Today's Lead Story: Race A Factor In Corruption Cases?

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Political observers are beginning to ask whether race or ethnicity are playing a role in the state's most recent corruption cases. All five lawmakers charged in the growing corruption probe are black or Latino. So, too, are the eight people recorded for the FBI by state Sen. Shirley Huntley.

At a forum on Friday night titled "Attack on Black Leaders: Corruption or Conspiracy?" state Sen. James Sanders of Queens raised questions about whether black leaders were being targeted . “Why aren’t we hearing about other people wired and looking at different communities? Why is it seemingly a focus on this community?”

But experts and lawmakers tell The Associated Press that the current batch of cases may involved people of color, but that has not been the case in the past.

“People are going to think what they think, but it’s important to understand that what is going on in Albany transcends race, gender or party,” Senate Democratic leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins told The AP. “While this current wave has involved mostly people of color, prior to this it captured people across the aisle who were not people of color.

Federal corruption cases between 2009 and 2011 involved were all white, and half were Republicans. The most recent cases involve Democrats.

Weekend Roundup

Mayoral candidates discussed education policies at a forum hosted by the United Federation of Teachers on Saturday night, where Democratic frontrunner and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn tried to distance herself from Mayor Michael Bloomberg's policies (The Daily News , CB

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The Rev. Floyd Flake, who leads the largest church in the city, was said to be backing former comptroller William Thompson for mayor (
Daily News
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In non-election news, the Brooklyn district attorney is reopening 50 murder cases brought by a decorated police officer whose record was recently tainted ( ). Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced yesterday that the state will pay for relocating power lines for homes that need to be raised after codes were changed following Hurricane Sandy.
The Associated Press reported
that a group that backs Cuomo went from reporting $17 million to zero after being required to name donors.

Policy Agenda

Council Speaker Christine Quinn announces new legislation to raise maximum product prices at newsstands at 11:30 a.m. (5 Park Place.) Mayor Michael Bloomberg makes an announcement at noon (201 Butler Street, Brooklyn). State Sen. Liz Krueger testifies at East Midtown rezoning hearing at 6 p.m. (Lighthouse International, 111 E. 59th St.)

Other Stories We're Following

A Day At The Stop-And-Frisk Trial With Councilman Jumaane Williams (New York Magazine)

NYC To Try Alternate Discipline For Mentally Ill Inmates (NY Times)

Plenty of Vacancies At World Trade Center Site (Crain's)

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