

# The Future

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This newsletter aims to chronicle the major events and developments in the societies of emerging nations with the potential to impact their future. This publication offers snippets of news analysis that might be advantageous to academics, policymakers, social and political workers, students and various organisations.

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## **More than 100,000 Gazans may have died from Israeli blockade and genocide; UN condemnations and civilian-led initiatives for Gaza continue**

The losses and setbacks sustained by Israel in the 12- day war with Iran have made it imperative for Israel and the US to end hostilities in Gaza, although the duo are so deeply entangled in this quagmire of death, destruction, genocide, and the dismantling of the international order that seems to have capitulated without much resistance, that it has become very difficult to extricate themselves from this hole they have dug for themselves. Israel and the Israeli society have become addicted to genocide and the flouting of international norms with US support. Israeli newspaper Haaretz recently reported that according to its estimates, nearly 100,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's genocidal war on Gaza, representing about 4% of the territory's population. After previously banning UNRWA, and placing a blockade spanning months that created disastrous levels of hunger in the Gaza Strip, Israel also prevented the Western activist-led Freedom flotilla (Madleen) and Global March for Gaza (which was cancelled after Egyptian authorities arrested more than 200 participants in Cairo) from bringing any relief to starving Gazan children, women, and men. As a means to whitewash its crimes, Israel teamed with private US contractors to weaponise aid through the so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, where Israeli soldiers and the private contractors have mowed down aid seekers with machine guns and killed atleast 600 people seeking aid; the aid was found to be rotten and expired in some instances, while in other cases, flour was found to be laced with opioid pills such as oxycodone. These are among reasons why 15 human rights and legal groups called for the suspension of GHF for its role in undermining international humanitarian organisations and fostering the "forced displacement" of Palestinians in Gaza, amounting to what could be complicity in "crimes under international law, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide".

While the Israeli war with Iran may have served to draw attention away from Israeli killing fields in Gaza, it has exposed the weakness and inaction of the global community. In this regard, civilian and activist efforts that try to reclaim the spotlight and focus on Gaza remain important. One should not brush away these as mere failures, since initiatives such as Madleen and the Global March for Gaza demonstrated to the world and to governments that are refusing to abide by their international legal obligations to stop the genocide and lift the blockade that Gaza will not be forgotten. Another such was the People's Tribunal on Gaza which recently concluded its public hearings in Sarajevo from May 26 to 29. The independent Gaza Tribunal, organized by academics, legal experts, and civil society figures under the leadership of Professor Richard Falk (former UN Special Rapporteur), had assembled "specialized Chambers," expert witnesses, and a "Jury of Conscience" to examine Israeli war crimes in Gaza—including genocide, ethnic cleansing, starvation, and targeting of civilians. On May 29, the tribunal closed its session with the Sarajevo Declaration, formally condemning Israel's actions in Gaza as genocide and demanding immediate withdrawal of forces, the lifting of the siege, full humanitarian access, accountability for perpetrators, and reparations for victims. The Sarajevo proceedings, livestreamed globally, mark a significant expansion of civil society efforts to fill perceived gaps in international justice mechanisms, with final hearings scheduled for October 2025 in Istanbul.

In the meantime, Francesca Albanese, the United Nations special rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territory, in a speech to the Human Rights Council in Geneva, has called on countries to cut off all trade and financial ties with Israel, including a full arms embargo, and withdraw international support for what she termed an "economy of genocide". The report, titled "From economy of occupation to economy of genocide," detailed what it described as "the corporate machinery sustaining Israel's settler-colonial project of displacement and replacement of the Palestinians in the occupied territory", and singled out companies, including arms manufacturers, tech giants, heavy machinery companies and financial institutions, for their "complicity" in Israel's repression of Palestinians, from sustaining Israeli expansion on occupied land to enabling the surveillance and killing of Palestinians. The report, backed by 440 citations, exposes not just a list of 48 global companies which have benefited from Israeli genocide, but represent a systemic issue which can only be dealt with if these war profiteering companies are held accountable for their actions and face legal consequences for their involvement in violations of international law.

