

U.S. Hostage
Freed in Deal
Without Israel

Last Living American
 Hamas Held in Gaza

This article is by Patrick Kingsley, Jhannatan Reiss and Adam Rasgon.

JERUSALEM — Hamas released Edan Alexander, the last living American hostage it held in Gaza, on Monday evening, after mediators brokered a deal between the group and the United States that largely circumvented the Israeli government.

Mr. Alexander’s release came on the eve of a visit by President Trump to the Middle East and was portrayed by Hamas officials as an attempt to secure U.S. support for a wider deal to end the war.

Mr. Alexander, 21, was among roughly 250 people seized and taken to Gaza during the Hamas-led attack on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, that ignited the war in Gaza. A dual Israeli American citizen serving in the Israeli Army, he was captured from a military post that morning. He grew up in New Jersey and moved to Israel after high school to join the military.

In images and video that the Israeli authorities shared on Monday following his release, Mr. Alexander, looking pale but smiling, enthusiastically greeted his family with hugs and exclamations of joy. According to reports in the Israeli news media, Mr. Alexander said that he had been held in a cage in an underground Hamas tunnel with his hands and feet bound, and ate little.

Unlike most other released hostages, Mr. Alexander was turned over without a formally announced cease-fire between Israel and Hamas, highlighting the failure of efforts to secure a broader truce between the two sides. Hamas still holds at least 20 living hostages — along with some 40 dead bodies, including those of several Americans — but it is reluctant to release more of them unless Israel agrees to hold negotiations to end the war. Israel wants the right to continue the war after any future truce, leading to an impasse in the talks.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, said in a statement on Monday that Mr. Alexander’s release showed the benefits of placing Hamas under greater military pressure. In March, Mr. Netanyahu ordered the Israeli military to break an earlier cease-fire, saying it would force the group to release more hostages and lead to its total military defeat.

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Mr. Alexander and his parents on Monday in Re'im, Israel.



STEFAN JEREMIAH/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Residents gathered in Tenafl, N.J., the hometown of Edan Alexander — held since Oct. 7, 2023 — to watch his release on Monday.

Trump Expects
Saudis to Pour
Cash Into U.S.

By VIVIAN NEREIM

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — President Trump embarks on a visit to Saudi Arabia on Tuesday with a \$1 trillion wish list for investments in the United States — a sum equivalent to the kingdom’s entire gross domestic product last year.

The Saudi crown prince is offering \$600 billion during Mr. Trump’s presidency.

Neither figure is realistic, economists say.

With a laundry list of its own costly megaprojects to build and with oil prices well below the level needed to finance its spending, Saudi Arabia is facing a budget deficit that could balloon to more than \$70 billion this year. It is increasingly borrowing money rather than lending it.

But that did not stop Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the de facto leader of the authoritarian Saudi monarchy, from pledging in January to invest \$600 billion in the United States while Mr. Trump is in office. Not long after that, Mr. Trump called him a “fantastic guy.”

Then the president said he would ask the crown prince to round that figure up to \$1 trillion. And bring down the price of oil — the source of the kingdom’s vast wealth — to boot.

“We’ve been very good to them,” Mr. Trump said.

Economists said that Saudi investments in the United States would probably increase during Mr. Trump’s administration, but were unlikely to even approach \$1 trillion.

The figure Mr. Trump is seeking

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Trump Crypto Auction Sells White House Access

By ERIC LIPTON and DAVID YAFFE-BELLANY

The sale of face-to-face access to President Trump using the Trump family’s own cryptocurrency has done more than benefit him financially, though it has certainly done that.

Mr. Trump announced last month that leading buyers of a digital coin his family is marketing would be rewarded with a private dinner with him at one of his golf courses and that the very top bidders would win a tour of the White House.

The auction, which ends Monday, has set off a spectacle that has drawn bipartisan criticism, trig-

Investors From Around
the World Rush to
Expand Holdings

gered a suspicious trading pattern, and left a sitting United States president wide open to attempts to corruptly influence him.

Since the announcement, crypto investors around the world have raced to expand their holdings of \$TRUMP — a digital currency called a memecoin, which is typically treated more as a novelty investment than an actual currency.

Certain buyers, in interviews

and statements, have said they bought the coins or entered the dinner contest with the intention of securing an action by Mr. Trump to affect United States policy.

