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Md Nymul Islam
English Studies (Media Discourse)

**Linguistic Representation of Muslim Identity in the British Media: A
Corpus-based Study**

MA thesis

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the linguistic representation of Muslim identity in the British media through a corpus-based approach using Sketch Engine. The corpus consists of 60 news articles and headlines from three major British news outlets: The Daily Mail, The Guardian, and the BBC. Two separate corpora were compiled: one for the news articles and one for the headlines, in order to examine the representational patterns at both the article level and the headline level independently. The study is based on Critical Discourse Analysis and framing theory, using Sketch Engine as a primary analytical tool. The study focuses on lexical choice and framing strategies across word frequency lists, adjective frequency lists, noun frequency lists, verb frequency lists, concordance lines, and a separate headline corpus. The findings of the study reveal that British media coverage about Muslim identity is dominated by two representational frames: a threat frame, which associates Muslims with danger, extremism, and state restriction, and a victimization frame, which associates Muslim identity with a target of discrimination and violence. The dominant lexical choices surrounding the node words "Muslim" and "Muslims" are consistently situated within semantic fields of security, violence, and institutional control. The study concludes that the language the British media use is not neutral. It reflects and reinforces certain views about who Muslims are and what role they play in British society.

Keywords: Muslim identity, British media, corpus linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, framing, media representation, Sketch Engine

ANOTACIJA

Šiame tyrime nagrinėjamas musulmoniškos tapatybės lingvistinis vaizdavimas Britanijos žiniasklaidoje, taikant korpusu pagrįstą metodą naudojant „Sketch Engine“. Korpusą sudaro 60 naujienų straipsnių ir antraščių iš trijų pagrindinių Britanijos naujienų agentūrų: „The Daily Mail“, „The Guardian“ ir BBC. Buvo sudaryti du atskiri korpusai: vienas naujienų straipsniams, o kitas – antraštėms, siekiant atskirai ištirti reprezentacijos modelius tiek straipsnių, tiek antraščių lygmeniu. Tyrimas pagrįstas kritine diskurso analize ir įrėminimo teorija, naudojant „Sketch Engine“ kaip pagrindinę analitinę priemonę. Tyrime daugiausia dėmesio skiriama leksikos pasirinkimo ir įrėminimo strategijoms žodžių dažnių sąrašuose, būdvardžių dažnių sąrašuose, daiktavardžių dažnių sąrašuose, veiksmažodžių dažnių sąrašuose, konkordanso eilutėse ir atskirame antraščių korpuse. Tyrimo rezultatai rodo, kad Britanijos žiniasklaidos nušvietime apie musulmonišką tapatybę dominuoja du reprezentaciniai rėmai: grėsmės rėmas, kuris musulmonus sieja su pavojumi, ekstremizmu ir valstybės apribojimais, ir viktimizacijos rėmas, kuris musulmonišką tapatybę sieja su diskriminacijos ir smurto taikiniu. Dominuojantys leksiniai pasirinkimai, susiję su žodžiais „musulmonas“ ir „musulmonai“, nuosekliai patenka į semantinius saugumo, smurto ir institucinės kontrolės laukus. Tyrime daroma išvada, kad britų žiniasklaidos vartojama kalba nėra neutrali. Ji atspindi ir sustiprina tam tikrus požiūrius į tai, kas yra musulmonai ir kokį vaidmenį jie atlieka britų visuomenėje.

Raktiniai žodžiai: musulmonų tapatybė, britų žiniasklaida, korpuso lingvistika, kritinė diskurso analizė, įrėminimas, žiniasklaidos reprezentacija, „Sketch Engine“.

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INTRODUCTION

Media representations do not merely mirror social reality; they produce and reproduce how social groups, events, and values are understood. Wheatly (2024, p.3) argues that media representations play a crucial role in molding the perceptions of culture and identity, influencing how individuals see themselves and others in a globalized world. Nowhere is this constructive function more visible or more consequential than in news coverage of religious and ethnic minorities. The present study focuses on one of the most intensely debated aspects of contemporary British media: the linguistic representation of Muslim identity.

Muslims are one of the most visible minority communities in contemporary Britain; their media representation has been a persistent subject of academic and public controversy. Shaheen (2009) argues that the word 'Muslim' is perceived as a threatening word. The representation of the Muslim countries is a reflection of the journalist's word views. Moore, Mason, and Lewis (2008, p.3) demonstrated that media coverage of Muslims is represented as threats, problems, or opposition to British values. These representational patterns are not neutral. They are shaped by different lexical choices and frames that together portray the Muslim community as others in public life.

According to Lemmouh (2008, p.217), after 9/11, the political and media focus on Muslims has been extensive. The negative representation of Muslims is associated with 9/11. After the September 11 attacks and subsequent global security concerns, British media coverage of Muslims and Islam has intensified. Some news is often released with emotional vocabulary and iterative framing patterns, which can influence how the Muslim community is accepted by the wider public. Ramadhan et al. (2025, p.1) observe, "Events such as the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and the 7/7 London bombings in 2005 have significantly fueled Islamophobia."

In the modern world, the mass media, particularly newspapers, are powerful mediums that can represent a social group, events, and identities. Though specific lexical choices in media texts not only report facts but also frame issues in particular ways that guide readers' interpretations and attitudes. As a result, media discourse has a significant impact on how a special group is represented and understood within the public.

This study is grounded in the conviction that language is never ideologically neutral. Fairclough (1989, p. 37) argues that language is shaped by social structures and power relations, and it in turn shapes them. The words a journalist chooses and how they name social actors, what events they associate them with, and what predicates they assign to them are not random.

The aim of this study is to examine the linguistic representation of Muslims and Muslim-related issues in the British news media. This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What lexical choices do British media use to describe Muslims and Muslim-related issues?
2. How are Muslims framed in the British media coverage?
3. How do the lexical choices and frames used in the British media shape the way Muslim identities are portrayed to the public?

Previously, numerous scholars have extensively examined the discursive construction of Muslim and Muslim-related issues in Western media. For instance, Milad (2018) investigates the discursive representation of Islam and Muslims in the British tabloid press, showing how recurring linguistic patterns contribute to the normalization of Islamophobic meanings. Correspondingly, Abed's (2025) corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis of Islamophobic Propaganda in British media and American Media Narratives, adopts a corpus-driven approach to reveal how media narratives frame Muslims. Alkhamash (2020) examines Islamophobia in the UK Print Media: An Intersectional Critical Discourse.

Building on these studies, this research shifts analytical attention to the lexical choice and framing strategies in quality news media, including The Daily Mail, The Guardian, and the BBC. Through a critical analysis of word selection and framing strategies, the study aims to reveal how representations of Muslims are constructed within the mainstream British news discourse.

This study is significant both socially and academically. Academically, it contributes to the fields of media discourse and critical discourse analysis by providing a detailed examination of lexical choice and framing strategy in British media coverage. Socially, the study is important because media representation can influence people's attitudes and social relations. Drawing attention to how language is used to construct the Muslim identity. The study may raise awareness of the biased representation and encourage more balanced and inclusive media discourse.

This study is structured as follows. Following the introduction, Chapter 1 reviews the relevant scholarly literature on the media representation of Muslim identity and the relationship between language and identity. It also outlines the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study, namely Critical Discourse Analysis and framing theory. Chapter 2 presents the methodology, detailing the corpus compilation procedure and the analytical process. It further discusses the corpus analysis findings in relation to the three research questions. The thesis concludes with the conclusions, followed by the summaries in English and Lithuanian.

I. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF MUSLIM IDENTITY AND ITS ANALYSIS

This chapter reviews the scholarship relevant to the present study. It is organized into four sections: Media representations of Muslims and Islamophobia; The role of language in constructing identity; Corpus-based approaches to media discourse and the British media and landscape.

1.1 Media representations of Muslims and Islamophobia

The concept of Islamophobia provides an important framework for this study. As Vakil (2009, p.78) traces, the term first appeared in print in a biography of the Prophet Muhammad and was later formalized as a social concept in the influential Runnymede Trust report. This report defined it as an unfounded hostility towards Islam and Muslims. Abed (2025, p.1100) shows differences in the Islamophobic propaganda in the British and American articles. It also reveals that the British articles were behind in displaying integration and agitation propaganda. Alkahammash (2020, p. 91) analyzes through an intersectional approach that media representations of Muslims are constituted through race, gender, and class and that Muslims are perceived to be othered in contemporary British public discourses.

According to Shaheen (2009), analysis of Hollywood cinema brings the representational critique to visual media, highlighting how the figure of the Arab, frequently conflated with the Muslim, has been vilified across decades of American popular culture.

Corbin (2017, p.455) argues that American media and legal discourse construct a figure of the “terrorist” who is always Muslim but never white, creating a representational asymmetry with significant real-world consequences for Muslim communities.

Focusing especially on British media, the Cardiff University study led by Moore, Mason, and Lewis (2008, p.3) remains one of the most comprehensive empirical analyses of Muslim representation. They analyzed over 974 news articles published from 2000 to 2008; the researchers found that Muslims were most frequently represented in relation to terrorism, Islamic extremism, and religious and cultural differences, with only a few articles presenting Muslims in positive or nuanced ways. This research establishes a baseline against which subsequent research has measured shifts in representational patterns.

Miladi (2021, p.132) investigates representation of Muslims in the British tabloid press. He finds Islamic concepts are considerably negative, with varying degrees depending on context.

Lemmouh (2008, p.217) provides an important comparative perspective through a critical linguistic analysis of Muslim representation in the New York Times; the results show that the linguistic features analyzed point to a systematic ‘othering’ and stereotyping of Muslims as compared to other

participants. Lemmouh (2008, p.230) finds 78% of the words referring to or associated with Muslims were non-neutral; they were linked to conflict, violence, and groups.

In summary, these scholarly perspectives demonstrate that Muslim identity in media discourse is frequently constructed through a lens of hostility and "othering," consistently associating the community with conflict, violence, and extremism. The media serves as a powerful site for the reproduction of Islamophobic narratives. This established body of research underscores a persistent representational asymmetry that prioritizes threat-based frames over more portrayals of Muslims as ordinary participants in society. Ultimately, these findings highlight the non-neutrality of media language and its profound role in shaping public perceptions and social relations.

1.2 Language, Identity, and Social Representation

The connection between language and identity is theorized across multiple disciplines. Jaspal (2009, p.17) argues that language seems to have two main purposes: it is a tool for communicating but also constitutes a means of asserting people's identity and what makes them different from others. These functions are not separable; every act of communication both conveys propositional content and performs identity work. In media discourse, this dual role of language is specifically consequential since the identity position constructed in news texts circulates at scale.

Adgar (2022, p.248) argues that linguistic representations are fundamentally constructs, abstractions of brain states, and consequently not intentional. They illustrate how they establish connections to the system that uses them.

Askeland and Payne (2006, p. 736) state that language plays an important role in shaping both personal and cultural identities and is also the carrier of knowledge. Kumari (2024, p. 118) notes that language plays a critical role in shaping social norms by influencing behavior, perceptions, and relationships within society. Individuals use language to express their beliefs and opinions, ultimately shaping collective values and norms.

In essence, language functions as much more than a simple communication tool; it is a vital mechanism for constructing identity and navigating social norms. By bridging individual expression with broader cultural frameworks, language acts as the primary medium through which personal and collective identities are shaped, maintained, and circulated within society.

1.3 Media as the Primary Source of Public Knowledge on Islam

Understanding the specific outlets that make up the corpus requires situating them within the wider landscape of British media and its well-documented history of representing Muslims. Jaspal and Cinniralla (2010, p.1) argue Muslims have never occupied a central position in British media;

generally, they are absent from normalized representation. Saeed (2007, p.443) finds British press media portrayed Muslims as an 'alien other.'

Allen (2012, p.2) demonstrated that a YouGov survey from 2002 found that 70% of the British public claimed that they know nothing about Islam, and of those who did have some knowledge about Islam, 64% said that they know Islam from the media. This finding establishes the stakes of media representation. For the majority of British people, the media is the primary and often only source of knowledge about Islam and Muslims. This study also measures British press coverage and has found that 84% of press coverage presents Islam and Muslims as either likely to cause danger or operating in a time of intense difficulty.

The difference between individual outlets within a landscape is significant and empirically documented. Sian, Law, and Sayyid (2012, p.229) carried out a three-month monitoring study of four British newspapers: The Sun, The Daily Mail, The Guardian, and The Independent. Their findings showed that 70% of all Muslim-related news is across the four papers linked with the threat of terrorism, dangerous, backward, or irrational.

According to the study of Moore et al. (2008, p.3), the most common nouns used for British Muslims were terrorist, extremist, Islamist, suicide bomber, and militant, and the most common adjectives used for Muslim-related issues across the British newspapers were radical, fanatical, fundamentalist, extremist, and militant.

In summary, the British media landscape acts as a primary and often singular source of public knowledge regarding Islam, yet it consistently frames Muslims as an "alien other" rather than as a normalized part of society. The historical and systematic association of Muslim identity with threats, danger, and irrationality across diverse outlets demonstrates that these representational patterns are deeply embedded. Ultimately, these findings underscore that media language is not neutral; it creates a persistent "othering" effect that continues to define the boundaries of how Muslims are perceived and understood within the British public sphere.

1.4 Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Muslim Representation in British Media

This subchapter dispenses the theoretical framework that conveys the analysis of the linguistic representation of Muslim identities in British media. The study is grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis and framing theory, with the particular observation of lexical choices as the key linguistic resource in media discourse. The mentioned theoretical points of view look into the analytical tools necessary to examine how language is used in media texts to establish meaning, shape identities, and reproduce particular ideological viewpoints. By amalgamating critical discourse and framing theory, this study looks to explore not only what is said about Muslims but also how it is said and with what implications.

1.4.1 Critical discourse analysis (CAD)

In the early 1990s, a group of critical linguists, including Kress, Van Dijk, Van Leeuwen, Fairclough, and Wodak, named this approach CDA and defined its main principles. Critical discourse was established by a group of critical linguists at the University of East Anglia in England. It is not only a single method but also a shared approach based on ideas from social theory (Gölbaşı, 2017, p.7).

Critical discourse analysis is an approach that looks into the relationship between language, power, and ideology in social contexts. In the book *Language and Power*, Fairclough (1989) discussed the term CDA. He inaugurated the concepts that are now shown as vital in CDA, such as discourse, power, ideology, social practice, and common sense.

The study of Fairclough's *Three Dimensions Critical Discourse Analysis of Malcolm X's Speech at Oxford Union Debate* by Dewangga et al. (2025, p. 72) argues that CDA, an approach that scrutinizes the connection between language, power, and society, shows that discourse is not only a reflection of the world but also a tool for shaping and constructing social practice. Fairclough (1995) describes CDA as a method for analyzing how language helps maintain and reproduce power relations in society.

CDA is the most influential and important approach in the study of media discourse (Carvalho, 2008, p.162). In the media discourse, critical discourse analysis is indispensable because news texts are generated within institutional settings and often demonstrate dominant social and political ideologies. From a CDA point of view, newspapers do not plainly report events; they actively bring out social actors and social issues by way of linguistic choice. The words' selection, focus on certain themes, and omission of alternative perspectives all contribute to the ideological positioning of media texts.

This study applies CDA as its main analytical framework in order to discover the dormant meanings and tacit hypotheses in British newspaper representations of Muslim identities. By critically investigating media language, the study aims to let out how Muslims are represented within public discourse and how the power relation between the majority and minority groups is reproduced through linguistic practice.

1.4.2 The Role of Lexical Choice and Framing in Media Representation

Lexical choice refers to the selection of words that the writer selects, which can vary on the style of the text, personal judgment, and social and cultural background of the writers (Van Dijk, 1991, p.210). In the media discourse, lexical choices are seldom neutral; instead, they carry ideological

implications and evaluative meanings. Das (2023, p.1) argues that lexical choice or choice of words, and syntactic structures are important to explore writers' biases; it reveals their underlying attitude and ideology beneath the surface structure.

Framing is a part of news where certain aspects of reality are recognized and highlighted as highly important in order to communicate a message to the public (Entman, 1993, p.52). Goffman mentions in his book *Fame Analysis* (1974, p.21) that a frame is explained as a scheme of interpretation that allows people to perceive, identify, locate, and label events and activities. Framing puts the media spotlight on a piece of information and makes that more important, meaningful, noticeable, or memorable (Entman, 1993, p 52).

In the study, lexical choices are analyzed to recognize evaluative trends and recurring patterns in British newspaper coverage. Also pays attention to adjectives, nouns, and verbs used to describe Muslim identities. By appraising these lexical choices, the study looks to understand how language contributes to the establishment of Muslims and the reinforcement of particular social meaning. This study also applies framing theory to pick out frames used in British media coverage of Muslim identities. By surveying how issues are framed across different texts, the study aims to reveal consistent patterns in the representation and pursue how these frames avail to the broader discourse surrounding Muslims in British society.

1.4.3 The role of Headlines in Media Discourse

According to Van Dijk (1991, p. 50), headlines are the most conspicuous part of a news report. Their main function is to summarize the most important information of the report; they also express its main 'topic,' a notion we discuss in the next chapter. Bonyadi and Samule (2013, p. 2) argue that newspaper headlines not only have the function of indicating the topic and summarizing the main idea of the text. It helps the readers grasp the meaning of the text.

Van Dijk (1991, p.50) further argues that headlines also have an important cognitive function; they are usually read first, and the information expressed in the headline is strategically used by the reader during the process of understanding in order to construct the overall meaning of the main topics or of the rest of the text before reading the full text.

According to Dor (2003, p.695), headlines provide the optimal ratio between contextual effect and processing effort and direct readers to construct the optimal context for interpretation. Van Dijk (1991, p.51) notes that headlines often have ideological implications. Since they express the most important information about a news event, they may bias the understanding process.

In summary, this study is grounded in three interconnected theoretical frameworks. Critical Discourse Analysis provides the overarching analytical lens, treating language as a socially situated

practice that both reflects and reproduces relations of power and ideology. The concept of lexical choice, central to CDA, reveals how specific word selections in media texts carry evaluative and ideological weight that goes beyond their surface meaning. Framing Theory, in turn, offers a structural perspective on how media discourse selects and emphasizes certain aspects of social reality to promote particular interpretations of social groups and events. Together, these three frameworks enable a systematic and critical examination of how linguistic choices in British news coverage contribute to the construction of Muslim identity in the public sphere.

II. Research Methodology and Analysis of Findings

This chapter describes the methodology of the study. The research examines the linguistic representation of Muslim identity in the British media through a corpus-based approach. The study focuses on lexical choice and framing in news discourse. The chapter covers the research design, the corpus compilation, and the analytical procedure.

2.1 Research Design

This analysis adopts a corpus-based approach and uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as its framework. A corpus-based approach means that all findings about language and representation are drawn from a collection of areal texts. According to Kilgarriff et al. (2014, p.32), corpus tools allow the researcher to examine systematically what is in the data, revealing patterns that would be impossible to identify through manual reading. CDA provides the framework for interpreting these patterns. Fairclough (1995) argues that language does not simply describe the words; it actively constructs a particular Understanding of social groups and events. Similarly, Van Dijk (1991, p.5) explains that linguistic choices are never neutral; their linguistic structures play a key role in maintaining ideological frameworks. This study uses CDA to examine how the lexical choice and framing strategies in the corpus construct a particular representation of Muslim identity in the British media.

2.1.2 Corpus Compilation

The use of corpus methods in the analysis of media discourse represents a significant methodological development in media linguistics. Baker et al. (2008, p.273) argue that the combination of corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis creates a methodological synergy. Their work showed how corpus methods reveal recurring patterns of representation that are not visible in individual text analysis. Kilgarriff and Kosem (2014, p. 32) explain that a corpus is a collection of documents and that instances of a word come from different documents of different types of text. The corpus analysis tool Sketch Engine is a comprehension tool for lexicographic and discourse research. Sketch Engine enables researchers to identify word frequency, collocations, concordances, and word sketches with precision and speed impossible in manual analysis.

The present study applies these methods to a corpus of British media coverage of Muslim identity. The data for this study consist of two corpora: the first contains 60 news articles, and the second contains their headlines (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). All articles and headlines are taken from three major British media outlets: 'The Daily Mail,' 'The Guardian,' and the BBC. Each outlet contributes 20 articles and 20 headlines to the corpus. These three outlets were selected because

they represent three distinct and well-documented positions in the British media landscape: the BBC provides public service broadcasting, the 'Daily Mail' is known for its right-of-center popular journalism, and 'The Guardian' represents left-of-center quality journalism. Together, they provide a broad picture of how Muslim identity is constructed across the British media.

The articles and headlines of the corpora were collected from the online archives using the search terms 'Muslims,' 'Muslim,' 'Islam,' and 'Islamophobia.' The corpus spans from 2015 to 2026. All articles in the corpus directly reference Muslims or Islam as their primary subject. The corpus was compiled in plain text format and imported into Sketch Engine for analysis.

2.1.3 Analytical procedure

The corpus of articles and headlines is analyzed separately using Sketch Engine, a corpus analysis tool widely used in linguistics research (kilgarriff and Kosem, 2014, p.32). This analysis is organized into four steps. Firstly, a word frequency list of content words was generated across the entire corpus of articles, using Sketch Engine's word list function.

Secondly, three separate parts of speech frequencies were generated for the adjective, noun, and verb. These lists reveal how Muslim identity is constructed through lexical choice. Baker and Croft (2017, p. 179) argue that lexical categories are used to describe adjectives, nouns, and verbs.

Thirdly, a concordance analysis of the two node words "Muslim" and "Muslims" was conducted. This analysis allows for the identification of the frequently occurring words that surround each node word. This step addresses research question 2.

Fourthly, headline analysis was conducted of all 60 news articles' headlines. All 60 article headlines are uploaded to Sketch Engine as a separate corpus. A word frequency list and concordance analysis are constructed. Miladi (2021, p.120) argues that typically most of the readers are drawn to headlines when they choose to read a newspaper. Konnikova (2014) argues that a headline shapes how readers interpret an article and how they recall it. Headlines frame the entire reading experience. This step addresses research questions 1 and 2.

The findings from all four steps are interpreted in the discussion section through the lens of framing theory (Entman, 1993; Goffman, 1974) to address research question 3.

2.2 Analysis of the Findings

This chapter presents the corpus-based analysis of 60 news articles and headlines taken from 'The Daily Mail,' 'The Guardian,' and the 'BBC,' and a headlines analysis of all 60 news articles' headlines. All 60 articles' headlines are uploaded to Sketch Engine as a separate corpus. Firstly, I create a word frequency list to identify the most prominent words across the corpus. Secondly, I conduct an adjective frequency list, a noun frequency list, and a verb frequency list. Thirdly, I

create a concordance analysis to examine how the node words "Muslim" and "Muslims" are grammatically and semantically related to their surrounding words. Fourthly, I analyze the headlines of all news articles from the corpus to identify the dominant framing patterns. These four steps address all three research questions.

2.2.1 Frequency Analysis of the Content Words

In this section, I generate a word frequency list from the articles corpus by using the Sketch Engine. All the function words, such as prepositions, articles, and pronouns, I set aside and focus on the content words that carry the meaning in relation to the representation of Muslim identity. Table 2 present the top 20 most frequent content words in the corpus of article.

Table 1
Top 20 most frequent content words in the corpus

No	Word	Frequency
1	Muslim	345
2	Muslims	194
3	people	168
4	attack	124
5	Islamophobia	115
6	community	114
7	Police	113
8	mosque	94
9	attacks	87
10	group	85
11	terrorist	83
12	government	79
13	hate	70
14	Islam	61
15	Country	58
16	ban	56
17	Law	55
18	communities	57
19	brotherhood	52
20	threat	48

The frequency list represents three dominant semantic fields. The first security and threat field is visible through the words "terrorist" (83), "threat" (48), and "brotherhood" (52). The second is victimization and hostility evidenced by attack (124), attacks (87), Islamophobia (115), and hate (70). The third political and legal frame is represented by the words "government" (79), "law" (55), and "ban" (56). After the node words "Muslim" (345), "attack" (124), and "attacks" (87) occur, making violence the single most prominent thematic concern in the corpus. Overall, the word frequency pattern demonstrates that the representation of Muslims in the corpus is strongly shaped by the discourse of security, victimization, and political regulation.

2.2.2 Lexical choice: Adjectives, Nouns, and Verbs

In this section, analyze the frequency of adjectives, nouns, and verbs that dominate the corpus. According to Baker and Croft (2017), lexical categories are used to describe adjectives, nouns, and verbs. These word classes are the primary carriers of meaning in media language and allow for a detailed investigation of how Muslim identity is constructed linguistically in the corpus. This analysis directly answers research question 1.

2.2.2.1 Adjective Analysis

Sketch Engine identifies the most frequent adjective as Muslim itself. It appears 205 times in the corpus. Table 2 presents the 20 most significant content adjectives, excluding non-content adjectives such as more, other, last, many, and such, which do not carry a specific meaning to the representation of Muslim identity.

Table 2
Top 20 frequent content adjectives in the corpus

No	Adjective	Frequency
1	Muslim	252
2	terrorist	70
3	political	51
4	Islamophobic	48
5	Islamic	45
6	religious	45
7	social	44
8	French	31
9	British	31
10	Jewish	26
11	foreign	25
12	civil	23
13	Australian	21
14	racist	21
15	far-right	18
16	dangerous	15
17	violent	12
18	radical	12
19	extremist	11
20	peaceful	8

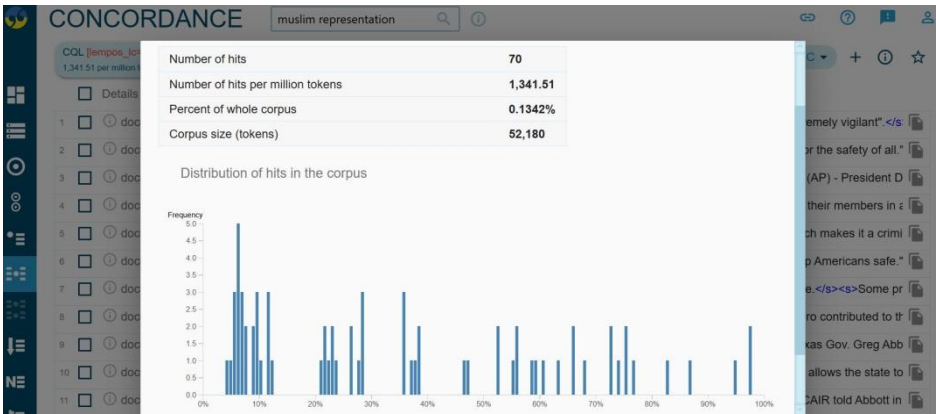
Adjectives present evaluative judgment. After "Muslim" itself, the most frequent adjective is "terrorist" in the corpus. "Terrorist" (70) functions as a dominant evaluative adjective in this corpus. It was directly applied to Muslim organizations and institutions. The adjectives "dangerous" (15),

"violent" (12), "radical" (12), and "extremist" (11) further reinforce this threat cluster, creating a semantic field that consistently associates Muslim identity with danger and radicalization.

The threat-based function of terrorist is clearly visible in the headlines of "The Daily Mail" such as "Trump administration labels 3 Muslim Brotherhood branches as terrorist organizations" (13 January 2026) and "Texas governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization" (19 November 2025) "Florida governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization" (19 December 2025) frames state authority as the agent that officially designates the Muslim group as dangerous, lending institutional legitimacy to the classification.

The corpus distribution of terrorism generated by the Sketch Engine further supports this interpretation. Sketch Engine result report of the following distribution result of terrorists in the corpus.

Figure 1
Distribution of 'terrorist' in the corpus



The adjective frequency shows that the most frequent word in the corpus is "terrorist" after "Muslim" itself, appearing 70 times across a total corpus of 52,180 tokens. This gives a rate of 1,341.51 occurrences per million tokens, accounting for 0.1342% of the entire corpus. The distribution chart shows how these 70 occurrences are spread in the corpus. The highest concentration of terrorists appears in the early section of the corpus, particularly 0% to 15%, where the frequency reaches 3 to 4 occurrences.

2.2.2.2 Noun Analysis

The frequency list of nouns reveals the subject and the object that shape how the corpus discusses the Muslim identity. Table 3 presents the 20 most significant noun frequency list excluding the words "Muslim" (183) and "Muslims" (105), and also the time words such as "year," "month," "day," and "week" because they do not carry any meaning to represent the Muslim identity.

Table 3
Top 20 frequent nouns in the corpus

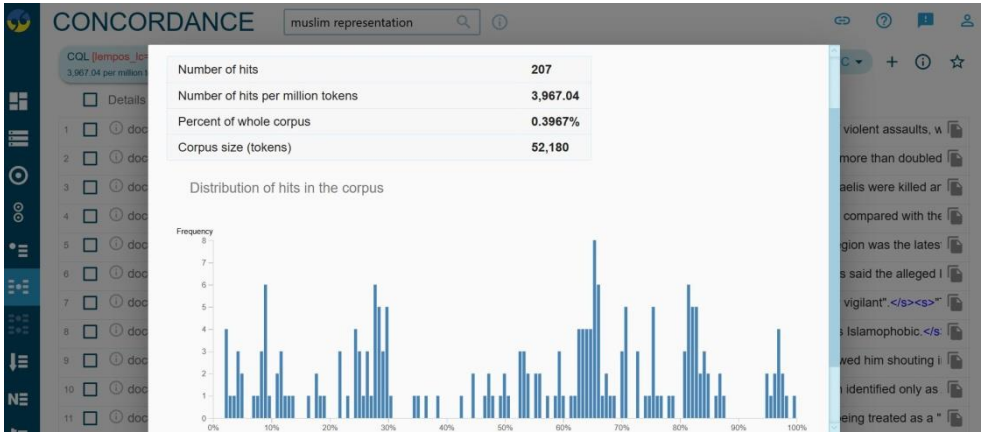
No	Word	Frequency
1	attack	207
2	people	175
3	community	169
4	mosque	129
5	group	119
6	Islamophobia	115
7	police	111
8	government	99
9	threat	76
10	woman	76
12	country	76
13	France	74
14	law	61
15	Islam	61
16	Leader	60
17	brotherhood	54
18	hate	52
19	ban	48
20	victim	44

Table 3 presents two dominant representational modes. On the one hand, semantic fields related to violence, security, and control: by the nouns attack (207), threat (76), brotherhood (54), ban (48), which reveal Muslims within the framework of danger and institutional regulation. Other nouns, such as "Islamophobia" (107) and "victim" (44), position Muslims within a framework of suffering. All over, the corpus represents the Muslims as threats or victims; it does not show them living and participating in the society.

The noun attack is the most frequent noun in this corpus. This single finding addresses directly research question 1. Three more nouns reinforce the semantic field of violence: threat (76), victim (44), and hate (52). Together, these four nouns, attack, threat, victim, and hate, create the dominant field of the corpus. The corpus distribution of attacks generated by the sketch engine supports this

interpretation. Figure 2 presents the Sketch Engine result report, the following distribution result of attacks in the corpus.

Figure 2
Distribution of 'attack' in the corpus



The distribution chart shows that "attack" appears 207 times across a corpus of a total of 52,180 tokens. This gives a rate of 3,967.04 occurrences per million tokens, accounting for 0.3967% of the entire corpus. The chart also shows how these 207 occurrences spread across the corpus. Unlike the terrorist (70) distributions, which are heavily concentrated in the early section of the corpus. The attack distribution is much more widespread. The word "attack" consistently appears from 0% to 100% in the distribution chart with very few empty sections. Several notable peaks are visible in the chart, particularly around 10%, 30%, 60% to 70%, and 80%, and most prominently at 60% to 70%, where frequency reaches 7 to 8 occurrences per section. The widespread distribution confirms that "attack" is not a word confined to a small cluster of terrorism-related articles. It appears throughout the multiple contexts: attacks on mosques, attacks on Muslim women, terrorist attacks, and Islamophobic attacks.

2.2.2.3 Verb Analysis

The frequency list of verbs represents the most dynamic picture of how Muslims are constructed in the corpus. Auxiliary verbs such as "be" and "have" and also the non-content verbs such as "make," "take," "get," and "go" are excluded because they do not carry any significant meaning to represent the Muslim identity. Table 4 represents the 15 most analytically significant verbs from the corpus, which are related to the Muslim representation.

Table 4
Top 15 frequent verbs in the corpus

No	Word	Frequency
1	feel	67
2	target	43
3	kill	40
4	wear	32
5	prevent	25
6	accuse	24
7	ban	20
8	attack	19
9	hate	19
10	arrest	18
11	declare	17
12	designate	17
13	stab	13
14	portray	13
15	investigate	11

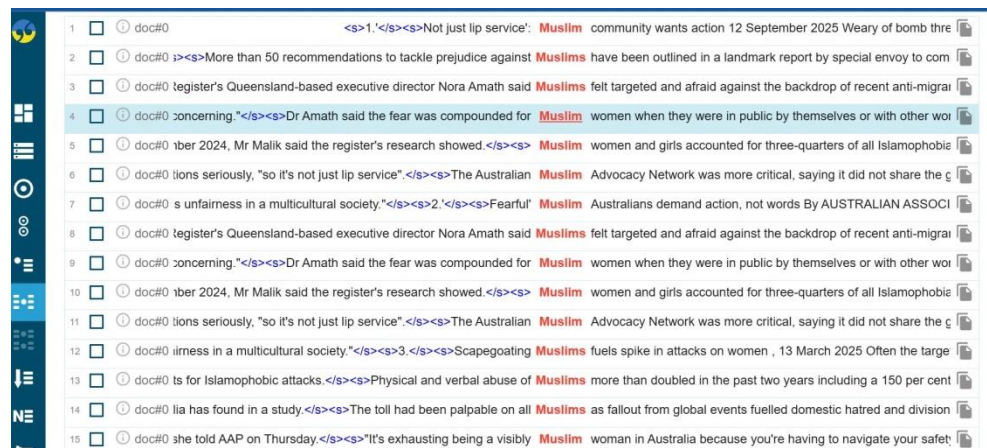
Table 4 reveals three dominant patterns in the representation of Muslim identity. "Feel" (67) is the most frequent content verb associated with Muslims. It reveals that Muslims are represented through emotional states such as fear, anxiety, and distress rather than purposeful action. Appearance of target (43) and wear (32) shows that Muslim women's dress is as prominent subject as the physical targeting of Muslim identity. Secondly, the violence frame: "kill" (40), "attack" (19), and "stab" (13) represent the Muslim as the object of harm. Thirdly, the state control verbs such as ban (20), prevent (25), accuse (24), designate (17), arrest (18), declare (17), investigate (11) represent Muslim identity and institutions that are regularly subjected to legal restriction and criminal accusation.

2.2.3 Concordance Analysis of Muslim and Muslims

This section investigates how the node words 'Muslims' and 'Muslim' relate to the words around them in the corpus. The concordance for the word 'Muslim' is 435 lines, and for "Muslims" 194 lines. Figure 3 presents some of the concordance of "Muslim" and 'Muslims'. Figures 4 and 5 present the distribution of Muslims in the corpus from the Sketch Engine results. Table 5 (see p.23) presents the most frequent words around the words 'Muslim' and 'Muslims.'

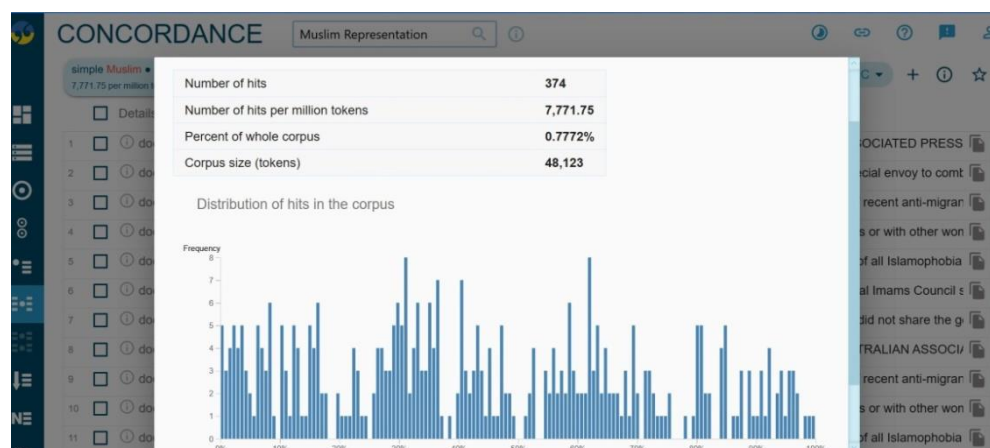
Figure 3

The concordance of 'Muslim' and 'Muslims.'



