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BIDEN ADMINISTRATION



Biden Admin Paid Hamas-Linked Mosque \$340K to Promote COVID Vaccines



Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Center board member Dr. Essam Tellawi encourages members to get the COVID vaccination (Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Center / YouTube).

Chuck Ross
October 28, 2023

The Biden administration, in its bid to promote the coronavirus vaccine to minority communities, awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxpayer funds to a mosque known for its extensive ties to terrorist groups, whose imam has promoted female genital mutilation.



Since 2021, the Department of Health and Human Services has awarded \$340,000 in grants to Dar Al-Hijrah mosque as part of a federal initiative to address "vaccine hesitancy and health inequities" in minority groups. Dar Al-Hijrah, based in Falls Church, Va., has used the money to host vaccine clinics and post yard signs and banners promoting the vaccine.

Dar al-Hijrah allegedly funded members of Hamas, the terrorist organization behind the recent attack on Israel. It works closely with Islamic Relief USA, whose U.K.-based parent organization has been accused of funding Hamas and linked to other terrorist groups, including Shaker Elsayed, an Egyptian-born imam who drew national headlines in 2017 after he preached in favor of female genital mutilation, which he claimed was effective at curbing "hypersexuality" in girls. Federal health agencies condemn the practice, which is common in the Middle East and parts of Africa.

The grants are the latest example of the Biden administration giving taxpayer money to organizations with affinity for Islamic terrorists. The State Department this year awarded grants to Palestinian universities, Al-Quds University and Al-Quds Open University, that praised Hamas as "righteous martyrs," the Washington Free Beacon reported.

Dar al-Hijrah's links to terrorists are no secret. Anwar Al-Awlaki, an al-Qaeda organizer, served as lead imam at the mosque during the 9/11 attacks. At least three 9/11 hijackers attended Al-Awlaki's sermons. Army Major Nidal Hasan, who murdered 13 soldiers at Fort Hood in 2009, attended services at Dar al-Hijrah and communicated with Al-Awlaki.

Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, convicted by the Justice Department in 2005 of conspiring to assassinate President George W. Bush, was a member of Dar Al-Hijrah. Former mosque board member Abdulhaleem al-Ashqar was indicted in 2004 on charges that he funded Hamas. Mosque co-founder Ismail Elbarasse was accused of wiring \$735,000 to a Hamas operative in 2004.

Dar al-Hijrah's imams have pushed anti-Israel views in the wake of the Hamas attack.

Elsayed, the imam who touted female genital mutilation, appeared to condone Hamas violence against Israel during a sermon last week. "When the hypocrites say, 'those people are deluded by their beliefs, they think if they kill their enemies, they go to paradise.' Well, you don't have to accept it. It's not your faith. But we are free to believe what we believe," said Elsayed, who serves as the mosque's "family services director."

Elsayed cast doubt on evidence that Hamas fighters killed children and bombed its own hospital in Gaza, calling the allegations "major lies" pushed by the media.

Farhan Siddiqi, the lead imam at Dar Al-Hijrah, has pushed conspiracy theories about the Israel-Hamas war, and cast doubt on claims that Hamas fighters killed children and raped female Israelis. "Our Muslim brothers and sisters are still being genocided," he said in a sermon last week.

It is unclear whether Dar Al-Hijrah used the grants to raise awareness about vaccines. According to the mosque's annual report in 2021, it used a \$100,000 grant that year to make five street banners, twenty yard signs, nine videos, and host six vaccine clinics.

Dar al-Hijrah spokesman Saif Rahman said the mosque is "proud" of federal and state grants it has received for its social services department. Rahman said the mosque "condemns the violence in Israel and Palestine," but he called on the White House and Congress to address what he claims is "Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territories and its system of apartheid towards Palestinians."

The Department of Health and Human Services did not respond to questions about the grants.

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