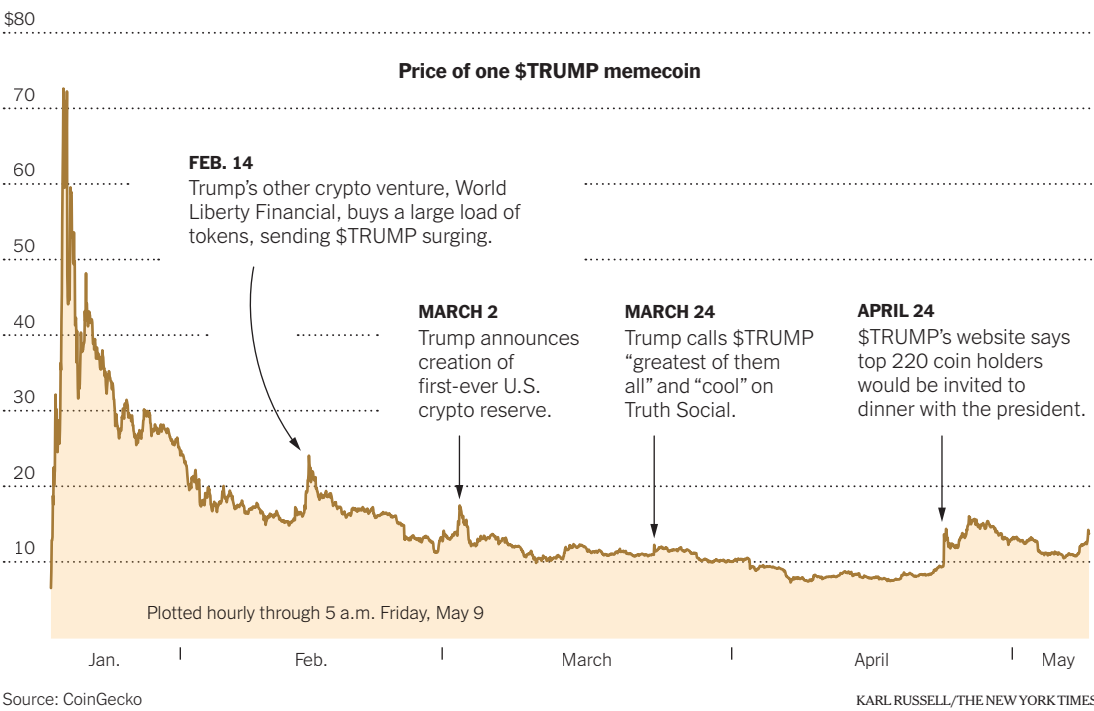
The contest has pushed up the memecoin’s trading price, adding billions of dollars, at least on paper, to the value of a \$TRUMP stash controlled by the Trump family and its business partners. And in a matter of weeks, the Trumps and their partners have reeled in more than \$1.3 million in fees, taking a cut every time the coins changed hands, according to Chainalysis, a crypto data firm.

Certain other large traders, sensing an opportunity to cash in,

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Trump’s Influence on \$TRUMP

President Trump’s memecoin has lost value since it began trading, but it has benefited from his social media posts along the way.



Staffing Shortage Adds to Newark Airport Woes

By NIRAJ CHOKSHI

The problems keep coming for Newark Liberty International Airport. On Monday, it was a staffing shortage at an air traffic control facility that serves the airport.

Most flights destined for Newark were being delayed at their origin airports by more than 1 hour 40 minutes at midday on Monday because too few air traffic controllers were available. The Federal Aviation Administration was also expecting to be short on control-

F.A.A. Advisories Delay
Most Arriving Flights

lers for Newark for about four hours on Monday night, according to an advisory posted online.

The F.A.A. said in a separate advisory that it was delaying incoming flights up to nearly seven hours from all airports in the contiguous United States and some in Canada. Such delays are not uncommon, but they can have cas-

cadic effects on flights around the world.

Monday’s delay was the latest in a string of setbacks for Newark, one of the nation’s busiest airports and a large hub for United Airlines. On Friday, the air traffic control facility in Philadelphia that guides planes at the airport had a brief radar outage. A similar outage late last month had left controllers unable to communicate with pilots for about 30 seconds.

That outage, on the afternoon of April 28, had followed months of

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Prosecutors Portray Combs as a Sexual Predator

This article is by Julia Jacobs, Ben Sisario, Benjamin Weiser and Thomas Fuller.

Federal prosecutors on Monday presented one of America’s most influential music moguls as a violent, serial sexual predator, accusing Sean Combs at the start of his trial in a Manhattan court of coercing women into drug-fueled sex marathons with prostitutes and using his vast wealth to try to cover it up.

