

Washington

Donald Trump's first anniversary as US president was marred by chaos yesterday as Congress struggled to reverse a government shutdown and mass demonstrations erupted in cities across the country.

Essential federal services and military activity are continuing, but

hundreds of thousands of public sector workers will be sent home without wages and even active duty troops will not be paid until a deal is reached to reopen the US government.

Highlighting the deep political polarization, crowds estimated to number in the hundreds of thousands took to the streets of major US cities to march against the president and his policies.

"This is the One Year Anniversary of my Presidency and the Democrats wanted to give me a nice present," Trump, who is in Washington instead of celebrating the anniversary at his Mar-a-Lago resort, wrote on Twitter in reference to the shutdown.

"Democrats are far more concerned with Illegal Immigrants than they are with our great Military or Safety at our dangerous Southern Border," he tweeted, later

accusing the opposition party of "holding our Military hostage."

The impact of the shutdown will be felt more strongly if it lasts into the coming work week.

But signs that the government was not open for business were already appearing on Saturday.

"The Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island are closed due to a lapse in appropriations," a notice on the National Park Service's website said, while a sign at US military cemetery in France where 4,409 Americans are buried read: "Due to the US Government shutdown, this site is closed to the public."

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis wrote in a memo that "daily operations around the world" will continue, but "training for reservists must be curtailed" and that "active forces will stay at their posts adapting their training to achieve the least negative impact on our readiness to fight."

'Holding pattern'

There have been four government shutdowns since 1990. In the last one in 2013, more than 800,000 government workers were put on temporary leave.

"We're just in a holding pattern. We just have to wait and see. It's scary," Noelle Joll, a 50-year-old furloughed US government employee, told AFP in Washington.

Joll was also affected by the 2013 shutdown, but "this one feels a lot more ominous," she said.

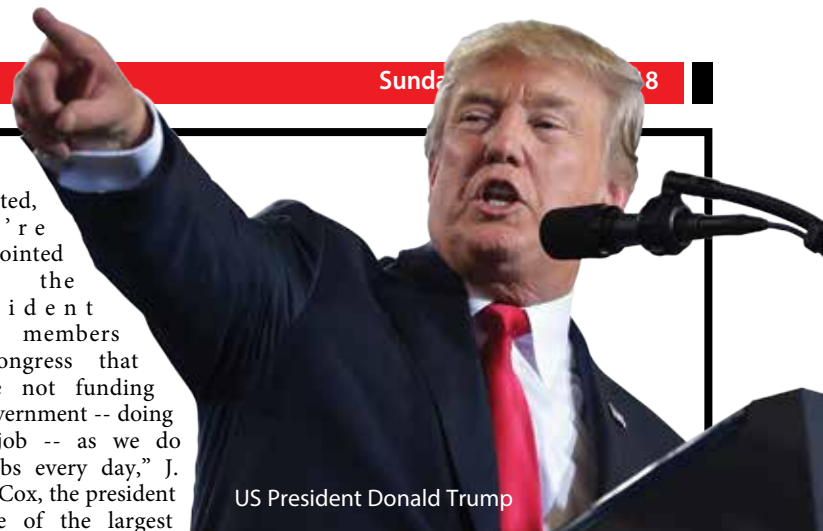
"I think our members are

frustrated, they're disappointed in the president and members of Congress that they're not funding the government -- doing their job -- as we do our jobs every day," J. David Cox, the president of one of the largest unions representing government workers, said on CNN.

A deal had appeared likely on Friday afternoon, when Trump -- who has touted himself as a master negotiator -- seemed to be close to an agreement with Democratic Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer on a measure to prevent the expulsion of undocumented migrants who arrived in the country as children.

But no such compromise was in the language that reached Congress for a stop-gap motion to keep the government open for four more weeks while a final arrangement is discussed -- and Republicans failed to win enough Democratic support to bring it to a vote.

Congress reconvened for a rare Saturday session, where leaders of both sides traded accusations of responsibility for the shutdown. (AFP)



US President Donald Trump

Trump marks year one with shutdown

US government shutdown: What does it mean?

Many thousands of federal workers will not report for work on Monday morning if the impasse is not solved.

That will not include those in so-called essential services like law enforcement, the military, air traffic control and social security -- ones that protect "life or human property".

Even then, not all staff will turn up. Thirteen per cent of workers at the Department of Homeland Security will be furloughed, as will half of those at Health and Human Services, according to contingency plans cited by The New York Times.

Some of those who do work during the shutdown may not be paid until after funding is restored.

CNN warned that some zoos and museums may close while funding is withheld. Special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation, however, will continue, according to the broadcaster. (independent)

The Senate side of the United States Capitol in Washington

Women and the World

Meredith Ann O'Connell



Diversity and Confidence: Because All Women are Worth It

Diversity and inclusion have been a hot-button topic lately, and diversity in the advertising world is no exception. For every feel-good

advertisement, there seems to be another that completely misses the mark (think the Kendall Jenner Pepsi ad, or H&M's "Coolest Monkey in

the Jungle" sweatshirt). Yet the latest L'Oreal Paris ad is a perfect study in how to get diversity right, and also how to promote confident women who do not need external validation to feel good about themselves.

The ad for L'Oreal's Elvive beauty line features women—and one man—of different backgrounds and ages discussing their hair. What sets it apart from other inclusive ads is the fact that it includes a hijab-wearing Muslim woman, British beauty blogger and businesswoman Amena Khan, who also happens to be one of their Brand Ambassadors. Wearing

a bright pink hijab and a serious expression, Khan tells the camera that "Whether or not your hair is on display doesn't affect how much you care about it."

Hair care ads usually consist of gorgeous models swinging around their long, shiny, impossibly healthy hair in an attempt to convince the consumer that their hair will be as perfect as the model's if they buy the product. By including Amena Khan, L'Oreal defies traditional beauty advertising in that it does not demonstrate what the product can do—the consumer has to be convinced by the woman speaking. Given that hijab-wearing girls

are often teased about their hijabs and are asked ridiculous questions such as whether they wash their hair, the inclusion of a hijabi in a hair care ad is important.

Besides promoting diversity, L'Oreal's ad also takes on inner confidence and self-worth, two issues that women struggle with and which advertising unfortunately does little to boost. While the other women complain about the color and texture of their hair, Khan asserts that "You're doing it for yourself and you don't have to show it off to the rest of the world to validate that you care about yourself." In a time where women

feel the pressure to look flawless for their social media accounts, this suggestion that women don't need validation for their looks is radical. It promotes self-care, which so many women forget to do while trying to look outwardly perfect.

The pressure on women to look and act perfect does not boost their confidence and sends a negative message. Promoting images of one type of women rather than showing the diversity of women further negates this confidence. Therefore, it is encouraging to see a beauty company highlight diversity and self-care.