



JAMES CARBONE

Women pray at the Selden mosque on the last day of Ramadan.

Congregants spilled out of the mosque during the second service at 8:30 a.m., with about 200 praying outside in the parking lot on mats.

The crowds were so large that the mosque made a last-minute decision Tuesday morning to add a fourth service at 10:45 a.m. to accommodate people who could not get into the earlier services, Rahman said.

In Nassau County, a record 8,500 people attended two services at Mitchel Field in Uniondale organized by the Islamic Center of Long Island in Westbury, said mosque president Dr. Isma Chaudhry.

The services were held at the indoor sports complex because the mosque could not handle the crowds, she said.

She thinks the numbers jumped because of the growing Muslim population and because some school districts

shut down for Eid al-Fitr for the first time this year.

Long Island is home to an estimated 80,000 Muslims and more than two dozen mosques — with more under construction.

With 1.8 billion followers — or about one-fourth of the world's population — Islam is the largest religion after Christianity and is the fastest-growing major religion.

Ramadan, which started May 5, is the holiest month of the year for Muslims. Besides fasting from dawn to dusk, they are expected to perform acts of charity and service, engage in self-reflection, and focus on their spirituality.

Ramadan is about bringing one's "focus back from our daily extravagance and self-indulgence to a mode of humility and God-consciousness and our duty to our communi-

ties and our fellow human beings," Chaudhry said.

Muhammad Abdullah Sheikh, the imam or spiritual leader of the mosque in Selden, told congregants Tuesday he wants that message to continue throughout the year, beyond Ramadan.

"Don't let this month go down the drain," he said.

Along those lines, the services at Mitchel Field also included the launch of a voter-registration drive, which signed up hundreds of people as part of a nonpartisan civic effort to support democracy, Chaudhry said.

The holy month commemorates the time when the prophet Muhammad received the Quran, the holiest book in Islam, from the angel Gabriel in the early 7th century.

Many of the faithful plan to spend the three days of Eid al-Fitr making short visits to the homes of friends and relatives, sharing a cup of tea and snacks.

Children traditionally receive gifts of money from relatives and friends.

This year, in an unprecedented move, at least 10 of the roughly 30 mosques on Long Island hired armed security guards for the holy month.

They made the decision after a spate of violence at Jewish, Christian and Islamic houses of worship around the world including the March 15 fatal shooting of 51 Muslims at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand.

"Things were very calm because there was a visual deterrence of anybody who was thinking of doing anything drastic," said Chaudhry, whose mosques attracted about 1,000 of the faithful each night for prayers and a breaking of the fast.

# \$526M for capital plan in Suffolk

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NEWSDAY / MICHAEL CUSANELLI

DuWayne Gregory

The Suffolk County Legislature on Tuesday approved a \$526.3 million capital spending plan for 2020 with funding for reconstruction of the aging Smith Point Bridge and renovations at the county jail in Riverhead.

The plan boosts funding for the \$73 million reconstruction of the 60-year-old Smith Point Bridge, which carries about a million visitors a year to Smith Point County Park, the county's largest park, according to the legislature's budget office.

The capital plan earmarks \$14.3 million for the project over three years. The federal government is contributing \$57 million.

The capital plan also includes \$7 million to repair the kitchen at the Riverhead correctional facility.

Altogether, the three-year plan includes \$1.07 billion for capital projects, according to the Office of Budget Review.

"We need to make those investments to grow the economy and keep long-term costs down," said Legis. Bridget Fleming (D-Sag Harbor).

Voting along party lines, legislators rejected a capital budget amendment by Minority Leader Tom Cilmi (R-Bay Shore) to remove all funding for Connect Long Island, a regional transportation plan along Nicolls Road, from Stony Brook to Patchogue, and Route 110 from Amityville to Halesite.

Also Tuesday, lawmakers: ■ Tabled a proposal to force the county attorney to enter into a new contract with non-profit Hudson River Healthcare that runs eight of the county's health clinics after aides to County Executive Steve Bellone requested more time to negotiate an agreement.

Company officials say the contract was finalized last year.

But Bellone aides say the agreement still is under negotia-

tion and have asked legislators to wait another two weeks to vote.

HRH officials said if they do not get a contract signed before July 1, they may have to issue notices to close clinics in Southampton and Coram, where contracts already have expired.

■ Tabled a proposal that would have eliminated a common check box on job applications asking applicants about their criminal history. Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory (D-Coppage), who co-sponsored the bill, said legislators were drafting an amendment to clarify that employers can ask about pending criminal charges but not past convictions.

■ Approved nearly \$70,000 in grant funding to launch a body camera program for the county sheriff's department.

■ Members of the Sons and Daughters of Italy in America asked Gregory to apologize for saying last month that officials involved in a whistleblower probe were "acting like the Soprano crime family." Group members said the comments played on negative stereotypes about Italian Americans. Gregory apologized for offending anyone, but said he was defending himself against attacks.

■ Approved the transfer of \$1.25 million that had been slated for the Long Island Music Hall of Fame to the YMCA of Wyandanch Village. The Hall of Fame has pulled out of Wyandanch Rising, a downtown revitalization effort.

# assault testifies

Michael Abiola in the back before he also made it inside the house, according to prosecutors.

Richard struggled to stay composed Tuesday as he described trying to comfort Abiola — a close friend — right after the shootings. "I didn't know if he was going to make it or not . . . He looked much worse," Richard testified.

Abiola still has a bullet lodged in one of his arms, prosecutor Emma Slane said in her opening statement Monday.

The defendant's attorney,

Robert Schalk, called the prosecution's case "flawed" in his opening statement.

He got Richard to acknowledge that direct testimony Richard gave about Wright threatening to shut the party down earlier that night after he was denied alcohol wasn't something Richard had told the grand jury.

Richard also told Schalk that Wright and the woman who accused Wright of a rape attempt had clothes on when the bathroom door opened.



HOWARD SCHWAPP

Kyle Richard testified in Nassau County Court.