

KEY JUSTICES CAST  
A SKEPTICAL EYE  
ON TRUMP TARIFFS

PRESIDENT’S PRIORITY

Debate Over Power and  
What Constitutes an  
Emergency

**By ANN E. MARIMOW**

WASHINGTON — A majority of Supreme Court justices on Wednesday asked skeptical questions about President Trump’s use of emergency powers to impose tariffs on imports from nearly every U.S. trading partner, casting doubt on a centerpiece of the administration’s second-term agenda.

The outcome of the case, which could be decided within weeks or months, has immense economic and political implications for U.S. businesses, consumers and the president’s trade policy.

Several members of the court’s conservative majority, including Justice Amy Coney Barrett and Justice Neil M. Gorsuch, joined the liberal justices in sharply questioning the Trump administration’s assertion that it has the power to unilaterally impose tariffs without congressional approval.

Justice Barrett, who is seen as a key vote, questioned the scope of Mr. Trump’s reciprocal tariffs, which she described as “across the board.”

“Is it your contention that every country needed to be tariffed because of threats to the defense and industrial base?” she asked a lawyer for the administration. “Spain? France? I mean, I could see it with some countries but explain to me why as many countries needed to be subject to the reciprocal tariff policy?”

Several justices also noted that Mr. Trump was the first president to claim that the 50-year-old emergency statute allowed the president to impose tariffs.

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**HERE TO STAY** The administration has plenty of other options for imposing tariffs if the Supreme Court rules against it. PAGE B1

Emboldened Mamdani Cites Mandate to Pursue His Agenda



Zohran Mamdani, New York’s mayor-elect, at the Unisphere in Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

G.O.P.’s Economic Edge Vanished, Polls Show

**By SHANE GOLDMACHER**

A year ago, President Trump won the White House promising to fix the economy. On Tuesday, Republican losses delivered a reminder of the high political price that the party in power pays when voters are still feeling squeezed.

Mr. Trump himself was not on the ballot, and he never held rallies in either of the states where new governors were elected on Tuesday. But the president was still a central character in the campaigns, a mainstay of the Democrats’ advertising and their arguments on the stump.

Democrats’ Focus on  
Affordability Paid  
Off in Wins

Democratic victories in New Jersey and Virginia were built on promises to address the sky-high cost of living in those states while blaming Mr. Trump and his allies for all that ails those places. In New York City, the sudden rise of Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani, the democratic socialist with an ambitious agenda to lower the cost of living, put a punctuation

mark on affordability as a political force in 2025.

The results on Tuesday came after a drumbeat of polls showing that Mr. Trump and the Republican Party have seen their long-time edge on management of the economy evaporate.

“Exactly one year ago we had that big beautiful victory, exactly one year,” Mr. Trump said on Wednesday at a breakfast with Republican senators at the White House. “And last night it was not expected to be a victory — it was very Democrat areas — but I don’t think it was good for Republicans.”

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Face to Face and by  
Phone, Courting  
the Powerful

**By NICHOLAS FANDOS**

Zohran Mamdani was still asleep early in the morning after June’s Democratic primary when the phone calls started flooding in. There were the usual congratulations, certainly, but also signs of something more worrying.

A young democratic socialist, Mr. Mamdani had just toppled former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, upending New York’s power structure in an upset so stunning and so swift that even he had not fully seen it coming.

Now, titans of the city establishment were clogging up the phones of the candidate and his small team, looking for belated introductions. Most did not sound happy.

“It’s a great day in New York,” Morris Katz, Mr. Mamdani’s 26-year-old political adviser, told the real estate magnate William C. Rudin in one of the conversations.

The businessman paused. That’s certainly not how I see it, he replied.

Many past primary winners had instantly been anointed as mayor-elect in this overwhelmingly Democratic city. But it took just hours to become clear that the power brokers and civic gatekeepers accustomed to running New York saw Mr. Mamdani’s ascent as something closer to hostile takeover — one that many would do anything to block.

A top aide for Mr. Cuomo was already phoning unions and Democratic officials urging them to withhold support. Old real estate friends soon began pitching President Trump on a possible White House intervention.

And Bill Ackman, the billionaire financier, fired off a warning on X, saying “hundreds of millions of dollars” would be available to clobber the young interloper in November and “save our City.”

