For STPUSA, the session reflected its continued work in youth development, civic education, and community empowerment. Through the Junior Ambassador Program, students were encouraged to see themselves as future voices for peace, understanding, and positive change.

The event left a strong impression on participants, turning a school session into a practical lesson in diplomacy and leadership. For the students of Elhaam Academy, the visit was a reminder that global citizenship begins with awareness, curiosity, and the courage to ask meaningful questions.



























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DIPLOMACY

The Junior Ambassador Program connects classroom learning to international affairs























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Inspiring Future Changemakers

Elhaam Academy Students explore leadership and civic engagement with Shaza Moghraby

Ashley Reed



A meaningful conversation about leadership, communication, and the power of youth engagement recently took place at Elhaam Academy, where students welcomed Shaza Moghraby, New York Spokesperson & Communications Lead, for an inspiring discussion on creating positive change in communities and beyond.

The visit provided students with a unique opportunity to engage directly with a communications professional and explore how effective leadership and advocacy can influence society. Throughout the session, students participated actively, asking thoughtful questions about public communication, leadership skills, community involvement, and the responsibilities that come with using one's voice to make a difference.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of global citizenship and encouraged students to think beyond their immediate surroundings. Students explored how young people can contribute to solutions for local and global challenges, reinforcing the idea that age is not a barrier to meaningful participation in civic life.

One of the most memorable moments of the event came when students proudly shared their contributions to The World We Dream Of, a book that captures the hopes, ideas, and aspirations of young people for a more peaceful, just, and sustainable future. Their reflections demonstrated creativity, optimism, and a strong desire to contribute positively to the world around them. For many students, the conversation served as a reminder that their perspectives matter. Hearing firsthand about leadership, communication, and advocacy helped bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world impact. The exchange encouraged students to view themselves not only as learners but also as future leaders capable of influencing their communities.

The event further reflected Elhaam Academy's commitment to providing educational experiences that extend beyond traditional academics. By connecting students with professionals and community leaders, the school continues to foster critical thinking, confidence, and civic responsibility among its students.

As the session concluded, students left with a renewed sense of purpose and confidence in their ability to contribute to society. The visit by Shaza Moghraby reinforced a simple but powerful message: young people have valuable ideas, important voices, and the potential to help shape the future they envision. For the students of Elhaam Academy, it was both an educational experience and an inspiring call to action.

























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Dine & Dialogue Brings Communities Together

Manhattan gathering focuses on combating hate, bias, and discrimination through conversation



William Henry

Conversations aimed at fostering understanding and strengthening community ties took center stage on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, as community leaders, advocates, and faith representatives gathered at Tsion Cafe in Manhattan for a special Dine & Dialogue event focused on combating hate, bias, and discrimination across New York City. Organized and sponsored by the New York State Division of Human Rights and hosted by the New York City Hate and Bias Prevention Regional Council, the event was part of an ongoing initiative designed to create safe spaces where people from diverse backgrounds can engage in meaningful conversations. The program seeks to address not only the impact of hate and bias but also the ongoing challenge of underreported incidents affecting communities throughout the city.

Held from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., the session brought participants together in small discussion groups guided by trained facilitators. Conversations explored a wide range of topics, including experiences within faith-based communities, gender discrimination, and personal encounters with hate and bias. The format encouraged open dialogue and allowed participants to share their perspectives in a respectful and supportive environment. As the discussions unfolded, many attendees spoke candidly about their own experiences and the challenges they have faced. The exchange of personal stories highlighted both the progress that has been made in promoting inclusion and the work that remains to be done to ensure all New Yorkers feel safe and respected.

One participant summarized the spirit of the event by stating, “Dialogue helps people understand one another beyond misconceptions. By listening to each other’s experiences and concerns, we can build trust and create stronger, more resilient communities.”

Among those participating in the discussion were Rabbi Bob Kaplan, Senior Adviser at the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York; Phylisa Wisdom, Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Antisemitism; Vijah Ramjattan, Executive Director of OPHC; and Ayanna Behind, Director of Training and Conflict Consulting at the Peace Institute.

Organizers emphasized that addressing hate and discrimination requires collaboration across faiths, cultures, and communities.

By bringing together individuals from different backgrounds, the event sought to strengthen relationships, encourage mutual understanding, and inspire collective action.

Created by the New York City Hate and Bias Prevention Regional Council and hosted in partnership with UJA Federation of New York, the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC-NY), and the New York Peace Institute, the Dine & Dialogue series continues to serve as an important platform for community engagement. Participants left the gathering with a shared belief that honest conversation remains one of the most powerful tools for building safer, more compassionate, and more united communities throughout New York City.













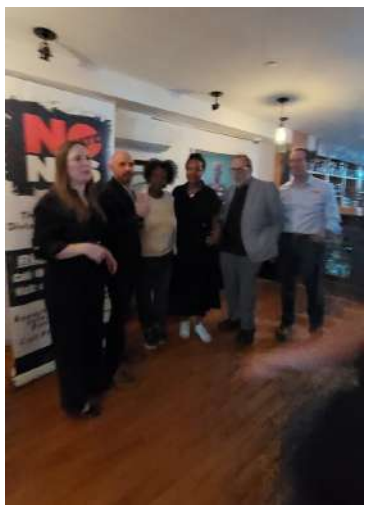



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UNITY

Faith leaders and advocates discuss ways to strengthen community relationships

















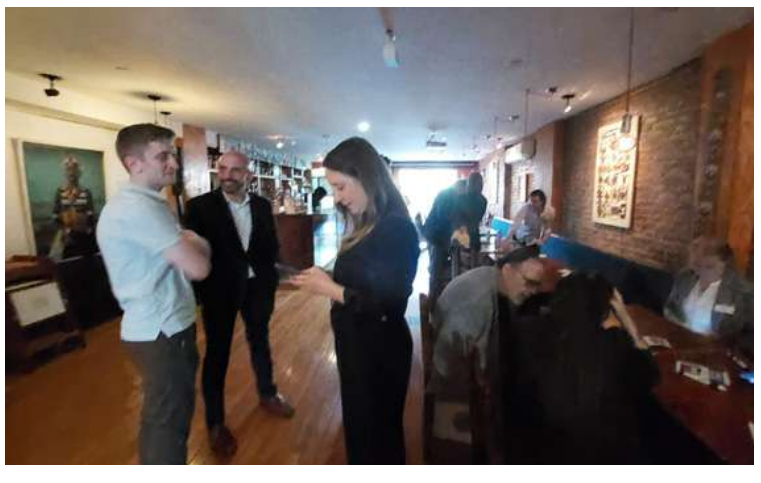










EDUCATION

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WUST Class of 2026 Celebrates Graduation

Nearly 290 graduates mark a milestone defined by achievement, resilience, and new beginnings

Jessica Morgan



A spirit of pride, accomplishment, and optimism filled the auditorium as Washington University of Science and Technology (WUST) celebrated the graduation of its Class of 2026, honoring students whose academic journeys culminated in a milestone years in the making. Held on June 13, 2026, at the Woodson High School Auditorium in Fairfax, Virginia, the commencement ceremony brought together graduates, families, faculty members, and community leaders for a day that celebrated achievement while looking toward the future. A total of 290 graduates crossed the stage, including 183 students from the School of Information Technology (SIT) and 107 students from the School of Business Administration.