Graphic: AI







## **Israel and American attacks against Iran and nuclear capabilities in 12-day war**

In a bid to move global attention away from its genocide in Gaza, on June 13, Israel sabotaged US-Iran nuclear program talks by launching a surprise large-scale air and covert strike on Iran's nuclear, missile, and military infrastructure—using over 200 jets and Mossad-deployed sabotage drones from within Irani soil. These initial Israeli strikes targeted and assassinated some of Iran's prominent military leaders, nuclear scientists, and politicians, and damaged or destroyed Iran's air defenses and some of its nuclear and military facilities. Over the course of the war, which lasted 12 days, hundreds of Iranian civilians were killed in later Israeli airstrikes as well. Iran retaliated with waves of missile and drone strikes against Israeli cities and military sites; over 550 ballistic missiles and more than 1,000 explosive drones were launched by Iran during the war. By June 22, the U.S. directly entered the conflict in an unprovoked fashion, executing “Operation Midnight Hammer” bunker buster strikes on three Iranian nuclear sites. Iran retaliated by firing missiles at a US base in Qatar. On 24 June, Israel and Iran agreed to a ceasefire after insistence from the US. In the aftermath of the ceasefire, citing national security concerns, Iran's parliament passed legislation to halt cooperation with the global nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, which was accused of leaking Iranian nuclear secrets to Israeli intelligence. As of June 4, UN nuclear inspectors of the IAEA departed Tehran after Iran halted its cooperation.

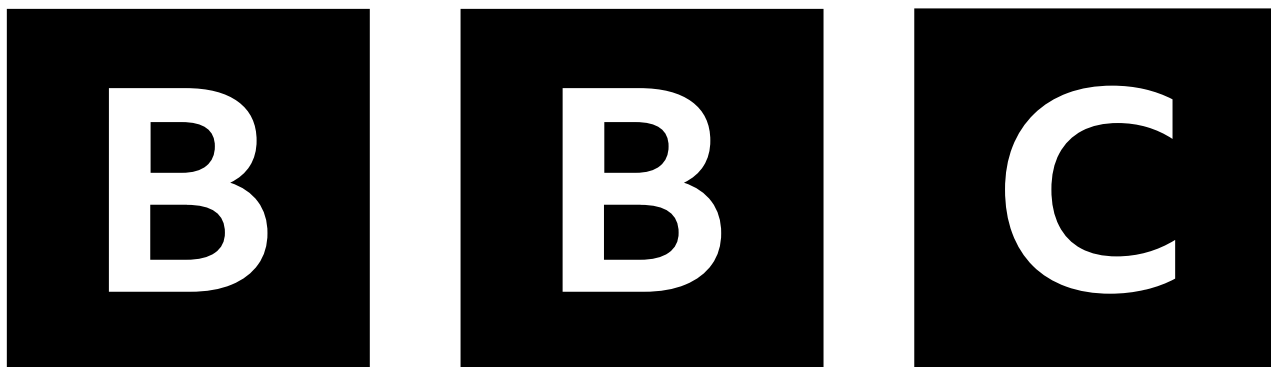




The conflict follows a decade long international concern regarding Iran's nuclear program which saw the signing of the JCPOA nuclear deal that lifted sanctions on Iran and froze Iran's nuclear program in 2015 under Obama, followed by unilateral withdrawal of Trump from the deal in 2018, and piling of sanctions from the West against Iran. A day before the Israeli aggression started against Iran, on 12 June 2025, the IAEA passed a resolution drafted by the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Germany that declared Iran non-compliant with its nuclear obligations. According to various estimates, at least 610 Iranians were killed in Israeli attacks, with almost 5000 injured, while 28 people in Israel were killed in Iranian counterattacks, with more than 3000 injured. Using its stockpile of ballistic missiles and drones, Iran mainly targeted Tel Aviv, Haifa, and areas around them - one of the significant hits was the military Soroka Medical Center – in a strike that injured dozens. Among other targets were the Israeli Military Intelligence School, the Ministry of Interior in Haifa, the Weizmann Institute of Science, and an oil refinery and power plants. While the 'ceasefire' was celebrated by Israel and the US as a win, in reality the Israeli campaign had not achieved any of the stated or unstated goals of either “decapitating the nuclear programme” and “regime change”—experts estimate that the Iranian enriched uranium stocks remain largely intact, while public displays of solidarity of the Iranian people with their government rules out the latter.

