

Two in custody after 'suspicious devices' lit outside Gracie Mansion amid anti-Islam protest

The anti-Islam protest was led by right-wing influencer Jake Lang. Police said two counterprotesters were taken into custody in connection with the devices.



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Two people were taken into custody after a pair “suspicious devices” were ignited Saturday during protests outside of Gracie Mansion, the official residence of the mayor of New York City.

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The incident occurred as an anti-Islam demonstration led by conservative influencer Jake Lang and a counterprotest were underway, police Commissioner Jessica Tisch told reporters. An NYPD spokesperson said there were no injuries.



— Zohran Mamdani in New York City in 2025. Alexi J. Rosenfeld / Getty Images

Tisch said earlier that she did not believe Mayor Zohran Mamdani or first lady Rama Duwaji were inside the mansion at the time, but the police department clarified Saturday night that Mamdani was in the residence. Mamdani spokesperson Joe Calvello said the mayor and his wife were safe.

“Thankfully, the Mayor and the First Lady are both safe, though the events are a stark reminder of the threats they both face regularly,” Calvello said in a statement.

A bomb squad examined the devices, described as being smaller than a football, and said they appeared to be jars wrapped in black tape with nuts, bolts, screws and a hobby fuse, Tisch said.



— A view of what appears to be a device in front of Mayor Zohran Mamdani's official residence in New York on Saturday. Charly Triballeau / AFP - Getty Images

“We do not yet know whether the devices were functional improvised explosive devices or hoax devices, because we don’t yet know if there was energetic material contained in them,” Tisch said.

Both devices were being transported for further testing and analysis.

The Lang-led protest, called “Stop the Islamic Takeover of New York City, Stop New York City Public Muslim Prayer,” drew 20 participants, Tisch said. The counterprotest, “Run the Nazis out of New York City, Stand Against Hate,” drew 125 demonstrators at its peak, the commissioner said.

The protests started around 11 a.m., with both groups separated into designated areas by police, but tensions escalated shortly before noon, officials said.

At 12:15 p.m., one protester from the Lang group fired pepper spray at counterprotesters and was arrested, Tisch said.

Shortly after 12:30 p.m., an 18-year-old counterprotester “lit and threw an ignited device toward the protest area,” she said.

It landed in the crosswalk and witnesses “reported seeing flames and smoke as it traveled through the air,” she said. The device struck a barrier and extinguished itself a few feet from

police officers.

— A person flees after throwing a device during demonstrations in front of Mayor Zohran Mamdani's official residence on Saturday. Charly Triballeau / AFP - Getty Images

The counterprotester then ran and retrieved a second device from a 19-year-old man, according to police. The 18-year-old lit the device and ran with it, then dropped it on the west side of East End Avenue between East 86th and East 87th streets, Tisch said.

Both people were taken into custody. The NYPD said no charges had been filed as of Saturday evening.

The men are from Pennsylvania, and law enforcement officials were headed there to speak to their relatives and contacts, sources familiar with the investigation told NBC New York.

Tisch said the whole incident was captured on an NYPD surveillance camera.

She said there was no immediate indication the incident “is related to the ongoing hostilities in Iran” but said the investigation is still ongoing.

The FBI’s joint terrorism task force has joined the investigation, sources familiar with the probe told NBC New York.

After the devices were seen, officers established a safety perimeter and launched a search, including K-9 sweeps and manual canvassing, for potential additional devices. None had been found as of Saturday evening.

Overall, six people were arrested as a result of Saturday's protest – the two men “responsible for handling and deploying the devices,” the person who deployed pepper spray and three others related to disorderly conduct and obstructing traffic, Tisch said.

— Right-wing influencer Jake Lang walks with a goat and supporters at a protest organized by the influencer on Saturday in New York City. Ryan Murphy / Getty Images

Mamdani is New York City's first Muslim mayor. The protest was held during the holy month of Ramadan, which is observed by Muslims around the world.

Calvello condemned the Lang-led protest as “despicable and Islamophobic.” He said the mayor has spoken with Tisch and that the NYPD is actively investigating the protest, counterprotest and the suspicious devices outside Gracie Mansion.

Lang could not immediately be reached for comment.

Lang, a right-wing provocateur who was pardoned for charges tied to the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol, has held similar rallies in recent weeks.

He also hosted an anti-immigration protest in Minneapolis in January in the days after the killing of Renee Good. Good, 37, was fatally shot by a federal immigration officer, prompting national outrage. Ahead of the rally, Lang [promised to burn a Quran at the site of the demonstration](#) but did not appear to do so. 



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