Q3 2026

MONITOR ANALYZE DOCUMENT

Media performance in the United States

A quarterly monitoring report on the representation of Arabs and Muslims in U.S. media — documented incidents, case studies, and analysis, with a public source for every figure.

JUL – SEP 2026
mediajusticenetwork.org

Who We Are

We are a group of media professionals from diverse backgrounds who are tired of the way minorities are misrepresented in the media. We've had enough of the stereotypes and negative narratives that perpetuate in movies, TV shows, news reports, and social media.

As members of minorities ourselves, we understand the frustration and pain that comes with being misrepresented or erased in the media.

Our Mission

Media Justice Network is a non-profit media organization dedicated to promoting fairness and justice in the media industry. Our mission is to defend the rights of minorities in the media and provide them with the necessary support, while documenting and studying ethical issues affecting minorities in the media.

Our Vision

Our vision is to create a media industry that is fair, equitable, and inclusive, where all voices are heard and represented without discrimination.

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SECTION 01

Introduction

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SECTION 01

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Introduction

This quarterly report covers July through September 2026, a period in which anti-Muslim and anti-Arab rhetoric in the United States did not merely persist — it was professionalized, amplified by national media platforms, and aimed directly at Muslim Americans serving in, or running for, public office.

The broader climate is documented. **CAIR**, the nation's largest Muslim civil rights organization, recorded **8,683 civil rights complaints in 2025** — the highest single-year total since its first report in 1996, surpassing the 8,658 complaints recorded in 2024 [1]. The **FBI's 2025 Uniform Crime Reporting data**, released August 14, 2026, recorded **10,606 reported hate crime incidents** nationwide, including **205 anti-Islamic (Muslim) incidents with 274 victims** [2]. Both figures predate this quarter; they describe the trajectory into it, not the quarter itself — national quarterly statistics do not exist, which is precisely why incident-focused monitoring reports like this one are necessary.

8,683	10,606	205
CAIR civil-rights complaints, 2025 — record high [1]	Reported hate-crime incidents, FBI UCR 2025 [2]	Anti-Islamic (Muslim) incidents / 274 victims [2]

This report, like Report No: 01, is not comprehensive of the landscape. Some victims never report; some incidents never receive coverage. It should be read as an informed starting point, to be complemented by public opinion research and community surveys.

> **Every figure and every case cited in this report carries a public source. Incidents are included only where a public record exists.**
>
> METHODOLOGY — OPEN-SOURCE RESEARCH

This report was prepared through open-source research: documented incidents from U.S. Department of Justice press releases, court and local-news reporting, and the public records of civil rights organizations, principally CAIR (national and state chapters), supplemented by media-analysis scholarship published in 2026 (The Intercept's 12,000-article/5,000-segment analysis [3]) and federal statistics (FBI UCR 2025 [2]). Where a quotation rests on a single reporting source, it is attributed to that source in line.

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Programs

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Programs

Media Monitoring

We monitor media content to identify instances of discrimination and bias against minorities. This information is used to advocate for change and to promote fair and balanced media coverage.

Research & Documentation

We conduct research and document ethical issues affecting minorities in the media industry. Our goal is to create a database of information that can be used to inform policies and practices that promote fairness and justice in the media industry.

Advocacy & Representation

Media Justice Network advocates for minorities in the media industry, and represents their interests in media-related cases and campaigns.

Media Production

Producing a variety of media materials such as press reports, documentaries, podcasts, and webinars that highlight the minorities. These materials will be used to educate the public and raise awareness about issues facing minorities in the media.

Education & Training

We provide training and educational resources to individuals and organizations to help them navigate the media industry, and to promote ethical and inclusive practices. Our training sessions cover topics such as media literacy, unconscious bias, diversity and inclusion, ethical journalism and how to avoid perpetuating negative stereotypes.

Incentive Prizes

Establishing an incentive prizes and competitions to encourage media outlets and professionals to promote fairness and justice in the representation of minorities in the media. These prizes will include awards for accurate and inclusive reporting, as well as recognition for media outlets that make significant efforts to promote diversity and inclusion.

