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high, 74. **Tonight,** partly cloudy, light and variable winds, low 58. **Tomor-**

row, mostly sunny and warmer, high

\$4.00

MONDAY, MAY 20, 2024 Prices in Canada may be higher © 2024 The New York Times Company

The helicopter carrying President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Sunday taking off.

## Threats and Fear Are Transforming U.S. Politics Biden Message

This article is by Danny Hakim, Ken Bensinger and Eileen Sullivan.

One Friday last month, Jamie Raskin, a Democratic congressman from Maryland, spent a chunk of his day in court securing a protective order.

It was not his first. Mr. Raskin, who played a leading role in Donald J. Trump's second impeachment hearing, said he received about 50 menacing calls, emails and letters every month that are turned over to the Capitol Police.

His latest court visit was prompted by a man who showed up at his house and screamed in his face about the Covid-19 vaccine, Mr. Trump's impeachment and gender-related surgeries. Nearly two years earlier, the same man, with his 3-year-old son in his arms, had yelled profanities at Mr. Raskin at a July 4 parade, according to a police report.

"I told the judge I don't care about him getting jail time. He just needs some parenting lessons," Mr. Raskin said.

Mr. Raskin was far from the only government official staring down the uglier side of public service in America in recent weeks. Since late March, bomb threats closed libraries in Durham, N.C.; Reading, Mass.; and Lancaster, Pa., and suspended operations at a courthouse in Franklin County, Pa. In Bakersfield, Calif., an activist protesting the war in Gaza was arrested after telling City Council members: "We'll see you at your house. We'll murder you."

A Florida man was sentenced to 14 months in prison for leaving a voice mail message promising to

## Violence Is a Risk From City Hall to Congress

"come kill" Chief Justice John Roberts.

And Mr. Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, refused to rule out violence if he were to lose in November. "It always depends on the fairness of the election," he said in an interview late last month.

This was just a typical month in American public life, where a steady undercurrent of violence

and physical risk has become a new normal. From City Hall to Congress, public officials increasingly describe threats and harassment as a routine part of their jobs. Often masked by online anonymity and propelled by extreme political views, the barrage of menace has changed how public officials do their work, terrified their families and driven some from public life altogether.

By almost all measures, the evidence of the trend is striking. Last year, more than 450 federal judges were targeted with threats, a roughly 150 percent increase from

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### 'I got into this to make a difference, but I thought, Why do I want to put up with this?'

JOE CHIMENTI, former chairman of the board of supervisors in Shasta County, Calif. Tired of threats, he did not run for a second term.

# At Morehouse: I'm With You

By KATIE ROGERS and MAYA KING

ATLANTA - President Biden invoked Scripture and lessons from his own tragic past on Sunday in a commencement address to hundreds of young Black men at Morehouse College, saying he believes there are "extremist forces aligned against the meaning and message" of the prestigious institution.

Mr. Biden's speech, delivered at the historically Black men's college in Atlanta, put him directly in front of hundreds who represent a slice of the electorate that is drifting away from him over the war in Gaza and growing apathy about their choices ahead of the election. Mr. Biden used the moment to say that manhood was not about "tough talk" and "bigotry" but about calling out ha

"Their idea of being a man is toxic," Mr. Biden told the graduates, a reference to adversaries he did not name — but, given that his other events this weekend were focused on attacking his Republican competitor, Donald J. Trump, it was little mystery who he was talking about. "That is not you. That is not us. Being a man is about strength and respect and dignity."

Those who stormed the Capitol with Confederate flags "are called patriots by some," he said - a clear reference to Mr. Trump. "Not

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# Iran Leader's Helicopter Crashes in a Thick Fog, Starting a Huge Search

## Rescue Effort Slowed by Bad Conditions

By FARNAZ FASSIHI

A helicopter carrying President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran and his foreign minister crashed on Sunday in the country's mountainous northwest, according to state media, deepening the turmoil that has gripped the nation on both the international and domestic fronts in recent months.

Mr. Raisi, 63, was traveling from Iran's border with Azerbaijan to inaugurate a joint dam project. The helicopter, carrying Mr. Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, state media reported, crashed near the city of Varzaghan around 1 p.m. local time, in bad weather and thick fog.

Search and rescue teams scoured an area of tall mountains and dense forest through rain and fog for more than 10 hours. At one point the authorities called off the aerial search because of the weather, dispatching on foot soldiers, elite commandos of the Revolutionary Guards and 40 rescue teams to locate the crash site.

Even well into the night, state media had not yet reported on casualties, or on the condition of the president or anyone else aboard. The cause of the crash was also

"There will be no disruption in the country's operation," Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in an address on state TV. "Senior officials are doing their work and I have advised them on the necessary points and all of the country's operation will carry on smoothly and orderly."

Mr. Raisi, a conservative who violently crushed dissent, is widely viewed as a possible successor to the supreme leader. The

uncertainty over his fate comes during a particularly tumultuous period for Iran.

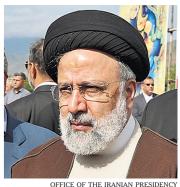
Its long shadow war with Israel burst into the open after Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, setting off the war in Gaza and a cascade of strikes and counterstrikes across the region.

The hostilities became even more pronounced after Israel conducted airstrikes on a building in the Iranian Embassy complex in Syria in April. Iran retaliated with its first direct attack on Israel after decades of enmity, launching more than 300 drones and missiles toward the country, many of which were shot down.

Domestically, Iran is also facing widespread anger, with many residents calling for an end to clerical rule. Corruption and sanctions have gutted the economy, stoking frustrations.

In the last two years, the country has witnessed a domestic uprising, the Iranian currency

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President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran, a conservative leader.