According to analysts, the 12-day conflict has left deep scars on Iran and Israel, strained regional supply chains, and sent ripples through global energy and trade markets. US and Israeli strikes degraded Iran's nuclear infrastructure and caused a sharp drop in Tehran's oil exports, while damage to energy installations and military infrastructure threatens to deepen Iran's structural weaknesses and delay its post-war recovery. In Iran's case, experts have estimated total direct and indirect losses between \$24–\$35 billion, equivalent to approximately 6.3 – 9.2% of Iran's estimated \$380 billion GDP. On the other hand, Israel spent approximately \$5 billion in the first week of strikes on Iran, with daily war costs hitting \$725 million—\$593 million for offensive operations and \$132 million for defence and mobilisation, while losses could have amounted to \$11.5 billion to \$17.8 billion, or 2.1–3.3% of its \$540 billion GDP. Meanwhile, a visible exodus of Israeli dual citizens was evident - Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics estimates that more than 80,000 Israelis left the country in 2024, and nearly half a million have left since October 7, 2023. Over 10,000 Israelis evacuated in the war's first week, with more than 36,000 filing for compensation, according to the Israel Tax Authority. In a sign that reflects Israel's growing insecurity, Israel's government had also imposed a travel ban on Jewish citizens, apparently to slow this outflow.





## BBC faces scrutiny over clear bias in Gaza-Israel Coverage

A comprehensive media analysis by the Centre for Media Monitoring (CfMM) has raised serious concerns about the BBC's coverage of the Gaza-Israel conflict, alleging a pattern of bias that favors Israeli narratives while marginalizing and erasing Palestinian suffering and narratives. The study, which examined over 35,000 pieces of BBC content from October 7, 2023, to October 6, 2024, found that despite the Gazan population being subject to 34 times more casualties than Israel, the BBC covered Israeli deaths 33 times more per fatality. Additionally, the BBC employed significantly more emotive language when reporting on Israeli victims, using terms like "massacre" 18 times more frequently and "murder" 220 times more often compared to Palestinian casualties. The report also highlighted a disparity in the representation of voices, with BBC interviews featuring Israeli individuals more than twice as often as Palestinians. Furthermore, presenters reportedly shut down genocide allegations over 100 times, while working towards enforcing a systematic omission of key historical and contemporary context, including genocidal rhetoric in statements from Israeli leaders, such as those by President Herzog and Prime Minister Netanyahu's biblical reference to wiping out the nation of "Amalek." While the BBC pressed a total of 38 interviewees to condemn the 7 October attacks, at no point did it apply the equivalent questioning to Israeli actions. Moreover, BBC presenters have referred to " Hamas-controlled Gaza", despite Israeli forces now effectively controlling more than two thirds of the devastated enclave.

The CFMM report, while comparing the BBC's Gaza coverage to 7,748 articles on the Russian invasion of Ukraine, concluded that the broadcaster is "more willing to cover the full facts in Ukraine than Gaza". The report comes as the BBC continues to withhold the release of Gaza: Medics Under Fire, a documentary it commissioned that tells the story of Palestinian doctors working in Gaza. Earlier, the BBC had pulled off How to Survive a Warzone, another BBC documentary on children in Gaza, after pro-Israeli voices forced the network to pull off the film off-air by picking on the fact that film did not mention that the father of one of the child narrators, who studied at British universities, was a technocrat in Gaza's " Hamas-run government." The CFMM report was heralded by public figures including Sayeeda Warsi, former Conservative Party co-chair; journalist Owen Jones, who has also reported on alleged bias at the BBC; Palestinian ambassador to the UK Husam Zomlot; Middle East Eye columnist Peter Osborne; and Francesca Albanese, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, as well as Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair's former director of communications.





