**Donald Trump, Finally Indicted**

[Juan Abbas](https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/juan-abbas/)

April 4, 2023

It finally happened-Donald Trump was finally indicted Late Thursday, by the Manhattan District Attorney for financial crimes and misdemeanours relating to campaign finances and payments made to Stormy Daniels, a high-profile figure in all of this. His arrest is scheduled for tomorrow.

It all started back in 2015 when he started soliciting campaign funds and ran for his first Presidential term. He would use those funds for rallies across the country, but his use of them to finance hush money payments to film star Stormy Daniels was what actually defined the bounds of this criminal investigation. The criminal investigation is based in New York and was started by the Manhattan District Attorney back in 2020. It was inspired by the confessions (a barrage of them rather) by Trump’s former attorney, Michael Cohen-who claims to have been responsible for delivering these payments. The investigation was originally based on grounds of the Trump Organization and its financial crimes. Cohen pleaded guilty to nine federal crimes including tax fraud, admitting to lying to Congress and campaign finance violations, in which the two women who were paid play a big part.

Keep in mind-Trump has had dozens of cases across the country-on many potential charges, including obstruction of justice, and unconstitutional acts relating to January 6. But, if this is the one thing that takes him down-if this is the $130,000 that is responsible for bringing him down and putting him behind bars, it will set a new tone in American history, and a fusion of exceptionalism and democracy will intertwine.

Another high-profile case against the former President and electoral deforming scheme is also in full play.

And this goes to the efforts at the DA’s office, in what was a multi-year-long eventful race to see how much evidence could be gathered to craft significant charges. In May 2021, the first Grand Jury was seated to oversee the presentation of Trump’s 15-year fraud scheme in his investment firm. The Second Grand Jury convened in October of the same year and saw more evidence pile up against the corresponding tax fraud charges they wanted to include.

This was around the time Trump’s CFO Allen Weisselberg had turned himself to investigators and struck a deal with the DA’s office to act as a witness in the high-profile case. After Michael Cohen-former Trump associates deemed it necessary to speak out and take their former boss down for good. To an extent, it worked.

The District attorney managed to present Weisselberg in the trial in 2022 and start the 4th Grand Jury by early this year, after which it was left to the DA as to whether or not Trump could be found liable in all of these piled-up charges. Currently, Trump stands charged with 30 counts of financial crime, which could wind him up in prison for 5 to 20 years. The extremities of the charges are yet to be revealed in which case the sentencing could go up.

It is now up to Trump’s legal team to figure out a way to present the jury with facts that he in fact never corroborated. Usually, the prosecution would take up witnesses who present an honest public eye. In this case, its people like Michael Cohen-who admitted to lying to Congress for his former boss but later turned on him. These are the people that know him best. These are folks who know each of his dealings and have done his dirty work for him for years.

Now Trump-notably has responded to the indictment and has not held back from his views. Trump said in multiple rallies last week that he expected to be indicted and arrested any day, but behind closed doors, he thought no one could lay a finger on him since it may only increase his popularity. He was, fortunately, wrong. There are consequences for actions, even if they themselves have unintended externalities.

“This is Political Persecution and Election Interference at the highest level in history,” Trump wrote in his statement earlier today. “The Democrats have lied; cheated and stolen in their obsession with trying to ‘Get Trump,’ but now they’ve done the unthinkable-indicting a completely innocent person in an act of blatant Election Interference.”

This next week-Trump is expected and taken to a location to discuss his collaboration with the case. If he manages to secure bail or a house arrest, it would be a big win for him in what many legal experts are calling a slippery slope. Again, we are in unchartered territories. And this goes to a strong precedent being set by NY prosecutors in the case highlighting that no one is above the law. This case could perhaps act as a catalyst for other District Attorneys across the country. Another high-profile case against the former President-relating to the January 6-and electoral deforming scheme is also in full play. The Judge in this specific case ordered Trump’s VP, Mike Pence-to testify and lay out the events of the day since he was one of few witnesses to the threats presented by his extremist supporters on January 6th, 2021. Now, we wait and see what the charges are and to what extent state and local officials collaborate with NY prosecutors to extract the Former President from his resort in Miami-Dade. Florida Governor, Ron DeSantis, has indicated he will not let NY prosecutors forcefully take the former President, but he can’t hinder federal investigations unless, of course, he wants his own potential presidential bid to go in limbo.

*The writer is a columnist and a linguistic activist.*