WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2024 · \$3



Israeli troops capture Rafah crossing

Incursion disrupts aid delivery, sends civilians fleeing by the thousands

BY LOVEDAY MORRIS, HEBA FAROUK MAHFOUZ, CLAIRE PARKER AND SHIRA RUBIN

JERUSALEM — Israeli forces seized control of the Rafah border crossing in the southern Gaza Strip on Tuesday, shutting down the flow of aid and sending thousands of civilians fleeing as they opened a new front in the months-long war to eradicate Hamas from the territory.

In a statement, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said it had



TOP: Smoke rises after an Israeli airstrike Tuesday in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip. The incursion appeared more limited than the large-scale offensive Israel had threatened. ABOVE: A girl wounded in the strike at a Rafah hospital.

gained "operational control" of the Palestinian side of the crossing as part of a "precise counterterrorism operation" in Rafah, which shares a border with Egypt.

The incursion Tuesday appeared limited, falling short of the large-scale ground offensive Israel has threatened in Rafah. But it also shut down the crossing, a key entry point for aid to southern Gaza, triggering immediate concern over the delivery of food, fuel and other supplies to Palestinians displaced by

U.N. Secretary General António Guterres called for the crossings to be reopened immediately, urging Israel to stop any escalation and engage in diplomacy.

SEE GAZA ON A12

Cease-fire talks: U.S. says it's optimistic about prospects for a deal. A12 Shot across the bow': U.S. delays arms shipments to Israel. A13

Daniels delivers fraught account of Trump encounter

ELICITS ANGER FROM FORMER PRESIDENT

Alarmed, judge warns defense about behavior

BY DEVLIN BARRETT, TOM JACKMAN, SHAYNA JACOBS AND MARIANNE LEVINE

NEW YORK — Stormy Daniels, the adult-film actress at the center of Donald Trump's hush money trial, testified Tuesday about a disturbing sexual encounter she says she had with him, leading to angry, profane muttering from the former president that alarmed the judge.

New York Supreme Court Justice Juan Merchan called Trump's lawyer Todd Blanche to a sidebar during a break to say that Trump was "cursing audibly" and possibly intimidating Daniels, who had begun testifying, according to a transcript.

"I understand that your client is upset at this point," Merchan said to the defense attorney, according to the transcript, "but he is cursing audibly and he is shaking his head visually and that's contemptuous. It has the potential to intimidate the witness and the jury can see that."

Blanche assured the judge he would speak to Trump.

"I am speaking to you here at the bench because I don't want to embarrass him," Merchan said.
"You need to speak to him. I won't tolerate that."

The exchange punctuated a day of rage - sometimes whispered from the defense table, sometimes declared loudly by Daniels from the witness stand.

It was one of several surreal moments on the 13th day of the first criminal trial of a former SEE TRUMP ON A6

Classified documents: Judge indefinitely postpones Fla. trial. A3

The Trump Trials: Actress's testimony spurs mistrial motion. A6

In N.Y. and D.C., scenes from a surreal campaign

BY MATT VISER

President Biden was in the Map Room at the White House, going line by line over a speech he would soon deliver commemorating the Holocaust, when, a few hundred miles to the north, a prosecutor stood before the court and declared, "The people call Stormy Daniels."

Biden would soon visit Capitol Hill to join some of the country's top elected officials in memorializing an atrocity that killed 6 million Jews and to pledge repeatedly, "Never again." He appeared at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum ceremony at the same moment his predecessor was listening attentively in a courthouse on the 13th day of his hush money trial, where an adult-film actress was called to testify about the tawdry details of their alleged encounter.

The person who introduced Biden called him a "mensch" and recalled his surprising attendance at a shiva for his late wife. The person testifying about Trump called him "arrogant and pompous" and recounted the time he surprisingly appeared in his underwear and purportedly SEE CAMPAIGN ON A4

TikTok sues over U.S. law that could ban app

Cites First Amendment in case that could prove to be an existential fight

BY DREW HARWELL

TikTok and its parent company ByteDance challenged the U.S. government in a legal filing Tuesday over a new law forcing the sale or ban of the social media giant, igniting a high-stakes court battle in Washington that could prove to be an existential fight for one of the world's most popular apps.

President Biden signed a law last month demanding that China-based ByteDance sell Tik-Tok within a year or be banned across the United States, arguing that the Chinese government could use the app to spy on Americans or secretly shape public opinion.

