

Palestinian activist Nerdeen Kiswani targeted in attempted assassination plot

Our Reporter
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Nerdeen Kiswani, a prominent Palestinian activist and co-founder of the New York-based group Within Our Lifetime, was the target of an imminent plot to assassinate her and/or firebomb her home, amid an escalating campaign of threats and incitement by Zionist organizations and pro-war politicians.

The New York Police Department and federal agents arrested a 26-year-old New Jersey man, Alexander Heifler, after an undercover NYPD detective infiltrated online communications and, in the course of the operation, identified what officials described as an imminent attack. Heifler was charged with making and possessing destructive devices and is expected to appear in federal court in Newark.

Heifler has been identified as a member of the JDL 613 Brotherhood, based out of New Jersey and founded in 2024. The organization cites as its inspiration the Jewish Defense League and the neo-fascist Rabbi Meir Kahane.

The federal criminal complaint, filed on Thursday, describes a plot “ongoing since at least February,” beginning with a February 10 video call in which Heifler, after saying he had to be “careful,” asked if anyone had space to train with “Molotovs.” The following day, February 11, the complaint states that Heifler met the undercover officer in person, discussed vandalizing Kiswani’s home, where she lives with her infant son and husband.

Heifler reportedly said he had the address and began discussing the manufacture of Molotov cocktails and an escape plan after the attack. On March 4, Heifler and the undercover agent drove to Kiswani’s residence to “conduct surveillance” and discussed making a dozen Molotov cocktails to throw at her home and two cars parked outside.

The complaint further records encrypted messages on

March 23-24 in which Heifler and the undercover officer discussed making the devices that week and confirmed a March 26 meeting at Heifler’s Hoboken residence.

The FBI notified Kiswani and her lawyers late Thursday that an arrest had been made in connection with an attempt on her life. On Friday, Kiswani posted the following statement on X:

Late last night the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force informed me that a plot against my life that was ‘about to’ take place, and that agents had conducted an operation in Hoboken related to this plot. For months, Zionist organizations like Betar and politicians like Randy Fine have encouraged violence against my family and me. I will have more to say as additional details come to light. I will not stop speaking up for the people of Palestine. Thank you for your support.

The threatened attack on Kiswani takes place in the context of a sustained campaign of intimidation and violent incitement against opponents of Israel’s US-backed genocide in Gaza, encouraged and enabled by the state, the corporate media and both big-business parties.

Kiswani has been a target of pro-Israel groups for years. In February, she filed a federal civil rights lawsuit in the Southern District of New York against Betar USA and its leadership under the Ku Klux Klan Enforcement Act of 1871, charging that the organization orchestrated a coordinated campaign of “racial harassment, violent threats, stalking and intimidation.”

Kiswani is represented by Eric Lee and Christopher Godshall-Bennett of Lee & Godshall-Bennett LLP, and Daniel Kornstein and Jonathan Abady of Emery Celli Brinckerhoff Abady Ward & Maazel LLP.

The lawsuit, together with a lengthy appendix, documents repeated social media threats, intimidation tactics, and bounty-style incitement directed at Kiswani and other antiwar protesters.

Betar USA has publicly characterized Kiswani as a “domestic terrorist,” threatened to work with the Trump administration to denaturalize and deport her, and boasted of providing “the names of hundreds of protesters and activists” to the Trump administration and DHS to urge ICE arrests and deportations.

A central component of the complaint concerns Betar’s attempts to terrorize Kiswani by repeatedly trying to force her to accept a pager or “beeper,” a menacing reference to Israel’s September 2024 operation in Lebanon. The suit cites Betar’s public bounty offer: “We offer 1000 to anyone who hands @NerdeenKiswani a beeper tomorrow. We have them for distribution.”

The lawsuit also cites the New York Attorney General’s January 13, 2026 investigation finding Betar engaged in “bias-motivated assaults, threats and harassment targeting Muslim, Arab, Palestinian and Jewish New Yorkers” —underscoring that these threats are part of an escalating campaign of political intimidation aimed at silencing opposition to the US-backed genocide in Gaza.

The attempt to assassinate Kiswani also comes amid a broader escalation of political repression in the United States, bound up with imperialist war abroad and the growth of authoritarianism at home, spearheaded by the Trump administration. The same ruling class that is waging a illegal war against Iran and has backed the genocide in Gaza is preparing to criminalize opposition and normalize political violence.



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