Trump Dismisses Concerns Over Hegseth's Signal Chat as 'Fake News'

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WASHINGTON, April 21 – President Donald Trump has defended Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth amid rising scrutiny over reports that Hegseth shared sensitive military information, including strike plans for Yemen, in private Signal group chats with his wife, brother, personal lawyer, and a journalist.

During the annual White House Easter Egg Roll, Trump dismissed the revelations reported by The New York Times, calling them "fake news" and the controversy "a waste of time." He praised Hegseth's performance, remarking, "He's doing a great job—ask the Houthis how he's doing," in reference to the recent U.S. strikes on the Yemeni rebel group.

Hegseth echoed Trump's sentiments, claiming he is fully aligned with the president and

denouncing the report as a smear campaign by "disgruntled employees." However, national security analysts have raised concerns about operational risks from sharing classified military planning in unsecured settings.

The controversy emerges alongside other developments in U.S. foreign and domestic policy. A leaked draft executive order indicates the Trump administration's intention to significantly restructure the State Department—cutting programs related to climate change, refugees, democracy promotion, and human rights.

Meanwhile, four Democratic lawmakers have arrived in El Salvador to advocate for the return of a Maryland resident reportedly wrongfully deported last month, sparking legal tensions with the administration.

On foreign policy, Trump confirmed recent "very good meetings" on Ukraine and Iran, hinting at ongoing cease-fire discussions with Russia, but offered no further details. When asked whether Hegseth should continue using the Signal app for sensitive discussions, Trump declined to answer, returning to join his family at the South Lawn festivities.