From the moment graduates arrived in their black academic gowns and gold-tasseled caps, the atmosphere reflected both excitement and reflection. Students gathered for photographs, embraced family members, and shared memories with classmates before the formal ceremony began.

In his commencement address, WUST Chancellor and Chairman Abubokor Hanip encouraged graduates to embrace change and remain committed to continuous growth. “The future will not belong to those who fear change. The future will belong to those who learn, adapt, and grow,” he told the graduating class. He also urged alumni to remain connected to the university and continue pursuing innovation, learning, and entrepreneurship throughout their lives.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Khalid H. Arar, Professor of Educational Leadership at Texas State University, who spoke on resilience, purpose, and the importance of maintaining humanity in a rapidly evolving technological world. While acknowledging the growing influence of artificial intelligence, he reminded graduates that qualities such as empathy, integrity, critical thinking, and compassion remain uniquely human. “The best education teaches both minds and hearts,” he said. Additional remarks came from Farhana Hanip, Chief Financial Officer of WUST, Virginia State Senator Saddam Aslan Selim, and entrepreneur Rafik Hawladar, all of whom emphasized perseverance, leadership, and the value of human connection in an increasingly technology-driven society.

Student representatives also shared their experiences and aspirations. Among them were Rithin Sain Manapati, Bilgen Ataley, Tania Rahni, and Maha Sajid, whose reflections highlighted the challenges overcome and opportunities ahead.

The ceremony concluded with one of academia’s most cherished traditions as graduates moved their tassels and officially became alumni.

As cheers filled the auditorium and caps soared into the air, the WUST Class of 2026 celebrated not only the completion of a degree, but the beginning of a new chapter defined by ambition, purpose, and hope for the future.













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YOUTH

Community Explores AI's Impact on Youth Mental Health

Workshop at Elhaam Academy examines how AI companions are shaping children's lives



Noah Presley

As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly integrated into everyday life, community members gathered at Elhaam Academy for a timely workshop examining one of the most important questions facing families today: how AI companions may affect children's mental health and development.

The event, titled "When AI Becomes Their Friend: Protecting Kids' Mental Health in the Age of AI Companions," brought together parents, educators, caregivers, and community members for an afternoon of learning, reflection, and dialogue. Held on June 14 at 1:30 p.m., the workshop encouraged participants to explore both the opportunities and challenges presented by the growing role of artificial intelligence in children's lives.

The program featured presentations from Dr. Jamiylah Jones, Founder and CEO of Creative Transformations, and Saudia Jameela Rahim, MSEd, Founder and CEO of Wisteria Mental Health Counseling. Drawing on their professional expertise, the speakers addressed concerns about children's increasing reliance on AI-powered interactions and discussed ways families can foster healthy communication and emotional well-being in a rapidly changing digital environment.

Participants engaged in thoughtful discussions and asked questions about how children are interacting with AI technologies, why some young people may turn to AI for companionship, and how parents can maintain meaningful conversations with their children about technology use.

Organizers noted that attendees received practical guidance designed to help families better understand the evolving relationship between youth and artificial intelligence.

According to event materials, participants also explored what children are saying about choosing AI over human interaction, learned strategies for initiating conversations at home, and received resources aimed at supporting family discussions about mental health and technology.

The workshop was co-sponsored by New York State Assemblyman David Weprin and supported by Elhaam Foundation and Save The People, reflecting a broader commitment to community education and youth well-being.

Following the formal presentations, attendees continued their conversations in an informal setting while enjoying ice cream, allowing community members to exchange ideas and build connections.

Organizers described the gathering as more than a workshop—it was an opportunity to move from awareness to action by encouraging open dialogue, education, and community support.

As AI continues to reshape how young people communicate and learn, events like this one highlight the importance of ensuring that technological innovation is accompanied by thoughtful conversations about mental health, relationships, and the well-being of future generations.










Young Leaders Ready for a Milestone Moment

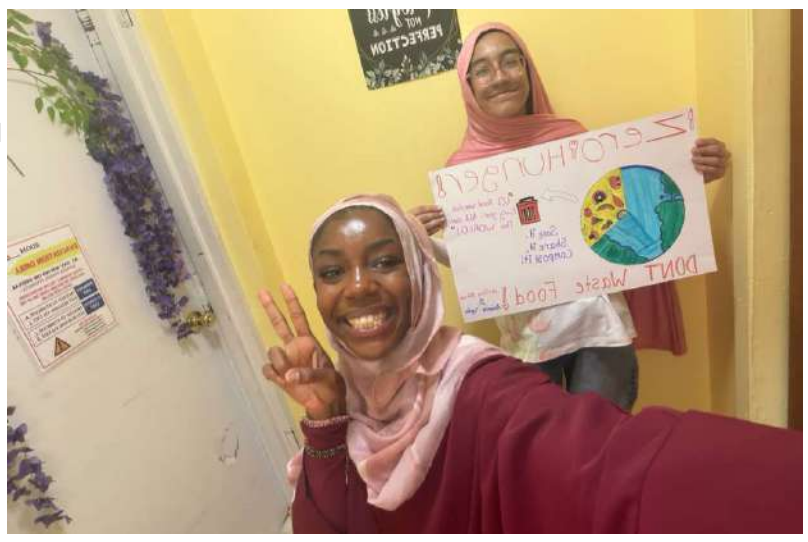
7th Grade Junior Ambassadors celebrate a year of growth and civic engagement

Emily Parker

The journey toward becoming future leaders and changemakers was celebrated as 7th Grade Junior Ambassadors completed preparations for their End-of-Year Ceremony, marking the culmination of a year filled with learning, leadership development, and community engagement.

Over the past several weeks, students participating in the Junior Ambassador Program reflected on the experiences and lessons that shaped their growth throughout the academic year. The program encouraged students to look beyond the classroom and engage with issues affecting communities around the world, helping them develop a deeper understanding of leadership, responsibility, and civic participation.

Throughout the year, participants took part in discussions focused on important global challenges and explored the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These conversations introduced students to topics such as education, equality, sustainability, and community well-being, encouraging them to think critically about the role young people can play in creating positive change.









A defining feature of the program was the opportunity for students to meet and learn from inspiring leaders representing a variety of professional and community backgrounds. These interactions helped students connect classroom learning with real-world leadership and public service, while demonstrating how individuals can make meaningful contributions to society.

As preparations for the ceremony progressed, students reflected on the confidence and skills they had gained during the program. From strengthening communication abilities to developing a greater awareness of global issues, participants demonstrated a commitment to personal growth and service.

