

Judge rules Donald Trump must hand over tax returns to New York prosecutors



New York, October 7 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump must hand over eight years of tax returns to Manhattan prosecutors, a federal judge ruled, after Trump claimed he was immune from being sued.

The decision, by U.S. District Judge Victor Marrero in Manhattan, escalates the president's battle to keep his finances under wraps, despite having promised during his 2016 White House run that he would disclose his tax returns. Marrero called Trump's immunity claim "repugnant to the nation's governmental structure and constitutional values."

Trump quickly filed an emergency notice of appeal to the federal appeals court in Manhattan. Cyrus Vance, the Manhattan district attorney, had subpoenaed personal and corporate tax returns from 2011 to 2018 and other records from Trump's longtime accounting firm Mazars USA as part of a criminal probe into the president and his family business.

Trump's lawyers had argued that the president was immune from such a probe while in office, and that the Constitution required Vance to wait until after Trump left the White House. Lawyers for Trump did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Danny Frost, a spokesman for Vance, declined to

comment.

In a 75-page decision, Marrero declined to assert jurisdiction over the dispute, saying Trump should have brought his case in a New York state court.

But the judge made clear that if the appeals court disagreed with that finding, Trump should lose. "The expansive notion of constitutional immunity invoked here to shield the President from judicial process would constitute an overreach of executive power," Marrero wrote. Such a "sweeping doctrine finds no support in the Constitution's text or history," and would effectively leave the president, his family and his businesses "above the law."

Vance issued the subpoena four weeks after issuing another subpoena to the Trump Organization for records of hush money payments, including to two women prior to the 2016 election who said they had sexual relationships with Trump, which he denies.

Mazars has in the past said it would comply with its legal obligations, and as a matter of policy did not comment on its work for clients. The president is separately trying to block Deutsche Bank AG from handing over financial records, which the bank has said include tax returns, sought by committees of the U.S. House of Representatives.

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