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Democracy Dies in Darkness

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After Pulte rift, Trump pivots on intel pick

Jay Clayton has garnered praise from both sides of the aisle

BY MAEGAN VAZQUEZ, WARREN P. STROBEL AND PERRY STEIN

President Donald Trump said Thursday that he plans to nominate Jay Clayton, the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, to serve as the next director of national intelligence.

"Few people anywhere in the Legal Community are respected at the level of Jay," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "I encourage the United States Senate to confirm Jay as soon as possible."

The Cabinet position oversees and coordinates 18 U.S. intelligence agencies but does not have a role in spying operations.

The president's decision to appoint a federal prosecutor to the intel role comes after his acting pick for the position — a Trump loyalist who lacked intelligence experience — caused an immediate rift in Washington.

Less than two weeks ago, Trump said he would appoint Bill Pulte, who leads a federal mortgage regulation agency, to replace outgoing Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard on an acting basis. But even some Republicans voiced concerns over the pick. And earlier Thursday, the House of Representatives rejected a last-minute attempt to extend a controversial warrantless-surveillance law, with Democrats pinning their no votes to Pulte's appointment to the sensitive national security role.

Clayton, the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission during Trump's first

SEE DNI ON A6

World Cup kicks off at a Mexico City stadium of soccer legend



RODRIGO OROPEZA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

For the next 39 days, billions of people around the world will tune in to the largest sporting event ever staged, with an expanded 48 countries competing in 104 games in cities across the United States, Mexico and Canada. Story, B7

Trump calls off planned attacks

HE CITES PROGRESS ON POSSIBLE DEAL

'Different group' calling shots in Iran, he says

BY VICTORIA CRAW, SIHAM SHAMALAKH AND DAN DIAMOND

President Donald Trump said Thursday that he had canceled scheduled attacks on Iran after progress on a potential peace deal, his latest reversal in a months-long pattern of threatening attacks and walking them back.

Speaking in the Oval Office, Trump asserted that an agreement to end hostilities would be signed "maybe this weekend," after which the United States would immediately lift its naval blockade of the country.

The deal would bar Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, Trump said, an objective he has named as key in deciding to strike the country. It was not immediately clear whether Iran's leaders had formally signed off on the agreement, although Trump asserted that they had.

Pressed by reporters on whether an agreement was truly close after weeks of false starts, Trump said Iran's current leaders were "much more rational" than their predecessors and were worn out by the U.S. military's attacks.

"We knocked out the first team of leadership," Trump said. "The second team of leadership, this is a different group. It's a different level. And I think it's, frankly, a smarter level."

The White House declined to

SEE IRAN ON A13

Midlife habits that could make or break your brain

Researchers say the 40s, 50s and 60s represent a critical window for protecting cognitive health later in life

BY ARIANA EUNJUNG CHA

Neuroscientist Miia Kivipelto's life's work has been about preventing dementia. Now, at 52, she has begun thinking more about her own vulnerability.

"Midlife is the time," said Kivipelto, a neuroscientist who recently joined the Yale School of Nursing as the inaugural director of its Center for Aging Well

in New Haven, Connecticut. "It's the last best chance to lower risk."

The idea that dementia prevention may hinge on what people do in their mid-30s to their 60s is rapidly reshaping the field. Scientists increasingly believe the disease is driven not only by changes in the aging brain, but also by years of metabolic stress, inflammation and vascular

damage accumulating across the body. Many researchers now think the biological process that leads to dementia begins 15 to 20 years before the first memory problems emerge. By the time symptoms become noticeable, the disease likely will already be well established.

Neuroscientists now see midlife as a critical window when the brain becomes especially vul-

nerable to aging — but also more responsive to intervention.

The implications are profound: The ordinary habits of middle age may matter far more than scientists once realized, and cognitive decline may not be inevitable.

Last year, a large study in JAMA Network Open found that people who remained physically

SEE BRAIN ON A11

House rejects extension of expiring wiretap law

Critical post-9/11 spy tool is all but certain to lapse for the first time

BY NOAH ROBERTSON AND MARIANA ALFARO

The House of Representatives on Thursday rejected a last-minute attempt to extend a controversial warrantless-surveillance law, as Democrats protested President Donald Trump's decision to temporarily place Bill Pulte, a mortgage agency director and MAGA loyalist, atop the U.S. intelligence community.