The experience also encouraged teamwork, problem-solving, and a sense of responsibility toward both local and global communities.

Educators and program supporters praised the students for their dedication and enthusiasm throughout the year. Their willingness to engage in thoughtful discussions and embrace new learning opportunities highlighted the program's broader mission of preparing informed, compassionate, and engaged future leaders.

The upcoming ceremony serves as more than a celebration of completed activities. It represents the accomplishments of students who have spent the year expanding their perspectives, building leadership skills, and discovering the power of their voices. As the 7th Grade Junior Ambassadors prepare to mark this important milestone, they do so with a stronger sense of purpose and a renewed commitment to making a positive impact in the world around them.

For these young leaders, the end of the program is not simply a conclusion—it is the beginning of a lifelong journey of learning, service, and leadership.

FOOD SECURITY

NYS Food Summit Tackles Hunger

Advocates and experts discuss food access, nutrition services, and statewide solutions



Carlos Stewart

Efforts to build a more food-secure New York took center stage as advocates, healthcare professionals, nonprofit leaders, and community partners gathered recently for the NYS Food Summit 2026, a statewide event focused on ending hunger through action, collaboration, and innovation. Hosted by The Alliance for a Hunger Free New York with partners including The Food Pantries for the Capital District and Met Council, the summit brought participants together at the Albany Capital Center and also welcomed virtual attendees. The gathering created a space for education, advocacy, networking, and shared problem-solving around hunger and nutrition insecurity. A major focus of the summit was Food as Medicine, highlighting the connection between nutrition, healthcare, and long-term community well-being. Sessions explored how food access can support better health outcomes, especially when healthcare providers, farms, food pantries, and community organizations work together. One session, "The Nutrition Rx Cookbook: Bridging Primary Care and Culinary Behavior Change Through a Farm-to-Clinic Model," featured experts from Saratoga Community Health Center, Albany Medical College, and Pitney Meadows Community Farm. The discussion examined how healthcare and food systems can collaborate to help families make healthier choices. Another panel, "Feeding with Dignity," featured representatives from Met Council and focused on culturally responsive food programs, especially during a time of funding challenges and growing concerns over diversity and equity. Speakers emphasized that food assistance must respect the cultural needs, identities, and dignity of the people being served. The summit also addressed immigration, food access, and human dignity, with speakers discussing how hunger affects immigrant communities and other vulnerable populations. Participants stressed that access to nutritious food is not only a public health issue but also a basic human right. Organizers later described the event as a day filled with collaboration, education, advocacy, innovation, and connection. While acknowledging that much work remains, they emphasized that meaningful progress is possible when community groups, healthcare providers, advocates, and policymakers work together. The NYS Food Summit 2026 closed with renewed commitment to a shared goal: creating a hunger-free and nutrition-secure New York where every person can access food with dignity.









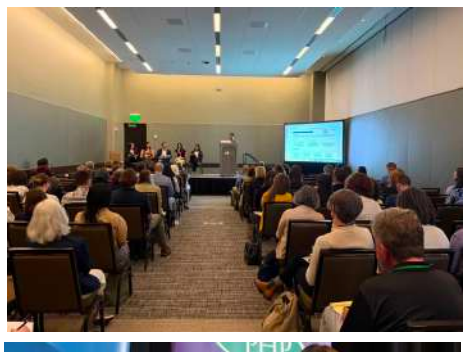


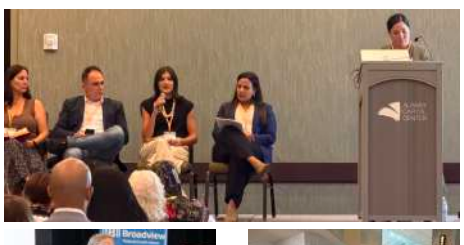














SAFETY

Youth Safety Workshop Empowers Teens

STPUSA, NP, and Interfaith Center of New York host educational program for teens

Alex Mason



A moment of awareness can prevent a lifetime of regret—a message that resonated throughout a recent Youth Safety & Situational Awareness Workshop in Queens, where local teenagers gathered to learn practical skills for staying safe, managing conflict, and making informed decisions in challenging situations.

The workshop was organized by Save The People USA (STPUSA), Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP), and The Interfaith Center of New York, bringing together students, parents, community leaders, and advocates for an afternoon focused on education, prevention, and empowerment.

Designed for high school youth ages 14 to 18, the program emphasized the importance of developing awareness, resilience, and confidence in an increasingly complex world.

Held at 87-41 165th Street, Queens, NY 11432, the workshop followed a structured agenda that combined presentations, group discussions, practical exercises, and reflection activities. Participants explored the meaning of safety beyond physical protection, discussing emotional, digital, and community safety as well. One session focused on understanding stress and survivor responses, including the concepts of fight, flight, freeze, and fawn, helping students better recognize how people react under pressure.

The educational sessions were led primarily by Melvin Sharty of Nonviolent Peaceforce, who guided participants through discussions on situational awareness and the OODA Loop (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act), a decision-making framework used to improve awareness and response in challenging situations. Students also participated in creative reflection exercises and a gallery walk exploring the question, “What does safety mean to us?”

A key component of the workshop focused on building personal support systems. During the Safety Pod Mapping activity, participants identified trusted individuals at home, school, and within the community whom they could rely on during difficult situations. Students then applied what they had learned through scenario-based exercises and small-group discussions designed to strengthen safety planning skills and encourage nonviolent responses to conflict.

The event also featured remarks from several community leaders. Saif Alam, President of the Jamaica Hills Association, spoke about the importance of community engagement and preparing young people to navigate challenges with confidence and responsibility. Melvin Sharty emphasized the role of awareness, prevention, and relationship-building in creating safer communities.

Imam Muhammad Shahidullah, CEO of Save The People USA, encouraged participants to view safety as both a personal and collective responsibility. He stressed that awareness, preparation, and community support are essential tools for preventing harm and empowering young people to become leaders within their schools and neighborhoods.

By the conclusion of the workshop, participants had gained practical tools for recognizing risks, managing stress, responding to conflict nonviolently, and building stronger support networks. Organizers said the program reflected a shared commitment to equipping young people with the knowledge and confidence needed to make safer decisions and contribute positively to their communities.

The workshop’s guiding message remained clear throughout the day: Be Aware. Be Prepared. Be Empowered.



