# SIPRI report warns world on the cusp of a new nuclear arms race

According to the latest report released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the world is on the brink of a new and dangerous nuclear arms race, and the likelihood that nuclear weapons may be used one day is increasing. In its annual yearbook, SIPRI warned that while the total number of nuclear warheads globally continues to decline slowly, the number of warheads actively deployed is increasing. As of early 2025, nine nuclear-armed states - the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel, collectively possess around 12,100 nuclear warheads, with over 3,900 deployed and many on high alert. All of them are modernizing or expanding their arsenals, focusing on improvements in potency, delivery and accuracy, which could be leading to a new nuclear era. China, in particular, has rapidly increased its stockpile from 410 to over 500 warheads in a single year, while India may be developing longer-range missiles as it broadens its traditional focus on Pakistan to include China.

However, 90 percent of the nuclear arsenal belongs to Russia and the US, with more than 1,700 deployed warheads each, and 4,521 in storage between them. Both countries continue to enhance their capabilities amid the collapse of key arms control treaties like INF and the pending expiration of New START. Last year, the US took delivery of 200 “modernised” nuclear warheads, the most in one year since the end of the Cold War. These changes are happening against a backdrop of intensifying conventional armed conflict in the world – the past year saw a rise in fatalities from 188,000 in 2023 to 239,000 in 2024 from five major conflicts: Israel’s war on Gaza, the Russia-Ukraine crisis, civil wars in Myanmar and Sudan, and “subnational armed conflicts” in Ethiopia. The world military spending also rose by 37 percent in the past decade, and by 9.4 percent last year alone, to \$2.7 trillion. Arms control advocates have echoed the alarm, urging immediate international dialogue and renewed political will to prevent catastrophe. Without urgent steps toward arms control and disarmament, SIPRI concludes, the world may be entering its most dangerous nuclear era in decades.

