

Progress needed beyond the end of Islamophobia Awareness month

MSP says progress is needed beyond the end of Islamophobia Awareness Month

Following the end of Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM) 2023, which aimed to raise awareness of Islamophobia and its prevalence in Scotland, figures show that many people are still subject to Islamophobic abuse.

This abuse can include harassment, hate speech, violent attacks, religious profiling and prejudice against Muslims. IAM seeks to demonstrate the effect of Islamophobia and how it can be tackled, in addition to the positive contributions of Muslims in the UK.

The Scottish Parliament raised awareness of Islamophobia Awareness Month by hosting photocalls and drop-in sessions, for MSPs to learn more about the challenges faced by Muslims in Scotland and how these challenges could be tackled.

Foysol Choudhury, MSP for Lothian, also lodged several questions in The Scottish Parliament, including asking The Scottish Government what steps it is taking to ensure scrutiny of Education Scotland and the Race Equality Action Plan, in light of the recommendations of the report of the public inquiry into Islamophobia in Scotland.

The inquiry, originally published in 2021, recently published an update on its recommendations to the Scottish Parliament's

Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Challenging Racial & Religious Prejudice, including recommendations that the improving on the reporting and recording of Islamophobia in schools should be urgently progressed.

Mr Choudhury, who is also Convener of the CPG, asked The Scottish Government what it is doing improve the reporting and recording of Islamophobia in schools, colleges and universities. He also questioned the government about initiatives to tackle the gendered nature of Islamophobia and the support offered to Police Scotland to help them identify and tackle Islamophobic abuse.

Mr Choudhury said :”This month has been promising in raising awareness of Islamophobia and the abuse faced by many Muslims in Scotland.

“I hope that this increased awareness and resolve to tackle the issue encourages more people to come forward for support, as well as more initiatives to eradicate Islamophobia in Scotland.

“I have been raising in the Scottish Parliament many questions about how the Scottish Government can tackle Islamophobia in different areas of our society, including within schools, and I look forward to their answers so we can all work together to build a better society for our next generation to grow up in.

“However, progress is clearly still needed, two years on from the 2021 inquiry into Islamophobia in Scotland, and we must keep the pressure on the Scottish Government beyond Islamophobia Awareness Month to increase initiatives to tackle Islamophobia and all religious hatred and intolerance in Scotland.”

He said the next CPG meeting will be an opportunity to brief members on Islamophobia Awareness Month in terms of what was a success and what needs to be pursued throughout the next year.

He said that he hopes this will keep momentum going and lead to positive sustained change for all constituents affected by Islamophobia in Scotland. He said: "It is my hope that this will then create a more peaceful Scotland for everyone, free from any kind of religious intolerance or hatred."

- <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-23364>
- <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-23365>
- <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-23363>
- <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-22685>

Islamophobia Inquiry:

[Scotlands_Islamophobia_2023_Update.pdf \(mcb.org.uk\)](#)

https://eprints.ncl.ac.uk/file_store/production/260891/A5D5A741-1237-475A-9487-97D4F37CE1B0.pdf