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Better Than a Box of Chocolates
Valentine’s Day meant “joyful chaos” for courthouse weddings. Above, Jessica Goulart and Gilan Salehi in Manhattan. Page A21.

No. 2 in Trump’s Justice Dept. Aided Dismissal Push for Adams

This article is by Michael S. Schmidt, William K. Rashbaum, Maggie Haberman and Jonah E. Bromwich.

President Trump had just taken office when lawyers for Mayor Eric Adams of New York went to the White House with an extraordinary request: They formally asked in a letter that the new president pardon the mayor in a federal corruption case that had yet to go to trial.

Just a week later, one of Mr. Trump’s top political appointees at the Justice Department called Mr. Adams’s lawyer, saying he wanted to talk about potentially dismissing the case.

What followed was a rapid series of exchanges between the lawyers and Mr. Trump’s administration that exploded this week into a confrontation between top Justice Department officials in Washington and New York prosecutors.

Agency’s Collaboration Shattered Norms of Enforcing the Law

On Monday, the acting No. 2 official at the Justice Department sent a memo ordering prosecutors to dismiss the charges against the mayor. By Thursday, the acting U.S. attorney in Manhattan, Danielle Sassoon, had resigned in protest over what she described as a quid pro quo between the Trump administration and the mayor of New York City. Five officials overseeing the Justice Department’s public integrity

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NEXT STEP Federal prosecutors formally asked a judge to drop the mayor’s charges. PAGE A13

Mayor Still Faces Political Peril Even if Trial Has Been Avoided

By EMMA G. FITZSIMMONS

When the Justice Department ordered federal prosecutors on Monday to drop the corruption case against Mayor Eric Adams of New York City, he hoped that it would save his political career and allow him to better focus on governing the nation’s largest city.

Instead, the mayor is in even more peril, his political future is still in question and New Yorkers’ trust in him is precipitously waning. In just the last 48 hours, the top Democrat in the House, nearly every major member of the city’s elected leadership, civic leaders, pastors and even staunch mayoral allies have credibly argued that he let President Trump gain effective sway over the most important City Hall in America.

Calls for his resignation have escalated. Pressure is mounting on Gov. Kathy Hochul to use her power to remove the mayor.

Representative Alexandria

Calls for His Removal or Resignation Keep Growing Louder

Ocasio-Cortez, citing Mr. Trump’s “leverage over Adams,” said that if the mayor “won’t resign, he must be removed.” Representative Nydia Velázquez said Mr. Adams must step down because the city could not be “led by someone under Trump’s thumb and willing to sell out New Yorkers.”

The calls also came from Ms. Hochul’s lieutenant governor, Antonio Delgado, and the State Senate’s No. 2 Democrat, Michael Ganimaris, and from the mayor’s primary challengers. And all of that preceded the Justice Department’s formal four-page motion, filed on Friday, to drop the charges against the mayor.

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Harrowing New Task in Gaza: Scouring the Rubble for the Dead

This article is by Erika Solomon, Aaron Boxerman and Rawan Sheikh Ahmad.

After 15 months of war, Hani al-Dibs, a high school teacher, thought his greatest wish was to see the bombardment of Gaza come to an end. But the long-awaited cease-fire has brought only bitterness and dread.

Mr. al-Dibs is one of countless Gazans burdened with an agonizing duty: trying to recover the remains of loved ones trapped beneath the swaths of rubble left by Israel’s war against Hamas.

Some families have returned home to find corpses of loved ones so decomposed, they cannot tell them apart. Others cannot even enter the wreckage to dig, so strong is the stench of human decay. And some have searched and searched, only to find nothing at all.

As they prepared to return to their hometown, Jabaliya, in northern Gaza, Mr. al-Dibs’s two surviving children kept asking him whether their mother and little brothers might somehow have survived the blast that had trapped their bodies for three months beneath the rubble of the family home.

“They’d ask: ‘What if they were still sleeping after the explosion,



SAHER ALGHORRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Hani al-Dibs returned to the wreckage of his home in northern Gaza to recover his family’s remains.

and climbed out later? What if, later on, the Israelis heard them screaming, and got them out?” he said in an interview. “Their questions torment me.”

Gazan health authorities have tallied nearly 48,000 among the

dead, without distinguishing between civilians and combatants.

Beyond that is an untold toll: those whose bodies have yet to be found.

Families have reported 9,000 people as missing and presumed

dead under rubble. Most of those have yet to be unearthed from Gaza’s ruins, health officials said. Several thousand of these are still not counted among the dead, as the authorities investigate the

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All Quiet on the Southern Front
President Trump dispatched troops to quell migrant crossings. So far, there isn’t much for them to do. PAGE A11

Bigger Role for A.I. Bots

Staffers working for Elon Musk push for A.I. to be more widely used within the Department of Education. PAGE A15

INTERNATIONAL A4-10

Whiskey Braces for Trade War
Liquor is leverage as the world careens toward another trade dispute. European tariffs on American whiskey could jump to 50 percent this spring. PAGE A4

Avoiding the Belly of a Beast

Paddling in Chilean Patagonia, Adrián Simancas was caught in a humpback’s lunge, suspended in its mouth and then spit back out. PAGE A5

Assault on Chernobyl Site

Ukraine called damage from a Russian drone “significant” but said there were no signs of radiation leaks. The Kremlin denied making the attack. PAGE A7

BUSINESS B1-5

Simply ‘Common Sense’
President Trump and Fox News, using the same words to describe Mr. Trump’s moves, say they are right and popular. Polling suggests otherwise. PAGE B1

Gutting Oversight of Business

Firings, stop-work orders and pauses in litigation by the Trump administration have hobbled regulators. PAGE B1

TRAVEL C7-8

British Pubs: All-in-One

This quintessentially British lodging offers room and board, and the chance to share pints with regulars. PAGE C7



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Turning the Page on News

Jesse Welles, who usually sings about hot topics, is releasing a new album that will avoid current events. PAGE C1

Need a Paddington Hug?

In “Paddington in Peru,” Ben Whishaw, who again voices the beloved bear, is here to make you feel better. PAGE C1

SPORTS B6-9

Off-Season, but on the Ball
With baseball’s spring training here, it’s a good time to look at award-worthy activity from the off-season. PAGE B8

Maplewood’s Hallowed Ground

In the New Jersey parking lot where Ultimate Frisbee was invented, some originals are still playing. PAGE B6

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Harold Varmus

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