

New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani praises NYPD shooting of emotionally distressed 22-year-old

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Last Monday, New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), praised officers of the New York Police Department (NYPD) after they shot 22-year-old Bangladeshi immigrant Jabez Chakraborty while he was experiencing a mental health crisis at his family's home in Queens. Jabez remains on a ventilator and has undergone several surgeries.

Later that day, the Chakraborty family released a statement through the immigrant advocacy group Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), explaining that they had called 911 to request an ambulance for Jabez, who was experiencing severe emotional distress. Instead of emergency medical responders, NYPD officers arrived at the home and shot Jabez at least four times in front of his family.

The officers then demanded that the family hand over their phones. In their statement, Jabez's parents wrote: "While our son lay shot on the floor, the NYPD acted like ICE, interrogating us on what country we were from, when we last visited, and whether our daughter was born here."

Jabez's family was not allowed to accompany him to the hospital and instead they were "forced to the precinct, where NYPD officers interrogated and detained us," they wrote. After several hours, the family was released from NYPD detention and, upon arriving at the hospital, denied visitation rights by the NYPD. Only after the intervention of DRUM and the New York City Public Advocate's office was the Chakraborty family allowed to see Jabez and reclaim their phones from the police.

The NYPD has posted officers to stand guard outside Jabez's hospital room and is denying family members access to Jabez without an official pass.

In response to the incident, Mamdani posted a brief statement on X, writing: "I've been briefed on an officer-involved shooting in Queens that occurred earlier today. The NYPD was responding to a 911 call where they encountered an individual wielding a knife. The NYPD is assessing the situation, and we are committed to keeping New Yorkers informed."

Mamdani concluded his statement with praise for the police response: "I'm grateful to the first responders who put

themselves on the line each day to keep our communities safe."

The Chakraborty family responded with a statement declaring, "After all this, we saw Mayor Mamdani's statement applauding the NYPD officers that shot our son, threatened and lied to us, and kept us from seeing our son for over 24 hours. Why is the mayor applauding officers who recklessly almost killed our son in front of us?"

They continue:

We are demanding that the Queens DA not press charges against our son. We demand to know, why did the NYPD come when we asked for an ambulance? Why is the NYPD posted outside of our son's hospital room while he is on a ventilator? Why did the NYPD take our phones through manipulation and without cause? Why have we been dehumanized, disrespected, and treated like criminals all while the NYPD were the ones who came and shot our son as if they came expressly to kill him?

Jabez Chakraborty's shooting has evoked memories—particularly among New York's South Asian immigrant community—of the NYPD's murder of 19-year-old Win Rozario, who was shot to death by police responding to a mental health call in the working-class Ozone Park neighborhood of Queens two years ago. Rozario's family had called 911 for help while he was experiencing a mental health crisis. NYPD officers shot Rozario after he picked up a pair of scissors. No officers were prosecuted for his killing.

The NYPD also received praise from Mamdani when officers killed former FDNY lieutenant Michael Lynch, who was experiencing a psychotic episode at NewYork-Presbyterian Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn on January 8. Mamdani's comments were similarly supportive of the NYPD. He stated that the officers were placed in "incredibly difficult and dangerous circumstances" and that they "responded swiftly" to the situation.

Since his brief statement on the January 26 shooting, Mamdani—along with the New York City chapter of the DSA and the national DSA—has remained entirely silent on the police shooting of Jabez Chakraborty and the detention and harassment of his family.

Mamdani's praise for the NYPD is not accidental. It underscores the fact that the DSA, a faction of the Democratic Party, has become a political representative of the capitalist state in New York City. This has occurred not only through Mamdani's support for NYPD killings, but through his entire political trajectory since his Democratic primary victory in June, particularly his November meeting with Trump at the White House.

One of the central figures in Mamdani's administration, retained from the administration of the widely despised Eric Adams, is NYPD Commissioner Jessica Tisch, a billionaire heiress. Formerly head of the city's Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Tisch has played a leading role in constructing the NYPD's vast surveillance apparatus, overseeing the violent citywide crackdown on protests against the Gaza genocide, and facilitating ICE's illegal detention of immigrants throughout the past year.

The police killings come as the Mamdani administration prepares to implement sweeping austerity measures. Mamdani has assembled an administration well versed in slashing critical social spending through cuts to jobs, wages and public services—measures cloaked in the language of “efficiency” and “taking direct aim at waste.”

For Mamdani and the ruling class, the police are seen as necessary instruments to maintain “order” in response to growing popular opposition. In a further illustration of Mamdani's anti-working class policies, the administration is leading efforts, in close collaboration with New York Governor Kathy Hochul and the trade union bureaucracy, to shut down the strike of 15,000 New York nurses.

The shooting of Chakraborty, and Mamdani's response, have sparked outrage among workers and young people. Hundreds have denounced the NYPD's actions and sharply criticized the administration's response on social media, with many posts garnering thousands of likes and shares.

One user, in a post that received over 3,000 likes, wrote in response to Mamdani's statement: “Hold @NYCMayor's feet to the F***ING FIRE for this.” Another commented, “We didn't elect you to release statements written by the NYPD.” A third wrote, “Zohran when ICE executes people in the street: this is horrific and unacceptable, literally murder. Zohran when NYPD shoots someone yet again: hey, I really really appreciate you guys [thank you so much].”

A comment with over 4,000 likes reads, “Zohran blew it to levels I thought he'd wait at least 2 years for. Outrageous. He owes a huge apology to the Chakraborty family and to his supporters who elected a mayor who promised not to unleash state violence on people struggling with mental illness.”

The shooting of Chakraborty occurred just one day before the NYPD's Strategic Response Group (SRG)—a notoriously violent, heavily militarized counterterrorism and protest suppression unit—violently dispersed a peaceful anti-ICE protest outside a Hilton Hotel in Manhattan. The SRG, which Mamdani previously pledged to disband, arrested numerous demonstrators during the action.

The DSA's silence on both the NYPD's shooting of Chakraborty and the violent crackdown on anti-ICE protesters, its continued political support for Mamdani, and its collaboration with the union bureaucracy in suppressing the nurses' strike, all underscore the class interests the DSA serves. While posturing as a force for “social justice,” the DSA is working to defend the capitalist order, enforce austerity, and prop up the institutions of state repression.

Mamdani, the DSA and the broader pseudo-left represent privileged layers of the upper middle class that are politically and materially tied to the capitalist ruling elite. While they trade in empty “left” rhetoric, these forces are fundamentally hostile to the working class and the fight for socialism. Their role is to block the emergence of an independent movement of workers and youth against war, fascism, police violence, social inequality and exploitation.

In the face of a massive escalation of the class struggle—millions protesting ICE's invasion of urban centers and strikes involving tens of thousands of workers—Mamdani has thrown his lot in with the capitalist state. He has committed his administration to austerity, strikebreaking, police repression and a “partnership” with the would-be dictator Donald Trump. These actions are aimed at suppressing the growing resistance of the working class to the dictatorship of the financial-corporate oligarchy.

Opposition to police violence, fascist dictatorship, war, genocide, austerity and massive social inequality can be advanced only through the development of an independent mass movement of the international working class against capitalism—not through appeals for piecemeal reform. This requires building new organizations of struggle: rank-and-file committees in every neighborhood, school, factory, warehouse, delivery center, and workplace, to coordinate and unify the growing resistance of workers against the dictatorship of the oligarchs.



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