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Students learn conflict resolution, situational awareness, and personal safety planning





















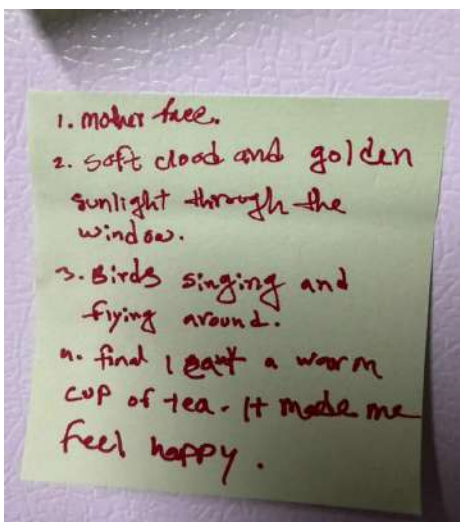






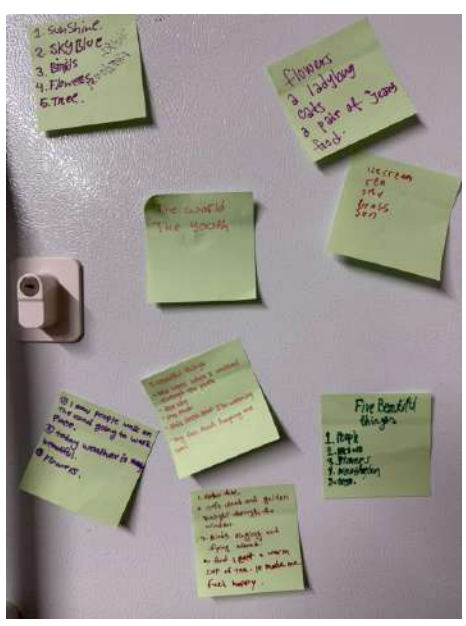










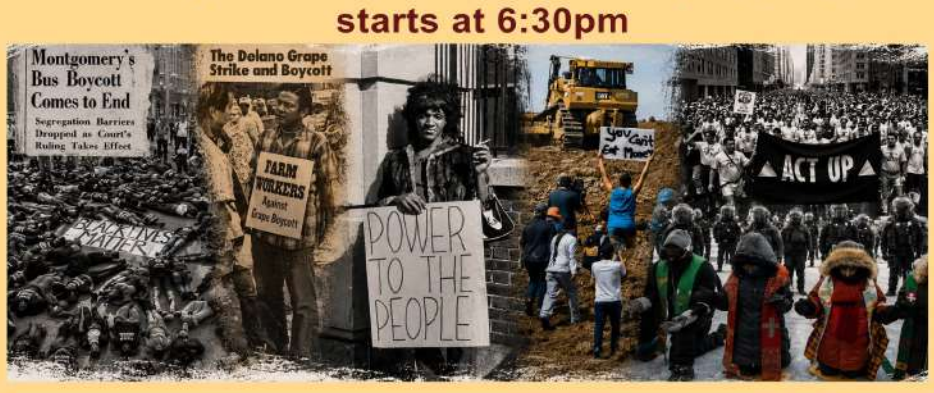


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BHALO Mela Draws Thousands in Queens

Culture, food, music, and community spirit transform Jamaica into a daylong celebration



Daniel Matthew

A bustling stretch of Hillside Avenue in Jamaica, Queens, was transformed into a colorful celebration of culture, community, and entertainment as BHALO Mela 2026 brought together families, community leaders, elected officials, entrepreneurs, and visitors for one of the largest Bangladeshi community festivals of the year.

Organized by BHALO (Bangladeshi Humanitarian Aid and Leadership Outreach), the festival turned Major Mark Park and the surrounding area near 173rd Street into a vibrant gathering place filled with music, food, shopping, cultural performances, and family-friendly activities. The event was held in partnership with Deputy Speaker Dr. Nantasha Williams, PhD, and supported by community partners including Jamaica Bangladesh Friends Society, Elhaam Academy, Thikana, and Bony (Bengalis of New York).

Throughout the day, attendees enjoyed a wide range of attractions designed to appeal to all ages. Multiple vendor zones featured dozens of small businesses and community organizations offering clothing, crafts, specialty products, beauty items, and cultural merchandise. Food vendors served popular South Asian and international dishes, while dedicated activity areas provided entertainment for children and families.

One of the festival's most popular attractions was the public screening of FIFA World Cup matches, which drew enthusiastic crowds and created an atmosphere of excitement and camaraderie. Visitors also enjoyed live concerts, cultural performances, stage programs, and community entertainment that showcased the rich heritage and diversity of the Bangladeshi-American community.

The event attracted several prominent public officials and community leaders. Among those in attendance were New York State Attorney General Letitia James, New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, NYPD Deputy Commissioner of Community Affairs Alden Foster, NYC Deputy Speaker Dr. Nantasha Williams, Council Member Linda Lee, and Council Member Shekar Krishnan. Their presence highlighted the growing civic engagement and visibility of the Bangladeshi community within New York City.

Beyond the festivities, organizers emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for cultural exchange, community networking, and support for local businesses. The festival provided entrepreneurs, nonprofit organizations, and community groups with a platform to connect directly with residents while celebrating shared traditions and values.

As families strolled through vendor rows, children enjoyed recreational activities, and crowds gathered around performance stages and World Cup screenings, BHALO Mela 2026 demonstrated the power of community events to bring people together. The festival concluded with a strong sense of unity, pride, and optimism, leaving attendees with lasting memories and reinforcing the important role that cultural celebrations play in strengthening New York's diverse communities.





























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FESTIVAL

Families, elected officials, and local organizations gather for a vibrant cultural festival



































All Photos are collected from the Facebook posts of Neher Siddiquee, Md Sumon Khan & other sources

GRADUATION

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Elhaam Academy Celebrates Student Success

Promotion and graduation ceremony honors achievement, growth, and future aspirations

Issac Andrew



The excitement of achievement and the promise of new beginnings filled the air as students, families, and educators gathered for the Elhaam Academy Promotion and Graduation Ceremony on June 18, 2026, celebrating a year of learning, growth, and accomplishment.

The ceremony marked an important milestone for students advancing to the next stage of their educational journey. Surrounded by proud family members and supportive teachers, students were recognized not only for their academic success but also for the dedication, character, and perseverance they demonstrated throughout the school year.

The event brought together members of the Elhaam Academy community in a joyful atmosphere filled with applause, reflection, and anticipation for the future. As students crossed the stage and received recognition for their achievements, the ceremony served as a reminder of the hard work that had brought them to this moment. For many families, it was an opportunity to celebrate years of effort, support, and commitment to education.

Throughout the program, the focus remained on the growth of the students both inside and outside the classroom.

Educators highlighted the importance of curiosity, leadership, responsibility, and service—qualities that have been emphasized throughout the academic year. Students were encouraged to continue building on the lessons they have learned and to approach future challenges with confidence and determination.

The ceremony also reflected the broader mission of Elhaam Academy to nurture young people who are prepared to contribute positively to their communities. In addition to academic instruction, students have been encouraged to develop leadership skills, strengthen their understanding of civic responsibility, and engage thoughtfully with the world around them.

Parents and guardians shared in the celebration as they watched students receive recognition for their accomplishments.

The event provided an opportunity for families and educators to reflect on the progress students have made while looking ahead to the opportunities that await them in the coming years.

As the ceremony concluded, graduates and promoted students celebrated with classmates, teachers, and loved ones, creating memories that will remain with them long after the school year has ended.