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Case Study

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CASE STUDY — A

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Twenty-Five Years Later: The 9/11 Anniversary as a Media Weapon (September 2026)

In the weeks surrounding the 25th anniversary of September 11, segments of U.S. right-wing media ran a coordinated-seeming campaign questioning whether Muslim Americans — specifically New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani and Michigan Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed — could legitimately take part in public commemoration and public office at all.

On Newsmax, former NYC mayor Rudy Giuliani said Muslims "have every desire to take us over… They want to dominate us," adding: "All of the Muslims he supports are murderers," and said Mamdani should skip the 9/11 ceremony [4][5].

Fox News hosted NYC Councilwoman Vickie Paladino, who said, as reported by Truthout, that Mamdani's attendance sent "a message to Osama bin Laden that, 'look, we conquered New York'"; a separate Fox segment hosted Councilwoman Joann Ariola promoting a petition to bar the mayor from the ceremony — a petition whose claim of 9/11-family signatures had been debunked, as reported by Truthout [4].

On August 31, CBS News published an article tying El-Sayed's old deleted social media posts to the 9/11 attacks; multiple outlets reported that CBS editor-in-chief Bari Weiss personally led the story, prompting public backlash [6][7][8].

A PAC ad sought to tie El-Sayed to "the hatred that caused 9/11"; White House ally Laura Loomer amplified it on X with the words "Ban Muslims from elected office," as reported by Truthout [4]. On August 25, Fox News' Jesse Watters Primetime devoted a segment to interrogating El-Sayed's past comments on Sharia law [9].

> **The pattern is the violation: faith itself was treated as disqualifying evidence, and guilt by religious association was presented as news.**
>
> THESE WERE NOT FRINGE BLOGS — NATIONAL NETWORK SEGMENTS AND A NETWORK NEWS DIVISION'S EDITORIAL LEADERSHIP

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CASE STUDY — B

A Month of Threats: The September 2026 Mosque-Threat Wave

Alongside the national media campaign in Case A, September 2026 saw a cluster of documented threats and attacks against mosques and Muslim worshippers across the United States. Each incident below is drawn from a public record: a Department of Justice release, a CAIR chapter release, or original local reporting.

On September 4, the Department of Justice announced the arrest of a man over threats against a California mosque [14]. On September 10, federal charges were announced against an Ohio man for threatening a Lorain County mosque [19]. This followed a series of attacks on an Ohio mosque, reported on August 22 as its third, and the August 6 vandalism of a Cincinnati mosque with the word "Die" [12][13].

On September 14, a 79-year-old man in Troy, Michigan was charged after allegedly threatening four Muslim men with a handgun [15]. The next day, a Michigan man faced hate-crime charges after a library incident [16], and charges were announced following a hate incident targeting a Washington State mosque [18]. On September 1, Muslim men attacked at a Utah mall announced plans to sue their alleged assailant [17].

The wave sits against a summer in which a suspect was charged (July 16) and indicted on a federal civil-rights charge (August 6) over the arson at the Northeast Philadelphia Islamic Center [10][11]. The incidents are documented separately in Section 04.

Their connection to Case A is one of timing and climate, not of proven cause: this report does not claim that any media segment caused any of these acts. What the record shows is that rhetoric treating Muslim faith as disqualifying was broadcast nationally in the same weeks that Muslim worshippers and mosques were being threatened in at least five states.

Charges and indictments are allegations; the individuals named in them are presumed innocent until proven guilty in court.

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SECTION 04

Examples of Violations

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Examples of Violations

Documented escalation during the quarter

- Arson at the Northeast Philadelphia Islamic Center (July 2026): a suspect was charged (July 16) and then indicted on a federal civil-rights charge (August 6) [10][11].
- An Ohio mosque was attacked for the third time (reported August 22); in Cincinnati, a mosque was vandalized with the word "Die" (August 6) [12][13].
- A man was arrested over threats against a California mosque, per DOJ (September 4) [14].
- In Troy, Michigan, a 79-year-old man was charged after allegedly threatening four Muslim men with a handgun (September 14); separately, a Michigan man faced hate-crime charges after a library incident (September 15) [15][16].
- Muslim men attacked at a Utah mall plan to sue their alleged assailant (September 1) [17].
- Charges followed a hate incident targeting a Washington State mosque (September 15) [18].
- Federal charges were brought against an Ohio man for threatening a Lorain County mosque (September 10) [19].

