

HSAS COMMON SENSE: CURRENT EVENTS RELEASE

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American Politics: Trump's Manhattan Trial

Kaela Glaser, Grade 10, Staff Writer, and Mollie Kuritzky, Grade 11, News Editor

- Former President Donald Trump's hush money trial began on Monday with jury selection. Opening arguments could begin as soon as next week.
 - Trump faces 34 felony counts, all of which are related to Trump's 2016 payment to porn star Stormy Daniels. Trump had given Daniels \$130,000 to suppress her story of a sexual encounter the two had.
 - While hush money itself is not illegal, prosecutors say that the way Trump accounted for the payment after being elected to office was fraudulent.
 - Such a high-profile case has not been without difficulty: as of Thursday afternoon, two jurors had been excused — one after she expressed concern about her identity being publicly revealed, and another after prosecutors questioned his credibility.
 - The hush money case is the first of four criminal trials the former president faces, and possibly the only one that will reach a verdict before the 2024 election.
 - The maximum sentence for each verdict the former president faces if convicted is four years in prison, but it is up to the presiding judge, Justice Merchan, to deliver the sentence.
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Global Events: Israel's Bombing Campaign in Gaza

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- Israel launched a new bombing campaign in Gaza with motives related to national security concerns, as well as in response to threats/provocations.
 - The campaign involves a mix of airstrikes and other military operations that are designed to target Hamas' infrastructure, as well as ensuring protection to minimize civilian casualties.
 - This plan has been gathering international attention with various standpoints on the spectrum of condemnation or support from the international audience.
 - These bombing campaigns in areas with dense populations (i.e. Gaza) can lead to significant humanitarian impacts, affect the lives of civilians, and further deepen already existing challenges and obstacles in the region.
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Miscellaneous News:

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- Ipeei Mizuhara, the interpreter of MLB player Shohei Ohtani, stole \$16 million from him between November 2021 to January 2024 to fund his sports gambling addiction. Despite initial suspicions of Ohtani being involved in the gambling, he was exonerated by authorities after an investigation.
- Mount Ruang, a volcano on the remote island of Ruang in North Sulawesi, Indonesia, has erupted five times since April 15th. Authorities have raised the volcano alert to the highest level due to concerns about the volcano collapsing into the sea and triggering a tsunami.
- Sam Salehpour, an engineer at Boeing for over a decade, testified before a Senate panel on April 17th about his concerns regarding the safety of the Boeing 787 Dreamliner airplanes. He claimed that Boeing used shortcuts in the production of the Dreamliner, which caused the plane to run the risk of breaking apart during flight. Amidst these claims, Boeing has continued to express their confidence in the Dreamliner's durability.

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