More than a formal recognition of academic achievement, the June 18, 2026 ceremony was a celebration of perseverance, community, and the bright future that lies ahead for the students of Elhaam Academy. The event served as a powerful reminder that education is not only about reaching milestones but also about preparing young people to become confident, compassionate, and engaged members of society.

















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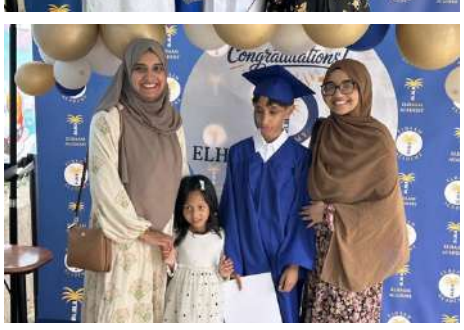
Elhaam Academy marks a memorable day of recognition and inspiration














































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Students, families, and educators gather to celebrate academic accomplishments





































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GRADUATION

Promotion and graduation ceremony highlights student dedication and perseverance







































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Following the Legacy of Great Souls Leads to a Brighter Future

Seminar in Cairo highlights the enduring lessons of Shah Mohammad Mohibullah (RA) for future generations

Marcos Alonso



A gathering of scholars, students, community leaders, and international representatives in Cairo, Egypt, recently paid tribute to one of South Asia's most influential Islamic figures during a seminar dedicated to the life and legacy of Bahr-e-Shariat Shah Mohammad Mohibullah (RA) of Charshina Darbar Sharif.

The seminar, titled "The Life and Works of Shah Mohammad Mohibullah (RA)", was organized by the Charshina Darus Sunnat Society (Cairo Branch) and held at the Grand Conference Hall, Burj Al-Tatbiqiyyin, following Maghrib prayers on June 18, 2026. The event brought together participants from across the Muslim world, including students of Al-Azhar University, representatives of international organizations, and leaders of various student and welfare associations.

The chief guest was Alhaj Maulana Mufti Shah Abu Nasr Nesaruddin Ahmad Hussain, the current Pir Sahib of Charshina Darbar Sharif, who delivered a keynote address emphasizing the importance of Islamic scholarship, spiritual development, moral character, and unity within the Muslim Ummah. He encouraged students studying at Al-Azhar University to pursue knowledge with sincerity while developing themselves as future leaders dedicated to serving humanity.

Throughout the seminar, speakers delivered presentations in Bengali, Arabic, and English, highlighting the contributions of Shah Mohammad Mohibullah (RA) to Islamic education, spiritual reform, religious scholarship, and the advancement of faith-based institutions in Bangladesh. Participants also discussed the ongoing work of the Tajdidi mission and the historical role of Charshina Sharif in promoting Islamic learning and social welfare.

Representatives from nearly 20 countries studying at Al-Azhar University joined the event, alongside members of organizations including Bangladesh Students Organization, Bangladesh Welfare Society, Bangladesh Welfare Foundation, One Ummah Foundation, Al-Azhar Student Forum, and several international student bodies. During the program, the Pir Sahib was honored with commemorative crests, awards, and floral receptions from numerous organizations in recognition of his leadership and service.

One of the most emotional moments of the gathering came when humanitarian aid from Hemayet-e-Islam Bangladesh, the global relief organization affiliated with Charshina Darbar Sharif, was distributed among 20 displaced Palestinian families residing in Egypt. The occasion became particularly moving as the Pir Sahib personally met Palestinian children, offering prayers, affection, and words of encouragement.

Several speakers described the contributions of Charshina Darbar Sharif as a model for spiritual guidance, education, humanitarian service, and social development. Dr. Mohammad Makhzumi, President of Ittihadul Arab, praised the institution's longstanding role in promoting Islamic values and spiritual excellence.

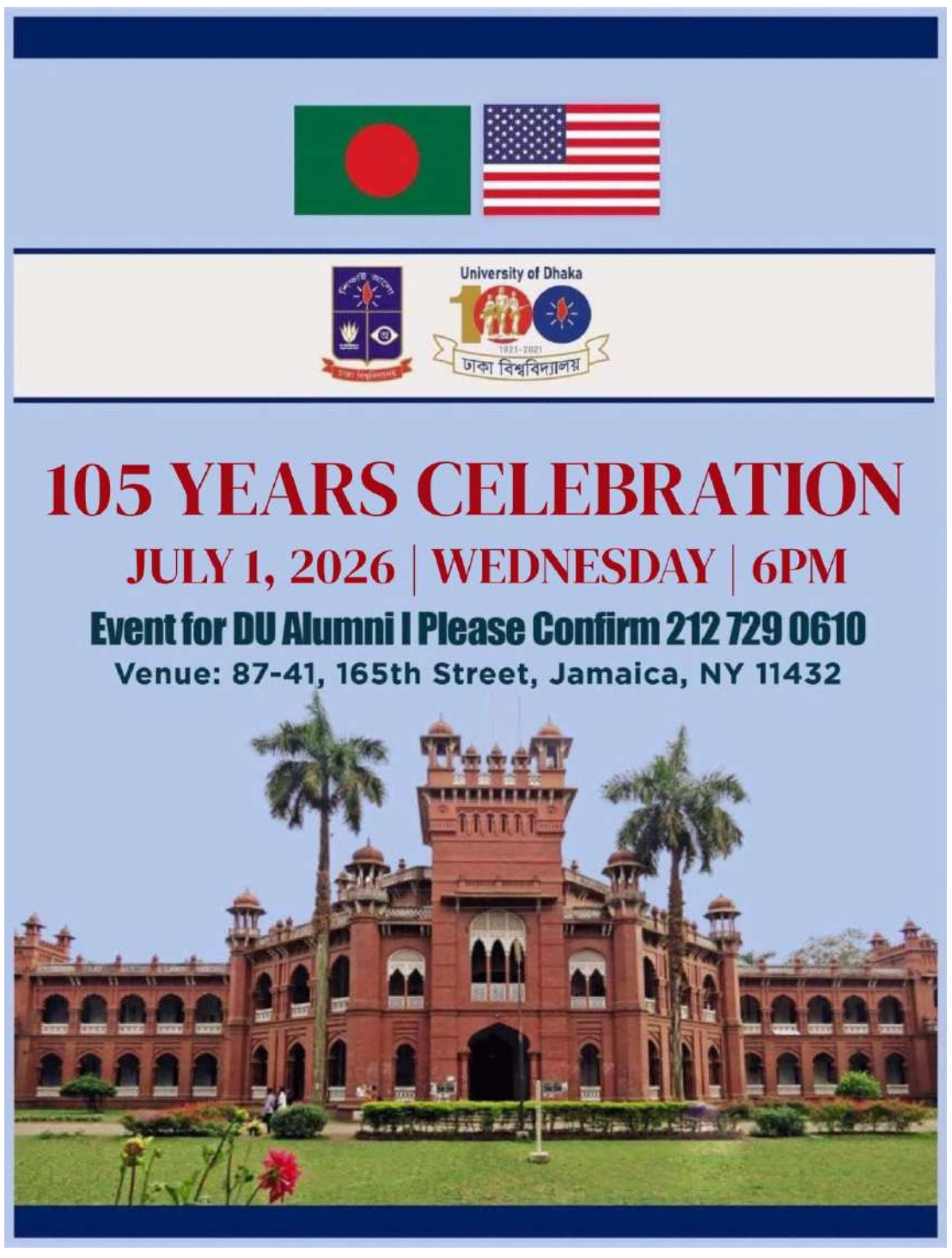
The seminar concluded with a special prayer led by the Pir Sahib for peace, security, and prosperity for people around the world, with particular prayers offered for Palestine, the broader Muslim Ummah, and global harmony.

