

HAMAS SUSPENDS  
FREEING CAPTIVES,  
IMPERILING TRUCE

RIVALS TRADING BLAME

Trump Issues Ultimatum  
to Militant Group as  
Breach Stalls Talks

This article is by *Lara Jakes, Ronen Bergman, Adam Rasgon and Johnatan Reiss.*

JERUSALEM — Hamas has indefinitely postponed the release of Israeli hostages who were set to be freed from the Gaza Strip this weekend, a spokesman said on Monday, accusing Israel’s government of violating an already fragile cease-fire agreement.

The move threatens to derail both the six-week truce agreed to last month and the prospects for agreement on a lasting end to the war. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel was consulting with his top advisers on Monday night and planned to move up a scheduled meeting with his security cabinet to Tuesday morning, a top official said.

President Trump issued an ultimatum to Hamas on Monday evening, saying that if all Israeli hostages were not released from Gaza by noon on Saturday, then “all hell is going to break out.”

“Israel can override it, but from myself, Saturday at 12 o’clock, and if they’re not, they’re not here, all hell is going to break out,” Mr. Trump said while signing executive orders at the White House in front of reporters.

Asked whether he meant retaliation from Israel, the president said: “You’ll find out, and they’ll find out too. Hamas will find out what I mean.” Asked whether he would rule out any U.S. involvement after the Saturday deadline, Mr. Trump said, “We’ll see what happens.”

Hamas and Israel have accused each other of violating aspects of the cease-fire agreement, but they have continued to release Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners each week.

The group’s statement on postponing the hostage release came shortly after the publication of a clip of a Fox News interview in which Mr. Trump said Palestinians would not be allowed to return to Gaza under his plan to relocate the entire population — which Hamas and much of the international community have rejected emphatically. Later, he said he could cut aid to Jordan and Egypt if they refused his demand to permanently take in most Pal-

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SHIR TOREM/REUTERS

Einav Zangauker, mother of a hostage, at a Tel Aviv protest.

A Showdown Emerges Over the Limits of Presidential Power



HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

It will take some time, though perhaps only weeks, for a challenge to one of President Trump’s actions to reach the Supreme Court.

Justice Official  
Pushes to Drop  
Case on Adams

This article is by *William K. Rashbaum, Dana Rubinstein, Glenn Thrush and Michael Rothfeld.*

The Justice Department on Monday told federal prosecutors in Manhattan to drop the corruption charges against Mayor Eric Adams of New York, claiming his indictment last fall came too near the 2025 mayoral primary and had limited his ability to cooperate in President Trump’s immigration crackdown.

“You are directed” to “dismiss” the charges, Emil Bove III, the Justice Department’s acting No. 2 official, wrote in a letter to prosecutors obtained by The New York Times.

Mr. Bove also ordered the government to restore security clearances stripped from Mr. Adams after his indictment in September and wrote that there must be “no further targeting of Mayor Adams or additional investigative steps” until after the election, when the case would be re-examined.

The remarkable intervention by a Trump political appointee in a public corruption prosecution involving an official who has been in close communication with the president throws into uncertainty the future of the case against the mayor.

It also raises urgent questions about the administration of justice during Mr. Trump’s second term and casts the independence of federal prosecutors into doubt [Page A19].

It is not clear how Danielle R. Sassoon, the interim U.S. attorney in Manhattan, will respond to the order to drop the case. A spokes-

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Trump Causes Constitutional Crisis, Scholars Say

By ADAM LIPTAK

WASHINGTON — There is no universally accepted definition of a constitutional crisis, but legal scholars agree about some of its characteristics. It is generally the product of presidential defiance of laws and judicial rulings. It is not binary: It is a slope, not a switch. It can be cumulative, and once one starts, it can get much worse.

It can also be obvious, said Erwin Chemerinsky, dean of the law school at the University of California, Berkeley.

“We are in the midst of a constitutional crisis right now,” he said

A Flurry of Radical Acts  
That May Thwart the  
Courts’ Response

on Friday. “There have been so many unconstitutional and illegal actions in the first 18 days of the Trump presidency. We never have seen anything like this.”