Graphic: AI

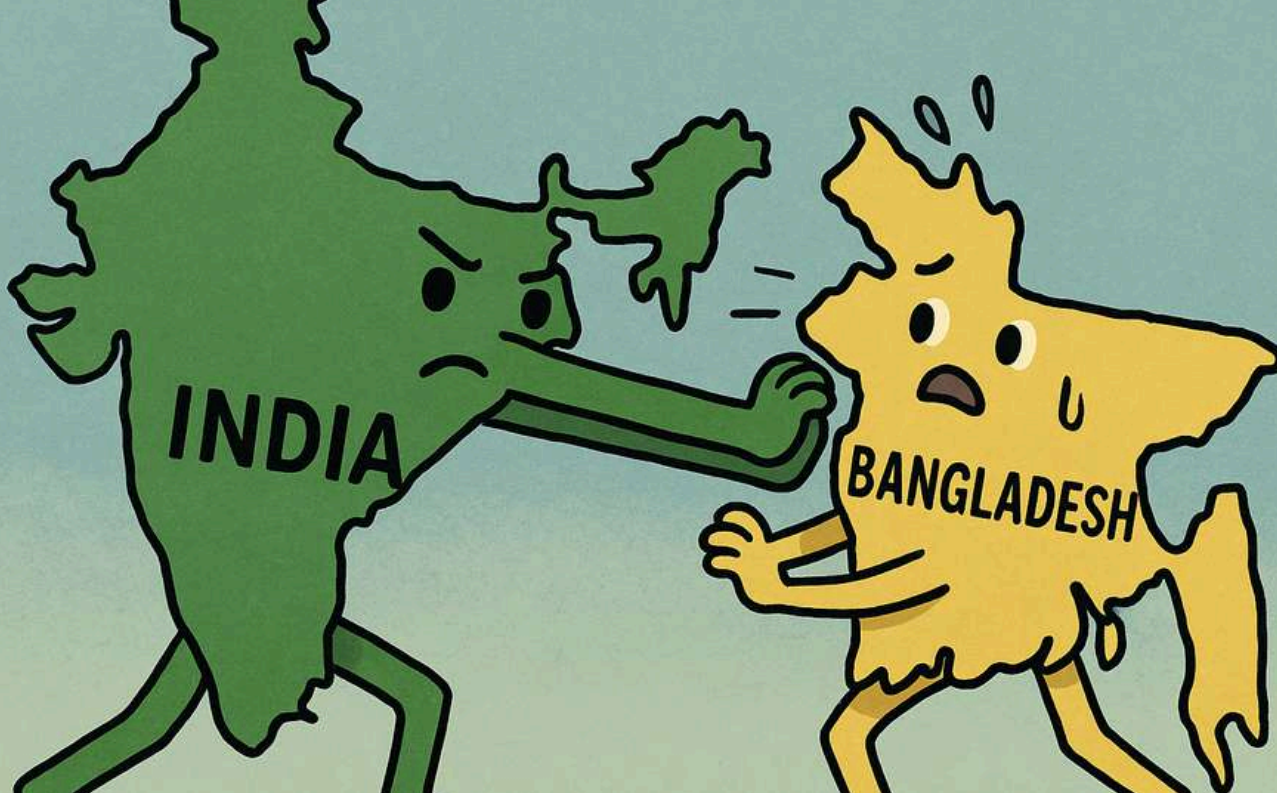


## **Sudden Trump-Pakistan romance - something temporary or a new shift?**

While US-Iran tensions were at its peak, Donald Trump surprising diplomatic outreach to Pakistan had sparked significant attention, alongside Islamabad's decision to nominate him for the Nobel Peace Prize—an unexpected turn that highlights shifting geopolitical dynamics. In mid-June, Trump made history by hosting Pakistan's army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, for a formal lunch at the White House—the first such invitation extended to a Pakistani military leader under civilian rule. The move was seen as a dramatic reset in US-Pakistan relations, signaling a potential new “inner-circle” alliance. Trump praised Pakistan's role in aiding the arrest of the Abbey Gate bomber and credited them—along with India—for embracing a ceasefire during the May conflict, emphasizing Pakistan's insider knowledge of regional security. Following the exchange, Indian PM Modi made bold claims in media contradicting Trump's account of mediating a ceasefire between India-Pakistan last month. Whatever the true details however, analysts warn the shift underscores more of a highly personalized, transactional diplomacy rather than a systemic US policy shift regarding India-Pakistan in the region.

Just days later, on June 21, Pakistan officially nominated Trump for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize, lauding his “pragmatic diplomacy” in brokering the four-day ceasefire between India and Pakistan. Islamabad stated that his intervention “stands as a testament to his role as a genuine peacemaker,” even as India asserted the agreement was bilateral. However, this move stirred controversy at home and abroad. Critics pointed to Trump's support for Israeli actions in Gaza and his subsequent US strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, calling the nomination “crass flattery” and urging its withdrawal. Pakistan was forced to swiftly condemn the Iran strikes as violations of international law, exposing the delicate balancing act in its foreign policy. The twin developments—Trump's high-profile engagement with Pakistan's top military official and the peace-prize nomination—underscore Islamabad's bid to leverage personal diplomacy for strategic gain. Whether this marks a sustained realignment or a fleeting tactical overture will hinge on future actions as developments remain highly volatile—especially amid intensifying shifting regional tensions involving Israel, Iran, and India.