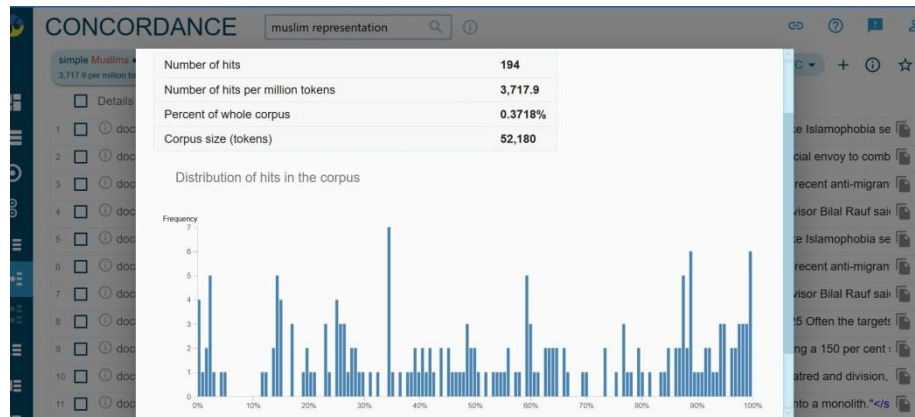
The concordance search for the node word "Muslim" in the Sketch Engine corpus produces 435 hits across a total corpus size of 52,180 tokens. It shows the Muslim appears at a rate of 8,336.53 occurrences per million tokens, accounting for 0.8337% of the entire corpus. These figures confirm that "Muslim" is not simply a passing reference in the corpus. It is a high-frequency node word that appears consistently in the collection of 60 articles.

Figure 4
Distribution of 'Muslim' in the corpus



The distribution chart of Muslim shows how these 435 hits are spread across the corpus from 0% to 100%. Muslim appears throughout all the sections of the corpus with no complete gap, which confirms that all the articles contain substantive reference to Muslim rather than being concentrated in a small number of texts. Several notable peaks are visible in the distribution, particularly 30%, 40%, and 60% of the corpus, where the frequency bar reaches 7 or 8 occurrences. These peaks reflect individual articles that contain a higher density of Muslim references, likely articles that focus especially on Muslim identity and Muslim civil right organizations.

Figure 5:
Distribution of Muslims in the corpus



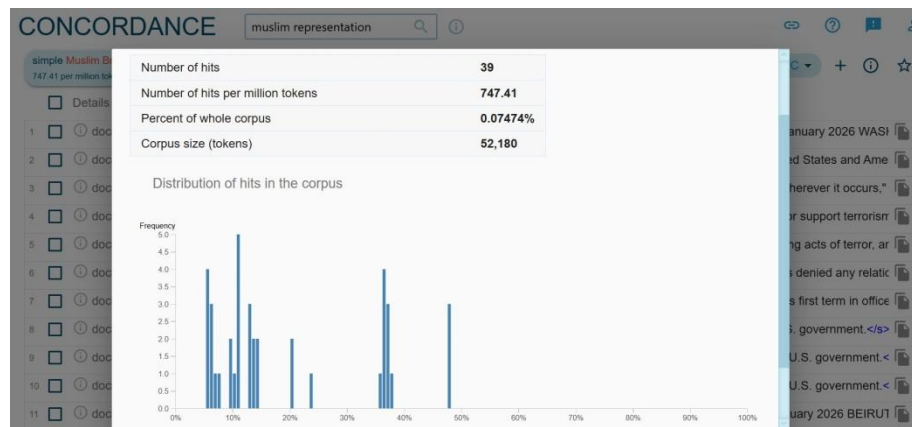
The concordance searches for the plural node word "Muslims" produce 194 hits across the same corpus of 52,180 tokens, appearing at a rate of 3717.9 occurrences per million tokens and accounting for 0.3718% of the entire corpus. The most prominent peaks appear around 30%, 90%, and 100% of the corpus. Where the frequency reaches 6 or 7 occurrences, it indicates in this section of the corpus that Muslims as a collective group are a central subject of discussion.

Table 5
The most frequent words around the words 'Muslim' and 'Muslims.'

No	words	Frequency
1	brotherhood	38
2	community	35
3	woman	20
4	communities	19
5	civil	10

The most frequent word in the corpus is "Brotherhood," which appears in 38 lines. Mostly, the appearance of brotherhood presents the designation of the organization as a terrorist group by the United States government and the authority of Texas and Florida. The second most frequent word is "community," which occurs in 35 lines in the context, such as "Muslim community wants action." The most striking pattern in the concordance data is the frequency of 'Muslim Brotherhood,' occurring 39 lines out of 435 lines. In almost every case, the Muslim Brotherhood refers to it as a political and religious organization. Headlines such as 'Trump administration labels 3 Muslim Brotherhood branches as terrorist organizations.' The organization is consistently described through the language of threat and violence. Figure 6 presents the distribution of the Muslim Brotherhood in the corpus.

Figure 6
Distribution of 'brotherhood' in the corpus



The concordance search for the brotherhood produces 39 hits across the corpus of 52,180 tokens, appearing at a rate of 747.41 occurrences per million tokens and accounting for 0.07474% of the entire corpus. The distribution of the chart shows that the occurrences are heavily concentrated in the early section of the corpus, particularly at 10%.

2.2.4 Headlines Analysis

This section investigates the most frequent lexical choice used in all 60 articles headlines. I create a separate corpus and upload it to Sketch Engine to generate a word frequency list. This examines the most frequent word in the corpus and which lexical choices dominate the headlines' coverage of Muslim identity across The Daily Mail, The Guardian, and the BBC. Table 6 presents the 15 most frequent content words from the headlines word frequency list.

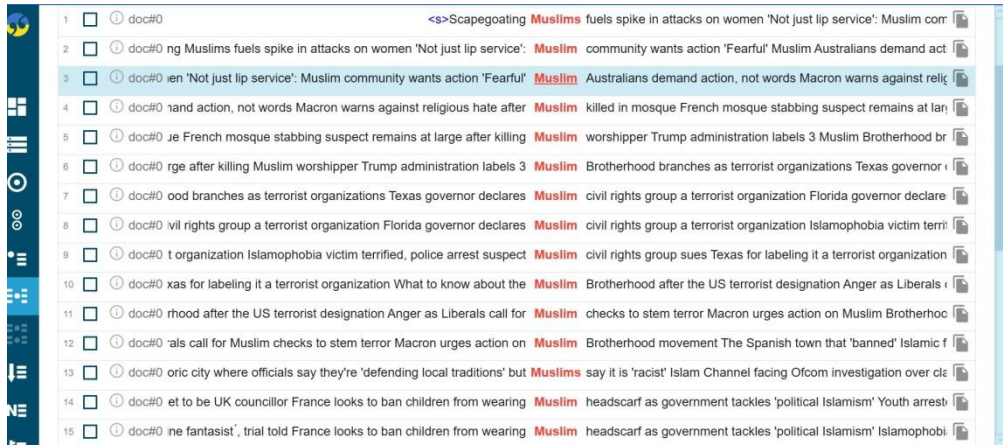
Table 6
The 15 most frequent content words

No	Word	Frequency
1	Muslim	22
2	Muslims	13
3	mosque	7
4	attack	7
5	islamophobia	7
6	terrorist	6
7	terror	6
9	attacks	5
10	group	5
11	ban	5
12	civil	4
13	killed	3
14	action	3
15	hate	3

The node words 'Muslim' and 'Muslims' are the most frequent words in the corpus, confirming that Muslim identity is the central subject of all the news articles. Mosque (7), attack (7), attacks (5), and killed (3) are occurrences of violence-related vocabulary in the headlines corpus. Terrorist (6)

and terror (6) are both words that appear directly in Muslim-related content in the headlines, such as Texas governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization." Islamophobia appears to be the same as an attack, showing that anti-Muslim sentiment is a prominent subject in the headlines, as violence, for example, 'Systemic Islamophobia', fuels terror attacks, say Muslim leaders. Ban (5) reflects the coverage of legal restrictions on Muslim identity, such as 'The Spanish town that banned Islamic festivals: Inside the historic city where officials say they are 'defending local traditions' but Muslims', 'France looks to ban children from wearing Muslim headscarf as government tackles political Islamism'. Civil (4) and group (4) appear together in the headlines about Muslims civil rights organizations being designated as terrorist groups. Figure 7 presents the concordance of the Muslim and Muslims in the headlines corpus.

Figure 7
The concordance of Muslim and Muslims in the headlines



doc#	Search Terms	Headline Text
1	doc#0	<s>Scapegoating Muslims fuels spike in attacks on women 'Not just lip service': Muslim community wants action 'Fearful' Muslim Australians demand action
2	doc#0	ng Muslims fuels spike in attacks on women 'Not just lip service': Muslim community wants action 'Fearful' Muslim Australians demand action
3	doc#0	en 'Not just lip service': Muslim community wants action 'Fearful' Muslim Australians demand action, not words Macron warns against religious hate after
4	doc#0	land action, not words Macron warns against religious hate after Muslim killed in mosque French mosque stabbing suspect remains at large after killing
5	doc#0	je French mosque stabbing suspect remains at large after killing Muslim worshipper Trump administration labels 3 Muslim Brotherhood branches as terrorist organizations Texas governor declares
6	doc#0	rge after killing Muslim worshipper Trump administration labels 3 Muslim Brotherhood branches as terrorist organizations Texas governor declares
7	doc#0	ood branches as terrorist organizations Texas governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization Florida governor declares
8	doc#0	vil rights group a terrorist organization Florida governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization Islamophobia victim terrified, police arrest suspect
9	doc#0	t organization Islamophobia victim terrified, police arrest suspect Muslim civil rights group sues Texas for labeling it a terrorist organization
10	doc#0	as for labeling it a terrorist organization What to know about the Muslim Brotherhood after the US terrorist designation Anger as Liberals call for
11	doc#0	hood after the US terrorist designation Anger as Liberals call for Muslim checks to stem terror Macron urges action on Muslim Brotherhood movement
12	doc#0	als call for Muslim checks to stem terror Macron urges action on Muslim Brotherhood movement The Spanish town that 'banned' Islamic festivals
13	doc#0	oric city where officials say they're 'defending local traditions' but Muslims say it is 'racist' Islam Channel facing Ofcom investigation over clerical
14	doc#0	et to be UK councillor France looks to ban children from wearing Muslim headscarf as government tackles 'political Islamism' Youth arrested
15	doc#0	ne fantasist', trial told France looks to ban children from wearing Muslim headscarf as government tackles 'political Islamism' Islamophobia

The concordance search for "Muslim" and "Muslims" in the headlines corpus produces 26 lines across all 60 headlines. The most frequent word of the corpus appearing after 'Muslim' in the headlines is 'civil', appearing in the construction 'Muslim civil rights group,' which always followed in the headlines by the terrorist organization. The second most frequent word in the corpus is 'brotherhood,' appearing in headlines such Muslim brotherhood branches as terrorist organizations.' For the plural form, Muslims appear in the headlines 'Scapegoating Muslims fuels spike in attacks on women'; these headlines consistently frame Muslims either as recipients of hostility and discrimination or as a group whose belonging is questioned.

2.3 Discussion of the findings

This chapter interprets the findings presented in Chapter 2.2 through the lens of CDA and framing theory. Entman (1993, p.52) defines framings as the process of selecting some aspect of perceived

reality and making it more salient in communicating text. Framing promotes a particular definition of the problem, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. Goffman (1974, p.21) argues that when individuals encounter a particular event, they tend to rely on interpretive frameworks that shape how they understand and respond to that event. Fairclough (1989, p.4) argues language contributes to the domination of some people by others. Fairclough (1995, p.2) further argues that language is a form of social practice. Van Dijk (1991, p.46) argues that news discourse usually consists of many sentences; they are not a sequence of unrelated assertions, but these speech acts are coherently linked and function as a broader macro-level act of assertion. The discussion applies the theoretical positions to the findings to address all research questions of this study.

2.3.1 Lexical Choices Used to Describe Muslims

The first research question asks what lexical choices the British media use to describe Muslims and Muslim-related issues. The findings from the words list frequency, adjective frequency, noun frequency, and verb frequency produce a very clear answer. The lexical choices position Muslim identity with danger, violence, and state control. According to Van Dijk (1991, p.260), the meaning of sentences, clauses, nouns, and adjectives is all possible targets for the expression of ideological content.

The words "frequency," "list," "present," "attack" (124), and "attacks" (87) collectively appear 217 times in the corpus, which is the most frequent word after "Muslims" itself. Similarly, in the adjective frequency list, terrorist (70) is the most frequent adjective after Muslim itself. This means the most common evaluative word used in the media coverage is directly linked to Muslim identity and violence. When terrorists use (70) as an adjective, it creates a strong association between Muslim identity and danger. The other threat adjectives, dangerous (15), violent (12), radical (12), and extremist (11) reinforce this association further. According to Louw (1993) this pattern is semantic prosody. When a word is consistently surrounded by negative lexical choices, it is easy to establish negative associations. In the corpus, the words "Muslim" and "Muslims" are surrounded by the threat adjective.

The most frequent noun in the corpus is "attack" (207), used as a common noun in the 60 articles to describe Muslim identity. "Community" (169) is the second most frequent word in the corpus and shows that Muslim identity is almost always described as a group rather than as individuals. Brotherhood (54) is another important noun. It appears almost always in the context of the Muslim Brotherhood, being designated as a terrorist organization, which directly links the word "Muslim" to terrorism in a number of articles.

Moore, Mason, and Lewis (2008) found the same pattern in their study of British press coverage from 2000 to 2008: Muslims are associated with threat, problems, or opposition of culture. This study shows that this pattern continues in the period of 2025 to 2026.

2.3.2 How Muslims are framed in the media

The second research question asks how Muslims are framed in the British media coverage. Entman (1993, p.52) argues that frames perform four functions: define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies. The concordance analysis and the headlines analysis together reveal two dominant frames in the corpus: the threat frame and the victimization frame. According to Entman (1993, 52), frames in text are manifested by the presence or absence of certain key words, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments.

The threat frame is visible in the concordance data. The most frequent word appearing after "Muslim" in the 435 concordance lines is "brotherhood." Most of the occurrences refer to the Muslim Brotherhood being designated as a terrorist organization. Applying four framing functions of Entman (1993, p.52), the problem is defined as Muslim organizations are presented as a security threat, the cause is identified as Muslim institutions themselves, moral evaluation is that these organizations are dangerous, and the suggested solution is state designation and legal restriction. "This frame is clear in the headlines such as 'Texas governor declares Muslims civil rights group a terrorist organization'" and "'Trump administration labels 3 Muslim Brotherhood branches as terrorist organizations.'"

The victimization frame is equally prominent in the corpus. Islamophobia (115) is an important content word in the corpus; the concordance of Muslims shows Muslims as recipients of harm, discrimination against Muslims, and attacks on Muslims. The verb "feel" (67) is the most frequent verb in the corpus associated with Muslims as grammatical subjects, encoding collective emotional suffering. Muslims felt targeted and afraid; Muslims felt they had to prove their innocence. This frame is clear in the headlines such as "'Fearful' Muslim Australians demand action, not words," "French mosque stabbing suspect remains at large after killing Muslim worshipper," and "Head of UK government's anti-Islamophobia partner refused service in shop for being Muslim."

2.3.3 How lexical choice and frames portrayed Muslim identities to the public

The third question asks how the lexical choices and frames used in the British media shape the way Muslim identities are portrayed to the public. Fairclough (1995, p.43) argues that discourse cumulatively contributes to the reproduction of macro structures, which is at the heart of the explanatory endeavor. Fairclough (1995, p.61) further argues that certain linguistic devices

cumulatively but implicitly ascribe massive legitimacy. It shows that public perception and social ideas are not created by one word or one text, but by the many repeated patterns in discourse over time. The findings of this present study show exactly this kind of cumulative pattern across the 60 articles published over eleven years in the three different outlets; the same threat and victimization vocabulary dominates the representation of Muslim identity.

Goffman (1974, p.39) observed that actively projecting their frames of reference into the world immediately around them, and one fails to see their so doing only because events ordinarily confirm these projections, causing the assumptions to disappear into the smooth flow of activity. The implication for the Muslim identity is significant; readers who encounter Muslim identity primarily through the lexical choices of terrorism, restriction, and suspicion are likely to apply this frame automatically and unconsciously when they are interpreting new information about Muslims' identities.

Entman (1993, p.52) defines four framing functions: problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and solution recommendation. The cumulative effect of the lexical patterns in the corpus is to construct a public portrait of Muslim identity, organizing all four of these functions simultaneously. The problem identification is visible in the headline data; after "Muslim" and "Muslims," the word "attack" is the most frequent word in the headline corpus. "Terrorist" and "terror" also appear in the headlines frequency list with the same frequency, where causal interpretation is visible. Moral evaluation is visible in the adjective list, where the least frequent adjective is "peaceful" (8) of the top 20 adjectives, and "terrorist" (70) is the most frequent adjective. It shows that the moral evaluation of Muslim identity is dangerous. The solution is presented in the verb list, where ban (20), prevent (25), accuse (24), designate (17), hate (19), arrest (19), and declare (17) appear, showing that Muslims are banned, accused of crime, and designated as terrorists.

2.3.4 Representations of Muslim women in British media

One of the most consistent findings across all analytical steps of this study is the prominence of Muslim women as a specific representational subject. The noun 'women' (76) is another frequent noun in the noun frequency list of the corpus. The verb 'wear' (32) is the fourth most frequent verb, appearing after 'target' (43) and 'kill' (30), meaning Muslim women's dress is represented as prominently in this corpus as the victimization of the individuals.

The pattern of gender representation operates on two levels simultaneously. On one level, Muslim women appear as victims: they are attacked, abused in public places, and described as easy targets in multiple articles across this corpus. On another level, Muslim women's bodies and clothing serve as the primary site of political contestation. French laws banning the headscarf, Spanish towns

restricting Islamic festivals and Bulgarian controversies over 'niqab' all use the Muslim women's bodies as the battleground for debates about national identity, secularism, and social values.

Alkhammash (2020, p.91) demonstrates that Islamophobia operates as an intersectional phenomenon combining religious discrimination with race and gender. The present study strongly supports this finding. Muslim women in British media coverage are rarely represented as professionals, intellectuals, or citizens navigating everyday life.

2.3.5 Connections to the Existing Literature

The present study findings are consistent with the foundational work of Moore, Mason, Lewis (2008, p.3) whose analysis of 974 British newspapers from 2000 to 2008 finds that Muslims are most frequently represented in relation to terrorism, extremism, and cultural difference. Seventeen years after the end of the study period, and the corpus from 2015 to 2026 from three different outlets, the same semantic fields are dominant. "Terrorism," "threat," and "restriction" remain the core vocabulary of Muslim identity representation in the media.

The findings also confirm that Miladi (2021, p.117) argues that recurring linguistic patterns in the British tabloid press have contributed to the gradual normalization of Islamophobic meaning within popular media. The present study finds the same patterns operate at every level of analysis, in the adjective frequency list, noun frequency list, concordance, and headlines, confirming that what Miladi (2021) observes in the tabloid press is equally visible in this corpus that includes The Daily Mail, The Guardian, and the BBC.

Alkhammash (2020, p.91) argues that media representations of Muslims are constituted through race, gender, and class. This present study confirms that by analyzing the representation of Muslim women in the British media section.

Allen (2012, p.2) argues that most of the British people know about Muslims and Islam from the media, where 84% of British press coverage presents Muslims as dangerous or operating in a time of intense difficulty. The present study supports this result directly. If the reader encounters Muslim identity primarily through the vocabulary of terrorism, attack, and Islamophobia, then the picture of Muslim identity being formed in the public mind is narrow and negative.

CONCLUSIONS

The study investigates how Muslim identity is represented linguistically in British media. The study asked three specific questions. To answer these questions, a corpus of 60 news articles was collected from The Daily Mail, The Guardian, and the BBC. The corpus was analyzed by Sketch Engine. This concluding chapter brings together the main findings, reflects on what they mean, acknowledges the limitations of the study, and suggests directions for future research.

The findings of the study are clear and consistent. The general word frequency list showed "attack" (124) and "attacks" (87) collectively appear 217 times as the most frequent words after the node word "Muslim" in the entire corpus. "Islamophobia" (115) is the most frequent word in the corpus, showing that the anti-discrimination discourse is also prominent but does not outweigh the threat vocabulary. The high-frequency adjective is "terrorist" (70) after "Muslim" itself. The threat adjective cluster: terrorist (70), dangerous (15), violent (12), radical (12), and extremist (11) collectively occurs 120 times, whereas in the top 20 adjective list, peaceful (8) is the only one positive adjective. This imbalance is one of the clearest findings of the study.

The noun analysis presents that "attack" (207) is the most frequent noun in the entire corpus. The second frequent noun is "community" (169), showing that Muslims are almost always discussed as a collective group. In the top 20 noun list, there are no words that connect Muslim identity with ordinary social life, work, education, culture, or community contribution.

The first research question asked: What lexical choice do British media use to describe Muslim identity? The finding gives a clear answer by the dominant lexical choice across all four levels of the analysis: words frequency list, parts of speech frequency list, concordance, and headlines associated with the Muslim identity.

The second question asked how Muslims are framed in the media texts. The analysis finds two representational frames dominant in the corpus: the threat frame and the victimization frame. The threat frame is visible through the consistent clustering of terrorist, attack, and brotherhood, and the victimization frame is visible through the words "Islamophobia" and the verb frequency list, where the most frequent verbs are feel, target, fear, accuse, and ban, showing that Muslim identity feels fear and targeted.

The third question asked how those choices and frames shape the public portrait of Muslim identity. Applying Entman's (1993, P.52) four framing functions to the full corpus, the cumulative effect of the pattern identified in this study is to construct a public portrait of Muslims organized around all four framing functions simultaneously. The problem is defined as Muslim organizations and communities posing a security threat. The cause is identified as the Muslims' institutions

themselves. The moral evaluation is made through the adjective cluster. The salutation is recommended through the state control verbs cluster.

Allen (2010, p.2) argues that the majority of the British people have no direct contact with Islam or Muslims. Media representation is the primary source of knowledge about Islam and Muslims for them. The present study shows that this knowledge consists cumulatively of threat and victimization framing, which represents Muslim identity primarily as dangerous and suffering rather than as ordinary participants of social life.

Limitations of the study

This study has some limitations. First, the corpus of 60 news articles is relatively small for a corpus-based study. A larger corpus allows for stronger and statistically reliable conclusions. Second, the study's focus on lexical choice and framing does not examine the grammatical depth, for example, whether "Muslim" appears as the subject or the object of the sentence, which would reveal important information about how much agency they are given in news texts. Third, the study focuses on lexical choice and does not examine the other aspect of media discourse, such as the use of images or the placement of Muslim voices within the articles relative to non-Muslim voices.

Recommendation for future research

To better understand the implications of the results, future studies could address several areas. First, a large-scale corpus study using several hundred or thousands of articles from a wider range of outlets, including social media, online news platforms, and regional British newspapers, would allow for a more statistically reliable conclusion. Second, a diachronic study tracking how language about Muslim identity changes over time in response to specific events would reveal whether the patterns identified here intensify. Third, a study specifically focuses on the representation of Muslim women with image analysis. Fourth, a comparative study of how Arabic language media represent Muslims and how English media represent Muslims. Fifth, how Muslim and non-Muslim readers actually respond and interpret.

Contribution of this study

This study extends the timeline of corpus-based research on Muslim identity representation in British media, covering the period 2015 to 2026.

The study combines four complementary analytical steps: general words frequency, parts of speech (adjective, noun, and verb) frequency, concordance, and headlines analysis. This multi-step approach produces a clearer picture of the representational system at work in the corpus than a single analytical method could provide alone.

The study confirms that the same pattern is still used for the representation of Muslim identity in the British media, which Moore et al. (2008) found from their study that Muslim identity is represented by the negative word list, such as "terrorist" and "extremist."

The study combines two theoretical frameworks. Critical discourse analysis and framing theory in ways that allow the study to look at both specific lexical choices used in individual texts and the bigger picture of how the words shape public understanding of Muslim identity.

Closing remarks

The study set out to examine how language is used to represent Muslim identity in British media coverage; the findings are consistent: the dominant lexical choices position Muslim identity with threat, restriction, and suffering. The language of social life, work, education, and contribution is almost absent from the dominant vocabulary.

Goffman (1974, p.39) observes that the frames become invisible; people stop noticing, and it just starts to feel like the truth. This is what happened with the way British media coverage represents Muslim identity: the same threat and victimization language appeared across many outlets for many years. It no longer feels like a frame; it feels normal. This study makes this invisible pattern visible. For the millions of Muslims living in Britain, the way the media talks about them is not just an academic issue. It affects how their neighbor sees them. The study does not claim to solve this problem. But it shows clearly through the real data what the language looks like and how it works.

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SUMMARY

This study investigates the linguistic representation of Muslim identity in British media. The object of the study is the language used in news articles published by three major news outlets: The Daily Mail, The Guardian, and the BBC from the period of 2015 to 2026. The aim of the analysis is to identify the dominant lexical choices and framing strategies through which Muslim identity is represented in British news discourse and examine the public portrait that these linguistic patterns collectively produce. The study is based on a corpus-based methodology. Two separate corpora were compiled: one for the news articles and one for the headlines, in order to examine the representational patterns at both the article level and the headline level independently, including 20 articles from each outlet. The corpus was analyzed using Sketch Engine, a corpus analysis tool widely used in media linguistics research. The analysis carries out four steps: a word frequency list covering the entire corpus, separate parts of speech frequency lists for adjectives, nouns, and verbs; a concordance analysis of the node words "Muslim" and "Muslims"; and a headline analysis covering all 60 news articles' headlines from 3 news outlets. The study is based on two theoretical frameworks: Critical Discourse Analysis based on the work of Fairclough (1989, 1995) and Van Dijk (1991), which presents that the linguistic choices in media text are never neutral but actively construct social reality. Framing theory is based on the work of Entman (1993) and Goffman (1974), which presents how the selection and salience of particular words and topics shape readers' interpretations. The result of the corpus analysis is very clear and consistent. Two dominant representations are identified across all three news outlets. The first frame is the threat frame, which associates Muslims with danger, terrorism, extremism, and state restriction. The most frequent evaluative adjective in the corpus is "terrorist," and the words "attack" and "attacks" together collectively constitute the highest frequency content theme after the node words themselves. The second frame in the corpus is the victimization frame, which associates Muslim identity with being a target, discrimination, and suffering. The word "islamophobia" is another frequent word in the corpus. The study finds that the same negative patterns identified in the earlier studies on British media coverage of Muslim identity are still present today. In the corpus, the words "Muslim" and "Muslims" are almost surrounded by the words connected to violence, danger, control, and suffering. This present study recommends that journalists, editors, and readers be aware of these patterns and encourages the British media to offer more balance and human representation of Muslim identity.

SANTRAUKA

Šiame tyrime nagrinėjamas musulmoniškos tapatybės lingvistinis vaizdavimas Britanijos žiniasklaidoje. Tyrimo objektas – kalba, vartojama trijų pagrindinių naujienų agentūrų – „The Daily Mail“, „The Guardian“ ir BBC – 2015–2026 m. paskelbtuose naujienų straipsniuose. Analizės tikslas – nustatyti dominuojančius leksinius pasirinkimus ir įrėminimo strategijas, kuriomis musulmoniška tapatybė vaizduojama Britanijos naujienų diskurse, ir ištirti viešąjį portretą, kurį šie lingvistiniai modeliai kartu sukuria. Tyrimas pagrįstas korpuso metodologija. Buvo sudaryti du atskiri korpusai: vienas naujienų straipsniams, o kitas – antraštėms, siekiant atskirai ištirti vaizdavimo modelius tiek straipsnių, tiek antraščių lygmeniu, įskaitant 20 straipsnių iš kiekvienos agentūros. Korpusas buvo analizuojamas naudojant „Sketch Engine“ – korpuso analizės įrankį, plačiai naudojamą žiniasklaidos lingvistikos tyrimuose. Analizė atliekama keturiais etapais: sudaromas žodžių dažnių sąrašas, apimantis visą korpusą, atskiri kalbos dalių dažnių sąrašai būdvardžiams, daiktavardžiams ir veiksmažodžiams; atliekama žodžių „musulmonas“ ir „musulmonai“ konkordansinė analizė; ir antraščių analizė, apimančią visus 60 naujienų straipsnių iš 3 naujienų agentūrų. Tyrimas pagrįstas dviem teoriniais pagrindais: kritine diskurso analize, pagrįsta Fairclough (1989, 1995) ir Van Dijk (1991) darbais, kuriuose teigiama, kad žiniasklaidos tekstų kalbiniai pasirinkimai niekada nebūna neutralūs, o aktyviai konstruoja socialinę realybę. Įrėminimo teorija pagrįsta Entman (1993) ir Goffman (1974) darbais, kuriuose pristatoma, kaip konkrečių žodžių ir temų pasirinkimas ir svarba formuoja skaitytojų interpretacijas. Korpuso analizės rezultatas yra labai aiškus ir nuoseklus. Visose trijose naujienų agentūrose nustatomos dvi dominuojančios reprezentacijos. Pirmasis rėmelis yra grėsmės rėmelis, kuris musulmonus sieja su pavojumi, terorizmu, ekstremizmu ir valstybės apribojimais. Dažniausias vertinamasis būdvardis korpuse yra „teroristas“, o žodžiai „išpuolis“ ir „išpuoliai“ kartu sudaro dažniausiai pasitaikančią turinio temą po pačių mazginių žodžių. Antrasis korpuso rėmelis yra viktimizacijos rėmelis, kuris musulmonų tapatybę sieja su buvimu taikiniu, diskriminacija ir kančia. Žodis „islamofobija“ yra dar vienas dažnai vartojamas žodis šiame tekste. Tyrimas rodo, kad tie patys neigiami modeliai, nustatyti ankstesniuose tyrimuose apie musulmonų tapatybės nušvietimą britų žiniasklaidoje, vis dar egzistuoja. Tekste žodžiai „musulmonas“ ir „musulmonai“ yra beveik apsupti žodžių, susijusių su smurtu, pavojumi, kontrole ir kančia. Šiame tyrime žurnalistams, redaktoriams ir skaitytojams rekomenduojama atkreipti dėmesį į šiuos modelius ir skatinama britų žiniasklaida siūlyti daugiau pusiausvyros ir žmogiško musulmonų tapatybės vaizdavimo.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. CORPUS OF NEWS ARTICLES

<u>The Daily Mail</u> 1.'Not just lip service': Muslim community wants action 12 September 2025 Weary of bomb threats to mosques and schools and mounting levels of persecution, Muslims in Australia are calling on the government to take Islamophobia seriously. More than 50 recommendations to tackle prejudice against Muslims have been outlined in a landmark report by special envoy to combat Islamophobia Aftab Malik. They include enacting federal religious freedom laws, updating religious discrimination legislation and reviewing counter-terrorism policies in an effort "to engender a fair, respectful and inclusive environment". Mr Malik's report released on Friday with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese comes days after a man placed a device at a Gold Coast mosque in an alleged bomb hoax and an Islamic school in Brisbane received a bomb threat that forced the evacuation of hundreds of students and staff. The Islamophobia Register's Queensland-based executive director Nora Amath said Muslims felt targeted and afraid against the backdrop of recent anti-migrant rallies. "We're seeing an escalation of intensity," she told AAP. "For the very first time, we're seeing back-to-back physical assaults and back-to-back bomb threats which is all very concerning." Dr Amath said the fear was compounded for Muslim women when they were in public by themselves or with other women. "They are seen as easy targets ... who are weak and vulnerable because of misrepresentations that they are submissive and oppressed," she said. Islamophobic incidents had "skyrocketed" since 2023 with a 150 per cent increase recorded by November 2024, Mr Malik said the register's research showed. Muslim women and girls accounted for three-quarters of all Islamophobia victims, three-fifths of physical assaults and every target of reported spitting incidents, the report said. Most of the perpetrators were men. One in three Australians also had expressed negative views about Muslims, <u>research has found</u>. Australian National Imams Council senior advisor Bilal Rauf said the report strengthened the case for religious protections, which the peak religious body has lobbied for. He said the onus was on Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and his government to take the recommendations seriously, "so it's not just lip service". The Australian Muslim Advocacy Network was more critical, saying it did not share the government's rationale for establishing the Islamophobia and anti-Semitism envoy roles but welcomed the recommendations. The network supported new measures to treat hate crimes more seriously without expanding crimes and police powers or restricting free speech. "The recommendation to establish independent scrutiny panels to improve the way hate crimes are policed is a positive step," the network said. "All communities deserve equal protection from hate, and applying different standards creates unfairness in a multicultural society." 2.'Fearful' Muslim Australians demand action, not words By AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATED PRESS 13 September 2025 Weary of bomb threats to mosques and schools and mounting levels of persecution, Muslims in Australia are calling on the government to take Islamophobia seriously. More than 50 recommendations to tackle prejudice have been outlined in a landmark report by special envoy to combat Islamophobia Aftab Malik. They include enacting federal religious freedom laws, updating religious discrimination legislation and reviewing counter-terrorism policies in an effort "to engender a fair, respectful and inclusive environment".
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But some advocates say there should be no specialist envoy roles and the way to address racism would be to adequately resource the Human Rights Commission.

The Australian Palestinian Advocacy Network says anti-Palestinian racism and the reports findings are deeply connected but this has not been recognised.

"The Australian government has failed by restricting its focus to Islamophobia through the Islamophobia envoy, while deliberately ignoring and refusing to quantify the widespread anti-Palestinian racism and discrimination that has surged since October 7," APAN executive member Lama Alqasem said.

"That refusal itself is a form of racism because it denies Palestinians recognition, safety and justice."

Mr Malik's report released on Friday with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese comes after a man staged an alleged bomb hoax at a Gold Coast mosque and an Islamic school in Brisbane received a bomb threat that forced the evacuation of hundreds of students and staff.

The Islamophobia Register's Queensland-based executive director Nora Amath said Muslims felt targeted and afraid against the backdrop of recent anti-migrant rallies.

"We're seeing an escalation of intensity," she told AAP.

"For the very first time, we're seeing back-to-back physical assaults and back-to-back bomb threats which is all very concerning."

Dr Amath said the fear was compounded for Muslim women when they were in public by themselves or with other women.

"They are seen as easy targets ... who are weak and vulnerable because of misrepresentations that they are submissive and oppressed," she said.

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Most of the perpetrators were men.

One in three Australians also had expressed negative views about Muslims, research has found.

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The network supported new measures to treat hate crimes more seriously without expanding crimes and police powers or restricting free speech.

"The recommendation to establish independent scrutiny panels to improve the way hate crimes are policed is a positive step," the network said.

"All communities deserve equal protection from hate and applying different standards creates unfairness in a multicultural society."

3.Scapegoating Muslims fuels spike in attacks on women

, 13 March 2025

Often the targets of violent assaults, women wearing hijabs have become the most frequent and easily identifiable targets for Islamophobic attacks.

Physical and verbal abuse of Muslims more than doubled in the past two years including a 150 per cent spike in in-person incidents, the Islamophobia Register Australia has found in a study.

The toll had been palpable on all Muslims as fallout from global events fuelled domestic hatred and division, says the register's executive director Nora Amath, whether they practised Islam or not.

"If I can use a word, it would be exhausting," she told AAP on Thursday.

"It's exhausting being a visibly Muslim woman in Australia because you're having to navigate your safety on certain days.

"Whether it's a local, national or global incident that references Muslims or Islam, you're scapegoated and stereotyped into a monolith."

The report covers a period including the October 7 attack by Hamas in 2023, during which about 1200 Israelis were killed and 250 taken hostage.

Israeli retaliatory assault on Gaza has killed more 50,000 Palestinians including more than 13,000 children, according to the United Nations.

Islamophobia soared to unprecedented levels in Australia as the events unfolded, marked by a fourteen-fold increase in the three weeks after October 7 compared to the same period the previous year, the research found.

Reported cases of anti-Semitism also soared after the attack, more than quadrupling in the subsequent year compared with the previous 12-month period, according to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. Researchers from Monash and Deakin universities relied on data from Muslims in Australia reporting incidents into the Islamophobia register.

They documented 309 verified in-person incidents of Islamophobia and 366 verified online cases during the study period spanning 700 days, from January 2023 to November 2024.

The reported abuse averaged nearly two incidents per day.

Earlier in March, one Sydney mosque received an alleged threat online that referred to the 2019 Christchurch massacre, in which an Australian man killed 51 Muslim worshippers in New Zealand.

Two Muslim women were also allegedly attacked at a Melbourne shopping centre in February and targeted with racist abuse, prompting the prime minister and other leaders to condemn the incident after public pressure.

Muslim women and girls accounted for three-quarters of all Islamophobia victims, three-fifths of physical assaults and every target of reported spitting incidents, the report said.

Most of the perpetrators were men.

Dr Amath, herself a veiled Muslim woman, said going out in public spaces had become a precarious exercise at times.

"You're navigating this minefield going about your everyday activities whether you're going to be abused or perceived as different so you might not take public transport," she said.

"These are circumstances many Muslim women face, including myself."

In 2024, victims displaying pro-Palestinian symbols accounted for 25 per cent of all reported abusive incidents.

