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Trump Threatens Federal Control Over D.C. and New York City Amid Attacks on Mamdani

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President Donald Trump has once again thrust himself into the center of local politics, warning that his administration could take over Washington, D.C., and possibly target New York City if voters elect Zohran Mamdani as mayor this fall.

Speaking to reporters at the White House, Trump said his team is seriously considering a federal intervention in the nation's capital, calling it "filthy and crime-ridden." He claimed the White House has "tremendous power" to run cities when necessary and hinted he would not hesitate to act if he believed local governments were failing.

“We’re thinking about doing it, to be honest with you,” Trump said. “We want a capital that’s run flawlessly.”

His remarks quickly fueled outrage, particularly as Trump also escalated his attacks on Mamdani, the 33-year-old Democratic nominee for mayor of New York City. Mamdani, who was born in Uganda and became a naturalized United States citizen in 2018, would be the city’s first South Asian and Muslim mayor if elected.

Throughout the campaign, Trump has repeatedly called Mamdani a communist and has gone as far as threatening him with arrest, denaturalization, and deportation claims that have no legal basis.

“I used to say we will never be a socialist country,” Trump said. “If a communist gets elected to run New York, it can never be the same.”

Mamdani has centered his campaign on affordability, promising free buses, no-cost childcare, and city-run grocery stores. Trump and his allies have distorted those proposals, accusing Mamdani of plotting to “take over grocery stores,” a claim the candidate has flatly denied.

In response, Mamdani called Trump’s threats “an attack on democracy” and a clear attempt to intimidate voters.

New York Governor Kathy Hochul quickly came to Mamdani’s defense, vowing to oppose any federal overreach. “If you threaten to unlawfully go after one of our neighbors, you’re picking a fight with 20 million New Yorkers, starting with me,” she said.

While Washington, D.C., has had the right to elect its leaders since 1973, Congress still holds significant power over its affairs. The idea of the White House unilaterally taking control of the capital or influencing New York City’s elections has alarmed many who see it as a direct challenge to local self-government.

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