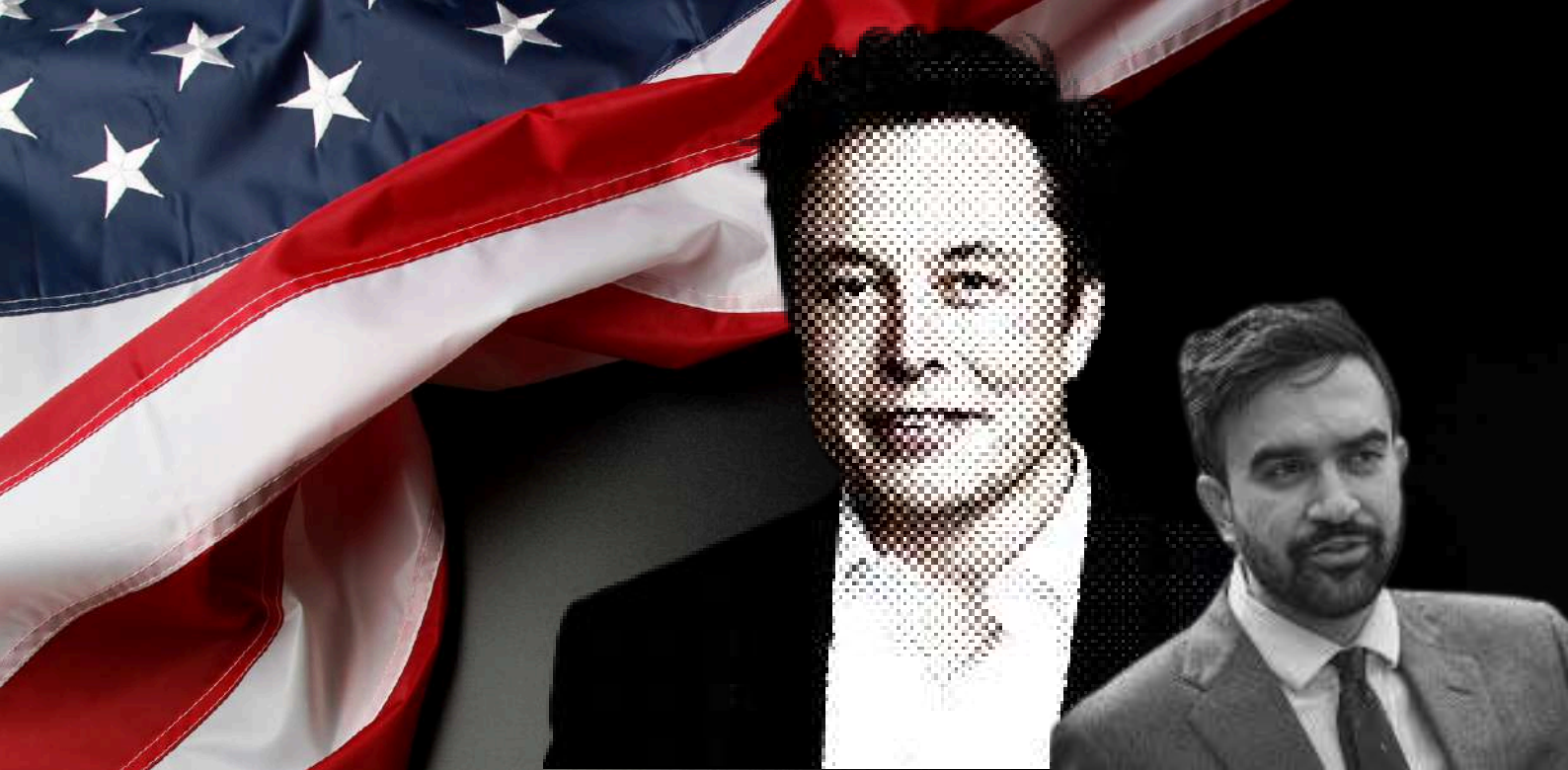




## **As India pushes back its Muslim residents into neighbouring Bangladesh, UK report downplays minority persecution in Bangladesh**

In recent weeks, Assam's BJP-led government has intensified efforts to evict and deport mainly Muslim residents by labelling them as "foreigners, infiltrators and illegal Bangladeshis." Since May, authorities have pushed back over 300 people—including long-time Indian residents—across the Bangladesh border under the 1950 Immigrants Expulsion Act, bypassing judicial review and tribunals. Many of the detained were done so abruptly and transported by the Indian border BSF; and Bangladesh border guards BGB have returned a number of them, confirming they were Indian citizens. Human rights groups argue these actions violate national and international laws, pointing to threats with firearms at the border and abandonment in no-man's land. Simultaneously, mass demolition campaigns have uprooted hundreds of Muslim families from forest and state-owned lands, often with bulldozers demolishing homes without adequate notice or legal recourse. Critics highlight a double standard: records show Hindu homes nearby remained untouched, while predominantly Muslim dwellings were destroyed, leaving thousands displaced, often with no resettlement plans and stripped of livelihoods, heightening fears of statelessness and systemic targeting of Muslim communities across Assam.