Dr Amath wants to see more robust legislation and better preventative programs to curb the abuse.

"We argue (Islamophobia) doesn't just impact Muslims ... racism

4. Macron warns against religious hate after Muslim killed in mosque 27 April 2025

France's President Emmanuel Macron lashed out Sunday against "racism and hatred" after the brutal stabbing to death of a Muslim in a mosque in the south of the country.

Officials said the attacker, who is on the run, stabbed Aboubakar Cisse, a young Malian in his early 20s, dozens of times and then filmed him with a mobile phone while shouting insults at Islam.

The attack in the village of La Grand-Combe in the Gard region was the latest in a series of deadly stabbings in France in recent years.

It shocked the country's leaders, with Macron finally speaking out on X on Sunday.

"Racism and hatred based on religion can have no place in France. Freedom of worship cannot be violated," he wrote, offering support to "our fellow Muslim citizens".

French Prime Minister Francois Bayrou earlier branded it an "Islamophobic atrocity" -- although the prosecutor in the case emphasised that Islamophobia is just one of the motives being considered.

Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau said in televised comments on Sunday that he had ordered police to tighten security at mosques around the country.

Around 1,000 people on Sunday marched through La Grand-Combe, which has just 5,000 inhabitants, to remember the victim.

Hundreds also rallied in Paris, where far-left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon accused the government of nurturing a "climate of Islamophobia" at a time when immigration is top of the political agenda.

Retailleau accused Melenchon's party of exploiting the attack for political ends.

- Video of victim -

Investigators said the alleged killer sent the video he had filmed with his phone -- showing the victim writhing in agony -- to another person, who then shared it on a social media platform before deleting it.

A source close to the case, who asked not to be named, said the suspected perpetrator, while not apprehended, had been identified as a French citizen of Bosnian origin who is not a Muslim.

After initially praying alongside the man when they were alone in the mosque, the attacker stabbed the victim up to 50 times before fleeing the scene.

The body of the victim was discovered later in the morning when other worshippers arrived at the mosque for Friday prayers.

- 'Not neglected' -

The French Council of the Muslim Faith (CFCM) said it was "horrified" by the "anti-Muslim terrorist attack" and urged Muslims in France to be "extremely vigilant".

"The murder of a worshipper in a mosque is a despicable crime that must revolt the hearts of all French people,"

added the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions of France (CRIF).

The attacker has been named only as Olivier A., born in France in 2004 and unemployed without a criminal record.

He is "potentially extremely dangerous" and it is "essential" to arrest him before he claims more victims, said regional prosecutor Abdelkrim Grini.

But while the motive of Islamophobia is the lead that the 70 investigators are "working on as a priority... it is not the only one", Grini said.

There are "certain elements (which) could suggest that this motive was perhaps not the primary motive... or the only motive," he added, without elaborating.

Grini was speaking in the regional centre of Ales, near La Grand-Combe, alongside Retailleau, a hardline right-winger who takes a tough line on immigration and Islamism.

Retailleau emphasised that "the possibility of an anti-Muslim act has not been neglected at all, quite the contrary".

5.French mosque stabbing suspect remains at large after killing Muslim worshipper

27 April 2025

LA GRAND COMBE, France (AP) - A man suspected of killing a Muslim worshipper in a mosque in the south of France was still on the run Sunday, authorities said, in an attack described by Prime Minister Francois Bayrou as Islamophobic.

Both men were alone in the mosque in the former mining town of La Grand Combe on Friday when the victim was fatally stabbed. The assailant recorded the attack on his phone, and security camera footage showed him shouting insults at "Allah," which means God in Arabic, local media said.

Local prosecutor Abdelkrim Grini said Sunday that investigators are taking into account "the possibility that this was an Islamophobic act. It's the one we're working on first, but it's not the only one," he said.

"Racism and hatred based on religion will never have a place in France," French President Emmanuel Macron said. "Religious freedom is inviolable."

Grini said images of the stabbing he watched as part of the investigation were "horrifying" and that police forces were working non-stop to try and arrest the suspect, with 70 investigators deployed.

"We're being particularly vigilant to make sure he doesn't claim any more victims," Grini said. He added that the suspect is a man born in France in 2004, who lived in the area and did not have a criminal record.

The Grand Mosque of Paris condemned the attack in a statement and said the victim, a young man identified only as Aboubakar in French media, had just finished cleaning the mosque when he was killed.

It called on authorities to quickly shed light on the reasons behind the attack, asking judicial authorities to say whether it is being treated as a "terrorist" act and to note its "scale and seriousness ... for the safety of all."

Justice Minister Gerald Darmanin called the stabbing a "despicable murder" that "wounds the hearts of all believers, of all Muslims in France."

Bayrou also denounced an act of "Islamophobic ignominy displayed on video."

"We stand shoulder to shoulder with the victim's family and the shocked worshippers," he said. "The resources of the state are being mobilised to ensure that the murderer is caught and punished."

The SOS Racisme campaign group joined the calls for more clarity in the investigation and took part in a march organized later Sunday at La Grand Combe in support of the victim. Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau traveled to the nearby town of Ales to meet with local Muslim faith officials and pledged to stop the suspect.

"Of course, the possibility of an anti-Muslim act is not at all neglected, quite the contrary," he said. "It is out of the question to tolerate this kind of act in this hyper-violent society."

In Paris, a rally against Islamophobia and in tribute to the victim was held at the Place de la République.

6.Trump administration labels 3 Muslim Brotherhood branches as terrorist organizations

13 January 2026

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Donald Trump's administration has made good on its pledge to label three Middle Eastern branches of the Muslim Brotherhood as terrorist organizations, imposing sanctions on them and their members in a decision that could have implications for U.S. relationships with allies in the region.

The Treasury and State departments announced the actions Tuesday against the Lebanese, Jordanian and Egyptian chapters of the Muslim Brotherhood, which they said pose a risk to the United States and American interests.

The State Department designated the Lebanese branch a foreign terrorist organization, the most severe of the labels, which makes it a criminal offense to provide material support to the group. The Jordanian and Egyptian branches were listed by Treasury as specially designated global terrorists for providing support to Hamas.

"These designations reflect the opening actions of an ongoing, sustained effort to thwart Muslim Brotherhood chapters' violence and destabilization wherever it occurs," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement. "The United States will use all available tools to deprive these Muslim Brotherhood chapters of the resources to engage in or support terrorism."

Rubio and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent were mandated last year under an executive order signed by Trump to determine the most appropriate way to impose sanctions on the groups, which U.S. officials say engage in or support violence and destabilization campaigns that harm the United States and other regions.

Bessent said in a post on X that the Muslim Brotherhood "has a longstanding record of perpetrating acts of terror, and we are working aggressively to cut them off from the financial system." He added that the Trump administration will "deploy the full scope of its authorities to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat terrorist networks wherever they operate in order to keep Americans safe."

"For other governments where the brotherhood is tolerated, it would be a thorn in bilateral relations," including in Qatar and Turkey, he said. While the Turkish ruling party has been associated with members of the Muslim Brotherhood in the past, the government of Qatar has denied any relationship with it.

Brown also said a designation on the chapters may have effects on visa and asylum claims for people entering not just the U.S. but also Western European countries and Canada.

"I think this would give immigration officials a stronger basis for suspicion, and it might make courts less likely to question any kind of official action against Brotherhood members who are seeking to stay in this country, seeking political asylum," he said.

Trump, a Republican, weighed whether to designate the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization in 2019 during his first term in office. Some prominent Trump supporters, including right-wing influencer Laura Loomer, have pushed his administration to take aggressive action against the group.

Two Republican-led state governments - Florida and Texas - designated the group as a terrorist organization this year.

Fatma Khaled in Cairo contributed to this report.

7. Texas governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization

19 November 2025

Republican Texas Gov. Greg Abbott on Tuesday declared one of the largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy groups in the U.S. a "foreign terrorist organization" under a proclamation that he said allows the state to try shutting them down.

He also designated the Council on American-Islamic Relations "a transnational criminal organization" and said it would not be allowed to buy land in the state. The proclamation also included the Muslim Brotherhood.

Neither the CAIR nor the Muslim Brotherhood are designated as foreign terrorist organizations by the U.S. government.

CAIR told Abbott in a letter that his announcement had no basis "in law or fact." The group accused his office of stoking "anti-Muslim hysteria."

"You do not have the authority to unilaterally declare any Americans or American institutions terrorist groups, nor is there any basis to level this smear against our organization," wrote Robert S. McCaw, CAIR's government affairs director.

Months ago, Texas Republicans moved aggressively to try to stop a Muslim-centered planned community around one of the state's largest mosques near Dallas. Abbott and other GOP state officials launched investigations into the development tied to the East Plano Islamic Center, saying the group is trying to create a Muslim-exclusive community that would impose Islamic law.

EPIC City representatives called the attacks about Islamic law and other assertions misleading, dangerous and without merit. Earlier this year, the Justice Department closed a federal civil rights investigation into the planned community without filing any charges or lawsuits.

In his proclamation, Abbott cited a law he signed this year that he said prohibits "foreign adversaries" from purchasing or acquiring land. The Republican author of that bill praised the governor's declaration.

"Today proves exactly why that law was needed," Republican state Rep. Cole Hefner posted on X.

The Muslim Brotherhood was established in Egypt nearly a century ago and has branches across the world. Its leaders say it renounced violence decades ago and seeks to set up Islamic rule through elections and other peaceful means. Critics, including autocratic governments across the Mideast region, view it as a threat

8. Florida governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization

9 December 2025

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on Monday designated one of the largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy groups in the U.S. a "foreign terrorist organization," following a similar step by Texas last month.

The directive against the Council on American-Islamic Relations comes in an executive order DeSantis posted on the social media site X. It also gives the same label to the Muslim Brotherhood.

Neither CAIR nor the Muslim Brotherhood is designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the U.S. government.

The order instructs Florida agencies to prevent the two groups and those who have provided them material support from receiving contracts, employment and funds from a state executive or cabinet agency.

In an emailed statement, CAIR and its Florida chapter said the organization plans to sue DeSantis in response to what it called an "unconstitutional" and "defamatory" proclamation.

Founded in 1994, CAIR has 25 chapters around the country.

CAIR last month asked a federal judge to strike down Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's proclamation, saying in a lawsuit that it was "not only contrary to the United States Constitution, but finds no support in any Texas law."

The Muslim Brotherhood was established in Egypt nearly a century ago and has branches around the world. Its leaders say it renounced violence decades ago and seeks to set up Islamic rule through elections and other peaceful means. Critics, including autocratic governments across the Middle East region, view it as a threat.

9. Islamophobia victim terrified, police arrest suspect

19 February 2025

A woman will face court charged over Islamophobic attacks on two women at a shopping centre, as one of the victims says she remains terrified.

The 31-year-old Pascoe Vale woman is accused of assaulting a pregnant 30-year-old Muslim woman inside an Epping shopping complex in Melbourne's north on Thursday before attacking 26-year-old Ealaf Al-Easawi about 10 minutes later.

"She came straight towards me, slapped me with what I believe was a closed fist to the left side of face and my chest and shoved me so hard to the tiled floor," Ms Al-Easawi told AAP.

The childcare worker had been grocery shopping on her break and said she had never seen her attacker before.

"I was shaking. I could barely talk and breathe," Ms Al-Easawi said.

The 26-year-old says she is now too scared to leave her home and has trouble sleeping due to body aches, bruises and back pain.

"I feel terrified, traumatised and still can't believe what happened to me," she said.

"The scene won't come out of my head. It keeps repeating itself in my mind - how I got attacked.

"I'm not a homebody, but since Thursday, I've been stuck in front of the four walls, and every crack I hear from the house, I'm like, 'Oh my God, there's someone coming'."

Victoria Police charged a woman on Wednesday with intentionally and recklessly cause injury, unlawful assault and aggravated assault.

It will be allege the victims were targeted because of their head coverings.

Investigators are also investigating a report of online threats being made against one of the victims.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese was quizzed on Wednesday about the Islamophobic incident, offering his first comments almost a week after the assault.

"Any attack on people on the basis of their faith or who they are is reprehensible, and I certainly hope that the perpetrators get tracked down and face the full force of the law," he told reporters.

Mr Albanese also denied Australians view Islamophobia differently to anti-Semitism, pointing to the appointment of a special envoy on Islamophobia.

"I take all attacks on the basis of people's faiths seriously," he said.

When asked about political leaders' slow response to the attack, Ms Al-Easawi said it caused fear amongst the community.

"It causes this terrible thing inside that person feeling, 'oh, why aren't they condemning this?'" she said.

"I am part of this country, and this country is a multicultural country."

Australian cricket star Usman Khawaja on Tuesday accused Mr Albanese of being silent over Islamophobic attacks and favouring other faiths.

The "atrocious" attacks will be "swept under the rug like all attacks against the Islamic community", Khawaja said in an Instagram post.

When asked on Tuesday by AAP for a comment on the attacks following his prompt responses to a spate of anti-Semitic incidents, Mr Albanese's office pointed to a statement released by federal assistant minister for multicultural affairs Julian Hill.

Opposition Leader Peter Dutton said the violence was unacceptable, egregious and a disgrace and of particular concern was one of the victims being pregnant.

Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan condemned the "horrific" attacks when asked by reporters, calling the incidents "evil hatred".

Australia's Special Envoy to combat Islamophobia Aftab Malik said the "disgusting" attacks on the women

brought the hidden cancer of Islamophobia to the surface.

10. Muslim civil rights group sues Texas for labeling it a terrorist organization

21 November 2025

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) - A Muslim civil rights group that Texas' governor labeled a "foreign terrorist organization" filed a lawsuit challenging the move Thursday, saying it violates the U.S. Constitution and state law.

The Dallas-Fort Worth and Austin chapters of the Council on American-Islamic Relations asked a federal judge to strike down the proclamation Gov. Greg Abbott issued Tuesday, which also labeled the group "a transnational criminal organization."

"This attempt to punish the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization simply because Governor Abbott disagrees with its views is not only contrary to the United States Constitution, but finds no support in any Texas law," the group said in its lawsuit.

Abbott's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment Thursday.

Founded in 1994, CAIR has 25 chapters around the country. It has eight employees and two independent contractors in Texas, according to the lawsuit.

The proclamation also included the Muslim Brotherhood. Neither the CAIR nor the Muslim Brotherhood is designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the U.S. government.

Abbott's proclamation declares that CAIR is prohibited from purchasing or acquiring land in the state, citing a law he signed this year targeting "foreign adversaries."

In its lawsuit, CAIR said the governor's proclamation relies on "inflammatory statements that have no basis in fact" and cherry-picks statements from people affiliated with the group to portray it as supporting terrorism.

Months ago, Texas Republicans moved aggressively to try to stop a Muslim-centered planned community around one of the state's largest mosques near Dallas. Abbott and other GOP state officials launched investigations into the development tied to the East Plano Islamic Center, saying the group is trying to create a Muslim-exclusive community that would impose Islamic law.

EPIC City representatives called the attacks about Islamic law and other assertions misleading, dangerous and without merit. Earlier this year, the Justice Department closed a federal civil rights investigation into the planned community without filing any charges or lawsuits.

11. What to know about the Muslim Brotherhood after the US terrorist designation

13 January 2026

BEIRUT (AP) - The Trump administration waded into a regional debate over the Muslim Brotherhood on Tuesday, designating the Lebanese, Jordanian and Egyptian chapters of the transnational Sunni Islamist group as terrorist organizations.

The group founded in the 1920s in Egypt inspired Islamist political movements around the region.

Its ideology has been both popular and divisive in the Arab and Muslim world. The Brotherhood's leaders say it renounced violence decades ago and seeks to set up Islamic rule through elections and other peaceful means, but some of the group's offshoots have armed wings. Critics, including a number of autocratic governments across the region, view it as a threat.

Here's how the group started and where it stands now.

The Muslim Brotherhood rose as a pan-Arab Islamist political movement, founded in Egypt in 1928 by a school teacher-turned-ideologue Hassan al-Banna. He believed that Islamic teachings should be the basis for governance.

In its early days, the group largely focused on providing social services, but it later turned to militancy, with an armed wing that fought against British colonialists and Israel. It was implicated in the assassination of Egyptian Prime Minister Mahmoud Fahmi al-Nokrashi in 1948 after he outlawed the group. Two months later, al-Banna was assassinated in Cairo.

After Egypt's 1952 military coup, the Brotherhood was accused of an assassination attempt against President Gamal Abdel-Nasser, who retaliated by executing prominent Brotherhood ideologue Sayyed Qutb and imprisoning thousands of other members.

The group witnessed a revival in the 1970s under then-President Anwar Sadat, who tolerated the Brotherhood and used it as a counterweight to leftist opponents. The group formally foreswore violence.

During the 30-year rule of autocrat Hosni Mubarak, the Brotherhood was technically banned but also tolerated. By 2005 it had become Egypt's strongest political opposition group, winning a fifth of the seats in parliament.

The Brotherhood rose to power following elections in Egypt a year after the 2011 popular uprising that toppled Mubarak. But the group fueled opponents' fears that it aimed to monopolize power.

After giant protests over Brotherhood President Mohammed Morsi's divisive rule, the Egyptian army ousted the

group in 2013, crushing it in a bloody crackdown.

The authorities later outlawed the group and labeled it a terrorist organization. Authorities under President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi have cracked down heavily on Brotherhood members and those suspected of links to the group, jailing thousands.

The Brotherhood's leader, or supreme guide, Mohammed Badie, remains behind bars in Egypt under several life sentences, the last of which was upheld in July 2021. Nearly all of the group's senior leaders have been imprisoned or live in exile.

After its founding in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood developed into a transnational network with chapters across the Middle East.

Some of those have engaged in armed uprisings against their own governments or fought against Israel. In 1982, the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria staged an anti-government rebellion, launching attacks that targeted military officers, state institutions and ruling party offices.

In February 1982, then-Syrian President Hafez Assad ordered an assault on the city of Hama to quell the unrest. Between 10,000 to 40,000 people were killed or disappeared in the government offensive that left the city in ruins.

The Palestinian militant group Hamas, which launched the Oct. 7, 2023 attack on southern Israel triggering the war in Gaza, has roots in the Muslim Brotherhood. Hamas was formed in December 1987 in Gaza, several days after the outbreak of the first intifada, or Palestinian uprising, against Israel. It called for armed resistance and for setting up an Islamic state in all of historic Palestine.

In its founding charter, Hamas defined itself as a Palestinian branch of the Brotherhood.

The Lebanese branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Jamaa al-Islamiya (or the Islamic Group) is a Sunni Muslim political party but also has an armed wing. After the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war, its armed wing joined forces with the Shiite militant group Hezbollah and launched rockets across the border into Israel.

The al-Jamaa al-Islamiya leader Mohammed Takkoush told The Associated Press at the time that his group and Hezbollah supported different sides in regional conflicts and Syria and Yemen but put their differences aside to fight Israel.

Sunni regional powers Turkey and Qatar have been sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology, while other Sunni powers in the region - including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt - see the group as a threat and have cracked down on it.

Earlier this year, Jordan announced a sweeping ban on the Brotherhood that could include shutting down the country's largest opposition party, after accusing the Islamist group of planning attacks. The monarchy banned the Brotherhood a decade ago but officially licensed a splinter group and continued to tolerate the Islamic Action Front while restricting some of its activities.

The U.S. says its chapters in Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt engage in or facilitate and support violence and destabilization campaigns that harm their own regions, United States citizens and United States interests.

The State Department designated the Lebanese branch a foreign terrorist organization, the most severe of the labels, which makes it a criminal offense to provide material support to the group. The Jordanian and Egyptian branches were listed by Treasury as specially designated global terrorists for providing support to Hamas.

Mednick reported from Tel Aviv, Israel.

12Anger as Liberals call for Muslim checks to stem terror

28 January 2026

Australian Islamic leaders have slammed suggestions by Liberals that the whole Muslim community should take responsibility for terrorist attacks and that its preachers require accreditation.

Speaking at an anti-Semitism conference in Israel, former Liberal prime minister Scott Morrison called for sermons to be translated into English and for a crackdown on those with links to foreign Islamist groups.

Liberal senators backed the calls by their former leader, with one going further to suggest Australian Muslims should "take some responsibility" for terrorist attacks on home soil.

Mr Morrison said a multitude of options needed to be considered following the killing of 15 people at Bondi by two Islamic State-inspired gunmen, including accreditation for imams and a register for preachers.

"Some will seek to characterise these remarks as hostile to Australia's Islamic community and even multiculturalism itself, rolling out the usual accusations of Islamophobia," he said in the speech.

"To the contrary, I am advocating reforms I believe will help religious leaders in our Islamic community keep the wolves from their flock.

"After December 14, all options to combat anti-Semitism must be on the table without fear or favour. This includes how Islam is practised and governed in Australia."

The ideas put forward by the former party leader had merit, Liberal senator and party moderate Andrew Bragg said.

"The Australian Muslim community has to take some responsibility for the behaviours we've seen exhibited over the last couple of decades," he told ABC Radio on Wednesday.

"Unfortunately, it has been a pattern of behaviour that some of these smaller incidents, and now a significant terrorist incident, have emerged from these communities."

The Australian National Imams Council said Mr Morrison's remarks were reckless and deeply ill-informed.

"It is profoundly disappointing to hear such divisive language from a former prime minister who understands, better than most, the importance of unity, social cohesion, and responsible leadership," it said in a statement.

"To suggest that an entire faith community should be held accountable for the actions of two criminal offenders, both of whom law enforcement agencies have confirmed acted alone, is unacceptable and categorically rejected."

The council also criticised Senator Bragg's comments, saying they reinforced divisive rhetoric from political leaders.

Australian Federation of Islamic Councils president Rateb Jneid said the comments would lead to further fear and hostility towards the Muslim community.

"Rhetoric like this inevitably creates a divide between so-called 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' Muslims, with politicians positioning themselves as arbiters of our faith," he said.

"When senior political figures single out Islam in this way, they legitimise the very hatred they claim to oppose."

The comments came as Israel's President Isaac Herzog confirmed he would travel to Australia for a five-day visit from February 8.

Mr Herzog, invited to Australia by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in the aftermath of the terror attack, will meet with federal leaders and Bondi victims.

A father-and-son duo opened fire on a Hanukkah celebration taking place at the famous beach in the December 14 massacre.

The Israeli president's visit, announced by Mr Albanese following the shooting, prompted legal groups to urge the Australian Federal Police to investigate Mr Herzog for allegedly inciting genocide.

A United Nations Human Rights Council inquiry examining the war in Gaza found comments made by the president following Hamas's October 7, 2023, attacks in Israel were evidence of genocidal intent.

Mr Herzog has denied the allegations and said the remarks were taken out of context.

Labor Friends of Palestine called for the government to rescind the invitation.

"The visit by Israel's president makes a mockery of all the fine words about hate speech, social cohesion, unity and healing," co-convenor Peter Moss said.

But Australian/Israel and Jewish Affairs Council executive director Colin Rubenstein said the organisation was disturbed by groups labelling the visit divisive.

"After Bondi, Herzog's visit is not only appropriate, but an essential part of the healing process," he said.

13 Macron urges action on Muslim Brotherhood movement

21 May 2025

France's authorities are eager to prevent any spread of extremist Islamist ideas in a country that has been rocked by a string of deadly jihadist attacks

President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday ordered the government to draw up proposals to tackle the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood movement and the spread of political Islamism in France, the Elysee said.

The French presidency made the announcement after Macron chaired a security meeting to examine a report sounding the alarm about the Muslim Brotherhood and saying the movement poses "a threat to national cohesion" in France.

"Given the importance of the subject and the seriousness of the facts established, he has asked the government to draw up new proposals that will be examined at a forthcoming Defence Council meeting in early June," the Elysee Palace said.

In a rare move, Macron has also decided to make the report public by the end of the week. AFP obtained a copy of the report on Tuesday.

The Elysee Palace has said that some measures will be announced, while others will be classified.

The report into the movement, which was founded in Egypt in 1928, was commissioned by the government and prepared by two senior civil servants.

It "clearly establishes the anti-republican and subversive nature of the Muslim Brotherhood" and "proposes ways to address this threat", the presidency said ahead of the meeting.

France and Germany have the biggest Muslim populations among European Union countries.

Authorities are eager to prevent any spread of extremist Islamist ideas in a country that has been rocked by a string of deadly jihadist attacks.

Religious radicalisation has become a hot-button issue as the far-right is becoming increasingly popular in

France.

The report sparked heated reactions.

Far-right leader Marine Le Pen accused the government of inaction, saying on X that she has long proposed measures to "eradicate Islamist fundamentalism".

Jordan Bardella, the leader of her National Rally party, said on France Inter radio: "If we come to power tomorrow, we will ban the Muslim Brotherhood."

But critics have condemned what they call the rise of Islamophobia in France.

"Islamophobia has crossed a line," hard-left firebrand Jean-Luc Melenchon said on X.

He accused officials of endorsing "the delusional theories" of Le Pen and France's hardline Interior Minister, Bruno Retailleau.

The report pointed to the spread of Islamism "from the bottom up", adding the phenomenon constituted "a threat in the short to medium term".

At the same time, the presidency stressed, "we are all perfectly aligned in saying that we must not lump all Muslims together".

"We are fighting against Islamism and its radical excesses."

The report zeroed in on the role of Muslims of France (Musulmans de France), which it identified as "the national branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in France."

- 'Subtle but subversive aim' -

The Federation of Muslims of France denounced "unfounded accusations" and warned against "dangerous" conflation between Islam and radicalism.

"We firmly reject any allegation that attempts to associate us with a foreign political project or an 'entryism' strategy," said Muslims of France, warning against "a stigmatisation of Islam and Muslims."

The "constant accusation shapes minds, fuels fears and, sadly, contributes to violent acts," it added, pointing to the death of Aboubakar Cisse, a 22-year-old Malian who was stabbed dozens of times while praying in a mosque in southern France.

Conservative daily Le Figaro, which first published excerpts of the "shocking" report on Tuesday, said the Muslim Brotherhood "wants to introduce Sharia law in France".

The report said however that "no recent document demonstrates the desire of Muslims in France to establish an Islamic state in France or to enforce Sharia law there".

But the threat was real, the authors said.

"We are not dealing with aggressive separatism" but a "subtle... yet no less subversive aim for the institutions."

Macron's party proposed banning minors under 15 from wearing the Muslim headscarf in public spaces, saying the hijab "seriously undermines gender equality and the protection of children".

The party also wants to introduce a "criminal offence for coercion against parents who force their underage daughters to wear the veil".

In 2023, France banned pupils in public schools from wearing the abaya, a loose-fitting garment worn by Muslim women.

14. The Spanish town that 'banned' Islamic festivals: Inside the historic city where officials say they're 'defending local traditions' but Muslims say it is 'racist'

11 August 2025

The historic town of Jumilla was on the frontline of conflict between Muslims and Christians when the Moors were kicked out of southern Spain in the 13th century.

Muslim migrants may have felt more welcome in recent years when they have lived largely happily alongside their Spanish neighbours, and enjoyed freedom to worship.

But a decision by Jumilla town council to effectively ban religious events from being held at public sports' facilities has threatened to ignite community tensions.

Muslims have no doubt that the ruling is aimed at them as it will prevent them from having traditional Eid prayers twice a year at the town's Antonio Ibanez Morales football stadium.

The Daily Mail can reveal that local Muslims have up to now hired the pitch to hold prayers for Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, and Eid al-Adha, known as the 'lamb festival'.

The prayer events, attended by around 1,500 people, are only held between 7am and 9am on two mornings a year when the field, which is surrounded by a running track, is not being used for anything else.

But the news that they will potentially no longer be able to use the open air venue has left local Muslims hurt and disappointed.

Muslim men were talking of little else, and expressed despair at the ruling, as they arrived for Friday afternoon prayers at the town's main mosque.

Logistics worker Aouissat El Mamoun, 27, who grew up in the town and used to play football for Jumilla, said:

'It's really bad and I regard it as racist.

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'The football field has only been used for Eid prayers for two mornings every year for the last four years. It is always a peaceful occasion and there is never any trouble.

'Now the council is saying that it cannot happen any more. It is embarrassing for the town and it has caused a lot of upset.

'Before the pitch was used, people gathered for the Eid prayers outside the mosque, but there was not enough space for everyone.

'This is all a political game. What this political party wants to do is divide the people and win votes from ignorant people.'

Other shook their heads as they arrived at the mosque, pausing as usual to snack on dates set out in boxes as a welcome snack at the entrance while a volunteer worshipper swept dust from the roadway outside.

Farm worker Adam Salifu, 43, who is originally from Ghana, said: 'This is a peaceful town and everyone gets on with each other, whatever their religion.

'There are people from every country in Africa in my village. Some are Muslim and some are Christian, and we have no problems with each other.

'The Eid festival prayers are an important part of being a Muslim and now the council say we cannot hold them on the football pitch. It is outrageous.

'We have two mosques here and always had a good relationship with the council. Now we have this. It is all down to the politicians. The ordinary people are fine.

'What we really need is a new mosque because this one is quite congested. We are looking for some land to build, but the council have not provided anywhere.'

The ban on municipal sports facilities was suggested by Jumilla's only councillor from the far right Vox party who singled out the 'lamb festival' as being at odds with Spain's identity as a Christian country.

It was voted through in an amended form with the help of councillors from the conservative People's Party (PP) in what many locals regard as a political favour.

Locals have suggested that it came down to the effectively hung council's ten PP members needing the support of the Vox councillor to vote in legislation opposed by the council's nine socialist and one far left councillor.

Councillors appear to have been taken by surprise at the ruling having made headlines around the world, and sparking outrage in Spain from opposition leaders, Islamic groups and even Bishops.

Jumilla mayor Seve Gonzalez, a member of the PP, insisted to reporters this week that there had been no underhand political manoeuvring and that there had long been talk of modifying rules to make municipal sports spaces available for the sole use of sports.

Ms Gonzalez tried to claim the motion was not about discriminating against non-Catholic faiths, saying the point was 'defending what is ours our traditions, those of everyone' with activities 'that highlight our roots'.

But the amendment was passed under the same heading as the original Vox motion which cited its objective as being 'against foreign cultural practices such as the lamb festival'.

Critics have described the wording is a thinly veiled attack on Islamic traditions, and have warned that the ruling could breach Spain's constitutionally protected freedom of religion.

There have been suggestions that it may be subject to legal challenge and possibly overthrown before the next Eid event, marking the end of Ramadan in March next year.

Some have even pointed out that the town was fully Islamic for hundreds of years following the Moors takeover of southern Spain in the eighth century.

Jumilla was originally part of the Roman empire, and then the Visigothic kingdom, until the Arab conquest when it was known as As Yumil-la.

It remained a principally Arab town until it was attacked by Christian troops led by Alfonso X of Castile in the mid-13th century.

The local Arab ruler reached an agreement under which Alfonso could be king as long as the rights of the existing population were respected, but the Moors to be largely thrown out after Alfonso's death.

Much of the area has the feel of a quiet town or city in north Africa, particularly when men and boys are wearing traditional Islamic dress as they head for prayers.

One housing project of three storey blocks called the Barrio de Los Angeles on the northern edge of Jumilla is home to a large number of Muslims, as well as poverty-stricken Spanish locals.

The area is known locally as 'the red floors' due to the colour of several of the red painted blocks, although several were repainted in 2008 to try and create a fresher look.

Many of the flats remain run down with rubbish strewn around walkways and some in a derelict condition with no windows.

Moroccan-born language student Mohammed Yasin, 27, who works as a day labourer and lives in one of the flats, said he was concerned about Eid prayers being banned.

He said: 'They are only on two mornings in the year and there is never any noise causing a disturbance. I think it is discrimination against Muslims. We expect to be treated with respect, as we respect other religions.'

'People get the wrong idea about Muslims. We are not robbers or terrorists. We want to lead peaceful lives.'

A mother-of-three called Hanan, 40, who lives in the same neighbourhood added: 'It hurts us a lot. The two festival days are far apart. I don't see that they cause a problem.'

Another Muslim who gave his name as Hussein, 44, added: 'We have always been treated as second class citizens. People are going to be really angry at this latest insult. Everyone should live together peacefully.'

While the Daily Mail reporter was outside the flats, he witnessed an angry confrontation in a stairwell between local youths and a Spanish man who appeared drunk or drugged.

The reporter was later approached by two Guardia Civil police officers who advised him to leave saying: 'It is dangerous here'.

The ruling about festivals comes less than a month after several people were left injured during anti-migrant rioting in Torre Pacheco, just 70 miles from Jumilla.

The rioting which erupted over three days was sparked after a 68-year-old Spanish man he had been beaten up in the street by three men of north African origin on July 9.

The local Vox party openly gloated about the Eid ban by declaring on X: 'Thanks to Vox the first measure to ban Islamic festivals in Spain's public spaces has been passed. Spain is and will be forever the land of Christian people.'

But Mounir Benjelloun Andaloussi Azhari, president of the Spanish Federation of Islamic Organisations, described the ban as a direct attack on the country's Muslim population, calling it 'Islamophobic and discriminatory'.

'They're not going after other religions, they're going after ours,' he told left leaning Spanish newspaper El Pais. Referring to a recent rise of racist rhetoric and attacks, he added: 'We're rather surprised by what's happening in Spain. For the first time in 30 years I feel afraid.'

Legal experts have warned the ban could face a constitutional challenge. Article 16 of Spain's constitution grants freedom of religious belief, with the only restriction being the protection of public order.

Francisco Lucas, the Socialist leader of Murcia, accused the PP of stoking division.

'The PP violates the constitution and puts social cohesion at risk simply in the pursuit of power,' he stated on X.

Juana Guardiola, a former socialist mayor of Jumilla, condemned the rhetoric behind the ban.

She said: 'What do they mean by identity? And what about the centuries of Muslim legacy here?'

Mohamed Benallal, president of the local Islamic community, publicly called for restraint and for no 'heated' or violent reaction to the town council ruling.

He said that the community planned to 'take the appropriate legal measures' against the council after an assembly, planned for September.

In an interview with El Pais, he added: 'What worries us most is how to explain to our children that their creed is not welcome in the town.'

Miguel Moratinos, the High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, also expressed shock at the ruling.

A spokesperson for the UNAOC said: 'He emphasises that policies that single out or disproportionately affect one community pose a threat to social cohesion and erode the principle of living together in peace - a foundation of inclusive, just and democratic societies.'

'To that end, the High Representative expresses his deep concern about the rise in xenophobic rhetoric and Islamophobic sentiments in some regions in Spain.'

15. Islam Channel facing Ofcom investigation over claims it incites extremism and breaches rules on impartiality

16 March 2025

A UK-based Muslim TV channel is facing an Ofcom investigation after it was accused of inciting extremism and breaching rules on impartiality.

The free-to-air Islam Channel, which operates out of London, is facing claims they have praised violent Islamist movements, encouraged hostility against the West and portrayed terrorism with sympathy.

In complaints submitted to the broadcasting regulator, the channel has also been accused of comparing Israel to the Nazi regime, giving airtime to extremists and broadcasting misinformation.

It has also been said to have, on multiple occasions, praised the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023, which saw around 1,200 people killed.

The channel, which was founded in 2004 by Tunisian activist Mohamed Ali Harrath, has roughly two million

daily viewers and is said to be watched by 60 per cent of British Muslims. And they could be penalised if Ofcom finds them to have breached their broadcasting code. The report was submitted to the regulator by the Director of the Oxford Institute for British Islam, Dr Taj Hargey.

Dr Hargey is seen as a leading thinker in the field of British Islam, and has criticised the channel for broadcasting impartially, using examples between November 2024 and January 2025. In his letter of complaint to Ofcom, he wrote: 'The station's persistent lack of impartiality, spread of harmful rhetoric, and engagement in political advocacy appear to directly contravene the principles set out in the Broadcasting Code.'

He also said the channel portrayed Islam as being under attack from an authoritarian West and presents Hamas, Iran and Islamist Jihadi groups as 'resistance' movements to this.

In one of the criticisms of failing to disclose key information in its broadcasts, Dr Hargey said Islam Channel's coverage of Southport killer Axel Rudakubana's sentencing did not disclose that he was in possession of an Al-Qaeda training manual.

However, the sentencing was reportedly used as an example to attack the UK government's counter-terrorism programme, Prevent.

The channel, which claims to be the only broadcaster telling the truth about the war in Gaza and won two British Muslim Awards in 2014 and 2015, was also said to have consistently failed to include pro-Israel commentators in its coverage of the war.

Dr Hargey said the channel championing terrorists was an example of a serious breach of the broadcasting code which requires channels not to cause harm or undue offence or incite crime, disorder or violence.

In one example, he said Aafia Siddiqui, who has links to Al-Qaeda and attempted to kill US officers, was portrayed as an victim of the 'War on Islam', in a documentary broadcast in January.

The channel's is also facing claims it has broadcast anti-Israel hate speeches, including one by Ismail Patel, an organiser of recent pro-Palestine marches, who accused Israel of being 'a violent racist colonialist enterprise'.