Mr. Mamdani’s political rise may be remembered for what came first: the buoyant, flamboyant

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Tone Shifts After Win  
With a Clear Call  
to Tax the Rich

**By EMMA G. FITZSIMMONS**

A newly empowered Zohran Mamdani on Wednesday vowed to use his convincing victory in the New York City mayor’s race as a mandate to push an ambitious progressive agenda past potential obstacles, from billionaire antagonists to Albany bureaucracy.

In a shift from the mollifying tone he had used for months, Mr. Mamdani made clear that while he would govern for all New Yorkers, he was determined to deliver for those who had been agitating for structural change.

“I’m also looking to be clear about the mandate that we won over the course of this election, and it is a mandate to deliver on the agenda that we ran on,” he said in a phone interview on Wednesday afternoon after a celebratory lunch with his progressive ally Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York.

The shift in tone was most striking when it came to his plan to raise taxes on the wealthy. In recent weeks, Mr. Mamdani had conveyed an openness to finding creative ways to pay for his signature policy initiative, universal child care, indicating that he was not necessarily set on raising taxes. There was plenty of revenue in the existing budget, he suggested.

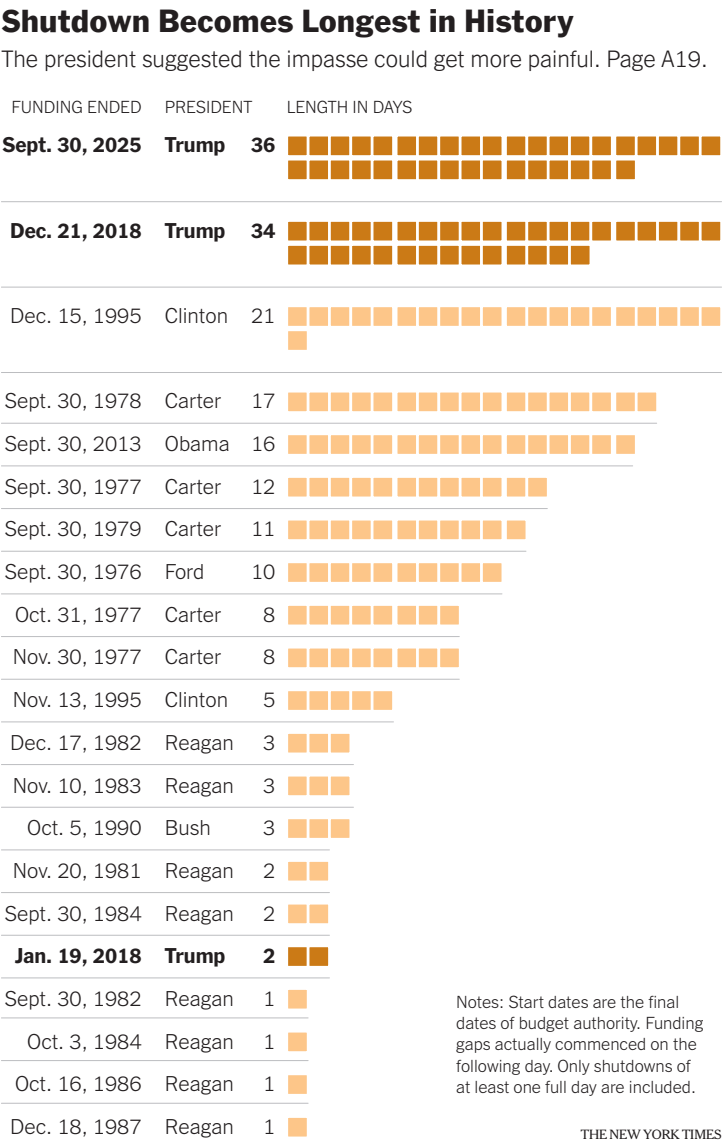
On Wednesday, Mr. Mamdani said his call to tax the wealthy was also about fairness. He said that New Yorkers who had voted for him were eager for billionaires to pay more taxes. On Monday, the day before the election, droves of Mr. Mamdani’s supporters marched with him over the Brooklyn Bridge at sunrise, chanting, “Tax the rich!”

