

Reports say Elon Musk is sticking close to Trump, influencing U.S. transition

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Miami, November 12 (RHC)-- Tech billionaire Elon Musk is diving even deeper into the world of politics after Donald Trump's election win, cosying up to the president-elect and offering him input on key administration hires, according to U.S. media reports.

Musk, who donated \$119 million to a pro-Trump political action committee and aggressively campaigned for the Republican, has made near-daily visits to Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida since Election Day on Tuesday, spending time with the president-elect and his family, CNN reported.

Kai Trump, Donald Trump's granddaughter, posted a photo of herself with Musk and his child on social media, joking that the billionaire was "achieving uncle status".

Musk is making his voice heard on important staffing deliberations, according to CNN, while using the X social media platform, which he owns, to promote his political vision.

"He definitely inserts himself all the time. That's his style," tech journalist Kara Swisher told CNN. "I've heard from Trump people, calling me, saying, 'Oh, wow. This is odd.' And it is."

Over the weekend and on Monday, Musk posted endorsements for Florida Senator Rick Scott to lead the Senate and invited the public to suggest candidates for Trump's cabinet.

The billionaire also shared posts by former Republican presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy, whose name has been floated for an administration role, advocating to "radically downsize" the government.

"The obstacles are overcoming the Kafkaesque nature of the rules governing this vast bureaucracy and ensuring that maniacally dedicated small-government revolutionaries join this administration!" Musk wrote in one post, responding to Ramaswamy's suggestion.

Musk's access to Trump at Mar-a-Lago, which CNN reported has become the de facto nucleus of Trump's presidential transition, has given him an enormous amount of sway in a way that could benefit his businesses, analysts said.

His electric vehicle firm, Tesla, has already seen a boost with its stocks jumping 14 percent the day after Trump's election win and the threat of tariffs on Chinese imports likely blocking competitors from the country.

"We've seen lobbying efforts. We've seen super PACs [political action committees], but this is a different level we've never seen before," Gita Johar, a professor at Columbia Business School, told The Guardian. "There will be some quid pro quo where he [Musk] will benefit."

While Trump earlier floated the idea of naming Musk "secretary of cost-cutting", he is unlikely to take any job that requires Senate confirmation or disrupts his businesses, Al Jazeera's Alan Fischer reported.

Instead, Musk might serve on a "blue-ribbon committee where he would still have enormous access but would not be subject to government ethics rules", according to CNN. With such close ties to the president-elect, Musk is likely to push hard for deregulation, which he has repeatedly blamed for slowing innovation in his companies, including SpaceX and Tesla.

"America is a nation of builders," Musk wrote on X on the day of Trump's election victory. "Soon, you will be free to build."

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