Mr Harrath, who founded the channel, was granted refugee status by the UK in 2000 after fleeing Tunisia where he had led the Tunisian Islamic Front, which allegedly has ties to terrorism.

The now-businessman was arrested in South Africa on terrorism charges in 2010 after being added to Interpol's Red Notice list but he was later released without charge.

In a broadcast last Christmas, Mr Harrath compared the treatment of Muslims in Britain to how Jews were treated under Adolf Hitler's leadership in Nazi Germany.

But his channel has been sanctioned by Ofcom in the past for 'serious and repeated' breaches of the broadcasting code.

In 2007, Islam Channel were fined £30,000 for having Yvonne Ridley - who converted to Islam in 2003 - front their news programmes while she was up for local election.

In November 2010, the channel was condemned by Ofcom for allowing presenters to support marital rape and domestic abuse.

In September 2023, the regulator also found that one of it's documentaries broadcast antisemitic hate speech against Jews.

Dr Hargey told The Telegraph: 'Islam Channel epitomises hideous Islamic fundamentalism in the UK. It purports to represent British Muslims, but its sectarian ideology is nothing but an insidious initiative to mainstream Muslim extremism and fanaticism in this country. 'It revels in their 'them and us' narrative, inhibiting any effective social cohesion. Ofcom needs to take decisive action to mitigate the channel's incendiary language and partisan guests who do not subscribe to traditional British values.'

An Ofcom spokesperson said: 'We are assessing the complaints against our rules, but are yet to decide whether or not to investigate.'

16.Ex-terrorist who praised jihad as a 'compassionate act' set to be UK councillor
1 February 2026

A convicted terrorist who is standing as a councillor has praised jihad as a 'compassionate act' despite claiming he has turned his back on extremism, The Mail on Sunday can reveal.

Shahid Butt - who will be an independent candidate in Birmingham in May's local elections - has also told Muslims 'not to take Jews and Christians as friends' in an interview.

17.France looks to ban children from wearing Muslim headscarf as government tackles 'political Islamism'
21 May 2025

French President Emmanuel Macron's political party has announced that it wants to ban minors under 15 from wearing the Muslim headscarf in public.

It comes as his government held a security meeting on Wednesday to discuss the spread of 'political Islamism' in France.

The meeting, which included the head of government and key ministers, addressed a report which sounds the alarm about the Muslim Brotherhood and the rising influence of the Islamist movement - which it said poses 'a threat to national cohesion' in France.

After the meeting, the Elysee Palace said measures will be taken, 'some of which will be announced' while others will remain classified.

The report into the movement, which was founded in Egypt in 1928, was commissioned by the government and prepared by two senior civil servants.

It 'clearly establishes the anti-republican and subversive nature of the Muslim Brotherhood' and 'proposes ways to address this threat', said the Elysee Palace.

It comes as Macron's Renaissance party said it would forbid 'minors under 15 from wearing the veil in public spaces,' phrasing that generally means places outside the home like the street, cafes, parks and stores.

It added the hijab 'seriously undermines gender equality and the protection of children'.

The party, led by former prime minister Gabriel Attal, also wants to introduce a 'criminal offence for coercion against parents who force their underage daughters to wear the veil'.

Renaissance is a minority force in the French parliament and works in a minority government alongside a traditional right-wing party.

18 Youth arrested over online mosque massacre threat
, 4 March 2025

A 16-year-old boy has been arrested in Western Australia after an online threat alluding to a terrorist massacre against a recently opened Sydney mosque.

A comment on the place of worship's Instagram page threatened to "Christchurch 2.0" the mosque at Edmondson Park in the city's west, an apparent reference to the New Zealand city where an Australian man killed 51 worshippers in 2019.

"Following a referral ... to the Western Australia Police Force just before 5pm (Tuesday WA local time), a 16-year-old boy was arrested at Eaton, in southwest Western Australia," according to a NSW Police statement issued late on Tuesday.

"He is currently assisting police with inquiries."

Police say there are no ongoing threats to the community.

Places of worship needed to be safeguarded from hatred and violence, Australian Islamic House president Mazhar Hadid said on Tuesday night.

"We are profoundly concerned by this threat and take it with the utmost seriousness.

"We also urge the public to remain vigilant and to stand united against Islamophobia and all forms of bigotry."

The mosque officially opened on Friday, the first day of Ramadan.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said whoever was responsible for the abhorrent threat should face the full force of the law.

"There is no place for this in Australia ... racism and Islamophobia will not be tolerated," he said in a statement.

NSW Premier Chris Minns said the threat was the focus of a major police investigation.

"Racist threats and Islamophobia will not be tolerated and will be met with the full force of the law," he said in a statement.

"This is very distressing, particularly as Muslims right across the state are participating in prayer during the month of Ramadan."

Australian Islamic House said nightly prayers would continue after it had been assured of an increased police presence.

NSW Jewish Board of Deputies president David Ossip said the community unequivocally condemned the threat.

"A bigoted attack or threat targeted at any group of Australians is an attack on us all," he said.

19 Anglo Jihadi' accused of terror plan 'not just online fantasist', trial told
27 October 2025

A self-styled "Anglo Jihadi" accused of planning a terrorist attack was "not just an online fantasist", prosecutors have told a jury.

Muslim convert Jordan Richardson, 21, is alleged to have been planning an "atrocious", with possible targets including a shopping centre, after becoming interested in an "extremist, fundamentalist" interpretation of the religion.

Leeds Crown Court jurors heard Richardson "regularly expressed a wish to kill Jews" and made a joke about

going into a synagogue in a suicide vest.

Sadly we know these days terrorism takes all forms and involves all kinds of people you might not expect. We have now what we call homegrown terrorists

Katherine Robinson, prosecuting

He was arrested on his way to work in Howden, East Yorkshire, in December last year with instructions on how to make mustard gas and a note which said: "Throw all grenades into crowd; Shoot bystanders; Stab anyone who comes close; Do not get taken alive."

A crossbow and a knife were found at Richardson's home, and prosecutors say he had accessed material online which "showed his interest in and affiliation with extreme Islamist ideology, (including) material depicting and glorifying terrorist actions".

The court has heard one possible target of the defendant, whose Instagram accounts included one with the handle 'Anglo Jihadi', was Meadowhall shopping centre, near Sheffield, which was referenced in his social media posts.

Jurors heard Richardson says his behaviour was a form of fantasy and escape from the rest of his life, where he felt depressed and isolated, and that he was "role playing the character of an extremist".

In her closing speech to jurors, prosecutor Katherine Robinson said there was evidence Richardson "wasn't just an online fantasist" but that he was "going to put his jihadi fantasies into reality".

Ms Robinson told the court: "He was a man who kept a lethal crossbow and knife in his house, who had a recipe for explosives, who was carrying around a detailed set of notes for how to make a chemical warfare agent.

"In the same bag, a plan to put all these things into effect, having suggested a location three weeks earlier."

Jurors previously heard Richardson posted a video on Instagram of the exterior of Meadowhall shopping centre followed by a brightly coloured clip featuring pictures of rainbows and dolphins, overlaid with the words: "How life feels when you finally give up and just start killing people brutally."

Ms Robinson said the stereotypical image of a terrorist has changed over time, telling jurors: "Sadly we know these days terrorism takes all forms and involves all kinds of people you might not expect.

"We have now what we call homegrown terrorists.

"There is information readily available online for people who 30 years ago would have had no idea about how to make a bomb.

"People don't need to travel to other countries to meet people with a similar mindset... This allows people to form networks and encourage extreme views."

Richardson, of Oliver Close, Howden, denies preparing for acts of terrorism.

He also denies the collection of information of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism and distributing terrorist publications.

The trial continues.

20 Muslim rights group sues Florida Gov. DeSantis over 'foreign terrorist' label

16 December 2025

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) - A leading Muslim civil rights group in the U.S. has sued Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis over his order designating it and another organization as a " foreign terrorist organization," saying the directive was unconstitutional.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations, known as CAIR, has more than 20 chapters across the United States and its work involves legal actions, advocacy and education outreach.

The lawsuit was filed late Monday by the CAIR-Foundation and CAIR-Florida, its affiliate in the state. The suit asked a federal judge in Tallahassee to declare DeSantis' order unlawful and unconstitutional and prevent it from being enforced.

"He has usurped the exclusive authority of the federal government to identify and designate terrorist organizations by baselessly declaring CAIR a terrorist organization," the lawsuit says.

DeSantis' order was among a series of recent actions or statements made by Republican elected officials which target U.S. Muslims or their groups.

U.S. Sen. Tommy Tuberville, R-Ala., on Sunday posted on social media that "Islam is not a religion. It's a cult." A day later, CAIR designated Tuberville, who is running for Alabama governor, as an anti-Muslim extremist for his "increasingly hateful and dangerous attacks on Alabama Muslims." The group said it was the first time it had given a U.S. senator that designation. Tuberville responded on social media that it was a "badge of honor." When asked Tuesday about his statements, Tuberville spokesman Mallory Jaspers repeated what Tuberville had said.

U.S. Rep. Randy Fine, R-Fla., also posted Monday on social media about his support for "a Muslim travel ban, radical deportations of all mainstream Muslim legal and illegal immigrants, and citizenship revocations wherever possible."

"Mainstream Muslims have declared war on us. The least we can do is kick them the hell out of America," Fine wrote.

Anti-Muslim bias has persisted in different forms since Sept. 11, 2001, and there's been a rise in Islamophobia during more than two years of war in Gaza.

During a news conference about the Florida lawsuit, Charles Swift, a lawyer for the Muslim Legal Fund of America, called the elected officials' statements dangerous and bigoted.

"The Constitution protects people's rights to be bigoted, not the government's rights," said Swift, whose group is one of the legal organizations representing CAIR. "When a governor issues an executive order to silence Muslims, that's a different question altogether because if you can do that, you can silence anyone."

CAIR said in the Florida lawsuit that it has always condemned terrorism and violence. The lawsuit alleges DeSantis targeted the group for defending the free speech rights of people in cases where state officials and officials elsewhere tried to punish or silence those who expressed support for Palestinian human rights.

The order by DeSantis last week also gives the same "foreign terrorist" label to the Muslim Brotherhood, a pan-Arab Islamist political movement. President Donald Trump last month issued an executive order that sets in motion a process to designate certain chapters of the Muslim Brotherhood as a foreign terrorist organization.

The governor's order instructs Florida agencies to prevent the two groups and those who have provided them material support from receiving contracts, employment and funds from a state executive or cabinet agency.

Florida has an estimated 500,000 Muslim residents, according to CAIR.

When reached by email for comment on Tuesday, the governor's press secretary, Molly Best, referred to DeSantis' recent social media posts on the topic in which he said he looked forward to a trial. In one post, DeSantis said, "I look forward to discovery - especially the CAIR finances. Should be illuminating!"

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has issued a similar proclamation in Texas. CAIR last month asked a federal judge to strike down Abbott's proclamation, saying in a lawsuit that it was "not only contrary to the United States Constitution, but finds no support in any Texas law."

Associated Press writers Kimberly Chandler in Montgomery, Alabama, and Kate Payne in Tallahassee, Florida, contributed to this report.

The Guardian

21. Islamophobia has surged since the Bondi attack. Australia's Muslim community should not have to endure this abuse

No Muslim leader wants to diminish the suffering of the Jewish community or be seen as engaging in competitive victimhood. We must stand in solidarity with each other

Fri 2 Jan 2026

While many Australians remain in a state of anger, grief and reflection due to the devastating Bondi terror attack, Muslim community leaders are in a predicament. What is to be done about the ensuing rise of anti-Muslim sentiment, hatred and racism that their communities face?

Following the 14 December mass shooting, community registers that document Islamophobia have largely been reluctant to speak publicly about the spike in Islamophobia, out of concern of being perceived to trivialise the killing of Jewish Australians, their suffering, or vying for sympathy from the public.

Nevertheless, the registers have recorded a surge in reports of Islamophobia. These include individuals receiving abusive and threatening calls, a spate of mosques and Islamic centres across Australia reporting vandalism, a Muslim cemetery in New South Wales being desecrated, physical attacks and a wave of online hate. The Islamophobia Register Australia and Action Against Islamophobia have both recorded a spike in such incidents. The Islamophobia Register Australia, for example, has recorded a 740% increase in reports since the Bondi terror attack.

Unsurprisingly, most reports received by the community registers are from Muslim women who have reported being spat at, abused, attacked and threatened. Many women who I spoke to over the past two weeks have actively adjusted their normal movements in public due to a heightened perceived risk of danger to them and their children.

This increased wave of anxiety and unease that Muslims are now feeling is present in everyday community discussions around the nation.

The Bondi terror attack demonstrates that some Australians struggle to distinguish between the jihadist group Islamic State (also known as Isis or Isil) and Islam, the religion of almost 2 billion people worldwide (despite the extremist group being denounced by Muslim religious leaders around the globe, and imams across Australia).

This has been made abundantly clear from the plethora of messages that littered social media following the attack:

“The common denominator in both Gaza and Bondi? Islam.”

“There will be no peace until you can irradiate [sic] Islam from society.”

“It’s not a phobia, it’s pattern recognition.”

These ideas shape people’s attitudes towards ordinary Muslim Australian citizens. They engender social exclusion and fear. For others, it provides them with a “permission to hate” Muslims. Ultimately, it produces an “us” and “them” dynamic, which undermines Australia’s core values such as fairness, inclusion and compassion.

It is imperative that in combating extremism, hate and antisemitism, we don’t unwittingly nurture a fertile environment for the same kind of anti-Muslim hate that became a deluge following the 9/11 terror attacks to reappear.

Muslim community leaders understand that law enforcement agencies have full justification to act on intelligence. They are told to trust the police, but trust is a two-way street.

Take the arrest of the seven Muslim youth (dubbed “the Liverpool seven” in some circles). All were released the next day, without charge. However, many Muslims I spoke to, young and old, were frustrated and anxious, telling me that the “dramatic” arrests simply reinforce the idea that Muslims are suspects, and this spreads paranoia. Others believed that the arrests were “performative” to let the public know that the police are tough, vigilant and serious about terrorism. Everyone understood that terrorism is anathema, and that police must investigate credible leads, but they all feared that they, as Muslim Australians, would now have to endure the public backlash.

Counter-terrorism raids may erode trust between Muslim communities and police, while fanning public anxiety about terrorism, Muslims and Islam. This ultimately adds to prejudice and discrimination against Muslims.

It is critical that the police understand this.

We cannot afford to return to the days of suspicion, profiling, guilt by association, securitisation and surveillance, where Muslims felt they had to constantly prove their innocence and reassure others that they pose no threat. Muslim Australians find this exhausting and distressing. They should not have to carry the collective responsibility for acts of terror carried out by criminals.

No Muslim leader wishes to diminish the pain, tragedy and suffering of the Jewish Australian community. There is legitimate concern still plaguing Muslim leaders that to talk about Islamophobia now will be perceived to be engaging in competitive victimhood. I share this concern. However, we can speak about both, standing in solidarity with Jewish communities by affirming our shared commitment to safety, dignity and mutual respect.

Debate Islam all you like. Be critical, robust and challenging. But be dignified.

Don’t carry out the work of the extremists who want society to rip itself apart, pitting neighbour against neighbour and worshipper against worshipper, forcing people to build

walls and retreat.

For the preservation of societal integrity, we must stand guard against what Frank Furedi calls “a culture of fear” and instead follow the sage advice of Marie Curie: “Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.”

Aftab Malik is Australia’s special envoy to combat Islamophobia

22. Systemic Islamophobia’ fuels terror attacks, say Muslim leaders

Letter to Guardian calls for action on bigotry as Lady Warsi demands more security funds for UK mosques

18 Mar 2019

Muslim leaders from around the world have accused the mainstream media, politicians and academics of contributing to the conditions fuelling terrorist violence against their community such as Friday’s attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand, which claimed 50 lives.

More than 350 leading Islamic figures from countries including the UK, US and South Africa have signed a letter to the Guardian, which links the actions of the suspected shooter, the 28-year-old Australian Brenton Tarrant, to an atmosphere of “systemic and institutionalised Islamophobia”.

The letter says: “This bigotry has been fuelled by certain callous academics, reckless politicians as well as media outlets who regularly feature those who demonise Islam and Muslims with impunity, disguising their vile mantra behind a veneer of objectivity.

“The massacre of Muslims did not just begin with bullets fired from the barrel of Tarrant’s gun. Rather it was decades in the making: inspired by Islamophobic media reports, hundreds and thousands of column inches of hatred printed in the press, many Muslim-hating politicians and unchecked social media bigotry.

“Muslims have been constantly cast as suspect communities, foreigners with barbaric views who are a threat to our society. We are now reaping the awful outcome of systemic and institutionalised Islamophobia woven into many sections of our societies.”

The letter came as the Conservative peer Sayeeda Warsi called on ministers to heed demands from Muslim leaders for an increase in funding for mosque security after the New Zealand terrorist attack. She said Islamophobia was the party’s “bigotry blind spot”.

The former Tory party chair said there was overwhelming evidence to support an increase in funding for mosque protection following the Christchurch attacks.

The Muslim Council of Britain has called for increased funding for Muslim places of worship amid a rise in the number of suspected far-right incidents across England, some of which are alleged to have been inspired by the atrocities in New Zealand.

Lady Warsi made the comments as a row continued over the Conservatives’ record on tackling Islamophobia. Earlier this month, Warsi repeated calls for an internal inquiry and suggested the most senior figures in the party – including Theresa May – needed to take the problem more seriously.

Responding to claims that mosques were inadequately funded, Warsi said: “That’s not an opinion, that’s a fact. There are two different pots of funds: there’s a fund specifically for the protection of synagogues and then a fund of about £2.4m for the protection of all other religious institutions.

“The government has to go back and recognise that there is a need right now – and there’s overwhelming evidence that there’s clearly a need – and therefore how quickly is it going to respond to that.”

But she added: "I'm really cautious about making comparisons. Each form of hate is unique and specific and has its own challenges. It was quite right for the government to respond when they identified a form of hate with antisemitism and made sure places of worship were protected."

Warsi said a change the government should make – to show it has learned from the attacks in New Zealand – is to adopt a formal definition of Islamophobia. A definition put forward by the all-party parliamentary group on British Muslims had been adopted by the Lib Dems, was being considered by the Labour party and was backed by councils, academics, 850 Muslim organisations and about 70 parliamentarians, she said.

"Whether it's in relation to the protection of mosques, whether it's in relation to engagement with British Muslim communities, whether it's in relation to acknowledging the level of hate either within the party or within government policymaking, whether it's the way we use the language of British Muslim communities, it is our bigotry blind spot.

"It comes back down to the fact that we fail to see it and recognise it as a specific form of racism that it is, directed at British Muslim communities, and we therefore fail to make adequate policy and respond."

Harun Khan, the secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain, will be writing to May raising the "palpable sense of fear" felt by Muslim communities after the attack in Christchurch, and warning of the risk of copycat attacks in the UK.

The government increased security funding for Jewish institutions after the rise in antisemitic attacks, pledging £14m to support the security at about 400 synagogues and 150 Jewish schools, equivalent to more than £25,000 per institution.

Khan called on the government to demonstrate equivalent support to Muslim communities. The former integration tsar Dame Louise Casey warned that a New Zealand-style atrocity could occur in the UK. Casey said Britain needed to "wake up" as extremism had not been tackled sufficiently.

She also strongly criticised the "appalling behaviour of far too many politicians" and the "mood music" they were creating.

The security minister, Ben Wallace, said: "The funding for protective security tacks with the threat. As the threat changes that funding will change with it.

"In response to increased threat, we will increase and seek to change the funding around that, and that is why we do have the places of worship scheme. We will absolutely be looking at seeing whether that needs to be increased over the short and longer term."

23 Terror attacks by Muslims receive 357% more press attention, study finds

This article is more than 7 years old

Research by the University of Alabama shows attacks by Muslims receive an average of 105 headlines, others just 15

Fri 20 Jul 2018

Terrorist attacks committed by Muslim extremists receive 357% more US press coverage than those committed by non-Muslims, according to new research from the University of Alabama. The researchers controlled for factors like target type, number of fatalities, and whether or not the perpetrators were arrested before reaching their final statistic.

Terrorist attacks committed by non-Muslims (or where the religion was unknown) received an average of 15 headlines, while those committed by Muslim extremists received 105 headlines.

The findings, which are illustrated below, were based on all terrorist attacks in the US between 2006 and 2015 according to the Global Terrorism Database. The disparity in media coverage is particularly out of sync with the reality given that white and rightwing terrorists carried out nearly twice as many terrorist attacks as Muslim extremists between 2008 and 2016.

Not all headlines have the same audience, though. Lead researcher Erin Kearns explained: “We broke it down by the two different types of sources and we found that the over-coverage is much bigger among national news sources than local papers.”

A new Guardian documentary, *White Fright*, follows one case of an attack plotted by a non-Muslim. In 2015, Robert Duggart was convicted for planning an attack on Islamburg, a small community in New York. Duggart’s plan was described as “terroristic” by a US attorney.

How did British Muslims become ‘the problem’? – podcast

Miqdaad Versi, Shaista Aziz, Aamna Mohdin and Nosheen Iqbal on the rise of the far right and growing Islamophobia in the UK

The far right is on the rise and much of its messaging is explicitly Islamophobic. In 2024 anti-Muslim hate crimes in England and Wales doubled. Meanwhile, the government has stated that it cannot even agree on a definition of what Islamophobia is.

How does all this make British Muslims feel? Miqdaad Versi, Shaista Aziz and the Guardian’s community affairs reporter Aamna Mohdin talk to Nosheen Iqbal about what’s changed.

Shaista says: “Over the last 10 years in particular I have been subjected to increasing levels of physical violence on the streets. Examples include a random man while I was standing at the bus stop using a racial slur against me and then lurching forward to punch me. The impact of all of that is devastating. It made me feel like I didn’t want to engage with the wider world.”

Miqdaad says that as his Muslim identity feels increasingly politicised and criticised, it has made him more protective of others in the community. “There’s so many people who are in so many difficult circumstances because of the Muslim identity. And it feels like if you don’t try and stand up for all, you’re diminishing what it means to be Muslim here in this country.”

For Aamna, the data tells a worrying story. “The stats are quite harrowing and really staggering. Latest YouGov polling data shows that most British people don’t think Islam is compatible with British values, which is really bizarre to me. The number of Islamophobic assaults has increased by 73% between 2023 to 2024. Genuinely every leader that I talk to within the Muslim community in this country is saying this is an unparalleled time to be Muslim, the danger is here, we desperately need help – and they are being ignored.”

24.Retribution fears as Australian Muslims see surge in Islamophobic hate since Bondi terror attack 24 Dec 2025

Threats and hate speech against Muslim Australians have surged in the wake of the Bondi beach attack, with one mosque receiving dozens of offensive phone calls and reports of people being targeted in the street.

As Australia’s Jewish community deals with trauma from the attack that killed 15 people at a Hanukah event, religious leaders say societal and political divisions has led to other groups being targeted by hatred.

The Islamophobia Register Australia received 126 reported hate incidents in the week after

the 14 December shooting – 10 times more than it had received each of the two weeks prior.

A similar surge in incidents has been recorded separately by the Australian National Imams Council . Its vice-president, Ahmed Abdo, said Muslim women have been verbally abused and had been subjected to hand gestures imitating guns.

“There is a heightened fear,” Abdo said. “One woman ... doesn’t want to actually leave her home because she wears a scarf as a Muslim woman, and she fears that she may be targeted. There’s a feeling [there is] likely to be hate violence directed towards Muslims.”

Police have alleged the Bondi attack was inspired by Islamic State, and allegedly found two copies of the Qur’an in an Airbnb used by Naveed Akram and his father.

Muslim leaders and organisations have condemned the attack, with representatives attending vigils to mourn those killed.

But the day after the attack, butchered pig heads and other animal parts were left at the entrance to a Muslim cemetery in Sydney’s south-west.

A Queensland mosque and an Islamic school in Victoria were also vandalised with graffiti in the week after the attack.

Separately, calls circulated on social media for a “Middle East” bashing at Cronulla beach, for which a man has been charged.

Security ramped up but community ‘resilient’

Abdo said some Sydney congregations had cut the amount of time they spent at mosques, leaving immediately after prayers were finished.

Others, like the Lakemba mosque in south-west Sydney, have increased their security presence.

Mohamed Mohideen, the president of the Islamic Council of Victoria (ICV), said the organisation’s prayer centre had faced skyrocketing hate mail and he had received at least 30 threatening phone calls.

“It manifests online, which is safe although it’s hate, or it will manifest in abuse, and it could also go down the pathway of physical harm and attacks,” Mohideen said.

Mohideen said the ICV has received reports of teenagers in hijabs and worshippers outside mosques being verbally abused since 14 December, which he added has resulted in more police patrols.

“We fear someone could do something at any time ... but the Muslim community is very resilient. We are not going to claim victimhood, we are not going to hide.”

Mohideen said the political debate and rhetoric about “radical Islam” since the Bondi attack had intensified hostility towards the Muslim community.

“The Jewish community didn’t come out and attack the Muslim community ... it was the politicians,” Mohideen said.

On Tuesday, the New South Wales premier, Chris Minns, visited Sydney’s Masjid Al-Hidayah mosque at Rockdale with David Ossip, the president of NSW’s Jewish Board of Deputies. The mosque had honoured a vigil for the 15 dead on Sunday by lighting a menorah, a Jewish candelabrum marking Hanukah.

Minns denied his language had encouraged division, and said if someone is “prepared to attack or marginalise or vilify a Muslim family or a Muslim cleric or a Muslim woman”, then police “have shown that they will tackle extremism or racism regardless of who is

responsible for it.”

The mosque’s secretary, Jashim Uddin, said by lighting the menorah “we want to minimise the tension in the community.”

“We want to show that we are all together, not separate,” Uddin said. “It is not Muslim or Jew or Christian ... we shouldn’t be finger-pointing [at] anyone.”

25. We’ve got more in common than what divides us’: a Muslim-Jewish kitchen in Nottingham counters hate and hunger

As antisemitism and Islamophobia rise, a community centre brings people together over shared meals, offering an antidote to food poverty, social isolation and division

21 Dec 2025

It’s 2.30pm on a Wednesday afternoon and the Himmah Hub, a community centre in Nottingham, is abuzz with activity. Crates of leftover supermarket food are being carried inside, trestle tables assembled, and volunteers are arriving to prepare meals that will be served in a few hours’ time to anyone who needs one – a queue has already begun to form outside.

This is the Salaam Shalom kitchen, known as SaSh, a joint Muslim-Jewish project set up in 2015, and based on one of the core tenets of both faith groups: bringing people together through food. It also draws on a north Indian tradition of community meals, with food prepared collectively and duties shared across the village, Sajid Mohammed, director of the Muslim-led social justice initiative Himmah, explains.

Mohammed had previously worked with the then rabbi of Nottingham Liberal synagogue, Tanya Sakhnovich, on a number of community projects when, in 2014, the pair got chatting about their shared concern about the number of English Defence League (EDL) marches that were taking place. “She goes: ‘Look, I’m just dead worried, Saj. Week in, week out there’s these bloody marches, and I don’t know what it means for the Jewish community.’ And I said: ‘Don’t worry, they’ll never get anywhere,’” Mohammed says with a wry smile. But he agreed there was a growing fear of bigotry in both Nottingham’s Muslim and Jewish communities, and that “something deeply unsettling” was happening.

Although at leadership level Muslims and Jews had been working together on interfaith projects for years, when it came to “the congregations, the community groups, families, parents, children, our communities were not connected,” the charity leader explains. It just so happened that Himmah had already been considering setting up a hot meal provision in Hyson Green, home to Nottingham’s largest ethnic minority population – and also home to a historic Jewish cemetery. It seemed like the perfect project with which to bring both faith communities together, with Mohammed recruiting in volunteers from Himmah, and Sakhnovich from the synagogue, to provide a service that “demonstrates our shared values of dignity, justice and service to our communities,” he says.

Sajid Mohammed, director of Himmah. Photograph: Fabio De Paola/The Guardian

People thought it was bonkers to try to bring together two faith groups that have been so often pitted against each other: when the pair approached a local vicar to apply for a grant from the Church of England’s Church Urban Fund he called it “a disaster idea,” Mohammed says. Which only fired them up more – Sakhnovich went directly to the bishop of Nottingham to get the grant signed off, and the SaSh kitchen opened its doors for the first time in June 2015 and has been running ever since, even during the coronavirus pandemic,

when it moved outdoors.

Initially there were about 50 guests a week, says SaSh's co-chair, Ferzana Shan. And though anyone is welcome to receive a meal, no questions asked, at first the guests were mostly white homeless men. Over the years, the demographic has diversified, with people of all ages, genders and backgrounds coming along. While the charity is pleased to reach so many people – tonight, they anticipate feeding approximately 130 – it is also “really heartbreaking” that so many people need it, Shan says.

While I've been talking to the project's trustees, volunteers have pulled chairs around a trestle table and started chopping vegetables. The food served is always vegetarian, which takes away decisions about whether to make the food kosher or halal. “We're the chop and chat table,” the volunteers tell me cheerfully when I approach them, and I'm invited to start dicing peppers.

Volunteers chop vegetables and help prepare the food. Photograph: Fabio De Paola/The Guardian

I meet 91-year-old retired consultant Dr Raoof, who has been given the job of finely slicing garlic, since he is, according to the others, “the best chopper”. I also meet Justyna, 38, a GP practice manager who spends her one day off each week volunteering with SaSh. Though many of the volunteers are from Nottingham's Muslim and Jewish communities, there are also members of the local Catholic cathedral who heard about the project and wanted to get involved and people of no faith who simply want to help.

Justyna, who moved to the UK from Poland in 2006, is passionate about showing the guests who are refugees and asylum seekers that they are welcome. “Frequently they think ‘everyone hates us’ because of what they hear on the news, so it's nice [for them] to come and feel included knowing that there are people here to support you and like you and want you to do well in this country,” she says.

Jews and Muslims working together on this kind of project “in the present climate, is a bloody miracle,” thinks fellow volunteer Daniel, 75, who heard about SaSh via his synagogue. Against the backdrop of the war in Gaza and increasing division in the UK, running the project has been “stressful at times,” says Andrea Chipman, one of SaSh's Jewish trustees. “We're really dedicated to the project and the community, and I think that's helped us work through a difficult situation,” she says.

“We share the pain of antisemitism and Islamophobia together,” Shan adds – pointing out that both communities have been used as “the scapegoat for any societal issues. So that keeps us together.”

Ferzana Shan, SaSh's co-chair, (left) and Andrea Chipman, one of SaSh's trustees. Photograph: Fabio De Paola/The Guardian

SaSh is being supported by advocacy group Hope Not Hate's charity arm, Hope Unlimited, one of the recipients of this year's Guardian charity appeal. The charity believes that community-led initiatives can provide hopeful alternatives to extremist hate. Mohammed says the war in Gaza, along with Brexit and the UK's cost of living crisis, have created “fertile land” for people with deep political agendas to push ideas. “I don't think British people are intrinsically racist,” he says, arguing instead for creating spaces where dialogue can happen and people can share their hopes and dreams so they realise “we've got so much more in common than what divides us”. Building community bonds, he adds, “is the herd immunity that will protect us from the virus of fascism”.

For that reason, SaSh aims to tackle not just food poverty, but social isolation. As 5.30pm approaches, the chop and chat table is cleared, and more tables assembled. They're covered with colourful tablecloths to make the space look inviting. Sometimes, musicians will come and play as the food is served, the trustees tell me, and during Muslim and Jewish festivals volunteers come along to talk to the guests about their significance. Everything is geared towards making the space somewhere for people to come together and connect – not just receive basic essentials. Many of the guests pick up bunches of flowers alongside their food – it will brighten his home up, says one guest, Daniel. "I met a lot of people here – it's a good community," he adds.

SaSh kitchen guest Daniel. Photograph: Fabio De Paola/The Guardian

Janet, 66, has been coming to the SaSh kitchen since its inception. She tells me it gives her a break, and "some normality", away from her home, where she is a full-time carer for two of her family members, one of whom has autism and schizophrenia, and the other a spinal injury. "It gives me that time for me," she says, giving her the energy to return to her caring responsibilities.

Of all the projects that Himmah runs, Mohammed hopes if he is remembered for anything it will be SaSh. "It's a project of immense hope," he says. "And we live in some dark, dark times. Times that many of us, people of colour, the Jewish and Muslim communities, had thought we would never see again in this country." As both Islamophobia and antisemitism continue to rise, it has been helpful that "even through the trauma of everything going on, that we have people who are from similar and different backgrounds to share the experience with," Chipman adds. The strong relationships and the conversations between the Jewish and Muslim communities "never stop" even "when everything's feeling a bit hopeless," she says. It's "a very local hands-on way where you can make a difference".

SaSh's message is "don't give up," Mohammed says. "We know we're living in tough times, and it's easy to get demoralised," and to think the division shown on social media is representative of the world we live in.

But "it isn't: the world is your family, your street, your neighbourhood, your city." We will get through this moment in history, he says. "As long as we hold the rope of unity together."

26. Democrats condemn Republicans calling for Muslim ban on the heels of Australia shooting

Randy Fine and Tommy Tuberville, US legislators, face backlash for Islamophobic calls to deport Muslims

Tue 16 Dec 2025

Democrats are condemning two Republican members of Congress who said, in the wake of the mass shooting in Australia, that the US should ban Muslims from the country and kick out those who already live here.

Congressman Randy Fine, a Florida Republican, said he not only wants deportations of legal immigrants who are Muslim, but "citizenship revocations wherever possible" of Muslims.

"This has to stop. Diversity is not our strength. Diversity has become suicidal," Fine wrote on X on Monday. "It is time for a Muslim travel ban, radical deportations of all mainstream

Muslim legal and illegal immigrants, and citizenship revocations wherever possible. Mainstream Muslims have declared war on us. The least we can do is kick them the hell out of America.”

Senator Tommy Tuberville, a Republican from Alabama, said Islam is a “cult”, Muslims are “here to conquer” and that people needed to “stop worrying about offending the pearl clutchers”.

“We’ve got to SEND THEM HOME NOW or we’ll become the United Caliphate of America,” he wrote on X on Sunday.

In response, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (Cair), a group that advocates for civil rights for Muslims, designated Tuberville as an “anti-Muslim bigot”, the first time the organization has given the designation to a US senator.

Fine has repeatedly shared Islamophobic social media posts in recent days, ramping up anti-Muslim comments that have been a feature of his time in office. On Monday, he listed out examples of attacks committed by Muslims, including the shooting at Bondi Beach in Australia, believed to be carried out by two people inspired by Islamic terrorists.

He also called the movement to free Palestine “nothing more than a Muslim terror movement” and said anyone involved in it should be charged and prosecuted “to the fullest extent of the law”.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democratic representative from New York, said Fine’s posts were “disgusting”.

“Our Muslim neighbors are not Republicans’ scapegoats for antisemitic attacks and [Donald] Trump’s failed policies,” she wrote on X. “We must absolutely condemn Islamophobia loudly and hold those perpetuating it accountable.”

Fine doubled down, retweeting Ocasio-Cortez’s criticism with: “Bring it. I will not sacrifice America on the altar of suicidal empathy. Islamophobia is lie. Because fear of Islam is rational.”

Democrats broadly spoke out against Tuberville’s comments. Senator Patty Murray called them “vile and disgusting” and a “disgrace”. Senator Chris Murphy said they were “vile and so un-American” and “bigoted zealotry”. Chuck Schumer, the Senate minority leader, called them “an outrageous, disgusting display of islamophobia”.

Mehdi Hasan, a journalist and founder of Zeteo, called out the House minority leader, Hakeem Jeffries, who has not yet responded to Fine’s comments, for his silence.

“How is this man allowed to be in Congress?” Hasan wrote on X. “Where the fuck are you @RepJeffries and Dem leaders in Congress? How is this ok? This is worse than anything random trolls like Nick Fuentes say. This is insanely racist and dangerous stuff.”

In addition to his repeated anti-Muslim comments, Tuberville celebrated when an Islamic school decided not to relocate, according to AL.com. Muslims in Alabama have invited Tuberville to meet with them and visit a local mosque, but he has not accepted the offer.

“Instead of taking that opportunity to directly engage with the Americans he so fears, he has engaged in increasingly unhinged and hateful rhetoric about them, most recently smearing and endangering a K-12 private Muslim school in Alabama,” Cair wrote.

Tuberville responded: “Badge of honor. I will NEVER stop fighting for AMERICANS and our Constitutional values.”

The Republicans’ Islamophobic comments come as Trump has gone after Somalis, who are primarily Muslim, saying they should all be sent back home, including Rep Ilhan Omar, who

is a US citizen.

Trump issued a travel ban on seven Muslim-majority countries in 2017, which provoked immediate protests. He has banned travel from some Muslim-majority countries in his second term alongside bans on other countries.

