

New York prosecutors investigating Trump form grand jury



New York, May 26 (RHC)-- New York prosecutors have convened a grand jury that is expected to decide whether to indict former President Donald Trump, suggesting they may have found evidence of a crime, US media reported.

The development is the latest step towards 74-year-old Trump, who left the White House in January, possibly becoming the first-ever ex-US leader to face criminal charges.

The grand jury was set up recently and will sit three days a week for six months, The Washington Post newspaper said on Tuesday, citing two unnamed people familiar with the case. The panel is also hearing several matters unrelated to Trump's case, the paper added.

The Washington Post said the grand jury formation suggests that Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance may have found evidence of a crime, if not by Trump, then somebody close to him. A spokesman for Vance declined to comment when contacted by the AFP and Reuters news agencies.

Vance has been investigating Trump's business dealings before he became president for more than two years, and his office has said in court filings that it was investigating "possibly extensive and protracted criminal conduct" at the family-run Trump Organization, including tax and insurance fraud and falsification of business records.

New York State Attorney General Letitia James is also investigating the Trump Organization and last week said her office was investigating the company in a "criminal capacity" and was working with Vance's team.

In the United States, prosecutors typically refer important cases to grand juries made up of citizens who examine the prosecution's case in secret. They hear evidence and can request additional documents before deciding whether criminal charges should be brought.

Trump, who was a property developer and reality television star before he was elected president in 2016, denies wrongdoing. Last week he attacked James, saying "we will overcome" any attempt at prosecution.

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