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Democracy Dies in Darkness

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Tariffs case seen as test for high court

Comes after emergency rulings have expanded presidential powers

BY JUSTIN JOUVENAL

For nine months, in a flood of emergency orders, the Supreme Court has allowed President Donald Trump to expand his power.

The justices have permitted Trump to slash the federal bureaucracy, fire the heads of nominally independent agencies and exercise powers traditionally ascribed to Congress.

How much further will the court go?

That will be the overriding question Wednesday when the court hears arguments on the legality of most of the president's tariffs — the first case to reach the justices in a series of high-stakes tests of Trump's sweeping claims of authority.

His asserted tariff powers are uniquely dear to Trump, who has repeatedly warned of economic devastation if the court were to rule against one of his signature policies. But the other tests of presidential power could also have major impact.

In November, the court will consider whether to strike down a 90-year-old precedent that insulates independent agencies from White House interference. In January, it will explore whether Trump can remake the Federal Reserve, with its vast powers over the economy.

Taken together, the cases will determine the extent to which the Supreme Court will embrace Trump's view of a presidency constrained by few checks and wielding the type of authority typically only seen in times of war or

SEE POWER ON A9

Rekindling memories on Día de los Muertos



JORGE LUIS PLATA/REUTERS

A man lights candles in remembrance of a loved one during festivities in Mazatlán Villa de Flores in Mexico's Oaxaca state on Sunday. The holiday is intended to celebrate those who have died and reunite their spirits with the living. For a look at how Washington celebrated Day of the Dead, see C10.

Trump, Mamdani embrace a mutual role as foils

The two New Yorkers see political benefits in attacks on each other

BY SARAH ELLISON

NEW YORK — Zohran Mamdani stood before 13,000 supporters and urged them to “let our words ring out so loud” that his opponent Andrew M. Cuomo’s “puppet

master in the White House hears them loud and clear.”

“Together, New York,” Mamdani called, “we’re going to freeze the ...”

“RENT!” the crowd roared. “Together, New York, we’re going to make buses fast and ...”

“FREE!”

“Together, New York, we’re going to deliver universal ...”

“CHILD CARE!”

“And how are we going to pay for it? ...”

“TAX THE RICH!”

President Donald Trump has spent months listening to the 34-year-old mayoral candidate and his democratic socialist message, and attempted to subvert it into his own rallying cry.

He has called Mamdani “terrible,” “bad news,” and a “total nutjob” whom he might arrest. In social media posts and public comments, he has threatened that as mayor of New York, Mamdani would face “problems with Washington like no Mayor in the history of our once great city” and

insisted New York City won’t receive federal funds to fulfill what Trump, 79, calls Mamdani’s “FAKE Communist promises.” He’s called him “Mamdani the Commie” and “one of the best things to ever happen to our great Republican Party.”

In one of the most contentious mayoral races in New York City’s modern history, a state assembly

SEE MAMDANI ON A12

Fashion statement: Mamdani’s relatable style sends a message. B1

Trump revives scrutiny of 2020

RENEWES DEMANDS FOR INVESTIGATION

Many allies would rather focus on future elections

BY ISAAC ARNSDORF, PATRICK MARLEY AND PERRY STEIN

President Donald Trump is dialing up pressure on the Justice Department to freshly scrutinize ballots from the 2020 election, raising tensions with administration officials who think their time is better spent examining voter lists for future elections.

In recent private meetings, public comments and social media posts, Trump has renewed demands that members of his administration find fraud in the five-year-old defeat that he never accepted. He recently hired at the White House a lawyer who worked on contesting the 2020 results. Administration officials and allies have asked to inspect voting equipment in Colorado and Missouri. Others are seeking mail ballots from Atlanta in 2020, when Trump became the first Republican presidential candidate to lose Georgia since 1992.

Across the administration, though, officials have been more focused on forward-looking steps such as examining state voter rolls for people who have moved or aren’t citizens. Some officials are ready to move on from 2020 and want to avoid being called “election deniers,” a term for people who claimed without evidence that Trump beat Biden in the 2020 election.

SEE TRUMP ON A7

A ‘Golden Dome’ could sport a heavy price tag

Game-changing missile defense system, a priority for White House, faces logistical, financial hurdles

BY CHRISTIAN DAVENPORT, WILLIAM NEFF AND AARON STECKELBERG

Since ordering the Pentagon in January to erect a U.S. missile defense shield partly based in space, President Donald Trump has claimed that it would be completed by the end of his term and cost \$175 billion. His signature national security effort will have close to a 100 percent suc-

cess rate, he has pledged, “forever ending the missile threat to the American homeland.”