This comes at a time when Indian state media, since the ouster of staunch Indian ally Sheikh Hasina in August 2024, had made big of claims that Hindus were being recklessly targeted and persecuted in post-Hasina Bangladesh, but which had mostly turned out to be untrue. According to Bangladeshi police investigations, 98.4% of the reported cases of attacks on minorities between August 5 and August 20 were due to political reasons. In September 2024, Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council claimed deaths of 9 Hindu men were part of Anti-Hindu motives. However, an investigation later carried out by Netra News later refuted the communal claims. Observers have noted that most of the claims are a part of misinformation drives by India-based media and pro-Hindutva voices, who often resort to using doctored or unrelated videos to back up their claims. Most recently, a detailed UK Home Office report contradicted claims of widespread persecution of minorities in Bangladesh, asserting that Bangladeshi Hindus are unlikely to face state or non-state persecution, which contrasts with the many claims and reports of violence against minorities, particularly Hindus, following Sheikh Hasina's ouster, that were being made by Indian media channels and politicians alike.



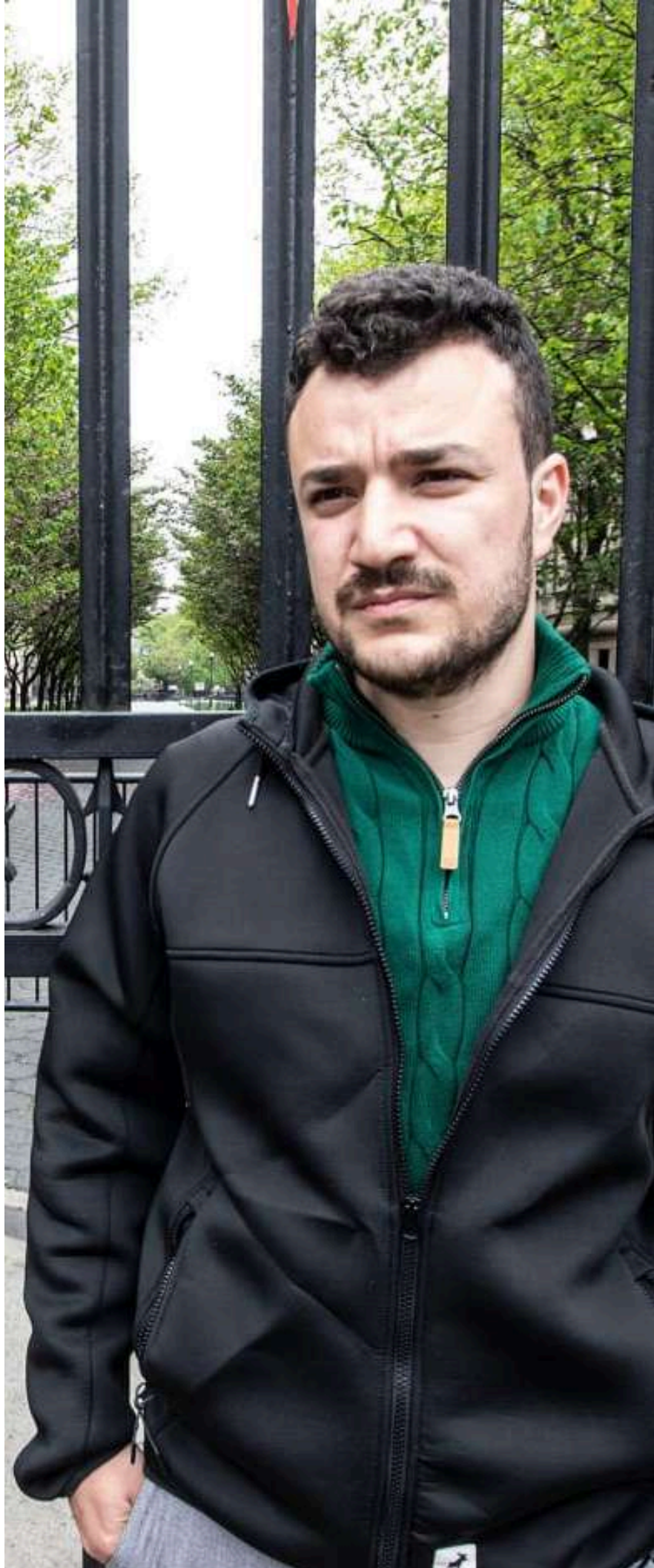
## **US in turmoil: Mahmoud Khalil released from US detention; Mamdani wins NY mayoral election primary in US, and Donald Trump-Elon Musk spat**