Fine has previously been designated an anti-Muslim bigot by Cair, which cites his comments calling for Gaza to be destroyed, calling Omar a “Muslim terrorist” and mocking a dead Palestinian child and those suffering from starvation, among others.

The comments come as anti-Muslim commentary has risen on the right. Brandon Gill, a representative from Texas, said in November that America “imported Islamic terrorism in just the last few decades through our suicidal immigration system”.

“It was a policy choice. The reality is that not all cultures are morally equal. Islam is incompatible with our culture and our governing system. Radical Islamists seek to fundamentally destroy our way of life,” Gill said. “Why would we allow them to immigrate here? Islamic ideology has no place in the West, and it’s time our immigration system recognizes this.”

27. Florida declares US Muslim civil rights group a foreign terrorist organization

Ron DeSantis’s legally dubious order designating Cair – and Muslim Brotherhood – follows similar move by Texas

Tue 9 Dec 2025

Florida is declaring the Council on American-Islamic Relations (Cair) – a US civil rights and liberties group – a foreign terrorist organization, the Republican governor, Ron DeSantis, announced on Monday.

The move closely follows a similar order issued in November by Texas’s governor, Greg Abbott, DeSantis’s fellow Republican, even though only the federal government can designate terrorist organizations.

Cair and its supporters are among those who have dismissed the orders from DeSantis and Abbott as Islamophobia.

In a statement, the national and Florida Cair chapters described DeSantis’s order as a “stunt” and accused him of signing a “defamatory and unconstitutional order baselessly smearing” them. The groups vowed to sue Florida as it has Texas, where Abbott has directed law enforcement officials to investigate whether a group in Dallas is operating courts under sharia law.

“Governor DeSantis knows full well that Cair-Florida is an American civil rights organization that has spent decades advancing free speech, religious freedom and justice for all,” including for the people of Palestine, the groups said in a statement.

DeSantis said the executive order naming Cair, one of the nation’s largest Muslim advocacy groups, was “effective immediately”. His order also targets the Muslim Brotherhood, a transnational Islamist group founded in 1928.

Neither the Muslim Brotherhood nor Cair are on the US government’s list of designated FTO groups.

Nonetheless, “Florida agencies are hereby directed to undertake all lawful measures to prevent unlawful activities by these organizations, including denying privileges or resources to anyone providing material support,” DeSantis said in a statement on X.

The order said Cair was “founded by persons connected to the Muslim Brotherhood,” which

it connects to Hamas and the 7 October 2023 attack on Israel. Cair denies ties to Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Cair's Florida and national chapters said DeSantis through his order had prioritized "serving the Israeli government over serving the people of Florida" – and of diverting "millions in Florida taxpayer dollars to the Israeli government's bonds".

DeSantis and Abbott, it added, want "to smear and silence Americans, especially American Muslims", who criticize the US's support for Israel's war in Gaza.

In a separate statement on X, DeSantis said that members of the Florida legislature "are crafting legislation to stop the creep of sharia law, and I hope that they codify these protections for Floridians against Cair and the Muslim Brotherhood in their legislation".

Abbott's order in Texas prohibited Cair and the Muslim Brotherhood from acquiring property in the state and authorizing legal action to shut down affiliated entities.

Cair sent a letter to Abbott in November saying it "has spent 30 years vocally speaking up against all forms of bigotry, including anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Palestinian racism and antisemitism, as well as all forms of unjust violence, including hate crimes, ethnic cleansing, genocide and terrorism".

28. Greg Abbott's Cair 'terror' label stokes legal fight in Texas's long struggle with Islamophobia

The civil liberties group argues the Texas governor's proclamation exceeds his authority and deepens fears

Fri 5 Dec 2025

Islamophobia is on the rise in the US, with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (Cair), a civil liberties group, reporting sharp increases in anti-Muslim violence and rhetoric over the last two years.

In Texas, the issue has come to the fore in high-profile incidents, including the case of a Euless woman who was initially released on a \$40,000 bail after attempting to drown two Palestinian American children.

Now, a brewing legal battle between Texas's hardline Republican governor, Greg Abbott, and Cair represents a new chapter in the state's long struggles with Islamophobia.

On 18 November, Abbott issued a proclamation designating Cair and the Muslim Brotherhood as terrorist organizations – a move only the federal government is able to make. "This designation authorizes heightened enforcement against both organizations and their affiliates and prohibits them from purchasing or acquiring land in Texas," Abbott's missive read, while linking to a broader proclamation.

Two days later, the governor directed his state's department of public safety to investigate the civil liberties group. In response, Cair's Texas chapters are suing Abbott and the state attorney general, Ken Paxton, in federal court.

The suit claims the proclamation violates constitutional protections – including free speech, due process and property rights – and points out that Cair has never been declared a terrorist group by the US government.

Cair has won multiple lawsuits against the governor in recent years, including free speech suits defending Texas students and a schoolteacher who were voicing support for the Palestinian people.

Edward Ahmed Mitchell, Cair's national deputy director, believes these recent wins have "drawn Governor Abbott's hostility". In an interview with the Guardian, he argued the

governor was trying to turn conspiracy theories into policy.

For instance, the governor's proclamation names eight people who have supposed ties to "terrorism-related activities".

"In terms of the specific people mentioned, some of these people have no connection to Cair whatsoever," Mitchell said. "Some of them may have committed a crime and were rightfully prosecuted for that crime, which Cair had nothing to do with. And in some cases, Cair actually has stood up for someone who was wrongfully charged with a crime they did not commit."

The Guardian reached out to Abbott's office with multiple questions for this story, but in response, the governor's team shared the original declaration and statements about the investigation and so-called "Sharia tribunals".

"We did not see any sort of systemic push to discuss the Sharia controversy or the Muslim Brotherhood for years," Mitchell said. "It all of a sudden came back over the summer."

The Cair leader points to an investigation of a planned Muslim community in north Texas and fearmongering about Sharia law in the state as further proof of a troubling rise in Islamophobia in Texas.

Other advocates agree.

Dr Omar Suleiman, an imam and the founder of the Dallas-based Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research, called the Cair declaration "political theater".

"Throughout Governor Abbott's tenure, Islamophobia has become increasingly normalized and instrumentalized in Texas politics," Suleiman said. "Muslims have repeatedly been used as convenient targets – not because our community has ever posed a threat, but because fear of Muslims has proven politically expedient."

Charles Swift is the gruff, quick-talking lawyer for the Muslim Legal Fund of America who is leading Cair's case against Abbott. He told the Guardian his organization has seen an uptick in Islamophobia-related lawsuits since the 7 October attacks by Hamas and subsequent military onslaught by Israel, which many humanitarian groups have classified as a genocide. Swift also called the designation of Cair as a terrorist group an "escalation" on the governor's part, and the lawyer's reasons for working on the case are simple.

"It's constitutional," he said, "and the governor is trying to exercise powers he does not have."

Mitchell, Cair's national leader, echoed that point.

"No one has to agree with Cair's criticism of the Israeli government or our position on anti-Muslim bigotry to recognize that no governor should have the power to unilaterally declare a civil rights group he disagrees with a terrorist group and try to shut them down," Mitchell told the Guardian.

But Abbott isn't the only Texas politician attacking the Muslim community.

Earlier this year, Valentina Gomez, a Republican running in the state's 31st congressional district, posted a video in which she burned a copy of the Qur'an with a flamethrower. She has also called Islam "the religion of rape, incest and pedophilia", and she has filmed herself eating popcorn while watching Israeli strikes on Gaza.

Sid Miller, the Texas agriculture commissioner, also has a long track record of violent, Islamophobic rhetoric. Most recently, he shared a social media post depicting Islam as a snake being killed with a knife. When Cair denounced the post, Miller endorsed a Republican-led resolution denouncing Cair.

Before Abbott's broadside against Cair, the state government engaged in a legal battle with the developers of Epic City, a planned community in north Texas that will include more than 1,000 homes, a mosque, a K-12 school and senior housing.

In March, Paxton launched an investigation on the grounds of alleged consumer-protection violations, while Abbott ordered multiple state agencies to investigate the development for potential fair-housing violations. Days later, the US Department of Justice opened a civil rights inquiry that claimed Epic City's marketing and membership policies might discriminate based on religion.

Advocacy groups, including Cair, swiftly defended the development.

Mustafaa Carroll, executive director of the organization's Dallas-Fort Worth office, argued Abbott and Paxton were disseminating "hateful misinformation" about Muslims and Islam.

"They pose a serious physical threat to the lives and safety of Muslim children, families, and communities in schools, homes, and spaces throughout north Texas and statewide," he told reporters in April.

The justice department closed their investigation in June without filing any charges, yet the project remains under state investigation.

What's more, the same month the justice department ended their inquiry, the Texas legislature passed a bill prohibiting certain residential developments from using "religious-organization" exemptions that previously allowed faith-based groups to develop housing communities.

"The Epic City case is one of the clearest examples of Islamophobia shaping policy," Suleiman told the Guardian. "Rather than addressing genuine issues with transparency and neutrality, the law institutionalized suspicion toward Muslim-led community planning, effectively singling out Muslim civic ambition for special scrutiny."

Suleiman admitted that, "it's hard to legislate Islamophobia", which is why lawmakers often use coded language. He argues this rise in Islamophobia is yet more reason to elect leaders who affirm Muslims living in Texas, rather than make life harder for them.

Suleiman spoke to the Guardian before a shooting in Washington DC, in which a member of the national guard was killed. The shooting was allegedly carried out by a man from Afghanistan who previously worked for CIA-backed anti-terrorism units. He was admitted to the US in 2021 under a post-Afghan war resettlement program, and after the shooting, the Trump administration halted all asylum decisions.

This hardline stance was echoed by politicians in the Texas suburbs.

In a newsletter titled Islamic Ideology Has No Place in the West, the Texas Republican congressman, Brandon Gill, wrote: "The question remains: why was an 'Afghan national' living in the United States in the first place?

"How many times do we have to hear 'Allahu Akbar' in America before we recognize Islam is a problem?" he continued. "The reality is that not all cultures are morally equal. Islam is incompatible with our culture and our governing system. Radical Islamists seek to fundamentally destroy our way of life. Why would we allow them to immigrate here?"

Such comments go against what Suleiman thinks all Texans need to hear.

"We need leaders willing to affirm publicly that Muslims are integral to Texas, serving as doctors, teachers, firefighters, business owners and public servants," he said. "We need leaders who refuse to weaponize fear for political gain."

29. Head of UK government's anti-Islamophobia partner 'refused service in shop for being

Muslim'

Akeela Ahmed, of British Muslim Trust, says experience is part of a wider rise in anti-Muslim hatred

Fri 31 Oct 2025

The chief executive of the government's new official partner in tackling Islamophobia has spoken about being refused service in a shop for being Muslim, amid concerns about a rise in insidious anti-Muslim "microaggressions".

The British Muslim Trust (BMT) is launching a government-backed telephone and online reporting service for hate crimes. In July, the trust was selected as a recipient of the government's "combating hate against Muslims fund", and in the months since its chief executive, Akeela Ahmed, has been meeting members of Muslim communities, including in Bradford in West Yorkshire, East Sussex, Greater London and Greater Manchester.

Ahmed said it seemed the "gap is closing" between hate speech and inflammatory comment online – from social media groups to newspaper comment sections – and anti-Muslim hatred in real life, which remained "underreported and underrecognised."

As a result, BMT hopes to research the impact of online discourse and "call on ministers if research showed social media companies are not being held to account" under existing legislation, she said.

"We're not even just talking about content that could be racist or anti-Muslim in nature. We're talking about content that is inciting violence, that is actually breaking the law," Ahmed said. "We would not be asking for any special favours or special measures just for Muslim communities. This is literally about upholding the law as it is and enacting it."

Ahmed said that in Bradford and Greater Manchester she had encountered "fatigue" and a sense of "disconnection from central government" in people who had been "raising the alarm about anti-Muslim hatred impacting their lives for a number of years".

Difficulties faced by Muslims she spoke to included being ignored as customers by staff who silently refused to serve them.

She said: "I think Muslims are an easy target because they are visible. People like me who wear a hijab. Pretty much everywhere that we visited, people described feeling like they were experiencing levels of hate that their parents had experienced in the 70s and the 80s.

"And they expressed how they felt that whereas the older generations might have just been like 'we're going keep our heads down, we're gonna prove our worth, get on with our lives, not make a fuss' – they felt that they were a different generation and they were doing all the right things.

"They were contributing to society, they're accomplished, educated, integrated. But despite that, there were these questions about their place in society, questions about whether or not they're British, whether or not they're loyal, what their place is ... there was rhetoric around looking at Muslims as a completely homogenised group which is a threat to society. And they felt that was then translating into greater hostility.

"People spoke about how they felt like if they went to a shop they wouldn't be served, whereas other people around them were being served – a lot of these kind of microaggressions ... because they're Muslim, because of the way they looked."

Ahmed added: "It's something I experienced myself, where I was in a shop and the people around me were being served but I wasn't served.

"First you feel helpless, and then you second guess yourself ... sort of gaslight yourself into

thinking that it must have been something that you did wrong. [But] basically there wasn't anybody else who looked like me in the shop."

A new definition of Islamophobia being considered by UK ministers is expected to "protect the freedom to criticise Islam", while helping provide a framework for countering the rise in anti-Muslim hate incidents. A government source said ministers were committed to "protecting people, not religions".

Ahmed said BMT would have a robust approach to data, aspiring to "have the same level of trust" in Muslim communities as the "gold standard" Community Security Trust did with Jewish communities.

"We want to paint a holistic and comprehensive picture of exactly what people are experiencing. Not only will we be recording incidents that people report to us of Islamophobia, we're also, as you say, going out, listening to people through outreach and roadshows, recording that as well.

"We'll also be doing research that will paint a comprehensive understanding of what's happening on the ground and then we'll present those findings to government," she said.

30. Proposed UK Islamophobia definition allows for right to criticise religion, source says
Source says working group stuck to requirement that definition must not interfere with freedom of speech

Mon 20 Oct 2025

A new definition of Islamophobia being considered by UK ministers is expected to protect the freedom to criticise Islam, the Guardian understands.

The government launched a working group in February to "define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim."

It is understood the working group submitted its report this month to the communities secretary, Steve Reed, laying out a non-statutory definition of Islamophobia.

The report is private and the government may choose not to publish it or to drop the project entirely. If it goes ahead, the proposed definition is expected to be put to a consultation.

Critics have raised concerns that the definition could limit freedom of speech and the ability to criticise Islam.

In 2019, the Labour party adopted a working definition of Islamophobia from the all-party parliamentary group (APPG) on British Muslims, which included the statement: "Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness."

More than 50 English councils also adopted the APPG's definition, research by the thinktank Civitas found, but the then Conservative government did not.

A source with knowledge of the matter said the 2019 definition "could be interpreted as being a mechanism by which freedom of expression to criticise Islam could be closed down" and that the working group knew it "must avoid" that.

The source said the working group stuck to its terms of reference that "any proposed definition must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression – which includes the right to criticise, express dislike of or insult religions and/or the beliefs and practices of adherents".

Chaired by the eminent barrister Dominic Grieve KC, who served as attorney general for

England and Wales between 2010 and 2014, the working group on anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia definition comprises Muslim community representatives, experts and academics, including the crossbench peer Shaista Gohir and Akeela Ahmed, a co-chair of the British Muslim Network.

A source said: "This is a non-statutory definition and anybody who bothers to look at the terms of reference will see that it is explicitly made clear that it must not interfere with freedom of expression and that it must not be a blasphemy law through the back door."

Data released by the government this month showed hate crimes against Muslims had increased by nearly a fifth. In England and Wales, where 3.9 million people identify as Muslim, anti-Muslim hate crime rose to 3,199 offences in the 12 months to March 2025, from 2,690 offences in the previous year.

A Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government spokesperson said: "We do not comment on leaks. The department is carefully considering the independent Working Group's advice on a definition of anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia, and no government decisions have been made.

"We will always defend freedom of speech, including fiercely protecting the right to criticise, express dislike of, or insult religions and the beliefs and practices of those who follow them. This will remain at the front of our minds as we review the definition."

31. Donald Trump's sharia law attack on Sadiq Khan outrages Labour MPs

Keir Starmer urged to take action over US president's inflammatory speech to the UN

Tue 23 Sep 2025

Keir Starmer is facing demands from Labour MPs to reprimand Donald Trump's administration after the US president falsely claimed London wanted to "go to sharia law" under its "terrible mayor", Sadiq Khan.

In an address to the UN general assembly, Trump said: "I look at London, where you have a terrible mayor, terrible, terrible mayor, and it's been changed, it's been so changed. Now they want to go to sharia law. But you are in a different country, you can't do that."

The development will cause further discomfort in No 10 after Trump was last week honoured with an unprecedented second state visit to the UK. Starmer has repeatedly cited the ability to avoid the worst of US tariffs as a reason for his largely conciliatory approach to Trump.

Rosena Allin-Khan, the MP for Tooting, said Warren Stephens, the US ambassador to the UK and an ally of Trump, should be called to account for the president's remarks.

"The US ambassador should be summoned and challenged over Trump's rampant Islamophobia," she wrote on X. "Trump continually spreads lies. In London, we celebrate our diversity and reject racists and bigots. London is the greatest city in the world in huge part due to Sadiq Khan's leadership."

A spokesperson for Khan said: "We are not going to dignify his appalling and bigoted comments with a response. London is the greatest city in the world, safer than major US cities and we're delighted to welcome the record number of US citizens moving here."

Khan was also defended by Wes Streeting, the health secretary, who wrote on X: "Sadiq Khan is not trying to impose sharia law on London. This is a mayor who marches with Pride, who stands up for difference of background and opinion, who's focused on improving our transport, our air, our streets, our safety, our choices and chances."

Rupa Huq, the MP for Ealing Central and Acton, wrote: “Blatant barefaced lies as any factcheck or reality check will attest.” Dawn Butler, the MP for Brent East, wrote: “Now is the time to stick up for your country. Don’t let Trump lie about us in this way.”

Trump has been attacking Khan since 2015, when the Labour politician condemned the then presidential candidate’s suggestion that Muslims should be banned from travelling to the US.

Last week, while returning from his state visit to the UK, Trump described Khan as “among the worst mayors in the world” and claimed he had made sure Khan was not invited to the banquet he attended at Windsor. Sources close to the mayor said this was false.

Analysis from Khan’s office shows that a record number of US citizens have applied for UK citizenship since Trump won the presidential election last November. The figure for April to June was 2,194 – a rise of 50% on the same period last year.

In an article in the Guardian shortly before the state visit, Khan said the US president had “perhaps done the most to fan the flames of divisive, far-right politics around the world in recent years”.

The special relationship between the UK and US, the mayor said, included “being open and honest with each other”, adding: “At times, this means being a critical friend and speaking truth to power. This includes being clear that we reject the politics of fear and division.”

32. Premier condemns religious intolerance as Muslims in Queensland face heightened ‘fear and anxiety’

Community voices concern it is being targeted after alleged bomb threat and threatening email in recent days

Tue 9 Sep 2025

The Queensland premier, David Crisafulli, has condemned separate alleged threats against a Muslim school and a mosque in recent days as the community says it’s facing heightened “fear and anxiety”.

The Muslim community says people are living in fear after an alleged bomb threat at a school and a threatening email was sent to a mosque last week, according to the Islamophobia register.

The Islamic College of Brisbane received a threatening email last Friday, and the Arundel Mosque on the Gold Coast an alleged bomb hoax on Sunday evening.

The Islamophobia Register Australia said it had grave concerns as the community was living in a heightened state of “fear and anxiety”.

Crisafulli said most Queenslanders were tolerant and welcoming of others, but “there are a handful of people who have hate in their heart”.

“Anyone who goes to a place of worship and tries to threaten and bully and make someone feel unwelcome and unsafe, well, they need the full force of the law to come down on them, and we need to call it out (as political leaders),” he said.

Nora Amath, a co-executive director of the Islamophobia register said the alleged threats have traumatised the broader Muslim community and constituted “an attack on the fundamental principles of safety, inclusivity, and respect that underpin Australia’s multicultural society”.

The register is a not-for-profit organisation providing a platform for reporting incidents of Islamophobia. Its annual report, released in May with assistance from academics from Monash and Deakin universities, documents an alarming escalation of Islamophobia in

Australia during 2023-2024.

After the 7 October attacks in Israel, reports to the register increased by 1,300% compared with the same period the previous year, it said, with victims displaying Palestinian symbols accounting for one-quarter of all reported incidents.

Amath called on police to treat the issue with the utmost urgency.

"The register further calls upon political leaders and members of the public to speak out against Islamophobia, racism, and xenophobia in all their manifestations," he said.

The Australian National Imams Council said it was "deeply alarmed" by the Friday threats.

A spokesperson for the Queensland Police Service said a 34-year-old man from Labrador had been charged in connection with the alleged bomb hoax, as well as alleged trespass and allegedly obstructing police over the mosque incident.

Police responded to reports of an alleged suspicious item at the mosque at about 8.43pm.

"The Explosive Ordinance Response Team located the device and deemed it safe," the spokesperson said.

"There was no risk to the community".

He will appear in Southport magistrates court on Tuesday, and has been remanded in custody.

The spokesperson said it had been determined that the "threatening message" sent to the school posed no risk to students, staff or the community.

"There is nothing to suggest this was religiously or racially motivated".

About 1,692 students are enrolled at the Islamic college, which is in Karawatha in Brisbane's south. Students are predominantly Muslim, but the school also enrolls students of all religions and cultural backgrounds.

33.Spanish town ordered to scrap religious festivals ban mainly impacting Muslims

This article is more than 7 months old

Jumilla's ban on gatherings in public sports centres breaches right to religious freedom, says Madrid

12 Aug 2025

Spain's central government has ordered officials in a Spanish town to scrap a ban on religious gatherings in public sports centres, describing it as a "discriminatory" measure that breaches the right to religious freedom as it will mainly impact Muslims.

"There can be no half-measures when it comes to intolerance," Ángel Víctor Torres, the minister for territorial policy, wrote on social media on Monday. Rightwing opposition parties, he added, "cannot decide who has freedom of worship and who does not".

Last week, it emerged that the conservative-led council in Jumilla, a town of about 27,000 residents in the region of Murcia, had backed the ban. As its Muslim residents had for years used the facilities to come together to mark Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, the motion was widely seen as targeting the town's estimated 1,500 Muslims.

The proposal was initially put forward by the far-right Vox party, which called for an outright ban on public celebrations such as Eid al-Adha.

Vox's hardline motion was watered down and subsequently backed by the People's party (PP), which removed the explicit reference to Eid al-Adha and instead stipulated that municipal sports facilities could no longer be used for "cultural, social or religious activities foreign to the city council". Vox had demanded the measure in exchange for backing the

budget put forward by the town's PP mayor.

As the far right celebrated what it described as the "first measure" to ban Islamic festivals in Spain's public spaces, the outcry was swift. The head of a prominent Muslim association in Spain described the ban as "institutionalised Islamophobia", while the country's migration minister called it "shameful".

In Jumilla, the PP defended the motion, arguing that it did not single out any religion or belief and highlighted that 72 nationalities coexisted in the town without any issue. The local mayor, Seve González, told El País the council was aiming to "promote cultural campaigns" that defended "our identity" and protected the "values and religious expressions of our country".

In Madrid, the Socialist-led central government seized on the measure, portraying the PP as beholden to the far right, forcing the party to compromise with Vox while also drifting further to the right in order to compete for votes.

Spain's migration minister, Elma Saiz, said those who paid the price would be citizens who had spent decades peacefully living in Jumilla and had helped to sustain a local economy centred on vineyards and crops such as olives and almonds.

She told the broadcaster Antena 3: "Foreigners make up 20% of those who contribute to social security in Jumilla. These towns would collapse without them."

Saiz brushed off the claim that the ban was aimed at protecting Spanish identity, citing the country's history as a Muslim stronghold. "To me, that seems utterly ignorant," she said. "It overlooks that we would not be the country we are today if we could not appreciate the contribution of Muslim culture to our language, our works of art, advances in architecture and civil engineering."

Among the chorus of voices condemning the ban was the Catholic church, which described it as a form of discrimination that was incompatible with the right to religious freedom, while the Federation of Jewish Communities of Spain told news agency Europa Press that the measure was a "serious democratic setback".

The leader of Vox, Santiago Abascal, said he was "perplexed" by the stance of the Catholic church. Speaking to a far-right YouTube channel, he suggested the church's view could be linked to its reliance on public funding or to clergy abuse scandals that he claimed have "absolutely muzzled" it.

On Monday, a central government representative said the council in Jumilla had a month to formally respond to Madrid's request. If it failed to respond, the central government would explore what other legal options are available, the spokesperson added.

34. Footballer, journalist, fashionista: whatever French Muslims do, we're treated as the enemy within

Ministers have accused us of 'infiltration' and posing 'a threat to national cohesion'. They're old racist tropes given a dangerous new life

4 Aug 2025

Being a Muslim in a country with a long colonial history, which has also had to deal with terrorist attacks carried out in the name of Islam, is an everyday challenge.

In January 2015, for example, I was as profoundly shocked as everyone else in France by the massacre of the Charlie Hebdo journalists in Paris. As the country mourned, I was invited by a major radio station to comment, but was first asked, live on air, to "dissociate" myself from the attackers.

I had been critical of Charlie Hebdo's publications in the past, but my comments always fell within the scope of legitimate political debate. Nevertheless, as a Muslim, I was now treated as if I was under suspicion. In order to be tolerated on the airwaves, I had to profess my innocence: state publicly that I had nothing to do with the violence.

I couldn't hold back my tears – because, even with a media profile, I was reduced to the most racist perception of my identity. I was strongly defended that night by others who took part in the show, and received much support online, but I couldn't help thinking of the millions of French Muslims who, unlike me, would have no microphone to defend themselves against vile accusations.

Some years later I was invited to take part in a TV debate on the thesis: is the white man always guilty. I was expecting a conversation about gender and race. But my opponent, the philosopher Pascal Bruckner, immediately took me to task, claiming that I had used my status “as a Black, Muslim woman” to incite hatred against Charlie Hebdo. He claimed that I had, in effect, blood on my hands, that my words had “led to the murder of 12 people at Charlie Hebdo”. I immediately protested, stating as firmly as I could, that I had “absolutely no responsibility for any terrorist attack”.

But Bruckner wouldn't let go. He attacked me for having signed a joint statement in 2011, following a night-time petrol-bomb attack at the Charlie Hebdo premises that caused, fortunately, only material damage. Nothing in the statement – which I did not draft and was co-signed by 20 other academics and activists– had called for hatred or violence. It had been critical of the disproportionate media treatment of the fire at Charlie Hebdo when vandalism of Muslim places of worship featured rarely in the news. Signatories had expressed dismay at the selective nature of French national outrage, highlighting the indifference shown after an arson attack on a Paris building inhabited by Roma people, in which a man died.

But Bruckner repeated his accusations in an interview the next day, claiming without any evidence that he had simply “reminded Rokhaya Diallo of her involvement in political Islam” adding – as if it were a crime – that I had “criticised Charlie Hebdo by calling them Islamophobic and racist”.

I felt I had no option but to file a defamation lawsuit against Bruckner, believing the accusation to be not just outrageous and insulting, but influenced by my origins and my faith. But defending myself was viewed as another provocation.

Le Figaro, the leading conservative daily, published a highly offensive article on the eve of the trial, which, without even bothering to interview me, stated: “Inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood, ‘anti-racist’ activists like Rokhaya Diallo are multiplying lawsuits to silence critics of Islamism.” Taking legal action as a Muslim woman was framed as a “jihadist” political plot.

This kind of smear tactic is used again and again to discredit any Muslim who calls out Islamophobia. When the footballer Karim Benzema spoke in support of the people of Gaza in October 2023, the then interior minister Gerard Darmanin declared – without a shred of evidence – that the player had “well-known ties to the Muslim Brotherhood”.

Karim Benzema scores for Real Madrid against Barcelona, 5 April 2023. Photograph: Enric Fontcuberta/EPA

In May, a report commissioned by the interior ministry into the Muslim Brotherhood fuelled suspicion of all French Muslims by recycling conspiracy theories around supposed “infiltration”. The report was as the the socio-anthropologist Hamza Esmili put it, “intellectually impoverished”.

Yet Bruno Retailleau, the current interior minister, used alarmist conspiracy tropes to describe its conclusions, claiming it had identified “a very clear threat to the republic and

to national cohesion” and “a quiet form of Islamist infiltration whose ultimate goal is to bring all of French society under sharia law”.

But even the report stated unequivocally: “No recent document demonstrates any intent by Muslims of France to establish an Islamic state in France or to enforce sharia law there.” It added that the Brotherhood’s members in France today are estimated to number “between 400 and 1,000 people”.

As Esmili argues, French Muslims present a paradox: we are part of every social sphere, yet many of us have not given up our cultural specificities. And that is precisely what we are blamed for – integration without assimilation. This is why the same government can claim it uses the law to fight against Muslim “separatism” while denouncing the threat of Muslim “infiltration”. Muslims can’t win: we are blamed for being part of the national community and for being outside of it.

Thus, no matter what level we reach in the social pecking order, being Muslim always carries the suspicion of association with a radical and dangerous ideology: of being the enemy within.

So when Léna Situations, a major fashion influencer in France, appeared on the Cannes film festival red carpet wearing a long dress with a headscarf, a senior official in Emmanuel Macron’s party suggested on social media that she was practising a form of religious “infiltration”. As if an outfit was in itself proof of extremism. The influencer never mentioned her religion but it made no difference – her Algerian heritage alone was enough to disqualify her.

Even non-Muslims who take a stand against this hostile climate are subjected to similar accusations. Emile Ackermann – a rabbi vocal on Islamophobia – was accused by a self-proclaimed academic “expert” of being inspired by a “Brotherist” discourse. Such absurd accusations would be laughable if the situation weren’t so volatile, with Islamophobic crime on the increase. Take the case of the hairdresser Hichem Miraoui, killed in June in the south of France, in what investigators are treating as a racially motivated act of domestic terrorism. Miraoui had been the target of racist rhetoric posted on social media by a neighbour who also denounced the French state as “incapable of protecting us from Muslims”.

Yet, the very same state constantly fuels a narrative portraying Muslims as a problem.

During the defamation lawsuit I launched against Bruckner, and its appeal, my accuser and his lawyer leaned into these clichés. While the philosopher repeated his accusations and suggested that I was funded by “foreign powers”, his lawyer told the court that, given that Charlie Hebdo’s case files amounted to several tonnes of documents, no one could say for sure whether my name was not mentioned in them.

Elyamine Settoul, a political scientist and expert on jihadism, testified, however, that terrorists are radicalised through direct contacts and in no way rely on intellectual debates or interventions.

And the expert and former Islamic State hostage Nicolas Hénin testified that my name appeared “neither in the legal proceedings concerning the January 2015 attack, nor in the research conducted on the subject”. He told the court that “the jihadist sphere holds nothing but contempt” for people like me because of my “multicultural progressivism, which aligns with none of their religious doctrines”.

Bruckner was acquitted in the first instance on the grounds that he had attributed to me only “purely moral responsibility” and invited me to “take ownership of the weight of my words and commitments”. The appeal court overturned the initial judgment, recognising the defamatory nature of Bruckner’s remarks, yet still acquitted him on the grounds that he had

made his statement “in good faith”.

Just like the “yellow peril” once attributed to east Asians, or the supposed “cosmopolitanist” trope used about Jews, the image of an allegedly foreign group secretly infiltrating France’s circles of influence is once again thriving, in a sadly familiar strain of dangerous racist rhetoric.

35. We are in a dangerous place’: British Muslims on the fallout from 7/7 attack 20 years on
This article is more than 8 months old

Many feel counter-terrorism policies and brazen Islamophobia have increased hostility and isolation experience by community

6 Jul 2025

For many in the British Muslim community, the tragedy of 7 July 2005 lives long in the memory. The bombings sent shockwaves through the nation but also marked a turning point that left many grappling with grief, fear and a new scrutiny of their identity.

Twenty years on, feelings of suspicion, isolation and hostility experienced in the aftermath of the attacks have, for some, only worsened after decades of UK counter-terrorism policies, and a political landscape they say has allowed Islamophobia to flourish.

“The emotional and social toll of 7/7 on Muslim communities was profound and is felt by many to this day,” said the imam Qari Asim.

After the four London bombings, which killed 52 people and injured more than 700, police recorded 180 racist incidents in three days, of which 58 were faith-related, and mosques were targeted with arson. A Guardian poll at the time found two-thirds of Muslims considered leaving the UK afterwards.

Asim, who was living in Leeds, where three of the four bombers were from, recalled the community feeling a collective sense of grief as the country mourned. But there was also an additional, silent layer of suffering for the Muslim community, he said: guilt and the need to justify their sense of belonging.

Qari Asim. Photograph: Gary Calton/The Guardian

As international media descended on Leeds, Asim organised a peace walk with other local places of worship, and joined mosques across the country in focusing their Friday sermons on solidarity and rejecting extremist ideologies. But he also recalled the psychological impact in the aftermath, such as the fear on people’s faces when he entered lifts. He had to stop carrying a rucksack when he travelled.

“Islamophobia has consistently increased in the last 20 years, and that’s not just due to extremism and terrorism but also a multitude of factors,” Asim said.

Among them, he said, were the counter-terrorism rules brought in after the bombings. The then prime minister, Tony Blair, introduced 12 measures intended to offer a greater degree of collective security, but many said they left the Muslim community feeling alienated, over-policed and that their faith had been weaponised against them.

There was a dramatic increase in faith-related hate crimes and police stop-and-searches. Dozens of terrorism charges were brought every year, and conviction rates on those charges soared.

Jean Charles de Menezes, a Brazilian man living in London, was shot dead by officers the day after the failed attacks of 21 July 2005, when they mistook him for one of the suspects. Another man was shot and injured during a counter-terrorism home raid in east London.

Government engagement with communities at the time became fixed through a counter-

terrorism lens, at the expense of other kinds of social engagement, said Milo Comerford, the counter-extremism policy director at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

“It obviously did lead to a lot of distrust and sort of perceptions of securitisation, particularly among younger Muslim men,” said Comerford.

While the government fund to tackle hatred against Muslims announced in April was a move in the right direction, Comerford said, there had been little government focus for decades, and the Islamist lens had been “part of the challenge”.

The extension of terrorism powers and increased powers given to police and intelligence agencies has been of concern to Shabna Begum, the chief executive of the Runnymede Trust, a leading race equality thinktank, because of their racialised and disproportionate impact on people of colour – particularly South Asian and Muslim communities.

“Muslim communities have generally faced this kind of real culture of both being perceived as a threat and being perceived as outside the main body of who is to be British,” said Begum.

Britain is home to a diverse Muslim community, the majority of whom are under the age of 19, according to the Muslim Council of Britain. In England and Wales, 3.9 million people identify as Muslim, according to 2021 census data, or 6.5% of the population.

Begum said she was conscious of her two children being targeted because of their Muslim identity. When she hears the customary “See it, say it, sorted” announcement on the tube, she believes she hears it differently to how a white passenger might.

Women in a park in Bradford. Photograph: Gary Calton/The Observer

Twenty years after 7/7, Begum said the extension of counter-terrorism powers into the current conversation on migration “feels regressive”.

“We’re in a really dangerous place,” she said, but added there was room for change. “There is room for a different narrative, there is room for solidarity. These counter-terrorism surveillance powers, the logic of all of what we’ve seen happen since the ‘war on terror’, those things apply and damage everyone.”

Those concerns were underscored this year when figures revealed Islamophobic assaults rose by 73% in 2024 as a result of the normalisation of Islamophobic rhetoric and the far-right “great replacement” conspiracy theory that spread on social media, according to Tell Mama, a national project that records and measures anti-Muslim incidents in the UK. While some noted some positive changes in the aftermath of 2005 – including increased Muslim participation in public life, the creation of Muslim organisations and charities, and interfaith solidarity – another turning point was the 2005 strategy known as Contest. Its key element, Prevent, was intended to address the “root causes of terrorism”.

A far-right Britain First rally in Dudley, West Midlands, in 2015. Photograph: PetaPix/Alamy

However, critics said Prevent was set up without meaningful engagement with communities, and the increase in surveillance culture caused a breakdown in trust between the Muslim community and the authorities. One person recalled a five-year-old child being referred to the programme. Another spoke of university students being pulled up over their research.

In the years after 7/7 and 9/11, there was a cultural shift that led to politicians and political commentators feeling able to speak about Muslims and the Muslim community in ways that

were not previously acceptable. In 2024, analysis found that GB News accounted for half of all news broadcast coverage of Muslims over a two-year period, much of it negative.

"It's become commonplace for people to say some really objectionable things and still be given platforms on mainstream media," said Jabeer Butt, the chief executive of the Race Equality Foundation.

"We've given permission for people to say some terrible things in public and for them not to be challenged under the guise that we're protecting free speech, when what we're actually doing is demonising whole swathes of our society."