The vote failed 218-198, with 19 Republicans joining nearly all Democrats in opposing the bill. It would have required a two-

thirds majority to advance under the parliamentary tool House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-Louisiana) used to quickly bring the legislation to the floor.

The result all but ensures that Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, a post-9/11 spy tool that both parties have argued is critical to U.S. national security, will lapse for the first time.

Republicans said the FISA lapse endangers national security, but Democrats argued Pulte's appointment as acting head of U.S. intelligence was a bigger danger to Americans' safety.

A few hours after the failed vote, Trump nominated former Securities and Exchange Commission chair Jay Clayton to be the next full-time director of national intelligence, a posting that

SEE FISA ON A5



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

The House went on a week-long recess after the failed vote. When reporters asked House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-Louisiana), above, if he would call the chamber back, he said, "What would be the point?"

El Niño is here, and its domino disruptions

The warm eastern Pacific will induce a chain reaction

BY MATTHEW CAPPUCCI AND BEN NOLL

El Niño is here, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The agency issued an El Niño Advisory on Thursday morning, signifying that Earth has crossed a key threshold into El Niño territory. A chain-reaction process in the atmosphere is underway and will influence global weather patterns in the months ahead.

While El Niño begins as a warming of water temperatures in the eastern tropical Pacific, there are domino effects globally. And this installment of El Niño looks to be particularly intense and could develop into a highly anticipated super El Niño.

"There is a 63% chance of a very strong El Niño during November-January ... that would rank among the largest El Niño events in the historical record going back to 1950," NOAA wrote

SEE EL NIÑO ON A14

With SpaceX IPO, Elon Musk will become the first trillionaire — on paper

BY SHIRA OVIDE AND FAIZ SIDDIQUI

Welcome to history's first trillionaire. Sort of.

Elon Musk's SpaceX, a rocket, satellite internet and artificial intelligence company that's bleeding cash and has puny sales compared to established technology giants, announced Thursday the price for its initial public offering

of \$135 per share. The step sets up a blockbuster IPO that ranks as the largest in history, at about \$75 billion.

Musk was already the richest person in the world, according to lists from Bloomberg and Forbes. He's also in line to receive a trillion-dollar pay package if he hits certain milestones at the automaker Tesla. But the SpaceX IPO pushes him into trillionaire status,

depending on how you count his wealth.

According to SpaceX's disclosures, Musk holds roughly half of the company's stock, including shares that he might earn far in the future tied to accomplishments such as shooting computer data centers into space and creating a human settlement on Mars. Those Musk shares in SpaceX are worth about \$867 bil-

lion at Thursday's IPO price.

Combined with the chunk of the automaker Tesla that also belongs to Musk, his stock in the two companies is valued at more than \$1.1 trillion combined, according to Washington Post calculations from SpaceX and Tesla securities filings.

As with nearly everything about Musk, his trillionaire status requires explanation. SpaceX

has granted big slugs of company stock that only pay off if he drives his company's value to monumental heights and if SpaceX achieves Musk's goal of establishing a populated human colony on Mars. Excluding those shares, Musk is just shy of trillionaire status, for now.

But based on SpaceX's report of Musk's holdings, the value of

SEE MUSK ON A11

IN THE NEWS

Trump's checkup The president appears to have set a new bar: 22 medical specialists assessed him, according to a report recently released by the White House. A10

ICE facility protest Brad Lander, a former NYC comptroller and a Democratic candidate for the U.S. House, was found not guilty. A9

THE NATION These seniors needed long-term care and rehab. Private Medicare plans denied them. A8
The DOJ charged pro-Palestinian activists in Michigan with threatening officials. A10

THE WORLD The global economy, tested by years of war, pandemic and trade tension, is beginning to fray, as fallout from the war on Iran dents prospects for growth, the World Bank said. A13

THE ECONOMY Oil and gas executives warned the White House that gasoline prices could surge in coming months as inventories fall to critical lows, complicating the Trump administration's efforts to contain inflation that has already rattled consumers. A18

STYLE A pop-up exhibit in D.C. features more than 3 million pages of files related to sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. B1
SPORTS Some of the top tennis talent in the U.S. will be on display this summer as the DC Open returns for its 57th year. B7

THE REGION A majority of D.C. residents are unhappy about the direction of the city, a poll found. We asked them why. B12
WEEKEND The premiere of "CrazySexyCool," now at Arena Stage, delves into the complex camaraderie of 1990s trio TLC.

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