But the companies in their petition for review contend that the law violates the First Amendment rights of its 170 million U.S. accounts in an "extraordinary and unconstitutional assertion of power" based on vaguely expressed national security concerns

"Banning TikTok is so obviously unconstitutional, in fact, that even the Act's sponsors recognized that reality, and therefore have tried mightily to depict the law not as a ban at all, but merely a regulation of TikTok's ownership," the challenge states.

"In reality, there is no choice," it adds. A forced sale "is simply not possible: not commercially, not technologically, not legally."

The case will set up a showdown for the Biden administration, which has touted the law as a way to avoid the pitfalls that doomed the Trump administration's previous attempt to ban the

A loss in court for the government would set back years of backroom federal strategizing that produced one of the few national technology policies passed by Congress in two dec-

A win would force a change in control over the biggest foreignowned tech platform to achieve mainstream prominence in the United States, disrupting what has become a potent force in the online creator economy and a popular driver of American entrepreneurship and entertain-

ByteDance, a private company that valued itself last year at \$268 billion, has vowed to fight what it calls an unconstitutional government overreach.

SEE TIKTOK ON A15

How the call to ban cellphones went through at one school







PHOTOS BY TONY LUONG FOR THE WASHINGTON POS

BY JOANNA SLATER IN MANCHESTER, CONN.

hen Raymond Dolphin became assistant principal of a middle school in Connecticut two years ago, it was clear to him that the kids were not all right.

The problem was cellphones. Students were using the devices in class, despite a rule against it. Social media was exacerbating nearly every conflict among students. When Dolphin walked the hallways or surveyed the cafeteria, he invariably saw heads bent over screens.

So last December, Dolphin did something unusual: He banned them

The experiment at Illing Middle School sparked objections from students and some parents, but it has already generated profound and unexpected

Dolphin likened prohibiting cellphones to curbing consumption of sugary foods. "In a matter of months, you start feeling better," he said.

What unfolded at the school reflects a broader struggle underway in education as some administrators turn to increasingly drastic measures to limit the reach of a technology that is both ubiquitous and SEE CELLPHONES ON A9

Illing Middle School math teacher Justin Pistorius and student Michael Wilson, who signed a petition urging school leaders to reconsider a phone ban.

Plans develop to muscle up for a global trade war

Trump advisers explore legal theories to justify a new 'universal' tariff

BY JEFF STEIN

Donald Trump's economic advisers are eyeing aggressive new legal justifications to impose tariffs on all imports, seeking to buttress a second-term plan that would reshape the U.S. economy, according to public and private comments by top aides.

On the campaign trail, Trump has repeatedly promised to enact a "ring" around the U.S. economy by enacting a tariff of at least 10 percent on goods imported from any other nation. Trump's plan would target more than \$3 trillion in annual imports and risks sending inflation soaring in what probably would prove the biggest escalation of trade hostilities in decades, ratcheting up the standoffs that marked his first

But the Constitution gives power over both taxation and regulation of foreign commerce SEE TARIFFS ON A15

IN THE NEWS

Plot against Zelensky Ukrainian authorities arrested two colonels in the protective service, accusing them of planning to kill the president and other top officials. A13

Judge disciplined Maryland's high court removed a Prince George's County jurist from the bench, citing "egregious" behavior. B1

THE NATION

A deadly tornado hit Oklahoma amid a string of violent storms across the region. A3 **House Speaker** Mike Johnson vowed to defy

GOP hard-liners and re-

main in his post. A7

THE WORLD

An outspoken rapper faces a death sentence from an Iranian revolutionary court. A10 A triumphal ceremony inaugurated Vladimir Putin for his fifth term as Russia's president. All

THE ECONOMY Defense think tank MITRE and chipmaker

Nvidia are building a supercomputer to more quickly bring AI to federal agencies. A14 **Social Security** needs to be fixed, but you also

need a plan for retirement savings, Michelle Singletary writes. A16

THE REGION The D.C. Council overrode a veto by Mayor

Muriel E. Bowser (D) targeting eligibility rules for housing voucher programs. B1

A college student who raised over \$400,000 for a homeless man in D.C. said the money has now been refunded. B1

STYLE In a city overcome by

tumult, the Met Gala still offered a dreamy escape. Designer John Galliano won the night. C1

FOOD

A beloved chicken and dumplings recipe died with a writer's greatgrandmother, leading to a quest to re-create it. E1

BUSINESS NEWS OBITUARIES.

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