In lurid detail, Emily A. Johnson, a prosecutor, portrayed Mr.

Trial of Hip-Hop Mogul
Opens in Manhattan

Combs in her opening statement as a man who ordered the performance of sex acts and “called himself the king.”

“To the public, he was Puff Daddy or Diddy,” Ms. Johnson said. “A cultural icon, a businessman — larger than life. But there was another side to him, a side that ran a criminal enterprise.”

THE WEATHER

Today, cloudy, a few showers, high 70. Tonight, clouds, rain and drizzle, low 58. Tomorrow, mainly cloudy, cool, occasional rain and drizzle, high 66. Weather map, Page A24.

CHINA AND U.S. SET
TO LOWER TARIFFS
TO EASE TENSIONS

AGREEMENT OF 90 DAYS

White House Backs Off
Steepest Fees, Seeing
Risks to Growth

This article is by Daisuke Wakabayashi, Amy Chang Chien and Alan Rappeport.

The United States and China took a step on Monday to defuse the trade war between the world’s two largest economies, agreeing to temporarily reduce the punishing tariffs they have imposed on each other.

The move by the United States, after President Trump had repeatedly declared that he would not lower tariffs without concessions from China, represented an acknowledgment of the costs of an all-out trade war with China. Despite the White House’s bluster, the Trump administration backed off, for now, from its steepest tariffs, and agreed to hold more formal talks with Beijing after companies and consumers started showing signs of economic strain.

Explaining that many of the tariffs that he imposed remain in place, Mr. Trump said at the White House on Monday that talks would be focused in part on “opening up” China to American businesses. He said that he expected to talk to President Xi Jinping of China this week, but that putting a full deal on paper would take a while.

“We’re not looking to hurt China,” Mr. Trump said.

In a joint statement released earlier in the day, the United States and China said they would suspend their respective tariffs for 90 days and continue negotiations they started this weekend. Under the agreement, the United States would reduce the tariff on Chinese imports to 30 percent from its current 145 percent, while China would lower its import duty on American goods to 10 percent from 125 percent.

The outcome of the frenzied negotiations brought tariff rates close to where they were before Mr. Trump ratcheted them higher on April 2, which he billed as “Liberation Day.” However, the talks did not appear to yield any meaningful concessions beyond an agreement to continue discussions.

“We concluded that we have a shared interest,” Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said at a news conference in Geneva, where U.S. and Chinese officials met over the

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More on the White House

AFRIKANERS ARRIVE The white South Africans who landed in the U.S. received refugee status from the administration. PAGE A14

IRRITATED The president grew angry when questioned about the ethics of accepting a luxury jetliner from Qatar. PAGE A19



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Out of Jail but in Danger

People released in Santa Fe, N.M., have to trudge along a highway to get back to town, often in the dark. PAGE A11

A Warning About Democracy

Justice David H. Souter, who died last week, said public ignorance could lead to authoritarian rule. Sidebar. PAGE A14

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Duterte Wins From Far Away

Ex-President Rodrigo Duterte, who faces charges of crimes against humanity at The Hague, may get a landslide in a Philippine mayoral race. PAGE A4

For Leo, a Bully Pulpit

The papacy is a global platform, so the issues the pope focuses on resonate far beyond the Catholic Church. PAGE A10

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Eyes on a Growing Rival

The Italian youth tennis system has minted rising stars. The United States is taking cues from it. PAGE B7

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A Titan’s Extraordinary Reach

Earlier moguls like Henry Ford helped set the stage for modern rabble-rousing. Elon Musk’s position of influence, however, sets him apart. PAGE B1

The Treasure of Silicon Valley

As President Trump heads to the Middle East, U.S. dominance over A.I. chips has become powerful leverage. PAGE B1

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Longtime Mayor of Newark

Sharpe James, 89, presided over a city’s revitalization but was later found guilty in a corruption case. PAGE A20



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In Tune With Baltimore

Brandon Woody refined songs in shows around his hometown and channeled the city’s vibes on his debut album. PAGE C1

Ambitious Artistry on Display

Guinea-Bissau in West Africa, where there are virtually no art galleries, has just staged its first art biennale. PAGE C1

SCIENCE TIMES D1-8

Toxic, and Precious

A site for acid mine drainage in Montana now offers an opportunity for extracting valuable metals. PAGE D5

Finding a Way to Help

A doctor who lost his home in the Palisades blaze is now treating those suffering from the effects of the fires. PAGE D1

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Nicole Gelinas

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