Shaista Gohir said that as a Muslim woman born and raised in the UK, racism was always present. But the chief executive of Muslim Women's Network UK and crossbench peer said she has never been as worried as she was now for the Muslim community.

Shaista Gohir outside parliament. Photograph: Sean Smith/The Guardian

"It's not people on the fringes any more," Lady Gohir said. "It's actually mainstream anti-Muslim hate.

"Twenty years on I thought we would be in a better place in terms of building the relationships and trust back, but I would say things have worsened."

36.Mamdani faces barrage of Islamophobic attacks after New York primary success

This article is more than 8 months old

State assembly member subjected to death threats and xenophobic rhetoric from Republican figures

Thu 26 Jun 2025

" Hamas terrorist sympathizer", "jihadist terrorist", calls for deportation and predictions of another 9/11 – these are among the torrent of Islamophobic attacks that have erupted across social media and conservative political circles following Zohran Mamdani's success in the Democratic primary for New York City mayor.

The 33-year-old state assembly member, a democratic socialist who would become the first Muslim mayor of America's largest city, has been subjected to a barrage of death threats and xenophobic rhetoric from prominent Republican figures and online activists since his primary win became apparent.

The coordinated nature of the attacks, spanning grassroots activists and senior political figures, reflects how anti-Muslim sentiment intersects with broader political divisions. Those targeting him have seized on Mamdani's immigrant background and Muslim faith alongside his hyper-progressive positions to frame his potential mayoralty as a civilizational threat.

Far-right activist and White House whisperer Laura Loomer posted on X that "there will be another 9/11 in NYC" under Mamdani's leadership, while the New York City councilwoman Vickie Paladino described him as a "known jihadist terrorist" and "communist" in a radio interview, calling for his deportation despite his American citizenship.

Senior Trump administration figures have joined the pile-on, including White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller and architect of mass deportations claiming: "NYC is the clearest warning yet of what happens to a society when it fails to control migration." The New York representative Elise Stefanik, Trump's one-time pick for UN ambassador, sent fundraising emails branding Mamdani a " Hamas terrorist sympathizer" before the race was

even called.

Donald Trump Jr amplified a post reading, “I’m old enough to remember when New Yorkers endured 9/11 instead of voting for it,” adding: “New York City has fallen.” Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene posted an AI-generated image of the Statue of Liberty draped in a burqa, while conservative commentator Matt Walsh lamented on how the famously immigrant New York isn’t “an American city anymore” because of its population being 40% foreign-born.

For longtime observers of American politics, the ferocity of the attacks may be shocking but their themes are depressingly familiar, especially after the 9/11 attacks. The playbook targeting Mamdani – questioning loyalty, invoking terrorism and weaponizing faith – has been deployed against Middle Eastern and Muslim candidates and officials for nearly two decades – such as with former Minnesota congressman and the state’s current attorney general, Keith Ellison, in 2006 – with predictable regularity.

“Many of the trends we are seeing mirror common Islamophobic content- Muslims as other and as a threat,” Council on American-Islamic Relation (Cair) research and advocacy director Corey Saylor told the Guardian. Saylor warned this could become a “larger issue, much like the Park 51 project did back in 2010”, referencing the controversy over the proposed Islamic cultural center near Ground Zero that sparked nationwide Islamophobic sentiment. Cair said it doesn’t track Islamophobic incidents online, but that the volume of xenophobic posts on Mamdani’s primary is “noteworthy”.

At a time when political violence on the whole is on the rise, Mamdani has reported multiple death threats, including voicemails threatening to blow up his car in the final stretch of his campaign. The NYPD’s hate crimes taskforce is investigating the incidents, one of which referenced the explosive pagers used in Israel’s recent attack on Hezbollah members in Lebanon.

His campaign had upped his security detail over the last few weeks in response to the threats, and the scale of hatred has also taken a deeply personal toll on Mamdani.

“I get messages that say the only good Muslim is a dead Muslim. I get threats on my life, on the people that I love,” Mamdani said last week while holding back tears. “My focus has always been on making this a city that’s affordable, on making the city that every New Yorker sees themselves in.”

Trump also weighed in on Wednesday, calling Mamdani a “100% Communist Lunatic” while criticizing his appearance and voice. And despite notably steering clear of overt language about Mamdani’s religion and ethnic background, he again called Senator Chuck Schumer a “Palestinian” as a slur.

The attacks represent a broader pattern of Islamophobic targeting throughout the primary campaign. Interviewers repeatedly pressed Mamdani on Israel-Palestine issues while giving other candidates more latitude – including demanding his stance on Israel’s right to exist when candidates were asked which foreign country they’d first visit. Mamdani said he would remain in New York and that Israel should be a state of equal rights for all.

Speaking on MSNBC about the attacks, Mamdani reflected on their broader impact: “I’ve spoken to many Muslims across this city who have shared that their fear of having to be essentially branded a terrorist just by living in public life is one that keeps them preferring life in the shadows, life outside of that specter. And this is not the way that we can have our city be. It’s not the way that we can have our country be.”

37. A worshipper is murdered in a French mosque. How can this be ‘just another crime’?
Rokhaya Diallo

Islamophobia is rampant in France. Official denial, even of the word itself, is driving the hatred

Tue 13 May 2025

Friday is a holy day for practising Muslims – a time to observe the faith more deeply and, where possible, attend prayers at the mosque. That’s exactly what Aboubakar Cissé did early on Friday 25 April.

In the southern French village of La Grand-Combe, Cissé, a 22-year-old carpenter originally from Mali, volunteered at his local mosque and was a familiar face among worshippers. So when he offered guidance through the prayers and rituals that Friday to a newcomer, a young man he did not know, it was an entirely natural gesture. The stranger, however, had come to prayers with very different intentions.

As Cissé bowed in prostration, he was stabbed with a knife 57 times. The assailant then posted a video on Snapchat of his victim writhing in agony in a pool of blood. In the video, a man can be heard saying “I did it” and insulting Allah.

Yet in France, this death – and apparent targeting of a Muslim worshipper – has not been unequivocally understood as a hate crime.

Ongoing controversy around the case is a dismaying reminder of how institutionally Islamophobic France is. For more than a fortnight, there have been public protests at the inadequacy of the investigation, the biggest of which so far took place in Paris on Sunday. But, with some notable exceptions, in political and media circles more time has been devoted to debating whether a horrific killing in a place of worship deserves to be called “Islamophobic” than the terrifying implications of such violence for Europe’s biggest Muslim population.

Right from the outset we can see double standards: following a misleading steer from the public prosecutor’s office, much of the French media including national news networks wrongly framed the atrocity as a dispute between worshippers, repeating this fake narrative over and over.

After three days on the run, the suspect, a 20-year-old French national named as Olivier H, gave himself up to police in Italy. The suspect’s lawyer denied that his client harboured any hatred towards “Muslims or mosques”. He has been charged in France with murder aggravated by premeditation on grounds of race or religion. Yet this was deemed insufficient to classify the case as a terrorist incident. The killing was an “isolated event”, the public prosecutor said, the suspect “driven by a violent urge, rather than ideology”.

The political reactions one might reasonably have expected after violence of this nature in a mosque never came either.

Bruno Retailleau, the interior minister who is also responsible for religious affairs, posted a brief message of solidarity with the Muslim community on the day of the killing. But he did not cancel any public engagements (numerous, as he is campaigning for the leadership of the conservative party Les Republicains) to immediately visit the town as he has done after other violent incidents.

It took another full 24 hours for the prime minister, François Bayrou, to condemn the “vile Islamophobia ... shown on video” and another day after that for the president, Emmanuel Macron, to publicly comment, expressing condemnation of “racism” and “religious hatred”

in France. He was quicker to express solidarity following an attack in Vancouver – where a driver rammed a crowd – even though that tragedy, during a Filipino cultural event, occurred a day after the mosque attack in France.

Aboubakar Cissé, who was stabbed in a mosque in the French town of La Grande-Combe on 25 April 2025.

According to Mediapart, no member of the government nor any representative of the state took part in a silent march in La Grand-Combe. When Retailleau eventually showed up in the town on 27 April, a lack of urgency criticised even within his own party, he limited his presence to closed-door talks at the sub-prefecture and announced security protection for mosques. He neither went to the mosque nor met the victim's family.

Asked in a TV interview about the delay, Retailleau blamed his caution on uncertainty about the motivation for the crime, despite the video and the anti-Muslim sentiment the suspect had allegedly posted online. Throughout, Retailleau referred to the victim simply as “the individual”, never using his name, and later blamed the murder on our “multicultural society”.

When a minute's silence at the national assembly was proposed, the president of the chamber, Yaël Braun-Pivet, initially refused, claiming that minutes of silence were not observed for “individual cases”. Yet a few months earlier, silence had been observed for a young woman murdered by an undocumented immigrant, as well as for a French hostage killed while being held by Hamas.

Braun-Pivet eventually relented, but her counterpart in the senate refused to follow suit, claiming: “We only hold minutes of silence ... for serious events, particularly terrorist attacks.”

Why are France's highest-ranking politicians so reluctant to call a horrendous assault a terrorist incident? The suspect apparently expressed a wish to strike at other Muslims in the video he allegedly posted on social media. Why does it seem so hard to see the obvious?

Mourad Battikh, a lawyer representing Cissé's distraught family, rightly described the decision not to have the case dealt with by the national anti-terrorism prosecutor's office as “shocking”, and the first killing in a place of worship not to be treated as ideologically motivated.

But there is a pattern here. When Muslims are targeted by hate crimes, the attackers' motives are rarely, if ever, labelled as they should be. There is, as the journalist Widad Ketfi has pointed out, a glaring double standard for how attacks are reported depending on whether victims are in a mosque or at a synagogue.

38. Were two Muslim women in east London run over because they were wearing hijabs?

This article is more than 2 years old

Misbah Sadique and her friend Kulsum were hit by a car they say was accelerating at them but police did not regard incident as a potential hate crime despite rising Islamophobia

Mon 26 Feb 2024

The driver was said to have slowed down to let Misbah Sadique, 37, and her friend Kulsum, cross the road. They were close to home in Waltham Forest and felt safe in a part of east London that they knew well. But, as they stepped out, the car in front of them suddenly, inexplicably, accelerated, one of the women later alleged.

It is said that Kulsum was thrown to the ground by the force of the impact and that Misbah was dragged under the vehicle. She claims she was lucky to escape with breaks to her right ankle and foot, ribs and right arm, on top of extensive bruising and abrasions. Three weeks later, she remains in hospital, traumatised and facing a long road to recovery.

The driver, who did not leave the scene, gave a statement by the side of the road and the police have categorised what happened as a road traffic incident. No arrests were made. But Misbah and Kulsum had both been wearing hijabs. Misbah, who has given a statement to the police in recent days, is calling, with the support of her family and the charity, The Islamophobia Response Unit, for the incident on 1 February to be further investigated as a potential hate crime.

“The immense emotional distress and trauma [of the incident] was made worse as we felt the people who were supposed to protect us and make us feel safe were disregarding their duty of care to us,” said Nazia Tayyib, a cousin of Misbah’s, speaking on her behalf.

The Met said officers did open a hate crime investigation in response to concerns raised with them. “However, our investigation – including viewing of CCTV – leads us to believe that the women were not in any way deliberately targeted,” said Ch Supt Simon Crick, who is in charge of policing Waltham Forest. “This was an unfortunate road traffic collision.”

The police said they had asked specialists to review the case as well but that they had come to the same conclusion. But that Misbah should consider someone capable of running her down purely due to her faith might be in itself be regarded as a damning insight into modern Britain. Anti-racism campaigners within the Muslim community say people are feeling vulnerable and faith in the authorities is at a dangerously low ebb. Should the outlook of these two terrified young women really come as a surprise, it is asked?

The Tell Mama charity has documented 2,010 Islamophobic incidents in the UK since 7 October, when Hamas’s murderous attack triggered the war with Israel. This compares with 600 such incidents in the same period in the previous year.

Muslim women were targeted in two out of every three incidents recorded.

Shaista Gohir, leader of the Muslim Women’s Network, said the impact of Islamophobia could be particularly acute for women.

“Because of the negativity around Islam and faith, there’s this perception amongst the public, which is a narrative that’s been kind of reinforced by politicians and also media as well, that Muslim women are kind of oppressed and forced to cover up,” she said. “It seems it’s actually OK to become acceptable now, to say very negative things about Muslims, even if you’re a public figure ... When it comes to Islamophobia, there is a tolerance to it, that there is no such thing as zero tolerance. That doesn’t apply to us.”

Indeed, the evidence of a sudden rise in incidents only adds to the huge body of work over the years that has documented a creeping acceptance in the UK of hostility towards people of Muslim faith.

As early as 2011, the then chairman of the Conservative party, Sayeeda Warsi, the first Muslim woman to attend cabinet, had warned that prejudice against Muslims had become normalised, “passing the dinner table test”.

The former deputy chairman of the Conservative party Lee Anderson lost the Tory whip this week, not for the substance of his comments but for failing to apologise for “wrongly” claiming that the mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, the first Muslim leader of the capital, was under the power of Islamists.

With cabinet ministers refusing to describe his comments as racist, Anderson doubled down on his claims on Monday, telling GB News “when you think you are right, you should never apologise because to do so would be a sign of weakness”.

The war between Israel and Gaza is said by those experiencing the abuse to have only

further legitimised, in the eyes of some, the espousing of long-held views about the Muslim community.

On Monday, a coalition of civil society organisations, including Islamic Relief UK, the Fawcett Society and Hope Not Hate, known as the Anti-Islamophobia Working Group, wrote to the prime minister, Rishi Sunak, to express their alarm at the lack of response to the claim from Suella Braverman, the former home secretary, in the Daily Telegraph that the “Islamists, the extremists and the antisemites are in charge now”.

“As prime minister it is your duty to safeguard all communities, no matter their race or religion”, they demanded.

Majid Iqbal, chief executive of the the Islamophobia Response Unit (IRU), which seeks to help victims bring cases to the police, said they had recorded a 365% increase in cases crossing their desk since October with “lots of incidents of Islamophobia on public transport [directed at] individuals who’ve attended protests, just generally in the street, and in their everyday life”.

On Monday morning, the charity received an email typical of its sort. “I’m sick and tired of you lot moaning about racism when YOU are the problem,” wrote ‘Marie Conway’. “This war has NOTHING to do with the UK, OUR country, you are racist against Jewish people who’ve lived here peacefully until you came here. You are NOT welcome or wanted here. We will pay for your airfare home. So instead of being cowards, you can go and fight for your beliefs. If not shut up. As the true English people like myself don’t care about you.”

Mohammed Kozbar, general secretary of the Finsbury Park mosque, where worshippers were subject to a terrorist attack in 2017, which killed one man and left 12 injured, said he had reported a number of incidents to the police since October.

He said: “We’ve seen people standing outside the mosque shouting in an Islamophobic and racist way, attacking the community. We’ve seen offensive emails as well attacking the community, talking about the faith itself, the prophet, the Qur’an. So it’s about dehumanising the Muslim community.

“We hope that the police get to the bottom of it but from our experience, to be honest, most of the cases, I’m talking about probably 99% of the cases, nothing has been done about it and that’s an issue which the police needs to deal with.”

Kamran Hussain, chief executive of the British Muslim Heritage Centre in Manchester, said he was concerned by the rhetoric used by some media outlets and by prominent politicians. His organisation is now training up staff to provide a “hate crime” reporting service.

Mohammed Saeed, chair of trustees at the Green Lane mosque, in Birmingham, the country’s largest, said they were also in regular contact with West Midlands police but that leadership from Downing Street was now required. “We continuously receive Islamophobic hate,” Saeed said. “Support is needed from our government in these challenging times.”

This article was amended on 28 February 2024. An earlier version said that the Finsbury Park mosque was subject to a terrorist attack in 2017; to clarify the attack was on worshippers leaving both the Finsbury Park mosque and the Muslim Welfare House.

39 Half of Conservative party members believe Islam is threat, poll finds

This article is more than 5 years old

Survey finds six in 10 card-carrying Tories have negative attitude towards Muslims

Wed 30 Sep 2020

Almost half of Conservative party members believe Islam “a threat to the British way of life,” according to a poll which has reignited concerns over Islamophobia within Britain’s

ruling party.

It found that more than one-third of card-carrying Tories believed that Islamist terror attacks reflected a widespread hostility to Britain among the Muslim community, and nearly six in 10 thought “there are no-go areas in Britain where sharia law dominates and non-Muslims cannot enter.”

Attitudes hardened among those who had backed Boris Johnson in the 2019 leadership election, 44% of whom believed that Islamist terror reflected widespread hostility of British Muslims, and two-thirds of whom believed there were “no-go areas”.

Conservative members were far more likely to have negative attitudes towards Muslims than members of the public in general, 30% of whom said they thought Islam was a threat, according to the poll, which was commissioned by the antiracism organisation Hope Not Hate.

According to the YouGov poll of 1,213 Conservative party members, almost six in 10 card-carrying Tories had a negative attitude towards Muslims, scoring them 50 or below when asked to rate their feeling towards various religious minorities on a scale of 0-100.

A fifth indicated that they had a very negative attitude towards Muslims, rating them 20 or below – compared with only 3% who indicated a similarly negative attitude towards Hindus, Jews or Sikhs.

Commenting on the findings, the former Conservative party chair Sayeeda Warsi said: “This latest poll is further evidence that the party has a real and serious issue with racism directed at Muslims.

“It’s been consistently raised with the party since 2015. The refusal of the party to take the matter seriously has meant that these abhorrent views have been allowed to fester and grow – the culture of impunity must stop.”

The poll comes four months after the Equality and Human Rights Commission dropped plans for an inquiry into Islamophobia in the Conservative party, despite having received a dossier from the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) detailing more than 300 separate allegations of Islamophobic comments and actions by Tory activists, councillors and political advisers. Instead, the party said it would conduct its own review to look into how complaints are handled.

The poll’s findings form part of Hope Not Hate’s submission to the inquiry.

A spokesperson for the MCB said: “For years, we have been alarmed at how entrenched deeply Islamophobic views are in the Conservative party, and this polling, coupled with the MCB’s dossier of over 300 members engaging in Islamophobia is further evidence of how institutional, systemic and embedded in the culture of the Conservative party this is.”

40. Detention of Muslims at UK ports and airports 'structural Islamophobia'

This article is more than 6 years old

Dossier by Cage attacks ‘suspicionless stops’ under anti-terror laws and highlights minuscule rate of convictions

Tue 20 Aug 2019

Muslims are being detained at ports and airports for up to six hours by law enforcement using controversial counter-terrorism powers so disproportionately that the practice has become Islamophobic, according to human rights group Cage.

The organisation added there is growing anecdotal evidence that Muslim women are being forced to remove their headscarves when stopped, even though the rate that such stops lead to a conviction is 0.007%, according to Cage’s analysis of 420,000 incidences.

Cage said it had made a complaint to the policing regulator, the Independent Office for Police Conduct, on behalf of 10 people, and had written to MPs on the all-party group on British Muslims to spell out the extent of its concerns with so-called schedule 7 stops.

In the letter, Adnan Siddiqui, the director of Cage, said that tens of thousands of people were being subject to “suspicionless stops” and that “the practice is a manifestation of structural Islamophobia, which is experienced as harassment”.

One Briton, Omer, who asked only to be identified by his first name, told the Guardian he had been stopped 40 times when returning to the UK since 2005 but has never been convicted of any offence.

Omer said: “I get stopped 95% of the time, coming back from Belgium, France and Italy.” He said he had become so fed up with being repeatedly questioned he often used one-word answers to reply.

A former medical professional, Omer was stopped at Heathrow returning from Lahore, Pakistan, after a flight in which he had helped a teenager having a fit. But on leaving the plane he was nevertheless questioned. “This is a law that is almost impossible to beat.”

Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 allows people to be detained at the border for up to six hours if law enforcement is concerned they could be engaged in terrorist activities. Detainees have no right to silence, must surrender their phones, computers and passwords and provide fingerprints and DNA on request.

One of Cage’s complaints is that the Home Office does not respond to freedom of information requests breaking down the number of people stopped by their religion. But a study conducted by Cambridge University researchers in 2014 concluded 88% of those stopped were Muslim.

Cage has compiled a dossier summarising its complaints about schedule 7, which is partly based on a string of case studies it has compiled. Siddiqui said that the organisation had noticed that recently “a number of Muslim women had been asked to remove their hijab at a schedule 7 stop”.

In his letter to the MPs, Cage’s director added: “This request seems not to correlate with any appropriate investigation in relation to any form of terrorism, but seems to be a form of humiliation which can amount to a breach of equalities legislation.”

A woman returning from Mecca was stopped and held at an airport for five hours, according to the Cage dossier, despite having felt unwell on the plane. She was separated from her husband and son, asked for fingerprints, a DNA sample, her luggage was searched and her phone taken.

The woman asked what she thought about the 2017 Westminster terror attack, and wars in Syria and Yemen. “I said I didn’t agree with killing innocent people,” she recalled, before being released, having been told “you have complied with the laws”.

Muslims stopped say that questions frequently focus on their religious beliefs, and they are asked if they pray frequently, if they fast and if they have been to Mecca.

“The whole thing is done in such a way as to make you feel that you are doing something wrong for simply practising Islam,” said a filmmaker who had previously worked for aid organisations in Syria but on this occasion was travelling to Amsterdam via Dover.

Muhammad Rabbani, Cage’s international director, said: “The discrimination faced by Muslim travellers highlights how embedded Islamophobia is in schedule 7, and in broader counter-terrorism powers. Officers routinely ask intrusive questions about religion and

practice, which amounts to a modern-day inquisition.”

Figures relating to the use of schedule 7 only date back to 2010, but show there have been 419,472 stops since then. In the year to March 2019, 11,151 stops were conducted, down from 85,557 in the year to March 2010.

David Miranda, the partner of former Guardian journalist Glenn Greenwald, was controversially detained at Heathrow airport under the counter-terrorism power in 2013 for carrying files relating to information obtained by US whistleblower Edward Snowden.

A Home Office spokesperson said: “The use of Schedule 7 is vital to the police in their work to combat terrorism and the authors of this report are clearly misrepresenting facts to fit their own predetermined conclusions.”

BBC

41.France launches checks on dozens of mosques

3 December 2020

In October the Grand Mosque of Pantin, in a deprived Paris suburb, was ordered to close

The French authorities have launched inspections of dozens of mosques and prayer halls suspected of links to Islamist extremism.

Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin announced the crackdown, saying some could be closed if found to be encouraging "separatism".

It comes a week before the unveiling of a new law to combat such extremism.

It is a response to attacks in October, blamed on Islamists, including the beheading of teacher Samuel Paty.

In a note to regional security chiefs, reported by French media, Mr Darmanin said there would be special checks and surveillance for 76 mosques and prayer halls, 16 of them in the Paris region.

He ordered "immediate action" concerning 18 of them, with the first checks set to be done on Thursday.

In a tweet he called it a "massive and unprecedented action to combat separatism".

State inspectors will examine their financing, their imams' connections and possible Koranic schools for young children, Reuters news agency reports.

The BBC's Hugh Schofield in Paris says Mr Darmanin's authority has been dented in recent days by a row over police abuses in France and a proposed new law to protect police officers' identities.

'Not widespread radicalisation'

The 76 addresses set to be visited by inspectors are only a fraction of about 2,600 Muslim places of worship in France.

Mr Darmanin said that fact showed that "we are far from a situation of widespread radicalisation" among Muslims in France.

"Nearly all Muslims in France respect the laws of the republic and are hurt by that [radicalisation]," he said.

Muslims under pressure to sign French values charter

Beheading of teacher deepens divisions in France

France was shocked by the beheading of Samuel Paty and the fatal stabbing of three people in a cathedral in Nice.

Mr Paty had been vilified by some on social media after showing controversial Charlie Hebdo cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad to a class.

A top court has ordered the closure for six months of the Great Mosque of Pantin, after it published a video denouncing Mr Paty. The mosque is in a low-income area on the capital's north-eastern outskirts.

State secularism - or laïcité - is central to France's national identity. Laïcité decrees that the public space - whether classrooms, workplaces or ministries - should be free of religion.

Finsbury Park attack: Theresa May condemns 'sickening' terror attack

19 June 2017

Footage shows the suspected attacker being tackled to the ground before the police arrive

A terror attack near a London mosque is "every bit as sickening" as others in recent weeks, Theresa May says.

A man drove a van into worshippers close to Muslim Welfare House in Finsbury Park as they were gathered to help an elderly man who had collapsed.

He later died, but it is not clear if this was a result of the attack. Nine other people were taken to hospital.

A 47-year-old man was held on suspicion of attempted murder and later further arrested over alleged terror offences.

Scotland Yard said he was being held on suspicion of the commission, preparation or instigation of terrorism including murder and attempted murder.

Searches are also being carried out at an address in the Cardiff area.

Met Police Commissioner Cressida Dick said the incident in north London was "quite clearly an attack on Muslims", and the community would now see more police, including armed officers, in the area, "particularly around religious establishments".

It is the fourth terror attack in the UK in three months, after incidents in Westminster, Manchester and on London Bridge.

Police said all the victims of the attack shortly after midnight were Muslim and many were believed to have just left evening prayers after breaking the Ramadan fast.

Several of the injured are believed to be seriously hurt. London Ambulance Service said a number of other people were treated at the scene for minor injuries.

[Follow live updates here](#)

[What we know so far](#)

[In pictures: Finsbury Park attack](#)

[Welsh hire van in mosque terror attack](#)

[Theresa May's statement in full](#)

Security Minister Ben Wallace said the suspect was not known to the security services, and was believed to have acted alone.

The prime minister said police declared it a terrorist incident within eight minutes and a white man in his 40s was now in custody.

Mrs May was speaking after chairing a meeting of the government's emergency Cobra committee.

The prime minister and the Met Police commissioner met faith leaders at Finsbury Park Mosque

"It was an attack that once again targeted the ordinary and the innocent going about their daily lives - this time British Muslims as they left a mosque having broken their fast and prayed together at this sacred time of year," she said.

She added that "there has been far too much tolerance of extremism over many years".

"It is a reminder that terrorism, extremism and hatred take many forms; and our determination

to tackle them must be the same whoever is responsible."

After making her statement outside Downing Street, the prime minister visited Finsbury Park Mosque, which is also close to the scene of the incident, where she held talks with faith leaders.

Eyewitness Abdul Rahman told the BBC: "When the guy came out from his van he wanted to escape, run away, and he was saying 'I want to kill Muslims. 'I want to kill Muslims.'

"I hit him on his stomach... and then me and the other guys... we held him to the ground until he couldn't move. We stopped him until the police came."

Adil Rana, 24, said "people were punching him and beating him, which was reasonable because of what he's done".

The imam of Muslim Welfare House - which is also a community centre - said a passing police van was flagged down after the attack.

Mohammed Mahmoud told reporters: "We told them the situation - there's a man, he's restrained, he mowed down a group of people with his van and there is a mob attempting to hurt him and if you don't take him then, God forbid, he might be seriously hurt.

"We pushed people away from him until he was safely taken by police."

Toufik Kacimi, chief executive of Muslim Welfare House, said the suspect had told those holding him "you deserve it" and was also saying "I did my bit".

Finsbury Park Imam Mohamed Mahmoud says the community in Finsbury Park is "mild-mannered, calm"

Another witness, who gave his name as Abdul, told the BBC the suspect was shouting "kill me, I've done my job".

Earlier, police also said the arrested man would be the "subject of a mental health assessment in due course".

Police forensic experts have been at the scene of the attack

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan said: "While this appears to be an attack on a particular community, like the terrible attacks in Manchester, Westminster and London Bridge it is also an assault on all our shared values of tolerance, freedom and respect."

The mayor has also reiterated his calls for the government to provide more funding to the Met Police.

BBC home affairs correspondent Dominic Casciani said it was not the first time that Muslims - and specifically visible Muslim targets, namely mosques - had been targeted in an act of terrorism in the UK.

The threat from extreme right-wing groups has been growing in recent years, he said, noting that 16% of all terror arrests in the year to March were classed as "domestic extremism".

By Cherry Wilson, BBC News

Locals say this is a proudly multicultural area, where the biggest rivalry is whether you support Arsenal or their north London rivals, Tottenham.

Now the mood here is one of shock, as residents stand by the police cordon seeing the aftermath of yet another attack in London.

Mother-of-four Nicola Senior, 43, is walking back from taking her children to school when she stops to take in the scene.

She said: "I'm frightened. Is there going to be retaliation?

"I am fearful for my kids. Can we go to the park? Can we go to the church? It feels like this is happening all the time."

'Everyone is on edge' after attack

Forensics officers are examining a white van which has Pontyclun Van Hire on it - a firm from Rhondda Cynon Taff in south Wales.

The firm said in a statement that it was "shocked and saddened" and co-operating with the police.

A dangerous juncture in the battle against extremism

By BBC security correspondent Frank Gardner

This incident risks playing right into the hands of those planning further attacks on vulnerable citizens in the UK.

Online followers of the so-called Islamic State have been quick to seize on the Finsbury Park attack as proof of what they see as widespread hostility towards Muslims who live in the West. Inevitably, it will be used by recruiters and propagandists to incite further attacks - extremism breeds extremism.

The one thing that far right anti-Muslim extremists and violent jihadists have in common is the belief that peaceful coexistence between Muslim and non-Muslim is impossible.

The unified prayers and solidarity across communities that followed recent terror attacks are anathema to them. Extremists of both types want instead to divide society and will keep trying to bring this about by criminal acts of provocation such as this.

The Muslim Council of Britain said this was the "most violent manifestation to date" of recent Islamophobic incidents.

"We expect the authorities to increase security outside mosques as a matter of urgency."

Mohammed Kozbar, general secretary of Finsbury Park Mosque, gave a statement on behalf of a joint faiths group.

He said that "an attack on one faith is an attack on all faith and communities".

The group has appealed for calm, adding that "all of our efforts should be towards getting justice for the victims and ensuring our community stays the diverse, tolerant and welcome place we know it to be".

Abdulrahman Aidroos describes how he and others detained the suspected attacker

Theresa May said "hatred and evil" will never succeed

Home Secretary Amber Rudd described it as an appalling incident, and said new funding for security at religious sites had recently been arranged.

"We will make sure that we do all we can to reduce these sort of attacks," she added.

Labour's shadow home secretary and Hackney North and Stoke Newington MP Diane Abbott said on Twitter that police "must urgently review security for all mosques".

Labour leader and Islington North MP Jeremy Corbyn has also visited the area, telling the BBC that "an attack on a mosque, an attack on a synagogue, an attack on a church is actually an attack on all of us".

"We have to protect each other's faith, each other's way of life, and that's what makes us a strong society and community."

Corbyn: People must be free to practise their faith

Mr Corbyn attended prayers at Finsbury Park Mosque with Islington Council Leader Richard Watts.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid has also been to the area, where he met residents and community leaders.

Speaking to the BBC, he said it was a "despicable attack" which was intended to divide society, but added: "That will fail. These perpetrators will never succeed."

Mr Javid also said he wanted to reassure Muslims around the UK that the government would "always take a zero tolerance approach to hate crime".

42.Finsbury Park attack: Theresa May's statement in full

19 June 2017

Prime Minister Theresa May has given a statement in Downing Street following the terror attack near a mosque in Finsbury Park, north London. Here's the text in full:

"This morning, our country woke to news of another terrorist attack on the streets of our capital city, the second this month and every bit as sickening as those which have come before.

"It was an attack that once again targeted the ordinary and the innocent going about their daily lives - this time British Muslims as they left a mosque having broken their fast and prayed together at this sacred time of year.

"Today we come together - as we have done before - to condemn this act and to state once again that hatred and evil of this kind will never succeed.

"The government's Emergency Committee, Cobra, has just met and I can set out what we know about what happened and the steps that we are taking to respond.

"Just after 00:20 BST, the Metropolitan Police received reports that a van had been driven into a crowd of people on Seven Sisters Road in Finsbury Park.

"Officers were in the immediate vicinity as the attack unfolded and responded within one minute.

"Police declared it a terrorist incident within eight minutes.

"One man was pronounced dead at the scene; eight injured were taken to three separate hospitals, while two were treated at the scene for more minor injuries.

"The driver of the van - a white man aged 48 - was bravely detained by members of the public at the scene and then arrested by police.

"The early assessment by the police is that the attacker acted alone.

PM condemns "sickening" terror attack

What we know so far

In pictures: Finsbury Park attack

Latest updates on the story

"Our thoughts and prayers this morning are with the family and friends of the man who died and those who were injured.

"On behalf of the people of London - and the whole country - I want to thank the police and the emergency services once again for responding as they always do with great professionalism and courage.

"Extra police resources have already been deployed to reassure communities and the police will continue to assess the security needs of mosques and provide any additional resources needed, especially during this final week before Eid Al-Fitr, a particularly important time for the whole Muslim community.

"This was an attack on Muslims near their place of worship. And like all terrorism, in whatever form, it shares the same fundamental goal.

"It seeks to drive us apart; and to break the precious bonds of solidarity and citizenship that we share in this country.

"We will not let this happen.

"When I stood here for the first time as prime minister last summer I spoke about our precious

belief in the union - not just the bond between the four nations of the United Kingdom - but the bond between all our citizens, every one of us, whoever we are and wherever we are from.

"At the heart of that bond is a belief in the fundamental freedoms and liberties that we all cherish; the freedom of speech; the freedom to live how we choose and yes, the freedom to practise religion in peace.

"This morning we have seen a sickening attempt to destroy those freedoms; and to break those bonds of citizenship that define our United Kingdom.

"It is a reminder that terrorism, extremism and hatred take many forms and our determination to tackle them must be the same, whoever is responsible.

"As I said here two weeks ago, there has been far too much tolerance of extremism in our country over many years - and that means extremism of any kind, including Islamophobia.

"That is why this government will act to stamp out extremist and hateful ideology - both across society and on the internet, so it is denied a safe space to grow.

"It is why we will be reviewing our counter-terrorism strategy and ensuring that police and security services have the powers they need.

"And it is why we will establish a new Commission for Countering Extremism as a statutory body to help fight hatred and extremism in the same way as we have fought racism - because this extremism is every bit as insidious and destructive to our values and our way of life and we will stop at nothing to defeat it.

"Today's attack falls at a difficult time in the life of this city, following on from the attack on London Bridge two weeks ago - and of course the unimaginable tragedy of Grenfell Tower last week, on which I will chair another meeting of ministers and officials later today.

"But what we have seen throughout - whether in the heroism of the ordinary citizens who fought off the attackers at London Bridge, the unbreakable resolve of the residents in Kensington, or this morning the spirit of the community that apprehended this attacker - is that this is an extraordinary city of extraordinary people.

"It is home to a multitude of communities that together make London one of the greatest cities on earth.

"Diverse, welcoming, vibrant, compassionate, confident and determined never to give in to hate.

"These are the values that define this city. These are the values that define this country. These are the values that this government will uphold.

"These are the values that will prevail."

43. France targets radical Islamism amid Turkey row

27 October 2020

A shocked nation mourned Samuel Paty

The mosque in Pantin, north-eastern Paris, was among the first signs that something this time was different.

The building, shaped like an aircraft hangar with tiny windows perched high up in its corrugated walls, stands empty and closed.

Outside is an official notice, taped in plastic against the rain, announcing its forced closure by the government for "involve[ment] in the Islamist movement", and for sharing a social media video targeting teacher Samuel Paty.

The Pantin mosque - closed by the French authorities

The French government's general crackdown on radical Islamism, in response to the beheading of the history teacher outside Paris this month, has been rapid and tough - a blizzard of

inquiries, closures, plans and proposals that have sometimes been hard to keep track of.

"Fear will change sides," President Emmanuel Macron is widely quoted as telling his Defence Council last week.

The government has announced more than 120 searches of individual homes, the dissolution of associations accused of spreading Islamist rhetoric, plans to target terrorist funding, new support for teachers, and fresh pressure on social media companies to police content more efficiently.

Nothing on this scale happened after other attacks on President Macron's watch, despite the violent murder of some 20 people during his tenure, among them police officers, a young woman at a train station and shoppers in a Christmas market. So what's different now?

Wider surveillance

Jérôme Fourquet is a political analyst and a director of the IFOP polling agency. He believes that this attack was different, both in targeting a teacher and in its brutality, and that there has been a "shift in gear" within government.

"We are no longer dealing with organised jihadist networks," he said, "but a terrorist who came from our own country, an isolated individual who was radicalised.

"The government believes the response cannot only be about law enforcement. They also need to manage social networks and associations, because this tragic case shed light on a whole network which spreads hate speeches within the population. The system needs changing."

He said an IFOP survey two years ago suggested that a third of teachers had "self-censored" to avoid conflicts over secularism. He believes the government is right to challenge what he says are ideological threats to the Republic's laws, alongside security threats.

But Laurent Mucchielli, a sociologist at France's National Centre for Scientific Research, says that President Macron and his government have "overreacted" for political reasons; specifically, the presidential election in 2022.