## As Trump's Trial Nears Its End, Prosecutors Seem to Have Edge

By BEN PROTESS and JONAH E. BROMWICH

Over the course of a monthlong criminal trial, the evidence against Donald J. Trump has piled up.

A recording of his voice directing a fixer to pay in cash. Phone calls, text mes-

**NEWS ANALYSIS** 

A Victory in the Ring Boosts the Morale of a War-Weary Ukraine

sages, emails and a photograph that illustrate the case

against him. And a parade of 18 witnesses who together told the prosecution's story: that Mr. Trump orchestrated a conspiracy to suppress sex scandals during the 2016 election, and after winning, sought to bury a porn star's

story for good. But the 19th and final witness of their case — the only one to directly link Mr. Trump to the 34 business records he is charged with falsifying — is Michael D. Cohen. And for prosecutors, he was always high-reward, high risk. Though Mr. Cohen got off to a strong start, Mr. Trump's lawyer eventually hammered his credibility, highlighting his criminal record and painting him as a serial liar bent on taking down the former president.

It was the most significant momentum swing of the first criminal trial of an American president — and with Mr. Cohen's star turn on the stand poised to conclude on Monday, the prosecution's case would seem to hang in the balance. Mr. Trump's legal team argues that it

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## A Time-Honored Political Tactic: Throw Your Wife Under the Bus

By REBECCA DAVIS O'BRIEN and REID J. EPSTEIN

It is a tale as old as Adam and Eve: A husband, faced with accusations of misconduct, blames the

It is also a time-honored, bipartisan political strategy. Last week, Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. and Senator Bob Menendez of New Jersey pointed ringed fingers at their wives for episodes that have landed each man in political or legal trouble

"It was briefly placed by Mrs. Alito," Justice Alito, one of the Supreme Court's most conservative members, told The New York Times in explaining an upsidedown American flag - a "Stop the Steal" symbol of protest by Donald J. Trump's supporters — flying on a pole in the family's front lawn in the days before President Biden's 2021 inauguration. The justice's wife, Martha-Ann Alito, was in a feud with neighbors at the time over an anti-Trump sign, The Times reported.

In the case of Mr. Menendez, a Democrat, it was his lawyer who did the finger pointing. On Wednesday, in a federal courtroom in Manhattan, the lawyer, Avi Weitzman, blamed the sena-

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This article is by Constant Méheut, Maria Varenikova and Na-

KYIV, Ukraine Ukrainians were up in the early hours of Sunday morning, for once not to seek shelter from incoming Russian missiles, but to celebrate the Ukrainian boxer Oleksandr

taliia Novosolova

Usyk becoming the world's undisputed heavyweight champion. Mr. Usyk's victory over the British boxer Tyson Fury was a rare piece of good news for an embattled nation that is struggling to contain Russian advances, particularly in the northeast, where

Moscow has opened a new front. President Volodymyr Zelensky lauded the victory as a symbol of

Ukraine's resilience.

"Ukrainians hit hard!" Mr. Zelensky wrote in a Telegram post around 3 a.m. that included a photograph of Mr. Usyk delivering a punch to Mr. Fury. "And in the end, all our opponents will be over-

Ukrainian troops are engaged in fierce fighting to halt Russia's grinding advance all along the front line, and there are fears that some key positions may soon fall. Russian troops recently advanced farther into Robotyne, a village in the south that was one of the rare successes of Ukraine's failed counteroffensive last summer.

Faced with such grim prospects, many Ukrainians Continued on Page A10



FAYEZ NURELDINE/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

The Ukrainian boxer Oleksandr Usyk after a victory Sunday that made him the world's undisputed heavyweight champion.

**INTERNATIONAL A4-11** 

## Israel's Attacks on Aid Groups

The Times has examined strikes on aid group operations and shelters that were attacked even though they provided their locations to Israeli forces. PAGE A6

## Muslims in Modi's India

Families grapple with anguish and isolation as they try to raise their children in a country that increasingly questions their very identity.

### A Split Deepens in Slovakia An assassination attempt against the

prime minister has worsened a political situation that has long been considered toxic worldwide.

SPORTS D1-8

Love Affair in Liverpool A coach's soccer legacy is often reduced to titles and trophies. It's different for Liverpool and Jürgen Klopp.

## **Preparing for Paris**

Three years after withdrawing from the Tokyo Olympics, Simone Biles is back and looks ready to compete. PAGE D4-5



NATIONAL A12-19

## Aging in the Senate, Too

Age and health are a focus in the presidential race, but the Senate's roster is full of lawmakers at an age when most people are retired. PAGE A15

The Newest Culture-War Issue Republicans assert a secret Democratic agenda in the proposed Equal Rights Amendment in New York. PAGE A19

**BUSINESS B1-4** 

## **Accessing Your Greatest Asset**

Having home equity is a great and hard-earned thing, but extracting it when you need it can be tricky. PAGE B1 ARTS C1-6

## Reflections From Billie Eilish

"Hit Me Hard and Soft," the third album from the artistically self-conscious hitmaker, calls for self-redefinition, rethinking the past and challenging her fair-weather fans.

## Mimicking Amy Winehouse

In the biopic "Back to Black," the film's star, Marisa Abela, wears some of the singer's actual clothes, but the hair and makeup team decided to tone down the signature beehive hairdo.

OPINION A20-21 Linda Greenhouse

PAGE A20

**OBITUARIES B5-6** 

## Last of the 'Triple Ace' Pilots

Bud Anderson shot down 16 enemy planes in World War II and later became a top test pilot during the "Right Stuff" era. He was 102. PAGE B5



