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Civil Rights Groups Sue Government for Critical Information on Trump’s Muslim and African Ban

State Department, CBP Illegally Withholding Records on Immigration Ban Waivers and Purported “Worldwide Review”

Washington, DC — Today, Muslim Advocates and the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) sued the U.S. State Department and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol for failing to respond to a records request for essential information about the Trump administration’s expanded Muslim Ban, Presidential Proclamation 9983. This expanded ban targets nationals of six African and Asian nations, most with significant Muslim populations, for severe restrictions on their travel to the U.S.

In February, the groups filed a [Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\) request](#) seeking information on the ban’s implementation, the government’s handling of waiver requests by individuals impacted by the ban and records related to the purported worldwide review through which the targeted African and Asian countries were supposedly identified. Since then, both agencies have failed to provide these important records as required by FOIA.

“This Muslim and African Ban, which expands the restrictions from the Muslim Ban to additional African and Asian countries, separates countless Black and Muslim families,” said **Nimra Azmi, Muslim Advocates Staff Attorney**. “The records that the administration is illegally withholding under FOIA are essential in determining to what extent this ban was engineered to single out certain groups for unfavorable treatment. Given the moral and constitutional questions implicated, the urgent release of these materials by the government is imperative.”

“It is unacceptable that, three months after the Trump Administration expanded its Muslim Ban to severely restrict immigration from several African and Asian countries with large Muslim populations, the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Customs and Border Protection

are continuing to withhold critical information about how and why these countries were selected. In doing so, these agencies are failing to comply with their obligations under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA),” said **Ashok Chandran, Assistant Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.** “Our suit asks that the district court compel these agencies to immediately release this information. The countless immigrants who are being denied the opportunity to travel to the United States — as well as the friends and family from whom they are now separated by law — deserve to know whether improper racial or religious animus motivated these new restrictions.”

Additional Resources:

- [Civil Rights Groups Seek Critical Information on Trump’s Muslim and African Ban](#)

Muslim Advocates is a national civil rights organization working in the courts, in the halls of power and in communities to halt bigotry in its tracks. We ensure that American Muslims have a seat at the table with expert representation so that all Americans may live free from hate and discrimination.

Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.

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