The French president led a vigil for Samuel Paty in Paris, attended by Mr Paty's family and about 400 guests

"Macron is adding fuel to the fire," Mr Mucchielli said. "He doesn't want to appear on the back foot, compared to the right and the far right. His main goal is to get re-elected in 2022, [so] he needs to occupy the ground of the far right. And their themes, since the end of the 19th Century, have been immigration and security."

A poll last week suggested that the far-right leader, Marine Le Pen, is France's most trusted political leader in the fight against terrorism. Mr Macron trails her by four points. The two leaders could well find themselves facing each other in a presidential run-off in 18 months' time.

Security has widely been seen as the weak spot in President Macron's armour, trailing behind his strong image abroad and forceful economic reforms at home. But Marine Le Pen has also cast the peaceful public expression of Islam as a threat to French national identity.

Muslims have demonstrated against Islamophobia in France

Cultural tensions

Over his time in office, Mr Macron has taken great care to distinguish between security threats and secularism. For a long time, he would often side-step questions around headscarves, burkini swimsuits or halal school meals. But the febrile politics around religious expression in France has sometimes made subtlety feel like a luxury.

In September, Anne-Christine Lang, an MP from Mr Macron's liberal La République En Marche (LREM) party, walked out of the National Assembly after being asked to listen to testimony from

someone wearing a Muslim headscarf.

"I can't accept that inside the National Assembly, the beating heart of democracy, we will accept someone turning up in hijab," she said.

Public servants - such as teachers and mayors - are required not to show any overt signs of religious faith, but members of the public face no such constraint under the law, even inside public buildings.

That hasn't stopped furious rows over whether parents in headscarves can accompany their child's class on school trips, or whether swimmers at the beach can wear a burkini; debates that are usually accompanied by accusations of appeasement from the Right, and of Islamophobia from the Left.

Into this political hothouse comes the current frenzy of activity after the murder of Samuel Paty, who was targeted for showing cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad to a class.

International dimension

And whether or not the government's response is winning President Macron supporters at home, it's certainly rousing his critics abroad.

Turkey's President Erdogan (L) and Emmanuel Macron

There have been protests in Libya, Bangladesh and the Gaza Strip, along with calls for a boycott of French products and a growing war of words with Turkey.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has backed the boycott, and publicly questioned Mr Macron's mental health, after the French leader defended France's secular values last week, saying the country would "never give up [its] cartoons".

France has now recalled its ambassador.

Erdogan urges boycott of French products

But, like many complicated relationships, this one has a long history. Mr Macron has already built up a long list of grievances against his Turkish counterpart, including Turkey's operations against Kurdish militia in Syria, gas exploration in the eastern Mediterranean and allegedly breaking a Libyan arms embargo.

Now one shocking murder and France's response to it have triggered fresh rows - both within France and outside - over the boundaries between religion and politics, and how they are used by those in power.

44.White House defends its silence on mosque bomb

9 August 2017

No one was injured in the attack at the Dar Al Farooq Islamic Center

The White House has said it would comment on an explosion that rocked a Minnesota mosque when it has "some kind of finalised investigation".

Sebastian Gorka, deputy assistant to President Donald Trump, said the White House would "wait and see" in case the blast turned out to be a hoax.

The FBI is investigating what Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton has called "a criminal act of terrorism".

Critics pointed out Mr Trump quickly responded after London's terror attack.

America's 'invisible' Muslims

Viewpoint: Islamophobia has a long history in the US

Half of US Muslims

Congregants were arriving for prayer early on Saturday when the explosion went off at the Dar Al Farooq Islamic Center in a Minneapolis suburb.

No one was injured in the attack, but the imam's office was heavily damaged and windows were shattered.

FBI officials said the blast was caused by an improvised explosive device.

American Muslims explain how they feel in the United States

Mr Trump has yet to issue a statement on the attack, but Mr Gorka defended his boss during an MSNBC interview on Tuesday, saying the administration would wait for a full investigation.

When MSNBC's Stephanie Ruhle pressed Mr Gorka, noting that the president had taken to Twitter in previous attacks before full details were available, he said: "Sometimes an attack is unequivocally clear for what it is.

"When somebody shouts, 'Allahu Akbar', as they're stabbing a police officer, it's pretty clear it's not a case of the mafia robbing a bank, wouldn't you say so?"

He also said "fake hate crimes" have occurred before and the White House should wait for more information.

"Hold your horses, count to 10 and the president will do what he deems fit," Mr Gorka said.

But the president's silence on the attack has drawn criticism from groups including the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

"Silence on the part of public officials at the national level only serves to empower Islamophobes," spokesman Ibrahim Hooper said in a statement to the Los Angeles Times.

"We are wondering why President Trump has not tweeted about this," Asad Zaman, director of the Muslim American Society of Minnesota, told BuzzFeed News.

"He seems to want to tweet about security and terror issues."

The Department of Homeland Security released a statement on Sunday saying that its acting secretary, Elaine Duke, was "aware" of the incident and the agency was in contact with investigators.

"The Department of Homeland Security fully supports the rights of all to freely and safely worship the faith of their choosing and we vigorously condemn such attacks on any religious institution," the statement read.

"We are thankful that there were no injuries, but that does not diminish the serious nature of this act."

Some Twitter users also called on Mr Trump to speak up about the mosque bombing.

45.Trump travel ban comes into effect for six countries

1 July 2017

"This time we knew what to expect" - immigration lawyer at San Francisco airport

People from six mainly Muslim countries and all refugees now face tougher US entry due to President Donald Trump's controversial travel ban.

It means people without "close" family or business relationships in the US could be denied visas and barred entry.

Lawyers took up positions at US airports, offering free advice.

But there was no sign of the chaos that affected travellers when the first version of the ban was brought in at a few hours' notice in January.

That is because the executive order does not affect people who already have valid visas or green cards.

The Department of Homeland Security said it expected "business as usual at our ports of entry".
Seven questions about the ban

Monday's Supreme Court ruling upheld the temporary ban, a key Trump policy.

But the judges provided a major exception, for those who have "a credible claim of a bona fide

relationship" with someone in the US.

The effect is that citizens of the affected countries with a close relative in the US, such as a spouse, parent, child or sibling, will potentially be allowed in.

In a last minute change, the Trump administration extended the definition of close family to include fiancés.

However grandparents, aunts, uncles, nephews and nieces are not considered to be "bona fide" relations.

'Grandparents, not terrorists'

The rules apply to people from Iran, Libya, Syria, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen, as well as to all refugees.

Travellers with family connections in the US - such as this Yemeni mother - will not be affected by the revised order

Moments before the ban began at 20:00 Washington time on Thursday (00:00 GMT), it emerged that the state of Hawaii had asked a federal judge for clarification.

Hawaii's attorney general has argued that the definition of "close family" is too narrow and may improperly prevent people from travelling to the US.

Big win for Trump and his travel ban

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) said it would be closely monitoring the guidance and implementation of the order.

The Supreme Court is expected to make a final decision on the ban when its next session begins in October.

Who can come in?

Travel ban protests took place in New York as the ban took effect

According to the new rules, for the next 90 days those from the six countries without a close relationship will not be able to enter the US.

IN - a parent, spouse, fiancé, child, son- or daughter-in-law, or sibling, including step- or half-siblings.

OUT - grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, in-laws, extended family and grandchildren.

Also exempt from the new rules are those with business or educational ties to the US.

However, the guidelines specifically state that the relationship must be formal, documented and not formed for the purpose of evading the order.

As well as making clear that those with valid visas and legal permanent residents are not affected, the Department of Homeland Security says dual nationals who travel on their passport from the unaffected country will also be allowed entry.

What about refugees?

The Supreme Court also approved a 120-day ban on refugees entering the US, allowing the government to bar entry to refugee claimants who cannot prove the same ties to an American individual or entity.

But opponents of the ban point out that refugees are invited to relocate in the US by the UN Refugee Agency, which has well-documented relationships with the people they refer for resettlement.

It remains unclear how many refugees scheduled to resettle in the US will be affected, but the government will fully halt the programme once its quota of 50,000 refugees for the budget year ending in September is met.

How did we get here?

Muslim students on Trump ban: "I don't belong here"

The US president insisted his ban was necessary for national security and pointed to terrorist attacks in Paris, London, Brussels and Berlin as evidence.

However, critics called the policy un-American and Islamophobic, and said that this ban would not have stopped atrocities in the US perpetrated by American-born attackers.

The original ban, released on 27 January, provoked mass protests at American airports.

It included Iraq among nations whose travellers would be barred from the US, and imposed a full ban on refugees from Syria.

The president issued a revised version with a narrower scope on 6 March to overcome some of the legal problems.

The policy was left in limbo after it was struck down by federal judges in Hawaii and Maryland.

46. New Zealand mosque shootings: Welsh police step up patrols

16 March 2019

Police are increasing patrols at mosques in Wales, such as the Newport Mosque

Police in Wales are stepping up patrols near mosques after the attacks which killed 49 people in Christchurch.

A vigil was held in Cardiff on Friday night to honour the victims of the mosque shootings in New Zealand.

First Minister Mark Drakeford said Wales stood with New Zealand in its "resistance to the forces of darkness".

The Muslim Council of Wales called on the Welsh Government to develop a "specific strategy for countering far-right extremism".

The First Minister said Wales stood in "solidarity and strength" with the people affected by the terrorist attack

Speaking at the vigil, which took place at the Temple of Peace in Cathays Park, Mr Drakeford said the gathering showed the level of "strength and solidarity" in Wales towards those affected by the "awful events" in New Zealand.

He added: "It is also a message to communities here in Wales, who are fearful that what they have seen elsewhere may give license to people in this part of the world."

Dozens of people paid their respects at the Temple of Peace in Cardiff

Wales rugby captain Alun Wyn Jones, said: "On behalf of the Welsh Rugby Union players and staff we pass our respects to everyone affected with events that have gone on in New Zealand.

"Obviously there's close links with a lot of our staff and a few players so we would like to extend that."

The Muslim Council of Wales said it was "shocked and hurt" by the shootings in "such an idyllic and quiet place". It called them a reminder that "hatred can appear any place and at any time".

The council said religious hate crime had "rocketed by 40% across England and Wales in just one year, with more than half targeted at Muslims".

New Zealand mosque shooting: What is known about the suspects?

Christchurch shootings: UK mosque security to be discussed

In Wales, the council added there had also been a "resurgence in the activity and organising of far-right groups".

It called on public bodies to adopt the All Party Parliamentary Group definition of Islamophobia "as steps towards preventing future tragedies such as this from taking place".

South Wales Police said that in common with other UK forces, it would carry out extra patrols on Friday and over the weekend.

South Wales Police Chief Constable Matt Jukes tweeted that such tragedies sent "shockwaves across faith communities", and his force would provide a "visible presence at our mosques".

The killing of 49 people in Christchurch mosques has created nervousness among Muslims across the world

Dyfed-Powys Police also said it would step up "reassurance patrols" around mosques and increase contacts with communities of all faiths.

Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner Jeff Cuthbert said: "Today we must stand together in solidarity to remember all those who lost their lives in this hateful, abhorrent terrorist attack.

"We all have a responsibility to teach people that hate abuse is wrong from a young age and stand up against vicious extremism in all its forms."

PC Robert Newton-Miller, of North Wales Police, said the force was placing officers at mosques, and had been in touch with imams.

"I will be attending Friday prayers today to deliver a message to the communities in North Wales in order to promote our support and reassurance during these difficult times," said PC Newton-Miller.

The Church in Wales said: "In the face of this kind of hatred, it is more important than ever that we reach out in friendship and solidarity to our neighbours. We pray that God will be close to those most deeply affected, and give courage to all those who may now be fearful of showing their faith.

The Bishop of St Davids, Joanna Penberthy, added: "All of us together must condemn violence and stand against hatred and prejudice."

Muslim students at University of Connecticut received threats over Israel-Gaza war

10 November 2023

Mike WendlingBBC News

Lena Maarouf, a former leader of a pro-Palestinian student group, received a threatening voicemail

47. Muslim students at the University of Connecticut have received violent threats over the Israel-Gaza war and are pushing for protection.

At a news conference on Thursday, a former leader of a pro-Palestine campus group played a voicemail she received which included a racial slur.

The university's Muslim Student Association said it received an email mocking dead Palestinians, as well.

The messages were reported to campus and state police and the FBI.

The University of Connecticut, also known as UConn, "unequivocally condemns Islamophobia, just as it condemns antisemitism and all forms of hatred", a school spokesperson said.

Both Muslim and Jewish groups in the US have recorded spikes in incidents of hate and harassment since the 7 October attacks by Hamas that ignited a war where thousands have been killed.

Lena Maarouf said she graduated from UConn in 2022 but her phone number was still listed on the website for a group that she formerly led, Students for Justice in Palestine.

The man who left the voicemail message called her a "terrorist", used a racial slur and said: "I can't wait to see you dead."

The call came from an Oklahoma area code, and the threatening email came from a Yahoo email domain, the students said.

"The Muslim community does not feel supported, the Palestinian community does not feel supported," Ms Maarouf said during the news conference on the UConn campus in Storrs, Connecticut. "UConn needs to step up."

Muslim student leaders and the state chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (Cair), a Muslim civil rights group, called on the university to provide educational programmes about the conflict and about Islam, and to provide security assurances for Muslim students.

"No young person seeking an education should feel threatened because of their race, religion, background or political views," said Farhan Memon, chairperson of Cair's Connecticut chapter.

In a statement, UConn spokesperson Stephanie Reitz said the school recognises the concern about the messages, and that a teach-in on the conflict was held on campus last week.

"We recognize the concern generated by the messages, and we join others in condemning the hateful sentiments in the strongest terms," Ms Reitz said.

The BBC has contacted the FBI's Connecticut office for comment.

Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont said last week that he is organising a meeting of university security officials on dealing with hate crime on college campuses across the state.

American Jews and Palestinians face fear and hatred

Israel-Gaza inflames tensions on US college campuses

US college Israel-Gaza war protest stirs outrage

The University of Connecticut campus in Storrs

Spike in hate

On Thursday, Cair said it received 1,283 complaints in the month after the Hamas assault on Israel on 7 October, compared to 63 reports in the month of August. The incidents included threats, use of weapons, and a knife attack outside Chicago which killed a six-year-old boy and seriously injured his mother.

Last month the Anti-Defamation League, a Jewish civil rights organisation, said that it had recorded 30 incidents of anti-Semitic harassment, vandalism and assault in the weeks after the 7 October Hamas attacks, an increase of nearly 400% over the same period last year.

Last month a student at Cornell University in New York State was arrested after allegedly posting violent threats against Jewish students.

Prosecutors say Patrick Dai, 21, made threats to bring a gun to the Cornell University campus and rape Jewish women and "behead any Jewish babies".

48.Quebec City mosque shooting: Six killed, eight wounded

30 January 2017

Police and ambulances surrounded the area around the mosque

Six people have been killed and another eight wounded in a shooting at a mosque in Quebec City, Canada, police say.

Shots were fired at the Quebec Islamic Cultural Centre on Sunday night, where more than 50 people had gathered for evening prayers.

One suspect was arrested at the scene and another was arrested nearby. Police do not believe there are other suspects at large.

The Canadian authorities are treating the shooting as a terror attack.

"We condemn this terrorist attack on Muslims in a centre of worship and refuge," Prime

Minister Justin Trudeau said in a [statement, external](#).

"Muslim-Canadians are an important part of our national fabric, and these senseless acts have no place in our communities, cities and country."

Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard also referred to the shooting as a terrorist attack.

The dead were aged between about 35 and 70 years old, police spokeswoman Christine Coulombe said. Some of those injured were in a serious condition, she said.

Police said the area was secure and the situation was "under control". Thirty-nine people had left the mosque safely, they said.

The Quebec authorities have not identified the suspects, but [Radio Canada, external](#) quoted a source close to the investigation as saying that they were students at Laval University in Quebec City and one was of Moroccan origin.

An eyewitness told the radio station that two hooded people had burst into the mosque. One opened fire on those praying and shouted "Allahu Akbar", Arabic for "God is Great".

One of the suspects fled the scene in a vehicle but was arrested on a bridge leading to Orleans Island, local media reported. The suspect had called the police himself, Radio Canada said.

Automatic weapons and handguns were recovered by police, [Journal de Quebec, external](#) reported.

Image caption,

The mosque is in the Sainte Foy area of Quebec City

Image caption,

The attack took place as worshippers prayed

The president of the mosque, Mohamed Yanguï - who was not inside at the time - said the shooting had happened in the men's section of the mosque.

"Why is this happening here? This is barbaric," he said.

On its Facebook page the centre thanked the public "for the hundreds of messages of compassion".

In June last year the same mosque was the target of an Islamophobic incident when a pig's head was left in front of the building, with a card saying "bonne appetit".

Eating pork is forbidden in Islam.

A pig's head was left outside the mosque last June.

49. Why is Bulgaria making a big fuss about the niqab? 24 May 2016

The face-veil ban was first introduced in Pazardjik, where 4% of the population is Muslim

Bulgaria is set to become the latest EU country to ban the niqab, or face veil, after the right-wing coalition party, Patriotic Front, submitted a bill to parliament as a "pre-emptive measure".

Belgium, France and Latvia have already done so but Bulgaria's example stems from the small, southern city of Pazardjik, which has just imposed its own "burka ban", as local media dubbed it. The burka, which covers the eyes, has never been seen in Bulgaria.

The face veil is not considered traditional dress for Bulgaria's Muslims, who make up 10% of the country's 7.1 million population.

The vast majority are indigenous communities of ethnic Turks, Roma and Pomaks (Bulgarian-speaking Muslims). In fact, women who have been spotted wearing it in the past

two to three years are almost all members of a small Salafist, Roma community in Pazardjik.

Image caption,
Most Bulgarian Muslims do not wear the niqab, even in Pazardjik

The community has been at the centre of controversy and media attention after one of its preachers, Ahmed Musa, was put on trial three times for spreading "religious hatred". Locals say Musa was born Christian but 20 years ago converted to Islam; he adopted more conservative views after travelling to the West.

Only 4% of Pazardjik's 70,000 population is Muslim and only a fraction of that number follow Ahmed Musa. Yet the presence of about two dozen women wearing the niqab in the city created unease in the local administration.

"The main things that motivated and catalysed this [ban] were the terrorist attacks that happened in European countries and the increasing flow of migrants who entered the country in the past few years," explained Rumen Kozhuharov, the head of the municipality. The police had already issued a citation to one woman, he said, for wearing a face veil in the streets of the "Iztok" quarter, a mixed Christian and Muslim Roma neighbourhood where the Abu Bakir mosque of the conservative community was built 10 years ago.

The Abu Bakir mosque is surrounded by fields of rubbish

A week after the ban came into place no women were to be seen wearing the niqab in the streets of the neighbourhood. Local people were reluctant to comment, saying they distrusted journalists because of the persistent visits of TV crews and their "biased" portrayal of their community.

One man at the Abu Bakir mosque, who introduced himself only as Agati, told the BBC that the ban was "an affront to the religion", but he refused to elaborate.

Mickey Mouse and the Minions

Ramiz Sali, former head of the Muslim board in Pazardjik, who now works at the city's 350-year-old Ottoman mosque, said that he didn't care whether a woman covered her face or not, but that Islam only required that she wore a headscarf.

The real problems that the Roma neighbourhood faced were high illiteracy and unemployment, he added.

"What terrorism are they talking about when half of the Roma neighbourhood are scavenging rubbish containers?" he said.

After Pazardjik, five major Bulgarian cities, including the capital Sofia, began considering similar bans. By contrast, Plovdiv, Bulgaria's second biggest city, voted against it; its mayor mocked the proposal saying that it would affect only Mickey Mouse and the Minions.

The Grand Mufti's Office in Bulgaria has rejected the face veil ban bill, saying it infringes on the freedom of religion guaranteed by the constitution.

"The far-right populist pseudo-patriotic factions are seeking to gain dirty [political] dividends on the back of Muslims, which is dishonourable given the scale of Islamophobia across the world," said Jalal Faik, the secretary general of the Grand Mufti's Office.,

Patriotic Front MP Iskren Veselinov argues that the face veil leads to radicalisation

The face veil was not a major issue in Bulgaria until members of the VMRO Party (part of the Patriotic Front) started calling for a ban in late March. It then gained wide support among both the ruling majority and the opposition left.

"[Wearing the face veil] is one of the many steps which lead to radicalisation of the Islamic

community in Bulgaria. We shouldn't allow such radicalisation," said VMRO MP Iskren Veselinov.

He says the recent terror attacks in France and Belgium prove that such a ban is necessary. "France and Belgium started talking about [a ban] 30 years ago, but implemented it only a few years ago, after two generations of Islamists came of age," he added.

According to Dimitar Bechev, visiting fellow at Harvard's Center for European Politics, the face veil ban is part of a political game.

He explained that other members of the ruling coalition, including PM Boyko Borisov's GERB party, were supporting the ban to appease their coalition partner, the PF, while the left backed it because of its staunchly nationalistic attitudes.

"Here is the threat of a vicious circle emerging: nationalists scapegoating Muslims and pushing certain individuals to radicalisation which in turn would fuel more hate speech," he warned.

The face veil ban bill has already been approved by two parliamentary committees, and its supporters expect it to pass before parliament's summer break.

Residents have criticised media for what they say is an unfair representation of Pazardjik

50 This is my country, too

31 October 2017

This year has seen a spike in anti-Muslim hate crimes, and a new survey shows women are suffering the most - so what's it like to be a black British Muslim woman at the moment? Not great, says Muna Ahmed.

A man mimed shooting Linda with a rifle as he crossed the road. A man spent an entire train journey staring aggressively at Sonya, his face inches from hers.

These are the kind of incidents Muslim women face every day.

One young woman told me she has stopped listening to music so she can hear if someone is following her. Another has considered taking off her headscarf because she doesn't feel safe.

Many women worry about being attacked or singled out because of their faith. Most have experienced verbal abuse. They worry about being out after dark, and drive with their windows closed.

"The thought of being attacked crosses my mind now more than ever," says Natasha, a Muslim convert from Sheffield.

"I've always felt safe here in England, but post-Brexit, post the [terror] attacks, it's getting worse and worse."

The charity Tell MAMA will publish its latest report this week

It wasn't always like this. Growing up in Sheffield, I was just like every other kid I played with - I may have been a tad cheekier, but nobody treated me differently because of my race or faith.

At the weekends I would see people pouring out of the church and the mosque at either end of our street. I don't remember any hostility and I certainly didn't see any conflict between the faiths. It was just normal.

Everybody on my road knew each other. My friends Gemma and Tracy lived at the top of my street and we would walk to school together every day. When we got home we would eat fish-fingers and go straight out to play. Weekends were the best because we would get up early to watch cartoons and mum would make us pancakes.

I enjoyed *all* the religious holidays because there were always treats involved.

At Easter we would get chocolate eggs. During Ramadan we tried to fast so we could take part in the evening feast, but Mum knew that we would be starving by 4pm so she would leave a plate of food out, which my friends and I would sneak into the house and eat.

I loved the Christmas holidays because I would go and visit my grandmother and she would spoil me rotten. And on Eid I would get whatever I wanted.

Thinking about it now, I had the best of both worlds. But 9/11 changed everything.

I went from being a carefree teenager who had never been asked about my religion to having people constantly ask me questions about Islam - questions that I didn't have the answers to.

I asked my parents about al-Qaeda, and where Islam stood on terrorism. Every day I would come home with a different question, because the Islam that had become "the enemy" was not the religion I knew.

Ever since then, my country has not been a positive place to be a Muslim woman - and it seems to be getting worse.

Find out more

Woman's Hour are asking: [where's the best place to be a woman in Britain?](#)

See the results of the [Woman's Hour poll](#)

The other day I saw a big crowd of people listening to a man with a megaphone shouting: "We need to get these Muslims out of our country, we need to stand united against Islam."

A lot of people seemed to be agreeing with him.

A few days after that I posted a video on Facebook about how the tabloids portray Muslims and the first person to comment was one of my childhood friends, a girl I used to play with all the time. She reeled off a list of radical preachers - as if they represent Islam. The conversation went on for a while, while I tried to educate her about Islam. But she was having none of it.

At one point she said: "You're welcome in this country but your religion isn't."

It got worse - the final thing she said to me was: "Muna, you have blood on your hands too."

I felt physically sick when I saw those words on my screen.

But Muslim women often experience abuse on social media these days.

Sonya is a 23-year-old British Asian Muslim. We sat and talked about our experiences, laughing at the silly assumptions people have about Islam - for example, that she'll have to have an arranged marriage. But it was less funny when she told me about the death threats she had received on social media.

"I was quite popular on Twitter, I used to put up information about Islam and things like that. But all of a sudden dozens of people started commenting and saying all sorts of horrible things, like: 'Go back to your country,' 'We're going to come and kill you,' 'We will hunt you down,' 'You are disgusting to look at.'"

I don't have any children but whenever I'm back home in Sheffield I always take my two nieces, 10-year-old Aaliyah and seven-year-old Amanie, out for ice cream.

As we approached the restaurant last time we heard police sirens - they had been called to the scene because a white man was yelling obscene Islamophobic language at two Muslim waitresses. I grabbed my two nieces and told them we'd come back later. As we walked off, Amanie looked at me and said: "Why is that man saying bad things about Muslims?"

How do you tell a seven-year-old that some people in this country will treat you unfairly because of your race and religion?

The first time I wore a headscarf to work, a woman who works in our building said I like looked like a North African kidnapper, in front of my entire team. I laughed it off, but I felt isolated and different from everyone in the room at that moment.

It's like people don't know how to react to us any more - why are people so anxious around Muslim women? We're not creatures from outer space, we're just women, and some of us choose to cover our hair. Why is it such a big deal?

Saadiya is a young British Asian woman who works in the City. Like me, the only time she wears a headscarf is when she is going to the mosque - but on those occasions she gets weird looks - looks I know all too well.

"When our family moved to this country they faced a lot of that, and it was a real struggle for them," Saadiya tells me. That was 30, 40, 50 years ago - we've come a long way since then, and yet it feels as if we are now going 10 steps back.

Even though I have a thick Yorkshire accent, I'm often made to feel like I don't belong. One minute I'm fighting off racists and then a second later I'm back in the ring defending my faith. It feels like I'm constantly justifying my own existence.

We are at risk of terror attacks like everybody else, but we also have to deal with the backlash. After major attacks we have to endure intimidating comments and fear personal attacks, all because of the actions of a terrorist. Being held accountable for the actions of extremists is a massive burden.

Some days I want to scream at the top of my voice that I have nothing to do with terrorism but it doesn't matter how loud I scream, I will always be tarred with the same brush.

All we want is to feel safe in our own country and to be accepted for who we are - because we are British and this is our home.

51 Muslim family in Canada killed in 'premeditated' truck attack
8 June 2021

London, Ontario police: "We believe the victims were targeted because of their Islamic faith" Four members of a Muslim family were killed in a "premeditated" vehicle attack on Sunday, Canadian police say.

The attack took place in the city of London, Ontario province. A boy aged nine, the family's only survivor, is in hospital with serious injuries.

A 20-year-old Canadian man has been charged with four counts of murder and one count of attempted murder.

The attack was the worst against Canadian Muslims since six people were killed in a Quebec City mosque in 2017.

"It is believed that these victims were targeted because they were Muslim," Det Supt Paul Waight told a news conference on Monday.

Police are weighing possible terrorism charges, he said, adding that it is believed to be a hate crime.

Who are the victims?

Two women - aged 74 and 44 - a 46-year-old man and a 15-year-old girl were all killed. They have not been named, in accordance with the wishes of the family. A nine-year-old boy was in hospital with serious but non-life-threatening injuries, said police.

Police named the alleged attacker as Nathaniel Veltman, 20, of London, Ontario. He was arrested without incident at a shopping centre about 6km (4.8 miles) from the crime scene.

It is not yet known if the suspect has ties to any hate groups, said Det Supt Waight. A makeshift memorial for the victims was set up at the scene of the attack. Many local residents were in shock after the attack. "There is no known previous connection between the suspect and the victims," Det Supt Waight said, adding that the suspect was wearing a vest that appeared to be "like body armour". Police said Mr Veltman had no previous convictions. Officials added that there was good weather and high visibility conditions when the black truck was seen mounting the kerb on Hyde Park Road at around 20:40 local time on Sunday. One witness told [CTV News](#) she had to shield her young daughter's eyes from the bodies. Another witness told CTV the scene was "just chaos". "There were people everywhere and running," said Paige Martin. "Citizens were trying to direct the emergency vehicles where to go. There was a lot of pointing and screaming and arm waving."

A [2016 census](#) found that London - a city about 200km (125 miles) south-west of Toronto - is growing increasingly diverse. One in five people was born outside of Canada, with Arabs being the area's largest minority group, and South Asians coming in a close second. 'Unspeakable hatred'

Ontario Premier Doug Ford was among those who paid tribute to the victims, tweeting: "Hate and Islamophobia have NO place in Ontario."

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau tweeted that he was "horrified" by the news. "To the loved ones of those who were terrorised by yesterday's act of hatred, we are here for you," he wrote.

52. Finsbury Park attack: More armed policing around Scotland's mosques

20 June 2017

The assistant chief constable's comments come after the attack near Finsbury Park mosque in London.

High-visibility police patrols are to be stepped up near Scotland's mosques after the Finsbury Park attack in north London.

Police Scotland said it had no intelligence about a specific threat, but said armed response vehicles would carry out patrols.

A man died and 10 people were injured after [a man drove a van into worshippers near Finsbury Park Mosque](#).

Eight people were taken to hospital after the terror attack.

A 48-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder. Police said all the victims of the attack, which took place outside Muslim Welfare House, were Muslim.

[Live: Latest updates on Finsbury Park attack](#)

[What we know so far](#)

[In pictures: Finsbury Park attack](#)

Police Scotland's Assistant Chief Constable Nelson Telfer said the force would be mounting additional patrols in the general vicinity of Scotland's 84 mosques and that could include armed response vehicles.

He said hate crimes were being monitored on a daily basis, but had shown no increase.

He added the force would not tolerate any attempt by any group to target members of any community in Scotland.

Police Scotland said earlier this month it would increase its number of armed officers
First Minister Nicola Sturgeon chaired a Scottish government resilience meeting following the attack.

Deputy First Minister John Swinney, Justice Secretary Michael Matheson, Communities Secretary Angela Constance, senior Police Scotland representatives and Scottish government officials took part in the meeting.

Ms Sturgeon said: "This was a horrific attack and my thoughts go out to everyone who has been affected. I know that everyone will be saddened to see yet another terrorist attack.

"I convened a resilience meeting this afternoon to ensure that we are closely monitoring the situation. While there is no intelligence of any specific threat to Scotland, Police Scotland remain vigilant and visible across communities to provide reassurance to members of the public.

"Muslim communities will understandably be anxious just now and it is in these moments that we must come together as a country and unite against extremism and hate from wherever it comes."

A man has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder following the attack in London
Speaking earlier on the John Beattie programme on BBC Radio Scotland, Mr Telfer said: "We don't have any specific information that Scotland is at risk of attack in any of our communities. I would ask everyone to go about their business as normal, remain alert but not alarmed.

"We have 84 mosques across Scotland and we have linked in with the Muslim Council for Scotland and it will be within the general vicinity of those sites that people will see increased patrols.

"What they will see is high-visibility policing and that may well include armed response vehicles and they may well see armed police officers.

"People should not be alarmed that, they should be reassured by their presence."

He added: "We have put our increased presence in place from the early hours of this morning and we will monitor that on a daily basis and our response will continue to be proportionate to the situation faced UK-wide."

Police Scotland said earlier this month it would increase its number of armed police officers by about a third following warnings that the country would not be able to cope with a major terror attack.

Speaking earlier on the BBC's Good Morning Scotland radio programme, Nabeel Shaikh, a former general secretary of Glasgow Mosque, said the authorities should do more to tackle extremist behaviour targeted at the Muslim community.

"Far-right extremism is just as dangerous as what we term the 'Islamic extremism' within our community," he said.

"Islamophobia is on the rise and I think the government need to do something more about the far-right extremism that is growing and festering within our communities."

53. France radical Islamists: Cabinet backs law targeting extremism

10 December 2020

The French cabinet has approved a bill aimed at tackling radical Islamists after a series of extremist attacks.

The draft law, part of a long-term drive by President Emmanuel Macron to uphold secular values, tightens rules on home-schooling and hate speech.

Some critics, both in France and abroad, have accused his government of using it to target religion.

But Prime Minister Jean Castex called it "a law of protection" that would free Muslims from the grip of radicals.

He insisted that the text was not "aimed against religions or against the Muslim religion in particular".

What is in the law?

The bill "supporting Republican principles" would tighten restrictions on online hate speech and ban the use of the internet to maliciously reveal personal details about other people.

This is seen as a response to the beheading of teacher Samuel Paty in October. Paty, 47, was killed near his school by a lone attacker after showing pupils cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

The investigation has revealed an online campaign had been launched against him.

The law also bans "clandestine" schools that promote Islamist ideology and tightens rules on home-schooling.

It would also reinforce the ban on polygamy by refusing residency to polygamous applicants. Doctors could be fined or banned for performing virginity tests on girls.

There are new rules on financial transparency for Muslim associations and a requirement that they sign up to France's republican values in return for funding.

A ban on officials wearing religious attire at work is being extended to transport workers and staff at swimming pools and markets.

Meanwhile, separate to the law, President Macron has agreed with France's Muslim Council (CFCM) for a national council of imams to be set up. The president is seeking to put a stop to hundreds of foreign imams practising in France.

Muslims under pressure to sign French values charter

Beheading of teacher deepens divisions in France

Why is the law being introduced?

The draft law has been under consideration for some time but recent Islamist attacks pushed it up the agenda.

Paty's murder was one of three attacks that outraged France. Three people were killed in stabbings at a church in Nice in October.

Two people were stabbed and seriously hurt in September in Paris near the former offices of Charlie Hebdo magazine, where Islamist militants carried out a deadly attack in 2015.

French President Emmanuel Macron says France 'will never give in' to extremism

President Macron is a staunch defender of French republican values including state secularism. He has described Islam as a religion "in crisis" and defended the right of Charlie Hebdo to publish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

France has an estimated five million Muslims, Europe's largest Muslim minority.

What has the reaction been?

Mr Macron has become the target of sharp criticism in several Muslim-majority countries.

Relations with Turkey, already strained, were further undermined with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan describing the legislation as an "open provocation" and saying Mr Macron was "mentally ill".

Demonstrations have been held in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Lebanon.

The US envoy on religious freedom, Sam Brownback, was also critical, saying: "When you get heavy-handed, the situation can get worse."

In France itself, some left-wing politicians have expressed concern that the legislation could be seen as stigmatising Muslims.

Le Monde newspaper says it could also antagonise other religious groups who practise home-schooling.

But the BBC's Lucy Williamson in Paris says pressure has grown on President Macron to act.

Tackling Islamist influence in the name of French secularism may be popular at home, but it's still a delicate operation for the state, she adds.

54. British Asians 'treated worse after terror attacks'

14 August 2018

Almost a third of British Asians say they have been treated worse following a terrorism attack, a ComRes survey for the Asian Network suggests.

Muslims (40%) were most likely to have experienced a rise in negative treatment, followed by Sikhs (26%).

The poll also implied British Asians were less likely than others in the UK to say immigration is too high.

More than 2,000 British Asians responded to the poll as part of the BBC's Big British Asian Summer.

Among those who said they had been treated worse, the most common observation was that they had been treated with more awkwardness (59%) and more suspicion (53%).

Just under a third said other people had been abusive, while 11% said they had been excluded from events.

British Asians 'more socially conservative'

The club celebrating London's LGBT South Asians

Boris Johnson comments 'will inflame Islamophobia'

Of the 2,026 respondents to the British Asian survey, 1,197 were born in the UK - with countries of origin being predominantly India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

Security think tank Quilliam director of policy David Toube said: "The purpose of terrorism is to sow division within our society. It should be a matter of concern to everybody when a large minority within any ethnic group feels that some in this country are against them.

"A vital part of fighting Islamist terrorism and extremism is ensuring that far-right reciprocal radicalisation also fails."

The survey will be discussed on a special live debate show on the Asian Network, on Tuesday from 22:00 BST until midnight.

Results from the survey also suggested British Asians were less likely than the wider population to say the level of immigration is too high - though 34% said it was.

When the wider population was asked the same question, 56% said they felt it was too high.

Only 8% of British Asians say immigration is too low, in comparison with 3% of the general population.

The survey also looked into sporting allegiances among British Asians.

With regards to international football, British Asians overwhelmingly support one of the UK nations.

More than three quarters of respondents said they supported one of England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, with only 6% supporting other countries.

However, when asked about allegiances in cricket, 19% support a UK team while 54% support

an Asian team.

The Big British Asian Summer is a season of programmes across the BBC this August, in which British Asians share their stories.