While the Trump presidency is yet to showcase success in its economic or diplomatic overtures, it has been quite successful in grabbing media headlines, often for fast-paced or dramatic turn of events. Among these dramatic turns certainly has been Trump's decision to bomb Iranian civilian nuclear infrastructure at the end of June, which was covered in a separate news piece. Another has been the very public Trump-Musk spat that left many Trump supporters and opponents alike surprised. Following his departure from the semi-official Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), Elon Musk publicly denounced the GOP-backed "One Big Beautiful Bill" (targeting EV mandates, fuel economy credits, subsidies), labeling it "an abomination." Trump responded by threatening to revoke Tesla/SpaceX subsidies and contracts, and some Republicans even floated the idea of Elon's deportation. On his part, Musk threatened political retaliation and has claimed the launching a new "America Party." He also initially suggested that Trump's name appeared in the Epstein files— but then retracted it after Trump threatened to revoke Elon's government contracts. Many have wondered about the potential fallout of a spat between the world's most powerful man and the world's richest man, but for now, it seems that Trump has the upper hand, and the support of the Republican party, as evidenced by the passing of his 'Big Beautiful Bill' in both the Congress and the Senate.

A strong pushback to Trump's policies from the American society, however, seems to have strengthened. Zohran Mamdani, a 33-year-old pro-Palestinian Democratic Socialist and state assemblyman, defeated previous governor Andrew Cuomo in NYC's Democratic mayoral primary with 56% of the vote in ranked-choice tallies. Mamdani won against huge odds - Cuomo had strong institutional backing, as well as the support of pro-Israeli billionaires which helped him raise a record \$25 million. Mamdani on the other hand, did not back down from his criticism of Israel, made effective use of social media and a succinct set of well-communicated promises, and campaigned on a grassroots movement that helped him raise funds and an army of volunteers. If elected, Mamdani is poised to become the city's first Muslim and Asian American mayor, representing a major generational shift in Democratic politics. His win is a call towards reckoning in the Democratic Party, which has not just shied away from effectively standing up to Trump's policies, but also refused to speak against Israeli genocide in Gaza. Predictably, Republicans have expressed shock and outrage at Mamdani's win, and Trump has threatened to arrest Mamdani if the latter does not cooperate with ICE officials while in office.



In another development, Mahmoud Khalil, a Columbia University graduate and pro-Palestinian activist, was arrested by ICE in early March, was released after 104 days when a federal judge granted him bail, citing constitutional concerns and deeming him neither a flight risk nor a threat. Upon his return to NYC, Khalil expressed solidarity with other detainees and pledged to continue advocating for academic freedom and human rights. He has also vowed to continue his fight for Palestinian human rights, and that no one should stay silent when a genocide was ongoing in such a brazen manner. In the meantime, U.S. authorities are appealing the judge's move, and he risks deportation under the same statute under which he was arrested.



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