He ticked off examples of what he called President Trump’s lawless conduct: revoking birthright citizenship, freezing federal spending, shutting down an

agency, removing leaders of other agencies, firing government employees subject to civil service protections and threatening to deport people based on their political views.

That is a partial list, Professor Chemerinsky said, and it grows by the day. “Systematic unconstitutional and illegal acts create a constitutional crisis,” he said.

The distinctive feature of the current situation, several legal scholars said, is its chaotic flood of activity that collectively amounts to a radically new conception of presidential power. But the vol-

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GRAHAM DICKIE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

All the Pretty Yorkies

Yorkshire terriers at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, where judging began on Monday.

Body in Concrete Turns Chile’s Eye to Venezuela

This article is by *Jack Nicas, Pascale Bonnefoy and John Bartlett.*

Shortly after 3 a.m., a battering ram burst open the door to a 14th-floor apartment and three men dressed in the black tactical gear of the Chilean police rushed in. Brandishing guns, they grabbed Ronald Ojeda in front of his wife and 6-year-old son and dragged him away in his underwear.

Mr. Ojeda, a 32-year-old former

Assassination Stirs Fear  
of Maduro’s Reach

Venezuelan Army officer, was a political dissident living under asylum in a middle-class neighborhood of Chile’s capital, Santiago. He had tried to organize plots to topple Nicolás Maduro, Venezuela’s autocratic leader, and

weeks earlier, Mr. Maduro’s government had publicly labeled him a traitor.

When his wife called the Chilean authorities, she told them that at least one of her husband’s captors had a Venezuelan accent.

Across town nine days later, the authorities, acting on a tip, discovered a carry-on suitcase buried under nearly five feet of concrete. Inside, packed amid quicklime to

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TV Industry Debates Counting Couch Potatoes

By JOHN KOBLIN

Last month, the Golden Globes drew 10.1 million viewers. No, wait, maybe 9.3 million.

The very same night, “Sunday Night Football” attracted 28.5 million people. Scratch that, perhaps it was 25.8 million.

The “Yellowstone” finale? Possibly 11 million — or eight million?

Ratings have long been the currency of the TV business, helping

Different Ways to View  
Make Tally Harder

to determine how much media companies can charge for commercials. But the \$60 billion that advertisers spend on television each year largely depends on a shared leap of faith that the numbers are as good as gold.

That faith, though, is resting on shaky ground.

People now watch so many programs at so many different times in so many different ways — with an antenna, on cable, in an app or from a website, as well as live, recorded or on demand — that it is increasingly challenging for the industry to agree on the best way to measure viewership. In some cases, media executives and ad-

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Quakes Trouble Greek Island

Thousands of tremors have shaken Santorini. Over 13,000 of its 15,500 inhabitants have left.

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Seeking Early Pelicot Victims

French officials say the crimes of Dominique Pelicot may have started long before he drugged his wife.

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NATIONAL A12-21

Saying Goodbye After 80 Years

Researchers solved the mystery behind the death of an airman from California who was shot down over Germany during World War II.

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Odds Well Worth Watching

Scientists explain how they calculate the fluctuating probability of an asteroid hitting Earth in 2032.

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No E.T., but Still Fantastic

Felisa Wolfe-Simon never actually said she’d found an alien, but that didn’t stop the speculation that she had.

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BUSINESS B1-5

Tariffs on Steel Aim at Beijing

Existing U.S. levies already target steel and aluminum from China, which exports to other markets instead.

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Following Nixon’s Blueprint

President Trump’s heavy-handed approach to the news media is much like a crackdown 50 years ago.

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SPORTS B6-10

Squashing a Three-Peat Bid

Jalen Hurts led the way as Philadelphia ripped Super Bowl LIX out of the hands of Kansas City and resoundingly answered its doubters.

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OBITUARIES B11-12

A Renowned Comic Novelist

Tom Robbins blended pop philosophy and absurdist comedy in best-selling books like “Even Cowgirls Get the Blues.” He was 92.

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OPINION A22-23

Christopher Buckley

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Vendetta You Can Dance To

Kendrick Lamar, headlining the Super Bowl halftime show, made his Drake diss “Not Like Us” its centerpiece at the expense of a larger statement.

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