The event reinforced the enduring influence of Charshina Darbar Sharif and its continuing commitment to faith, service, and unity across borders.









FAITH

Remembering Karbala in New York

Conference highlights faith, sacrifice, and the enduring lessons of Ashura



TRIBUNE TRAINING ACADEMY | GOLDEN AGE HOME CARE | ELHAAM ACADEMY

Phillip D'Costa

A night dedicated to faith, remembrance, and spiritual reflection brought members of the Muslim community together in Queens, New York, as the Holy Ashura & Martyrdom of Karbala Conference and Quran Nights drew worshippers for an evening centered on the lessons of Karbala and the timeless message of the Holy Quran.

Held on June 17, 2026, at Ahlul Byat Mission Masjid in Woodside, Queens, the gathering welcomed community members from across the New York area for a program featuring Quran recitation, Islamic lectures, nasheed performances, and collective prayer.

The event focused on remembering the sacrifice of Karbala, while encouraging participants to strengthen their faith through reflection, knowledge, and spiritual engagement.

The conference featured a distinguished lineup of guests and speakers. Among them was Ustad Dr. Sheikh Qari Ahmed Ahmed Neanaa, recognized as a Chief Quran Reciter of Egypt and internationally known for his Quranic recitation. Also participating was Dr. Sheikh Qari Ahmad Alzaree, a renowned Quran reciter from the United States.

Religious guidance was provided by Sheikh Mufti Dr. Sayed Mutawakkil Billah Rabbani, described by organizers as a respected Islamic scholar, imam, and khatib of Ahlul Byat Mission Masjid. Additional recitations were delivered by Sheikh Qari Sayed Mustanzid Billah Rabbani, while Hafiz Muhammad Tipu Rahman contributed spiritual nasheed performances that added to the evening's atmosphere of devotion and remembrance.

Throughout the program, speakers reflected on the significance of Ashura and the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (RA) at Karbala, emphasizing themes of sacrifice, justice, perseverance, and faith. Organizers encouraged attendees to draw inspiration from these historical events while applying their lessons to contemporary life.

Quran recitations echoed throughout the gathering, while lectures and du'a sessions provided opportunities for participants to deepen their understanding of Islamic history and values.

Organizers expressed appreciation to the event sponsors, including Tribune Training Academy, Golden Age Home Care, and Elhaam Academy, whose support helped make the gathering possible. Their partnership contributed to an evening that united community members around shared values of faith, education, and remembrance.

As the conference concluded, attendees left with renewed spiritual inspiration and a deeper appreciation for the enduring lessons of Karbala. The event served as a reminder that the message of Ashura continues to resonate across generations, encouraging believers to uphold faith, compassion, and steadfastness in their daily lives.







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CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

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Voting Rights Discussion Held in the Bronx

Organizations unite to educate residents on language access and civic participation

Tulip Armstrong



Access to the ballot box begins with access to information—a message that guided a recent community meeting in the Bronx as residents, advocates, and community leaders gathered to discuss voting rights and language accessibility in New York's electoral process.

The meeting on “Voting Rights and Language Access” was held on June 18, 2026, at the Parkchester Islamic Center, located at 1375 Virginia Avenue, Bronx, New York. Organized by CEC, Voter Language Assistance, and Save The People USA (STPUSA), the event brought together community members interested in strengthening civic participation and ensuring that all eligible voters can fully engage in the democratic process.

Among those present were Imam Muhammad Shahidullah, CEO of Save The People USA (STPUSA), and Fatima Niass, Office Manager of STPUSA, along with other community members and participants. Their presence reflected the organization’s continued commitment to civic education, immigrant empowerment, and language access for underserved communities.

Throughout the discussion, participants examined the role that language access plays in helping residents understand election procedures, voter registration requirements, and ballot information. Organizers emphasized that New York’s diverse population includes many communities whose primary language is not English, making voter assistance programs an important tool for expanding participation and reducing barriers to voting. Attendees learned about resources available to voters who may need translated election materials or language assistance at polling locations.

The meeting also provided an opportunity for residents to ask questions, share concerns, and discuss challenges faced by immigrant and multilingual communities when navigating the electoral system. Speakers highlighted the importance of informed participation in local, state, and national elections. They encouraged community members to remain engaged in civic affairs, stay informed about election-related resources, and help spread awareness within their own neighborhoods.

Organizers noted that language accessibility is not only a matter of convenience but also an important component of ensuring equal access to democratic institutions.

The gathering fostered meaningful dialogue among participants from diverse backgrounds. Community leaders stressed that stronger voter engagement can lead to greater representation and ensure that the voices of underserved communities are heard in public decision-making processes.

By the conclusion of the event, attendees left with a greater understanding of available voter support services and the significance of language access in promoting fair and inclusive elections. The event served as a reminder that strengthening democracy requires more than encouraging people to vote—it also requires ensuring that every eligible voter can access the information and resources needed to make their voice heard.