“My supporters and our movement are hungry for a politics of consistency — a politics that actually focuses on the needs of working people,” Mr. Mamdani said. “I think that our tax system is an example of the many ways in which

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**DEMOCRATS** Victories in New York, New Jersey, Virginia and elsewhere were decisive, but the party is still rebuilding its brand. PAGE A11

**WALL STREET** Some financiers are vowing to play nice with Zohran Mamdani, while others are seeking to offset some of his plans. PAGE B1



Hawk for Bush  
Became a Voice  
Against Trump

**By PETER BAKER**

Dick Cheney and Kenneth Adelman were thick as thieves for decades. They worked side by side in Republican administrations, their wives and children were close, their families spent Thanksgiving together, they shared the same wedding anniversary.

Their relationship broke over the Iraq war.

Donald J. Trump brought them back together again.

Iraq, of course, was a defining moment of Mr. Cheney’s life in government. Like many Americans, Mr. Adelman supported the war at first, only to grow disenchanted. He and Mr. Cheney stopped speaking for 16 years. Then Mr. Trump came along, and Mr. Cheney and his daughter Liz Cheney spoke out against him. And so, one day, Mr. Cheney and his old friend were on the phone again, putting “the void years,” as Mr. Adelman put it, behind them.

Their reconciliation speaks to the complicated place Mr. Cheney occupies in the public life of the nation at this point in its

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‘Strung Up and Tortured’ in Grip of Iraqi Militia

*This article is by Adam Rasgon, Isabel Kershner and Ronen Bergman.*

RAMAT GAN, Israel — They handcuffed her, hung her up from the ceiling and beat her senseless. They shocked her with electricity and forced her into positions that injured her back and shoulders. When she lost consciousness, they threw water on her face to wake her so the torture could resume.

Elizabeth Tsurkov endured two

Israeli Russian Woman  
Held for Over 2 Years

and a half years of captivity in Iraq, held in solitary confinement by an Iran-backed militia. Ms. Tsurkov, 38, said it was a marathon of psychological torment, but the most excruciating were the first months, when she suffered beating after beating by her captors, as well as sexual assault.

“They whipped me all over,” she said in her first interview since being freed in September. “They basically used me as a punching bag.”

Barely able to sit up because of her injuries, Ms. Tsurkov, an Israeli Russian doctoral student at Princeton University, spoke while lying down in a friend’s home, the occasional jolt of pain forcing her to shift positions. During hours of interviews with The New York Times, she shared in mostly calm

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ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES

**‘The Whole Place Is Blown Apart’**  
On Jamaica’s southern coast, Hurricane Melissa destroyed an untold number of homes. Page A7.

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

Censors’ Grip Tightens

Restrictions on publishers and sellers have grown more severe, but bookstores remain important sources of community in Russia. PAGE A4

Challenge for a Dutch Centrist

Rob Jetten will need to turn his momentum into action to form a government after his center-left party bested the far right in elections last week. PAGE A5

U.S. Military’s Nigeria Plans

After social media posts from the president and his defense secretary, officials drafted an array of options to combat Islamist militant groups. PAGE A9

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Do-Over for NASA Nominee

To lead the space agency, the president tapped a man whose nomination he had withdrawn in June. PAGE A24

UPS Jet’s Left Engine Detached

Federal safety officials arrived in Kentucky to investigate what led the cargo plane to plunge, killing 11. PAGE A20



BUSINESS B1-5

Would Pay Deal Drive Musk?

There is an assumption that money is the biggest motivator for all. But economists present a more complex picture of how rewards affect effort. PAGE B1

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Interview With a Literary Titan

John Irving, 83, talks about his 16th novel, President Trump and why he hasn’t stopped working. PAGE D1

He’s Picturing the 2020s

Sam McKinniss’s internet-sourced portraits are in demand. But he says, “I’m a very nervous person.” PAGE D6

SPORTS B6-9

No End in Sight for Dodgers

With Shohei Ohtani under contract for eight more seasons, the champions may be just starting their dynasty. PAGE B8

N.F.L.’s Mexican Soundtrack

A mariachi band infuses Rams games with entertainment that reflects the Los Angeles region’s character. PAGE B6



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Recreating an Assassination

In a film about the killing of James A. Garfield, Matthew Macfadyen and Michael Shannon make sparks fly. PAGE C1

A Good Way to Stay Afloat

By sharing details of her seafaring life, a designer found an audience for her game about cleaning up pollution. PAGE C1

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Jamelle Bouie

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