Most media violations — patterns observed this quarter

- Presenting a public figure's Muslim faith as inherent evidence of extremist sympathy (Newsmax/Giuliani; Fox/Paladino).
- Guilt by religious association — linking officials to 9/11 because they are Muslim (CBS News; PAC advertising; social amplification).
- Subjecting Muslim candidates to religious tests no other candidate faces (Jesse Watters Primetime).
- Elevating debunked claims (the "9/11 families" petition) because they damage a Muslim official (Fox News segments).
- Dehumanizing language from broadcast hosts: in September, WABC radio host Sid Rosenberg called Mayor Mamdani "a cancer… a terrorist… a jihadist" on air and "this Jew hater" on X, as reported by Mediaite [20][21].
- Amplifying calls to exclude an entire religious community from elected office (X / Laura Loomer) without counterweight.

SECTION 04

Some Examples of Violations — Table

Source	Classification of violation	The violator	Date	Ref.
NewsMax	Racism, incitement, collective labeling	Rudy Giuliani	9/5/2026 (aired; reported 9/7)	[4] [5]
Fox News	Bias, labeling	Vickie Paladino (segment guest)	9/2026 (documented 9/10)	[4]
Fox News	Bias, amplification of debunked claim	Joann Ariola (segment guest)	9/2026 (documented 9/10)	[4]
CBS News	Misleading, labeling (9/11 framing of a Muslim candidate)	CBS News editorial / Bari Weiss	8/31/2026	[6] [7] [8]
Fox News (Jesse Watters Primetime)	Religious test, bias	Jesse Watters	8/25/2026	[9]
WABC Radio / X	Dehumanizing language, religious labeling	Sid Rosenberg	Sep 20-22, 2026	[20] [21]
Campaign ad (anti-El-Sayed PAC)	Incitement, labeling	PAC (via Truthout reporting)	9/2026	[4]
X (Twitter)	Incitement to exclude Muslims from office	Laura Loomer	9/2026	[4]

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Analysis

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Analysis

Three features distinguish this quarter.

First, the target shifted upward. Report No: 01 documented violations against communities and their defenders in general. This quarter's documented violations concentrated on elected and candidate Muslim officials — a sitting mayor and a Senate candidate — turning religious identity itself into a campaign issue on national platforms [4][6][9].

Second, the violations were institutional, not merely individual. The CBS News episode was reportedly directed by the network's editor-in-chief [7]; Fox News segments were programming decisions repeated across days [4]; dehumanizing descriptions of a sitting mayor were broadcast on a New York radio station and posted on social media in September [20][21].

Third, independent measurement continues to confirm the structural bias these episodes express. A 2026 analysis of more than 12,000 articles and 5,000 TV segments found U.S. outlets invoked Israel's "right to defend itself" 94 times more than Palestinians' on cable news, and over 100 times more in print [3]. CAIR's record 8,683 complaints in 2025 [1] and the FBI's 205 anti-Islamic incidents [2] supply the demand-side context: the audience absorbs what the platforms normalize.

Added to this is Case B's September wave: simultaneous threats against mosques in several states — a relationship of timing, not proven causation.

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Conclusion

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Conclusion

The quarter's record shows anti-Muslim and anti-Arab framing moving from commentary into the editorial core of national media, aimed at Americans in public life. Documenting these violations — by outlet, by name, by date, with public sources — remains the first condition of correcting them. Media Justice Network will continue this monitoring quarterly, and calls on the outlets named in this report to apply the same editorial standards to Muslim Americans that they apply to everyone else.

> **Documenting these violations — by outlet, by name, by date, with public sources — remains the first condition of correcting them.**
>
> MEDIA JUSTICE NETWORK — SEPTEMBER 2026

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