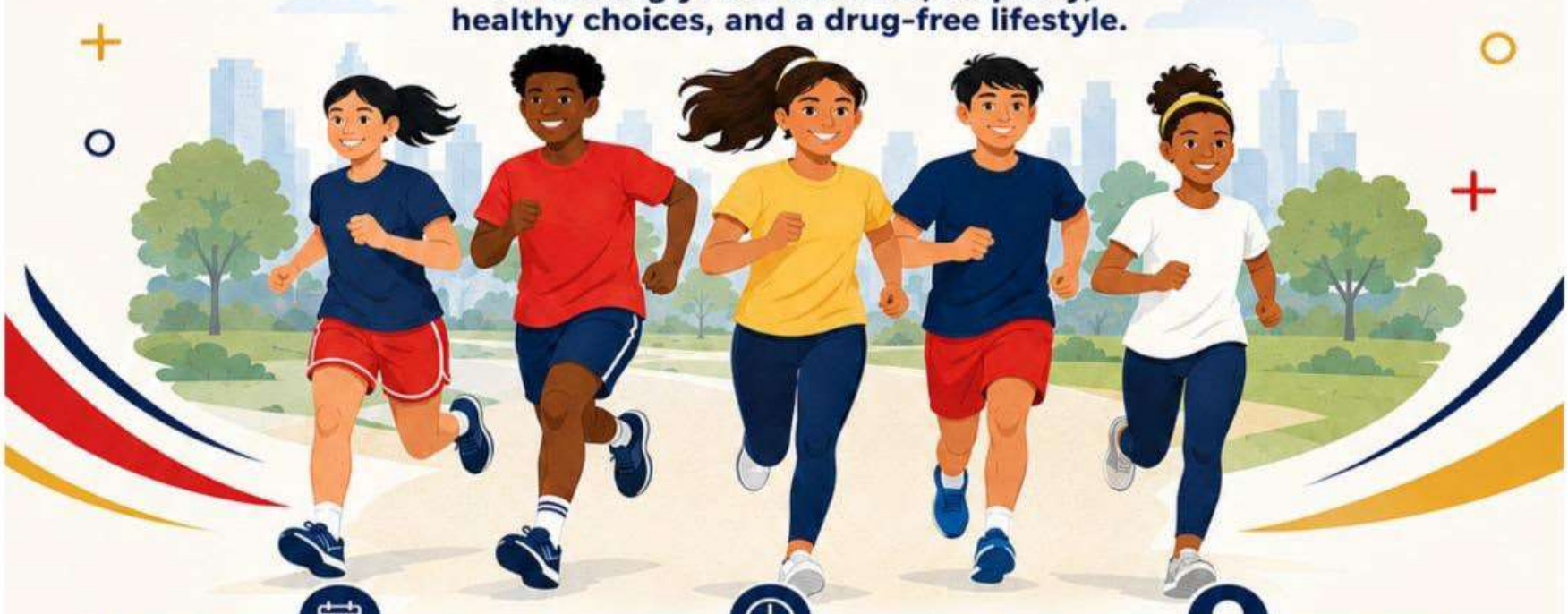

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Community Workshop Focuses on Child Safety

Experts guide families, teachers, and faith leaders on awareness and prevention



Abdul Azim

Protecting children begins long before a crisis occurs, and that message guided a community workshop at Masjid Al Abidin in South Richmond Hill, where families, educators, imams, and school staff gathered for a focused session on awareness, prevention, and empowerment.

The workshop, titled "Protecting our Children and Teachers: Awareness, Prevention & Empowerment," was held on Saturday, June 20, at 11:30 a.m. at Masjid Al Abidin, located at 104-14 127th St, South Richmond Hill, NY 11419. The event was organized by Masjid Al Abidin in partnership with Ummah NY (ummahny.org), bringing together families, educators, faith leaders, and community members for an important conversation on child safety and well-being.

The session was designed to support a broad audience, including children, imams, teachers, parents, and staff of schools and learning centers. Organizers emphasized that protecting young people requires cooperation among families, faith leaders, educators, and trained professionals who regularly interact with children.

The program was led by Alaa M. Shareef, LMHC, MA, EdM, and Omar Shareef, MD, MBA, who brought professional expertise to discussions on emotional well-being, prevention, and communication. According to event materials, licensed psychiatrists, therapists, and trained professionals guided participants through recognizing warning signs and strengthening support systems for children.

A central theme of the workshop was that prevention begins with awareness. Participants were encouraged to pay closer attention to changes in behavior, emotional distress, communication patterns, and environmental factors that may affect a child's safety or mental well-being. The session also highlighted the importance of speaking with children in ways that build trust, openness, and confidence.

For teachers and school staff, the workshop offered tools for creating safer learning environments where children feel heard and protected. For parents and imams, it reinforced the importance of community support and early intervention when concerns arise.

By bringing together faith, family, and professional guidance, the workshop served as a meaningful step toward strengthening child protection efforts within the community. The event underscored a clear message: safeguarding children is a shared responsibility, and education remains one of the most powerful tools for prevention.











REMEMBRANCE

Bangladesh Cemetery Opens in New York

Greater Noakhali Society USA inaugurates landmark 100,000-grave project in Scotchtown

Olivia Stone



A vision years in the making became reality as community leaders and members of the Bangladeshi-American community gathered in Scotchtown, New York, to celebrate the inauguration of the Scotchtown Bangladesh Cemetery, a landmark project expected to serve generations of Muslim families across the United States.

The inauguration ceremony took place on June 20, 2026, at 247 Connors Road, Scotchtown, New York, marking the official opening of what organizers describe as the largest cemetery project established by Bangladeshis outside Bangladesh. Developed by The Greater Noakhali Society USA Inc., the cemetery represents a major investment in community infrastructure and religious services for Bangladeshi and Muslim families living in North America.

Spread across approximately 126 acres,
the cemetery has been designed to accommodate more than 100,000 graves, making it one of the most ambitious Muslim burial projects in the region. Organizers noted that the site has been developed in full accordance with Islamic burial practices and traditions, providing families with a dedicated space that respects religious requirements while serving the needs of a growing community.

The project traces its origins to the acquisition of the property in December 2024. Infrastructure development officially began on July 31, 2025, with extensive preparations undertaken to transform the land into a large-scale cemetery capable of serving future generations. The inauguration marked the completion of a major phase of that effort and signaled
the beginning of operations at the site.

Community members attending the event described the cemetery as more than a burial ground. For many, it represents a lasting legacy of community cooperation, planning, and commitment to preserving Islamic traditions for future generations. The project also addresses a practical need, as Muslim communities throughout the region continue to seek burial facilities that fully accommodate religious rites and customs.

Organizers announced that while the facility officially opened with the inauguration ceremony, burial services are expected to commence on July 1, 2026. The opening has been welcomed by families across New York and neighboring states, many of whom view the cemetery as an important resource that will provide dignity, accessibility, and continuity for years to come.

As attendees gathered to mark the occasion, the inauguration stood as both a celebration of achievement and a reflection of the community's long-term vision.

With its vast capacity and dedicated purpose, the Scotchtown Bangladesh Cemetery is poised to become a significant institution for Bangladeshi-Americans and the broader Muslim community throughout the region.































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A Parade 53 Years in the Making

Blue and orange confetti fills the Canyon of Heroes as the Knicks celebrate their victory



Samuel Price

For a city that prides itself on resilience, passion, and never giving up, the celebration felt less like a parade and more like the release of five decades of hope. Millions of New Yorkers flooded the streets of Manhattan as the New York Knicks celebrated their first NBA championship in 53 years, transforming the historic Canyon of Heroes into a sea of blue, orange, and uncontainable joy.

The championship parade marked one of the largest sports celebrations in recent city history. Fans packed sidewalks, climbed vantage points, crowded subway platforms, and filled streets stretching far beyond the official parade route. As confetti rained down from above, chants of “Let’s Go Knicks!” echoed through Lower Manhattan while players proudly displayed the trophies that ended one of the longest title droughts in professional basketball.

