



GUERCHOM NDEBO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Mourning the Multitude of the Dead
Nearly 3,000 people were killed in a week as rebels captured the key city of Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Page A12.

Angry Callers
Tie Up Phones
At the Capitol

By MAYA C. MILLER
WASHINGTON — Americans dialing their members of Congress for basic services are going straight to voice mail. Interns and young aides can’t answer the phones quickly enough. And a system that usually handles a few dozen calls per minute is straining to keep up with more than 1,500. President Trump’s moves to upend the government — and his decision to empower the billionaire Elon Musk to carry out a slash-and-burn campaign inside the federal bureaucracy — are dominating the news and reverberating across the capital and beyond. And nowhere is the impact more apparent than the beleaguered congressional phone system, a major conduit for citizens to contact their representatives in Washington that in recent days has been nearly crippled as it absorbs tens of millions of calls responding to the new Washington order. Congressional phone lines have been jammed to the point of failure, according to lawmakers and officials on Capitol Hill, in a stark reflection of a political system buckling to a breaking point under an emboldened and unbound Mr. Trump. Calls are pouring in from constituents outraged about Mr. Trump’s unilateral moves and how he has allowed Mr. Musk to gain access to and begin dismantling critical parts of the federal bureaucracy, and demanding that members of Congress take a stand against them. Others are calling Republican senators incessantly to either demand that they fall in line behind Mr. Trump and his cabinet nominees, or plead with them to break ranks and challenge the president.

The sheer volume of vitriol from both ends of the political spectrum has all but drowned out a core function of Congress: allowing Americans to seek and receive help from their elected representatives interacting with the government for basic needs. Senators were informed last week that the Senate phone system was receiving 1,600 calls per minute, a sharp increase from the usual 40 calls a minute, according to officials who received the private notification and spoke about Continued on Page A15

Stunned Federal Workers Speak Out on Purge

By ELISABETH BUMILLER
WASHINGTON — One was fired by email at 12:47 a.m. Another wept with colleagues as security escorted her from the office. A third frantically tried to fill a prescription after she got a 24-hour notice that her health care was ending. Then there is Jacqueline Devine, a contractor in the office of H.I.V.-AIDS at the United States Agency for International Development. Ms. Devine, a behavioral scientist who worked largely in sub-Saharan Africa on H.I.V. treatment, was among those affected by an abrupt mass firing in

Many of Those Fired
Say That They Feel
Silenced by Musk

her Washington office on Jan. 28. She received no severance pay. “I’ve been going through the stages of grief, and it’s not a linear process, I’m finding out,” Ms. Devine said in an interview last week. “You kind of go back and move forward and go through anger and sadness.” Nights are difficult. “I either am not sleeping, or I’m sleeping to escape,” she said.

“Or it’s waking up at 1 or 2 a.m. and not being able to fall asleep again.” One thing lost in the Trump administration’s war on the federal bureaucracy is the collective voice of the workers. Many of those fired or in limbo say they feel silenced by Elon Musk, whose gleeful, vengeful posts describing U.S.A.I.D. as a “criminal organization” that he fed “into the wood chipper” make them fear retribution. Others don’t want to speak publicly because of pending lawsuits or orders from their agencies. But a few from U.S.A.I.D., the Continued on Page A21



MOSCOW CITY COURT PRESS SERVICE, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stephen Hubbard, a U.S. citizen accused of fighting for Ukraine, facing a court session in Moscow.

U.S. Teacher’s Cruel Odyssey in Russian Prisons

By KIM BARKER and NATALIYA VASILYEVA
KYIV, Ukraine — Stephen James Hubbard left America behind decades ago, first for Japan, then Cyprus and finally Ukraine. He didn’t like the government — any government, really. He was a wanderer, growing up in a small town in Michigan and traveling the world before ending up alone in the eastern Ukrainian town of Izium when the Russians invaded on Feb. 24, 2022. Now Mr. Hubbard, a retired

72-Year-Old Accused of
Fighting for Ukraine

English teacher who turns 73 on Thursday, has become an unlikely pawn in an international war. The Russians arrested him shortly after invading and accused him of fighting for Ukraine. They moved him to at least five different Russian detention centers before putting him on trial on a charge of being a mercenary.

In October, a Moscow court convicted him and sentenced him to almost seven years in a penal colony. His case has remained mostly under the radar. But last month the State Department said Mr. Hubbard was “wrongfully detained” — elevating his case and indicating that the United States believes that the charges are fabricated. A State Department spokesman said he never should have been taken captive or moved to a Russia Continued on Page A8

Front Line to Resist Trump
Coalesces in Federal Court

Attorneys General Lead Multipronged Push
That Will Test Checks and Balances

By MATTATHIAS SCHWARTZ

More than 40 lawsuits filed in recent days by state attorneys general, unions and nonprofits seek to erect a bulwark in the federal courts against President Trump’s blitzkrieg of executive actions, which have upended much of the federal government and challenged the Constitution’s system of checks and balances. Unlike the opening of Mr. Trump’s first term in 2017, little significant resistance to his second term has arisen in the streets, the halls of Congress or within his own Republican Party. For now at least, lawyers say, the judicial branch may be it. “The courts really are the front line,” said Skye Perryman, the chief executive of Democracy Forward, which has filed nine lawsuits and won four court orders against the second Trump administration. The multipronged legal push-back has already yielded quick — if potentially fleeting — results. Judicial orders in nine federal court cases will, for a time, partially bind the administration’s hands on its goals. Those include ending automatic citizenship for babies born to undocumented immigrants on U.S. soil; transferring transgender female inmates to male-only prisons; potentially exposing the identities of F.B.I. per-