Video shows passenger racially abusing Birmingham taxi driver

4 June 2020

taxi driver with torrent of insults

A video has been released showing a taxi driver being subjected to a torrent of racist abuse by a passenger.

The clip, which has been viewed more than a million times on Twitter, shows driver Abid Mustafa, from Birmingham, remaining calm while being abused by the man, who swears throughout.

Father-of-four Mr Mustafa told the BBC he was called a "Muslim terrorist" and told "go back to your own country".

West Midlands Police is trying to trace the passenger.

Mr Mustafa said the abuse started as soon as the man was picked up in the Birmingham suburb of Erdington and demanded to sit in the front seat, despite Covid-19 precautions.

In the video the man can be seen saying: "Who do you think you are?

"You think you're something special - Pakistan?"

Abid Mustafa said the abuse had made him feel "hurt"

Mr Mustafa, who has transported vital Covid-19 samples for the University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust during the pandemic, warns his passenger he will put the recorded footage on Facebook, which the man, who can be heard apparently slurring his words, dismisses.

Latest news from the West Midlands

The 39-year-old driver said at one point the passenger said: "You're from Pakistan, and you've come here to rob our country, take our money to back home. You guys are terrorists."

He said it was "not easy to keep calm" but in his profession "we see this quite often". He hopes the footage, filmed on 15 May, will prompt councils to fit CCTV in all taxis.

West Midlands Police said: "We're aware of a video circulating online that shows a taxi driver being racially abused - we can confirm that we're investigating."

Officers have been in touch with Mr Mustafa and will be meeting him, the force added.

55.Prevent scheme: Report highlights Muslims' 'persecution' fears

30 July 2018

The Manchester Arena attack in May 2017 left 22 dead and hundreds injured

There is a "genuine fear" that the government's counter-terrorism strategy is targeting Muslims in Greater Manchester, according to a new report.

A Shared Future was commissioned by the region's mayor Andy Burnham after the Manchester Arena attack in May 2017.

The report said a lack of information about the Prevent scheme had led to a "fear of persecution" among Muslims.

Security Minister Ben Wallace said the biggest challenge to Prevent was "inaccuracies" in perception.

Prevent's critics claim it "disproportionately targets" Muslims.

Prevent is part of the government's counter-terrorism strategy and is designed to support people at risk of carrying out terrorist activities.

The report was set up to consider how to tackle extremism, social exclusion and radicalisation across Greater Manchester in the wake of the Arena attack on 22 May 2017, which killed 22 people.

It said there was "no causal pathway that leads to extremism" and it was "unwise" to attempt to identify vulnerable groups.

It also recommended there should be an effort to move Prevent away from police and law enforcement to the safeguarding of people at risk of radicalisation.

Manchester Arena bombing: What have we learned?

Confusion hampered arena bomb response

Reality Check: What is the Prevent strategy?

Mr Burnham said he wanted to "challenge false perceptions" of Prevent despite previously saying it should be scrapped.

Manchester Arena suicide bomber Salman Abedi was not known to the Prevent scheme, Greater Manchester Police had previously said.

However, two people who knew him while he was at college made separate calls to an anti-terrorism hotline about his extremist views.

'Division and alienation'

The report from the Greater Manchester Preventing Hateful Extremism and Promoting Social Cohesion Commission said the current strategy was "vital to community safety" and "vulnerable people were being safeguarded".

But it said much of the positive work "was not being appropriately disseminated into communities".

The mayor said Prevent was "working well" in many areas but he accepted the need to provide more information about it.

Prevent has been backed by senior police figures, but criticised by some who said it was "counter-productive".

Siema Iqbal, a Manchester GP who is the co-founder of Advancing Voices of Women Against Islamophobia, said it was "almost offensive" to suggest Muslims were critical of Prevent because of a lack of understanding.

She said the Muslim community was "being disproportionately targeted by a strategy that has repeatedly been shown to be counter-productive".

In 2016, Mr Burnham, then shadow home secretary, called for a cross-party review of the strategy, The Guardian reported.

Shortly after the Manchester attack, he said he "didn't back away" from the comments, saying Prevent had led to "a sense of division and alienation" among some British Muslims.

56How Muslims became the good guys on TV

21 June 2019

Hit show Homeland is about to end, after many years casting Islam as the enemy. But in its place has come a wave of thrillers portraying Muslims as heroes, writes Mohammad Zaheer.

One of Hollywood's many ugly truths is that, for all its claims to be a progressive industry, it has relied heavily on racial and ethnic stereotypes, catering to and shaping the prejudices that are prevalent amongst its audience. This is especially true when it comes to who it chooses as its villains.

Even though the Cold War ended decades ago, Russians have remained a favoured variety of

bad guy, and Germans have also had a rough ride thanks to the countless number of Nazi evildoers who have appeared on screen since World War Two.

More like this

- [Hollywood's favourite racist stereotype](#)
- [How pop culture embraced sexuality without labels](#)
- [Big Little Lies Series 2 review](#)

But since the turn of the millennium, the demographic who has undoubtedly been the greatest single target for demonisation are Muslim-Arabs. Even before the events of 9/11, they found themselves portrayed variously as sleazy oil rich sex pests, exotic subservient women, misogynists and/or militant terrorists. But the tragedy of September 11 2001 and the subsequent war on terror only exacerbated their negative typecasting.

Hit thriller Homeland, which ends this year, has been accused of being one of the most bigoted shows on television for its portrayal of Muslims (Credit: Alamy)

Despite the fact that members of the far right and white supremacist movements are responsible for carrying out the overwhelming majority of extremist-related murders in the US in the last 15 years, according to Hollywood it has been Muslims who the public have had to fear the most. Thanks to a spate of post-9/11 thriller series like 24, or Sleeper Cell, it seemed like US television had made Islam – and its adherents – enemy number one.

The most Islamophobic show on TV?

However no show has encapsulated former US President George W Bush's oppositional "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists" outlook quite like the Showtime series Homeland, where Muslim characters have been either terrorists or willing collaborators with the US government. It returns later this year for an eighth and final series – and for many in the Muslim community, its end can't come soon enough.

It's depressing how little importance Homeland has given to getting basic details about the Islamic world right

Since it premiered in 2011, the drama has proved to be one of the most bigoted shows on television. Apart from incorporating every single negative stereotype about Muslims one could think of, it has gone out of its way to paint them as a hidden danger to Americans.

For a show that has won critical acclaim and became a pop culture phenomenon – even former President Obama was a huge fan – it's depressing how little importance the showrunners have given to getting basic details about the Islamic world right over the years. There was an inexplicable scene involving the first series' chief antagonist, US military Muslim convert Nicholas Brody, burying the Koran because it had been 'desecrated'; Arab characters have been given Persian names, and the beautiful and picturesque city of Islamabad was depicted as a "grimy hellhole and war zone". The list goes on.

Riz Ahmed (pictured in film Closed Circuit) is one of the world's highest-profile Muslim actors and gave an inspiring speech about representation in 2017 (Credit: Alamy)

Sue Obeidi, the Director of the Hollywood Bureau for America's Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), notes that the entertainment industry's promotion of these negative stereotypes has a detrimental impact on Western society because it "creates a situation where someone – who is not of that faith or that community – can form opinions of that community based on information that is so stereotypical and false that it can lead to horrible consequences".

Studies have shown a direct correlation between people's exposure to negative portrayals of Muslims in the media and their willingness to support policies that are harmful to Muslims or curtail their rights – as well as for military action against them. On the other hand, exposure to

positive footage, or direct contact or with Muslims, has been shown to have had the opposite effect.

The Hollywood star taking a stand

But, as Obeidi explains, authentic representation is important not only because it influences how other people see Muslims – but also how Muslims see themselves. In 2017, the problem was brought home by Riz Ahmed, star of *Rogue One* and *Venom*, and perhaps the most prominent Muslim actor working in Hollywood today. In a speech at Britain's House of Commons, he warned that a lack of diverse representation on television screens was leaving Muslims vulnerable to extremist propaganda. "In the mind of the Isis recruit, he's a version of James Bond, right? Everyone thinks they're the good guy. Have you seen some of the Isis propaganda videos? They're cut like action movies. Where's the counter-narrative? Where are we telling these kids that they can be heroes in our stories?"

People are looking for the message that they belong. They want to feel represented. In that task we have failed – Riz Ahmed

Outfits like the Islamic State group frame their recruits as Muslim heroes, in a conscious effort to take advantage of that gap in representation by the West.

"People are looking for the message that they belong, that they are part of something, that they are seen and heard and that despite, or perhaps because of, their experience, they are valued," said Ahmed. "They want to feel represented. In that task we have failed."

NCIS: Los Angeles introduced a hijab-wearing character, Special Agent Fatima Namazi, but took care not to make religion the focal point of her role (Credit: Getty)

Might the end of *Homeland* also mark the end of an Islamophobic TV era? Certainly, US television networks and showrunners have begun to take note of Muslim concerns. In the last few years, a wave of US thrillers have introduced Muslim heroes into their storylines, perhaps in a self-conscious attempt to mitigate the previous negativity.

The new Muslim heroes

Since it began in 2003, the NCIS police procedural franchise has courted a lot of controversy when it comes to its portrayals of Muslims, including Muslim-Americans, with critics accusing it of reinforcing the notion that every Muslim is a potential terrorist. However, it has done some commendable course correcting on its spin-off, *NCIS: Los Angeles*, now in its 10th series.

One of its protagonists, Sam Hanna (a Senior NCIS Special Agent and former Navy Seal played by LL Cool J) definitively came out as Muslim in the season 9 episode *The Silo*, making him one of the first Muslim lead characters on a major US television series. However his faith is seen as only one aspect of a man who is wholesome, patriotic and all-American.

In NCIS: Los Angeles, Hijab wearing Agent Fatima Namazi was fleshed out as an authentic Beverly Hills girl, with expensive tastes

This year, they also introduced a hijab-wearing character, Special Agent Fatima Namazi - yet took great care not to make her religion the focal point of the role. Instead they added in dialogue that fleshed her out as an authentic Beverly Hills girl, with expensive tastes, who recommends "Madeo for Italian food, Murat's for your tailoring" and "of course, pizza from Mulberrys". In fact, the only reference to her hijab was made by a judgemental Muslim extremist, who sneered that she wore a hijab, but was "nothing more than a spoiled American girl".

Similarly, *Blindspot*, a US crime drama series which has just been renewed for its fifth and final season on NBC, also has a hijab-wearing character, Afreen, who works for the FBI. But no unnecessary attention is drawn to her headscarf, and the character is more defined by her

dorky jokes. It's a step forward – for while not as harmful as overt demonisation, the constant subtle exoticisation of Muslims – via the emphasis on items or garb such as hijabs, keffiyehs, prayer mats and prayer beads – that even well-intentioned directors or howrunners are guilty of, is equally unhelpful.

Amazon's Tom Clancy adaptation Jack Ryan has recast Ryan's boss, CIA director James Greer (played by Wendell Pierce, right) as an African-American convert to Islam (Credit: Alamy)

The normalisation of these hijab-wearing female characters also stands in stark contrast to how Homeland presented Fara, a Muslim CIA agent, who pointedly got lambasted by her superior, Saul – often seen as the moral compass of the show – for disrespecting her colleagues by wearing a hijab because it was a symbolic reminder of their enemies. Tellingly, as the show progressed, and she was shown to be a committed agent, she stopped wearing the hijab without much explanation.

Muslim and patriotic

Another show that has taken steps to correct old prejudices is Amazon's reboot of Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan series, which launched last year and has recast the character of Ryan's boss, CIA director James Greer (Wendell Pierce) as an African-American convert to Islam. In the first series, there was a memorable scene where he reprimanded a member of French law enforcement, who didn't realise he was Muslim, for holding Islamophobic views.

The presence of such Muslim characters, patriotic and innately good, as heroes or in positions of leadership, feels like an important cultural step – a conscious statement of support by Hollywood for the fact that not only can Muslims align with American values, but they are putting their lives on the line to safeguard them every day. Additionally, the writing of these shows has evolved to demonstrate that people who practice Islam peacefully and positively are the norm, rather than the exception. Homeland, for example, has exploited stereotypes even when purporting to portray a 'good' Muslim character such as Danny Galvez: a CIA agent who was immediately brought under suspicion after he revealed his religion. He was then proved loyal to his country and fellow agents after all – as if such a development should constitute a 'twist'.

The industry will typecast you until they ethically can't do it anymore. There needs to be a cultural change – Zeeko Zaki

Another show making waves in this area, becoming CBS's most-watched new series last year, is FBI. It is the first major action series on US television to cast a Muslim-Arab actor to play one of its protagonists. Zeeko Zaki stars as Special Agent OA Zidan, a character who also happens to be of the same faith and ethnicity as the actor.

In an interview with Harper's Bazaar, Zaki revealed that before his big break, he was constantly offered stereotypical roles playing terrorists or bad guys. "The industry will typecast you until they ethically can't do it anymore. There needs to be a cultural change."

But while this progress in Muslim representation on the small screen is very welcome, it's mostly been confined to the thriller or geo-political genre. Stories of regular, everyday Muslims are still hard to come by.

Hulu series Ramy is a game-changing new comedy about a millennial Muslim (Credit: Alamy)

"Things will improve both on screen and off screen when Muslim writers are commissioned to tell their own stories," say Shaf Choudry and Sadia Habib, the creators of the Riz Test – a Muslim equivalent of the Bechdel test inspired by Riz Ahmed's speech. If there is any identifiably

Muslim character in a movie, the Riz Test team evaluate whether the character talks about, is a victim, or the perpetrator of terrorism; whether the character is presented as irrationally angry, superstitious, culturally backwards, anti-modern or presented as a threat to the Western way of life; or whether the character is a misogynistic male or an oppressed female. Displaying even one of these characteristics means the film fails the test.

"In order for things to change, the industry needs to understand the scale of the problem, something that the Riz Test hopes to achieve," they say.

Authenticity over virtue

Reza Aslan, a bestselling US author and TV producer, argues that what's needed is not more positive characterisations of Muslims, as such, but more authentic and nuanced portrayals. "The goal that we need to be shooting for is portrayals of characters whose Muslim identity is just one factor in the multiplicity of identities that they have that give them their motivations," says Aslan.

However he believes that such change is already happening. "There's no question about it," he says. "It's improving in the sense that more Muslim storytellers, more Muslim actors, Muslim writers are being given opportunities to tell their stories. But most importantly it's improving because we're seeing more Muslim execs and more Muslim producers working in studios: in other words, more Muslim decision makers. And that, I think, is what is having probably the biggest and most profound difference in how Muslims are portrayed in Hollywood."

The reality is, this journey in the industry is not a destination. No community that is marginalised is going to arrive at the perfect representation for a while – Sue Obeidi, Director of the Hollywood Bureau for America's Muslim Public Affairs Council

Obeidi agrees. "I used to say we're turning the corner – now I say we turned the corner," she says. "We are seeing more Muslim characters and narratives, especially on TV. The debut of Hulu's *Ramy* is a game changer." *Ramy* is a new comedy about a millennial Muslim, starring Egyptian American comedian Ramy Youssef, which premiered last month to rave reviews, earning comparisons to Lena Dunham's *Girls*.

Obeidi acknowledges that there is still a long way to go for Muslim experiences on screen to become mainstream or normalised. "The reality is, this journey in the industry is not a destination. No community that is marginalised is going to arrive at the perfect representation for a while. Being included is important, but being included in a fair and nuanced manner is even more important."

So, moving beyond the idea of Muslims as good or bad guys altogether, shows depicting regular people who happen to be Muslim, like *Ramy* and Aziz Ansari's *Master of None* – or movies like *The Big Sick* – are imperative in bringing about this much-needed change. "Hollywood doesn't have good or bad motivations," says Aslan. "Hollywood has one motivation. A single motivation. And that's to make money. That's all it thinks about. It's all it cares about. It doesn't want to do good in the world. It doesn't want to do bad in the world. It wants to make money. And so, if you can convince Hollywood – and this is something that I've been doing for the last 10 years – that you can make money by not pedalling in stereotypes about brown people, then they'll stop doing so."

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57. London mayor urged to do more to tackle Islamophobia

3 July 2025

Anna O'Neill BBC News

London Assembly Member Hina Bokhari says she has suffered a barrage of online and in-person abuse because she is a Muslim

"I've been called names on the train. I've been told to go home. I've been told I'm not welcome, that I'm not British."

Liberal Democrat London Assembly Member Hina Bokhari - the first woman from an ethnic minority to lead a group on the Assembly - says she and other Muslims are facing increasing levels of Islamophobia.

Ms Bokhari says that despite a promise by Mayor of London Sir Sadiq Khan to address this in the wake of the anti-immigrant riots last summer, and tensions over the conflict in the Middle East, no Islamophobia training has yet been forthcoming for those working across the Greater London Authority (GLA).

A spokesperson for Sir Sadiq said the GLA had mandatory training courses in place for staff to tackle all racism, prejudice and unconscious bias.

'Couldn't leave my house'

Ms Bokhari told BBC London: "I really do not want to be talking about Islamophobia. I want to be talking about young people and their future in the city, I want to be talking about the need for more homes, the fact that there is a welfare system that we need to fix, championing disabled people.

"But the reason I'm pushing this is because there hasn't been any training across the Greater London Authority," explains Ms Bokhari, who taught for 20 years in some of London's most deprived schools and was recently appointed OBE.

"It should have happened immediately after the riots in the summer. That was such a pivotal moment when Islamophobia was seen at its worst. I knew, as a Muslim, that I couldn't leave my house that day.

"The threat of being attacked because of who I was, being the colour that I was, the faith that I was. I've never had that experience before in my life growing up in this city.

"There were images of people throwing bricks at mosques and setting buildings on fire. I never thought I would see that day."

In a letter to the mayor of London, Ms Bokhari said the threat to Muslims was growing

Much of the aggression last summer was aimed at Muslim communities, after false information spread online about the race and religion of the man - later identified as Axel Rudakubana - who murdered three little girls at a dance class in Southport.

The war in the Middle East is also a trigger.

In the wake of the 7 October 2023 Hamas attacks, and subsequent conflict in Gaza, Ms Bokhari was offered training in combating antisemitism, which she willingly undertook, along with many of her colleagues.

"I'm really pleased I did antisemitism training; learning what it's like to have that lived experience of being Jewish was so helpful. We need that for Muslims, too."

But no specific Islamophobia training has been given by either the GLA, the Metropolitan Police or the London Fire Brigade.

In a letter to Sir Sadiq, Ms Bokhari said: "The threats we face as Muslim Londoners are not abstract or hypothetical - they are immediate, real, and growing.

"For many of us, this is not merely about perception or politics. It is about safety. Muslims today live in legitimate fear. Whether walking down the street, engaging online, or simply existing visibly as Muslims, we find ourselves bracing for abuse, harassment or worse."

'Go home'

In 2019, the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims proposed the following definition: "Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness."

In February, a group was established to provide the government with a working definition of Islamophobia.

Statistics published by the Met Police for the calendar year of 2024 show that hate crime fell by 16%, with just under 22,300 offences recorded. Islamophobic hate crime in the same timeframe was down 2%, with about 1,350 offences recorded.

Antisemitic crimes reported were down 14% in the same period, with just over 1,400 offences recorded. Overall, faith crimes were down 8.7%, with 3,229 offences recorded.

Tell Mama, an organisation that supports victims of Islamophobia, recorded 6,313 cases of anti-Muslim hate in 2024, a 43% increase on the previous year - with 5,837 of the reports verified by the group.

It documented a steep rise in offline incidents, with 3,680 cases reported - a 72% increase on the number two years ago.

Iman Atta, from Tell Mama, said its figures were higher than those recorded by the police because "as a victim support service, Muslim communities can report anti-Muslim hate and Islamophobic incidents to Tell Mama in confidence".

"With victims' consent, we flag and refer matters to the police where appropriate," she added.

Ms Bokhari believes Islamophobia has been getting steadily worse since 9/11, and was exacerbated by the 7/7 Tube and bus attacks and then by the conflict in the Middle East.

"In recent months it has definitely got worse. I was recently abused at a surgery where I had a woman who asked me if I was a Muslim and then began a tirade of ranting and screaming at me, saying Muslims should all die.

"I was at London Bridge station when someone came up to me and said a racist word to me and told me to 'go home'.

"Islamophobia is becoming so normalised that people think they can say these things to you."

'Extremely concerning'

Last year, Tell Mama recorded the highest number of anti-Muslim hate cases since its founding in 2011.

In its report, the organisation said there had been a "surge in rhetoric that falsely portrays Muslims as terrorists or terrorist sympathisers" following the Israel-Gaza conflict and Southport murders.

A government spokesperson described the findings as "extremely concerning" and said it would "seek to stamp out anti-Muslim hatred and racism wherever it occurs".

"The mayor of London has been providing moral leadership on tackling anti-Muslim hatred and antisemitism," said Iman Atta from Tell Mama.

"He convened the first-ever engagement between Jewish and Muslim communities post the October 7th attacks and the ongoing war in Israel-Palestine.

"One of the things I'd hope from the mayor," continued Ms Atta," is to back and endorse training on anti-Muslim hatred to understand the dynamics around it and how the Greater London Authority members can understand it, can challenge it, can prevent it and can call it out."

Muslims raised fears over their safety in the wake of the riots seen last August

A spokesperson for the mayor said: "Islamophobia has absolutely no place in London and the mayor continues to ensure the police take a zero-tolerance approach.

"Sadiq has invested a record £15.9m investment – more than any other mayor – to tackle hate crime in all its forms in our communities and strengthen Londoners' resilience to extremism, help stop the spread of hateful narratives and safeguard vulnerable young Londoners from radicalisation and misinformation online.

"At a time of rising tension and online hate, the mayor's Shared Endeavour Fund is tackling Islamophobia and other hate crime as a priority area, delivering programmes to tens of thousands of young Londoners over the last five years.

"The GLA also has mandatory training courses for staff to tackle all racism, prejudice and unconscious bias. The mayor will continue to do everything possible to ensure Londoners of all backgrounds and faiths feel welcome and safe, building a better London for everyone."

'We need to eradicate Islamophobia'

But Ms Bokhari doesn't think the mayor is doing enough to address Islamophobia specifically.

"We need to eradicate Islamophobia, and that will only happen through training. I don't think people really understand what Islamophobia is, or believe it exists. Some of the attacks I've been getting online have been about the fact that people think there is no such thing as Islamophobia.

"If we had training then at least people would know what we mean by Islamophobia."

Asked whether she was surprised that no specific training had been forthcoming on Islamophobia despite the fact that London has a Muslim mayor, Ms Bokhari replied: "I look forward to working with the mayor to make sure that there is action across the GLA.

"I want the mayor to implement this training not because he is Muslim, but because he is the mayor."

58Our mosque was threatened after the 7/7 bombings'

11 July 2025

Shabnam Mahmood,BBC Newsand

Jess Warren,BBC News

Dilowar Khan said the East London Mosque received threats after the 7/7 attacks

On 7 July 2005, a series of explosions on London's public transport system killed 52 people and injured more than 770.

The actions of the bombers, all British Muslims, affected Muslim communities - both immediately and in the long term.

Dilowar Khan, then an executive director at East London Mosque, described "a very tense time for all of us". He said the community felt anti-Muslim hatred, with women in particular afraid to leave their homes; that the mosque received "a number of bomb threats", and its windows were smashed.

Another incident involved "a good number of men who came down and urinated in front of the main entrance".

Although the mosque publicly condemned the attacks, Mr Khan said many Muslims in the

community faced increased scrutiny, suspicion and hostility.

"Shortly after the incident, we received a couple of bomb threats," he said. "I remember it was two Fridays actually. Friday is the busiest day for the mosque and so we had to call the police.

"We also received white powder by post, and again we had to call the police.

"Fortunately, it wasn't anthrax."

'The 7/7 London bombings made me feel helpless'

He said many Muslim women were "afraid to go on the bus and the underground" even though one of the congregation of his mosque, a young woman in her 20s, was killed in the bombing.

"Women's hijabs were pulled, they were spat on.

"I remember one incident where a woman was refused entry on the bus. The bus driver, he was probably Islamophobic or racist.

"My own sisters, my wife, they felt very scared to go out."

'Alienated and attacked'

Shahmina, a pharmacist, was just a teenager when the bombings took place.

"I was 13. And all of a sudden I started feeling quite alienated," she said. "Suddenly my faith felt like something that could be attacked.

"We felt afraid to openly be Muslim.

"We would avoid certain areas if we knew there wouldn't be a huge amount of Muslims there, because then we felt isolated.

"It was like you could become a prime target for Islamophobia and racism.

"It became rife after these attacks because what we were seeing in the media was a depiction that these attacks were central to being a Muslim and being Islamic and it wasn't - these attacks were isolated to individuals."

Shahmina said she felt scared to represent her faith after the bombings

Two decades on, London's Muslim community has more than doubled to 1.3m people, but for Shahmina, it is still difficult.

"I'm feeling it coming back again with the resurgence of what's happening in the international political sphere," she said.

"I think relations can improve if we start changing the language we use around Muslims and people of different ethnic groups.

"If we shift how we talk about them when a crime is committed, we may find that actually the general public will have a different view on our community."

Imam Shaqib Juneja said hosting interfaith events became important after the attacks

At the East London Mosque, community leaders regularly hold interfaith events and open days in the hopes of promoting a better understanding between people of different faiths.

Imam Shaqib Juneja is a former teacher and now works with a Muslim youth group.

"We don't want people to feel that we're different," he said.

"That's an important point, because one of the things that happened after 7/7 was a lot of the talk that was happening from politicians, from the media, about the portrayal of Muslims, perhaps even on the BBC - it made Muslims feel we are different.

"It's not the community that has the problem, it's a few individuals.

"But when it's portrayed as the community having the problem, people start to feel there is a

lack of trust.

"We're people just like everybody else. We're human beings. There are more things that we have in common than actually make us different."

59. Channel 4 show about Muslims accused of 'brownface'

My Week as a Muslim follows a family in Manchester

Channel 4 is facing criticism for dressing a white woman as a Pakistani Muslim for a new documentary.

My Week as a Muslim sees her integrated into a Manchester family after May's terrorist attack in the city.

Katie Freeman, an NHS healthcare assistant with professed anti-Muslim views, is made-over with prosthetics, brown skin and a hijab.

Fozia Khan, the show's producer, said it was designed to show what it's like to be a Muslim in Britain.

"The programme allowed Katie to meaningfully walk in the shoes of someone from a different background," she said.

According to Khan, it enabled Freeman "to experience what it is like to be part of the British Pakistani Muslim community rather than observe it as an outsider."

My Week as a Muslim has yet to be broadcast, but a trailer was released this week.

Freeman spent the week with the family of British-Pakistani Saima Alvi, a teacher and mother of five.

It shows the Manchester family dealing with everyday life immediately after the terrorist attack at the Manchester Arena, in which 22 people were killed.

Social media users have criticised it for using 'brownface' and have asked why the documentary couldn't show a Muslim family without involving a white woman.

60. Integrate? Europe's Muslims are damned if we do and damned if we don't

This article is more than 1 year old

The new allegation in Islamophobic discourse is that even Muslims who appear 'well-integrated' hate the west

Thu 2 Jan 2025

Reporting on the rise of anti-Muslim hostility across Europe means repeatedly hearing generalisations about Europe's 25 million Muslims. We are – all of us – too religious, easily drawn to extremism and terrorism, we live in parallel societies and Muslim women, especially those who wear the hijab, are victims of fanatical patriarchal oppression or foot soldiers in a drive to replace indigenous white Europeans.

Again and again, European governments instruct us to integrate: come in, step out of the shadows and join the sunny European mainstream. We should be less "foreign", more European, adopt "European values" (just which ones is left unclear, but drinking beer and eating pork seem to be among them), get an education and then – and only then – actively participate in the political, economic and social life of our "host societies" which, according to Hungary's Viktor Orbán, are purely Christian.

It is getting worse. The EU's Fundamental Rights Agency recently released grim findings on the steep rise in anti-Muslim racism across Europe, with almost half of Europe's Muslims facing discrimination because of their religion, skin colour and ethnic or immigrant background and, for the past 14 months, also because of societal tensions linked to the Israel-Gaza war.

Anti-Muslim racism has certainly gained traction since Israel unleashed what Amnesty

International now calls a genocide in Gaza after the 7 October Hamas attack, and some EU governments' insistence on equating criticism of the Israeli government with antisemitism. Yet as I discovered when researching the recent Islamophobic frenzy in the Netherlands after violence in Amsterdam between Maccabi Tel Aviv football fans and local people, there is a shriller and more insidious twist to the conventional civilisational, Eurocentric narrative. The subtext is that there is no longer a distinction between bad and good Muslims. Those who are part of the mainstream are just as much of a problem as those who are supposedly unadapted and antisocial.

Vitriolic debates in the Netherlands illustrate this development in the anti-Muslim discourse. Geert Wilders, the far-right anti-Islam Dutch MP who presides – unofficially – over the rightwing Dutch coalition government, falsely claimed that “Moroccans” were responsible for the violence in Amsterdam. He has threatened to deport and strip the citizenship of those deemed to have instigated it. The Dutch prime minister, Dick Schoof, insisted “we have to get rid of antisemitism” through “better integration, better child rearing and education”.

The secretary of state for benefits, Nora Achahbar, who is of Moroccan descent, resigned over what she described as racist remarks made by members of the government. The centre-right People's party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), which is part of the four-party coalition, has tabled a parliamentary motion asking the government to “keep details of cultural and religious norms and values of Dutch people with a migration background”.

Amid the war of words, Wierd Duk, a veteran commentator at the Telegraaf newspaper, suggested that the “real problem” with Muslims in the Netherlands – and by extrapolation across Europe – is that antisemitism and “hatred of the west” are instilled even in “well-integrated Muslims, who are highly educated, who have positions, who have columns, who work at universities”.

Duk's comments have been rebutted by, among others, the Dutch-Moroccan historian Nadia Bouras, who said in an interview that such “malicious” remarks were meant to keep Muslims in a constant state of being “foreign”, even though they're not. “It's meant to discipline, humiliate, and – now it has become clear – punish them by taking away their nationality if they don't do what you want.”

A Dutch Socialist member of the European parliament, Mohammed Chahim, tells me it is also a way of undermining Muslims' achievements, role and influence.

In the EU's Brussels bubble, an influential communications specialist tells me that Muslims struggle to be accepted. “No matter how well somebody speaks the language, gets the degrees, adopts the right dress codes, some opportunistic politician will point to something and declare it an ‘ethnic quirk’ that is incompatible with European values.”

All of this is depressing enough, but the debate on European Muslims – and not just among far-right politicians – has taken on even darker undertones. The accusations of Muslims being permanent outsiders are a new version of what was once said about Europe's Jews. “Now it is the Muslims who are accused of not fitting in, who have become ‘the other’ to Europe,” agrees Farid Hafez, the Austrian political scientist. “It is like we are Europe's new Jews,” the human rights activist Shaza Alrihawi, who lives in Germany, tells me.

As a new year begins, I tell myself this too will pass. Europeans will get used to living with diversity, the far right will find other hobbyhorses and European politicians will stop their carelessly divisive toxic talk.

And I often lose hope. The backlash always gets worse after a terror incident such as the recent attack in Magdeburg, which is being exploited by those determined to place all people of Muslim heritage, whatever their ideological preferences, under suspicion.

Yet, on a good day I believe attitudes will change as more Muslims speak out, work their

way up the ladder and, in Chahim's words, make it clear that "we know our fundamental rights, we know the law and we are successful". When that happens, European Muslims may finally be recognised as individuals and citizens in all their complicated diversity instead of being reduced to simplistic caricatures and Orientalised stereotypes. Perhaps then, we will no longer be damned if we integrate and damned if we don't.

APPENDIX 2. CORPUS OF NEWS ARTICLE HEADLINES

No	Title of the Articles	Date
The Daily Mail		
1	Scapegoating Muslims fuels spike in attacks on women	13 March 2025
2	'Not just lip service': Muslim community wants action	12 September 2025
3	'Fearful' Muslim Australians demand action, not words	13 September 2025
4	Macron warns against religious hate after Muslim killed in mosque	27 April 2025
5	French mosque stabbing suspect remains at large after killing Muslim worshipper	27 April 2025
6	Trump administration labels 3 Muslim Brotherhood branches as terrorist organizations	13 January 2026
7	Texas governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization	19 November 2025
8	Florida governor declares Muslim civil rights group a terrorist organization	9 December 2025
9	Islamophobia victim terrified, police arrest suspect	19 February 2025
10	Muslim civil rights group sues Texas for labeling it a terrorist organization	21 November 2025
11	What to know about the Muslim Brotherhood after the US terrorist designation	13 January 2026
12	Anger as Liberals call for Muslim checks to stem terror	27 January 2026
13	Macron urges action on Muslim Brotherhood movement	21 May 2025
14	The Spanish town that 'banned' Islamic festivals: Inside the historic city where officials say they're 'defending local traditions' but Muslims say it is 'racist'	11 August 2025
15	Islam Channel facing Ofcom investigation over claims it incites extremism and breaches rules on impartiality.	16 March 2025
16	Ex-terrorist who praised jihad as a 'compassionate act' set to be UK councillor	31 January 2026
17	France looks to ban children from wearing Muslim headscarf as government tackles 'political Islamism'	21 May 2025
18	Youth arrested over online mosque massacre threat	4 March 2025
19	Anglo Jihadi' accused of terror plan 'not just online fantasist', trial told	27 October 2025
20	Muslim rights group sues Florida Gov. DeSantis over 'foreign terrorist' label	16 December 2025
The Guardian		
21	Islamophobia has surged since the Bondi attack. Australia's Muslim community should not have to endure this abuse	2 Jan 2026

22	Systemic Islamophobia' fuels terror attacks, say Muslim leaders	18 Mar 2019
23	Terror attacks by Muslims receive 357% more press attention, study finds	20 Jul 2018
24	Retribution fears as Australian Muslims see surge in Islamophobic hate since Bondi terror attack	24 Dec 2025
25	We've got more in common than what divides us': a Muslim-Jewish kitchen in Nottingham counters hate and hunger	21 Dec 2025
26	Democrats condemn Republicans calling for Muslim ban on the heels of Australia shooting	16 Dec 2025
27	Florida declares US Muslim civil rights group a foreign terrorist organization	9 Dec 2025
28	Greg Abbott's Cair 'terror' label stokes legal fight in Texas's long struggle with Islamophobia	5 Dec 2025
29	Head of UK government's anti-Islamophobia partner 'refused service in shop for being Muslim'	31 Oct 2025
30	Proposed UK Islamophobia definition allows for right to criticise religion, source says	20 Oct 2025
31	Donald Trump's sharia law attack on Sadiq Khan outrages Labour MPs	23 Sep 2025
32	Premier condemns religious intolerance as Muslims in Queensland face heightened 'fear and anxiety'	9 Sep 2025
33	Spanish town ordered to scrap religious festivals ban mainly impacting Muslims	12 Aug 2025
34	Footballer, journalist, fashionista: whatever French Muslims do, we're treated as the enemy within	4 Aug 2025
35	We are in a dangerous place': British Muslims on the fallout from 7/7 attack 20 years on	6 Jul 2025
36	Mamdani faces barrage of Islamophobic attacks after New York primary success	26 Jun 2025
37	I'm a brown, Muslim European. For people like me, these EU elections are terrifying	28 May 2024
38	Were two Muslim women in east London run over because they were wearing hijabs?	26 Feb 2024
39	Half of Conservative party members believe Islam is threat, poll finds	30 Sep 2020
40	Detention of Muslims at UK ports and airports 'structural Islamophobia'	
BBC		
41	France launches checks on dozens of mosques	3 December 2020
42	Finsbury Park attack: Theresa May's statement in full	19 June 2017
43	France targets radical Islamism amid Turkey row	27 October 2020
44	White House defends its silence on mosque bomb	9 August 2017
45	Trump travel ban comes into effect for six countries	July 2017
46	New Zealand mosque shootings: Welsh police step up patrols	16 March 2019

47	Muslim students at University of Connecticut received threats over Israel-Gaza war	10 November 2023
48	Quebec City mosque shooting: Six killed, eight wounded	30 January 2017
49	Why is Bulgaria making a big fuss about the niqab?	24 May 2016
50	This is my country, too	31 October 2017
51	Muslim family in Canada killed in 'premeditated' truck attack	8 June 2021
52	Finsbury Park attack: More armed policing around Scotland's mosques	20 June 201
53	France radical Islamists: Cabinet backs law targeting extremism	10 December 2020
54	British Asians 'treated worse after terror attacks'	14 August 2018
55	Prevent scheme: Report highlights Muslims' 'persecution' fears	30 July 2018
56	How Muslims became the good guys on TV	21 June 2019
57	London mayor urged to do more to tackle Islamophobia	3 July 2025
58	Our mosque was threatened after the 7/7 bombings'	11 July 2025
59	Channel 4 show about Muslims accused of 'brownface'	20 October 2017
60	Integrate? Europe's Muslims are damned if we do and damned if we don't	2 Jan 2025