At the center of the celebration was Jalen Brunson, the Knicks’ Finals MVP, who carried the Larry O’Brien Championship Trophy through the crowds, allowing fans to reach out and touch the symbol of a dream finally realized. During the ceremony outside City Hall, Brunson addressed the jubilant crowd, saying, “Damn, New York, we really did it. Somehow, someway, I knew we were going to find a way to get this done.”

The festivities continued as Mayor Zohran Mamdani, wearing a Knicks jersey beneath his suit jacket, presented keys to the city to the team’s players, coaches, owners, and staff. Addressing thousands of supporters gathered outside City Hall, Mamdani praised the team’s perseverance and the unwavering loyalty of generations of fans who had waited decades for this moment.

The parade featured memorable scenes throughout the day. Karl-Anthony Towns proudly hoisted the Eastern Conference Championship Trophy, while OG Anunoby stepped off his float to interact directly with fans. Knicks legend Walt “Clyde” Frazier led part of the procession, reflecting on how the team had captivated New York in a way few could have imagined. Acclaimed filmmaker Spike Lee, one of the franchise’s most recognizable supporters, joined the celebration alongside a host of celebrities, including Alicia Keys, Timothée Chalamet, Ben Stiller, Jon Stewart, Mariska Hargitay, and Tracy Morgan.

For many fans, the parade represented more than a championship. It was a shared moment of civic pride that united neighborhoods, generations, and communities across the city.

Some arrived before dawn to secure viewing spots, while others traveled from neighboring states simply to witness history. Though city officials managed a massive security and cleanup operation to accommodate the enormous crowds, the dominant image of the day remained one of celebration. As blue and orange confetti drifted through the Manhattan skyline, New Yorkers embraced a moment many believed they might never see—a Knicks championship parade that finally brought basketball glory back to the city.
















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HAFIZ
ZAFEER ALI
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U.S.-Iran Talks Begin

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Photo: Salah Sarsour was released from ICE detention after about one month.
Image Source : Facebook post of Yaseen Najeeb Photography

Community Pressure Frees Sarsour

Muslim advocates celebrate rights victory

Amkel Nourush

Salah Sarsour walked out of ICE detention on June 20 and into the arms of supporters who had spent weeks protesting, organizing and demanding his release.
Sarsour had been detained for approximately one month in circumstances that his supporters described as unlawful. Muslim community members and civil rights advocates maintained public pressure throughout his detention, calling for due process, accountability and the protection of his fundamental rights.
His release was welcomed as a major victory for the Muslim community and a powerful example of what sustained collective action can accomplish. Supporters gathered to celebrate his return, describing the moment as proof that solidarity and community organizing can challenge injustice and help reunite families.
“Solidarity matters. Community matters,” advocates said in a statement welcoming him home. “When the people stand together, they will never be defeated.” Organizers stressed that Sarsour’s release did not mark the end of their work. They pledged to continue advocating for others held in immigration detention and for families separated by enforcement actions.
The emotional reunion offered relief to Sarsour’s loved ones while strengthening calls for fairness, transparency and respect for civil rights within the immigration system.

Trump-Meloni Feud Deepens

Leaders clash over G7 photograph

Julian Alvez

President Donald Trump deepened his dispute with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on Saturday, repeating claims that she repeatedly requested a photograph with him during the G7 summit in France.
Meloni rejected the allegation as “completely fabricated” and described Trump’s attacks as senseless.



Photo: President Trump and Italian PM Giorgia Meloni walk together at the G7 summit in France.
Image Source: Christian Hartmann/Reuters

She said her popularity came from defending Italy’s national interests, including refusing U.S. access to Italian military bases during the conflict with Iran. “Italy and I never beg,” Meloni said.
The public exchange marked a sharp decline in relations between the once-close conservative leaders. The dispute also affected diplomacy, with Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani canceling a planned meeting with Secretary of State Marco Rubio in the United States.

Spain’s Corruption Crisis Deepens

Court restricts prime minister’s wife

Nassr Al Shams

A Spanish judge ordered Begoña Gómez, the wife of Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, to stand trial on corruption-related charges, intensifying pressure on a government already facing several investigations involving senior allies.
Judge Juan Carlos Peinado ordered Gómez to surrender her passport, barred her from leaving Spain and required her to report to court twice each month. She has been charged with alleged embezzlement, influence peddling, business corruption and misappropriation of funds over claims that she used her marriage to advance her career at a Madrid university.
Both Gómez and Sánchez have denied wrongdoing. The prime minister has repeatedly described the case as politically motivated and an “obscene farce.”



Photos: Begoña Gómez attends a parliamentary inquiry hearing in Madrid, Nov. 13, 2024.
Image Source: Eduardo Parra/Europa Press/Getty Images

Justice Minister Félix Bolaños criticized the ruling, saying the truth would ultimately prevail.
The case adds to mounting difficulties for Sánchez’s minority government. Investigations have also involved former Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, former minister José Luis Ábalos and Sánchez’s brother David Sánchez, while police recently searched the headquarters of the governing Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party.
Opposition leader Alberto Núñez Feijóo said the government was in its “death throes” and renewed calls for Sánchez to resign.
Although the prime minister has pledged to complete his term, the expanding legal controversies have further weakened his fragile coalition.

Zelensky Returns Polish Honor

Wartime history dispute strains relations

Adrian Smith

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky returned Poland’s Order of the White Eagle after Polish President Karol Nawrocki revoked the honor amid a dispute over World War II history.
The controversy began after Zelensky named a Ukrainian military unit after the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, or UPA, which Poland holds responsible for massacres in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia.
Zelensky said Ukrainians had viewed the award as recognition of their people and armed forces. The honor was originally presented by former President Andrzej Duda in 2023.
The dispute has strained relations between two important allies against Russia. Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk urged both sides to reduce tensions, warning that the row would benefit Vladimir Putin and concern their international partners.



World Cup Drama Builds

Major teams deliver big victories

Rodrigo Diaz

The 2026 FIFA World Cup delivered another lively round of group-stage action, with the United States taking center stage after a composed 2-0 victory over Australia in Group D. Playing as co-hosts, the Americans showed discipline, confidence and control, strengthening belief that they can make a serious run in the tournament.
The result added to a growing sense of momentum around the USMNT, whose defensive organization and efficient finishing have impressed supporters across the country. For American fans, the win was more than another group-stage result; it was a sign that the team is handling home pressure with maturity.
Several major contenders also made strong statements. Brazil defeated Haiti 3-0, while Germany secured a narrow 2-1 win over Côte d'Ivoire. Morocco continued its solid campaign with a 1-0 victory over Scotland, and the Netherlands produced one of the most dominant performances of the round by beating Sweden 5-1.
Elsewhere, Japan routed Tunisia 4-0, Canada beat Qatar 6-0, Switzerland defeated Bosnia and Herzegovina 4-1, and Mexico edged South Korea 1-0.
As the group stage progresses, the United States remains one of the tournament’s most closely watched teams.