sonnel who investigated the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol; coaxing federal workers to accept “deferred resignation” under a tight deadline; and freezing as much as \$3 trillion in domestic spending. The judiciary’s response to the legal challenges continued through the weekend. On Friday afternoon, Judge Carl Nichols, a district judge nominated by Mr. Trump, said he would issue a temporary restraining order halting the administrative leave of 2,200 employees at the U.S. Agency for International Development and the looming withdrawal of nearly all of the agency’s workers from overseas. Also, late on Friday night, Judge John D. Bates, a nominee of President George W. Bush, rejected a request by a coalition of unions for an emergency order blocking Elon Musk’s team from accessing Labor Department data. While that case is ongoing, Judge Bates’s ruling was the first victory for Mr. Trump’s new administration in federal court. In Continued on Page A18

TARIFF THREAT President Trump said he would target all steel and aluminum imports. PAGE A10

Trump Memecoin Is a Bonanza
For a Few, but a Loser for Most

By ERIC LIPTON and DAVID YAFFE-BELLANY

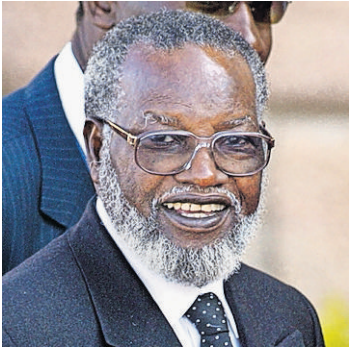
WASHINGTON — The curious trade came a little past 9 p.m. on Jan. 17 — a \$1,096,109 bet less than two minutes after the soon-to-be president of the United States posted on his social media account that his family had issued a cryptocurrency called \$Trump. In those first minutes, a crypto wallet with a unique identification code beginning 6QSc2Cx secured a giant load of the new tokens — 5,971,750 of them — at the opening sale price of just 18 cents each, starting a surge in the \$Trump price that would soon reach \$75 per token. This early trader, whose identity is not known, walked away with a two-day profit of as much as \$109 million, according to an analysis that was performed for The

New York Times. But the fast profits for early traders, whose names are unknown but some of whom appear to be based in China, came at the expense of a far larger number of slower investors who have cumulatively suffered more than \$2 billion in losses after the price of the token crashed. As of the middle of last week, more than 810,000 wallets had lost money on the bet, according to an examination that the crypto forensics firm Chainalysis performed for The New York Times. The total losses are almost certainly much larger: The data does not include transactions that took place on a series of popular crypto marketplaces that started offering Continued on Page A16

SAM NUJOMA, 1929-2025

Founding President of Namibia
Led Fight Against South Africa

By ALAN COWELL
Sam Nujoma, the founding president of an independent Namibia, who led a Soviet-backed guerrilla army against the vastly superior forces of white-ruled South Africa to a victory that owed much to the dynamics of the Cold War, died on Saturday in Windhoek, Namibia’s capital. He was 95. Nangolo Mbumba, the country’s current president, announced the death. He did not give a cause but said that the former president had been hospitalized for three weeks. Praising Mr. Nujoma as one who had “heroically marshaled the Namibian people during the darkest hours of our liberation struggle,” he said a period of national mourning would be announced. A bearded, bespectacled man given to trading his camouflage



MIKE HUTCHINGS/REUTERS

President Sam Nujoma

fatigues for business suits, depending on his audience, Mr. Nujoma pursued twin tracks of diplomacy and insurgency in a decades-long quest for the liberation of his country — a sprawling but sparsely populated former German colony that Pretoria ruled in defiance of the United Nations. Continued on Page A9



INTERNATIONAL A4-13
Hope for Italy’s ‘Land of Fires’
A European court said the nation failed to protect residents near Naples from the burning of toxic wastes. PAGE A4

Merkel’s Legacy on the Ballot
Germany’s election campaign shows how much voters have soured on the former chancellor. PAGE A10

NATIONAL A14-21
Rally to Support Trans Youth
Thousands gathered in New York City to protest an executive order that could withhold funding from hospitals providing gender care. PAGE A19

Barriers Aim to Stop Bullets
Birmingham, Ala., which had a record year for homicides, is trying to curb shootings by blocking streets. PAGE A14

SPORTS D1-6
A Hotshot Whom Time Forgot
Tracking down Finell White, who set the high school basketball season scoring record in the late 1980s. PAGE D1



BUSINESS B1-5
At Heart of Canal Showdown
The Trump administration sees a Chinese threat in a Hong Kong company’s operation of the Panama Canal. PAGE B1

Disinformation on U.S.A.I.D.
Right-wing influencers have flooded the web with falsehoods about an agency President Trump wants to gut. PAGE B1

OBITUARIES B6-7
A Curator for Black Art
Alonzo Davis and his brother created one of the few showcases in the United States for an emerging generation of minority artists in the late 1960s, in Los Angeles. He was 82. PAGE B6

Force for Diversity in N.F.L.
Cleveland Harris, an assistant for 33 years but never a head coach, pressed the league to open doors so that minority coaches would have a shot at the top job in the future. He was 79. PAGE B7

OPINION A22-23
Robert E. Lighthizer PAGE A22



ARTS C1-6
A Filmmaker’s Grand Debut
With his new movie, “Armand,” Halfdan Ullmann Tondel is trying to step out from the shadow of his grandfather Ingmar Bergman. PAGE C1