But the White House and Pentagon have revealed scant details of the “Golden Dome” project, which defense and budget analysts say is likely to take at least a decade to complete and cost a trillion dollars or more.

Golden Dome would radically reshape military doctrine and

SEE DOME ON A10

Trial to deploy two-pronged therapy for pediatric tumors

BY MARK JOHNSON

Years of caring for children with solid tumors and looking into the eyes of parents starved for hope have led Catherine Bollard to what she calls the most important moment of her career.

Children’s National Hospital, where Bollard is senior vice president and chief research officer, is

poised to start recruiting children with pediatric sarcomas and other solid tumors that have resisted chemotherapy and radiation for a clinical trial that will use an inventive new technique to combat one of the most persistent problems in cancer care.

For 30 years, as medicine advanced in the treatment of breast

SEE CANCER ON A4



CRAIG HUDSON/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Jim Sanborn created “Kryptos,” an encoded sculpture at the CIA’s headquarters that fans have been working for decades to decipher.

Code’s sale is scrambled by answer in plain sight

Shocking find upends auction tied to encrypted sculpture at CIA’s offices

BY KELSEY ABLES

Jarett Kobek was a “Kryptos” fan. Not one of the die-hards, working for decades to crack the final passage of the famous encoded sculpture at CIA headquarters — but in a dark period after the death of his father, he gave it a shot.

Kobek, a writer and researcher, even sent the creator of “Kryptos,” artist Jim Sanborn, his attempt at solving the passage, known as K4. “I came to the conclusion that if there is a mathematical, recoverable solution to K4, it was way beyond me,” he said.

But if “Kryptos” was beyond Kobek’s decoding skills, it was not beyond his sleuthing.

Sanborn announced in August he was putting an end to 35 years of managing the sculpture’s secrets and would auction off his private trove of documents related to the work, including the solution to K4. But thanks to

what Sanborn now calls a “monstrous mistake,” just weeks later, Kobek and his friend Richard Byrne revealed they found the plaintext answer to K4 in a public archive — shocking the artist and his avid followers, scrambling plans for the sale and whipping up a flurry of legal communications.

Since the pair’s discovery was reported by the New York Times in October, Sanborn and his auction house have stressed the auctioned materials also include “exclusive access to the highly anticipated K5,” an extension of K4 that Sanborn has long hinted at.

As of Friday, 20 bids had been placed, reaching \$137,859. The auction, which had been estimated to reach at least \$300,000, closes Nov. 20.

Kobek’s discovery began with a line in RR Auction’s listing: “Copies of coding charts used to code Kryptos (originals at the Smithsonian), 4 pieces,” read the website, which has since been edited.

Was the answer to a 35-year-old secret hiding in plain sight?

Kobek asked Byrne, a playwright and journalist based in the D.C. area, to visit the

SEE ‘KRYPTOS’ ON A6

IN THE NEWS

Food benefits Uncertainty hit tens of millions of Americans as they woke up to a SNAP freeze over the weekend. A3

Nigeria reacts to threat People across the African nation tried to decipher President Donald Trump’s warning of potential military action over alleged attacks on Christians. A15

THE NATION Recent attacks on transgender issues appear less potent for the GOP than in 2024. A3
The energy secretary said there are no plans to conduct nuclear explosions at this time. A6

THE WORLD Green Party leader Zack Polanski, a left-wing populist, is causing a stir in Britain. A13
Hamas and other Palestinian faction are holding closed-door talks on Gaza’s future. A14

THE ECONOMY South Korean firms have pulled or prolonged a pause on investment in U.S. projects after a large immigration raid. A17

STYLE Rachel Sennott lampoons West Coast zillennial life in “I Love LA,” an HBO comedy that won’t be for everyone. B1

SPORTS The Dodgers spent a ton of money, but winning a second straight World Series was anything but inevitable. C1

THE REGION A jury acquitted a former Coast Guard officer who called for Trump’s assassination on social media. C10

A Swedish company envisions a role for hydrofoil ferries on the Potomac River. C10

HEALTH & SCIENCE After three brain scans and eight doctors, a Minnesota woman got an explanation for face spasms that had turned her into a near-recluse. E1

BUSINESS NEWS.....A17
COMICS.....B4
OBITUARIES.....C12
OPINION PAGES.....A18
TELEVISION.....B6
WORLD NEWS.....A13

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