



Smoke rose in Latakia Province, where Syrian forces battled an insurgency by fighters loyal to the ousted leader Bashar al-Assad.

KARAM AL-MASRI/REUTERS

The New Government in Syria Is Put to a Bloody Test of Power

By CHRISTINA GOLDBAUM

DAMASCUS, Syria — Clashes between Syria’s new authorities and gunmen loyal to the ousted dictator Bashar al-Assad have killed at least 147 people over the past two days, a war monitor said on Friday, in the bloodiest fighting since the collapse of the old regime.

The troubles erupted across Latakia and Tartus Provinces, longtime strongholds of Mr. al-Assad along Syria’s Mediterranean coast. The area has become a tinderbox since Mr. al-Assad was overthrown in early December.

The clashes began on Thursday afternoon, after Assad loyalists killed 16 security personnel for the government in the Latakia coun-

More Than 140 Killed in Skirmishes With Assad Loyalists

tryside, the deadliest attack yet on Syria’s new security forces, according to government officials and the British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which has monitored the Syria civil war.

The government responded in force, deploying scores of security personnel in the countryside and directing thousands more from other cities to the coast as it tried to reestablish authority over a few

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Agencies Cancel \$400 Million In Federal Funds for Columbia

By SHARON OTTERMAN and LIAM STACK

The Trump administration announced on Friday that it had canceled \$400 million in federal grants and contracts to Columbia University, an extraordinary step that it said was necessary because of what it described as the school’s failure to protect Jewish students from harassment.

The announcement escalated the administration’s targeting of Columbia, where protests last year over the war in Gaza set off a nationwide debate over free speech, campus policing and antisemitism, and led to similar demonstrations at schools nationwide.

The move represents the latest in a series of attacks by Trump-

A ‘First Round’ of Cuts, Citing Antisemitism After Protests

aligned Republicans aimed at elite higher educational institutions, following last year’s congressional hearings that resulted in the departure of the presidents of Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania. It comes after recent executive orders barring diversity, equity and inclusion programs at all educational institutions that receive federal funds.

A warning issued Monday by Linda McMahon, the newly con-

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GABBY JONES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

RICARDO SCOFIDIO, 1935-2025

An architect, he helped design innovative public spaces like Manhattan’s High Line. Page A24.

Sonnet’s Ever-Fixed Mark Did, Perchance, Move

By AMELIA NIERENBERG

LONDON — If you have already had the good fortune of encountering “Sonnet 116” by William Shakespeare, you were probably at a wedding.

It is not, by most accounts, a sexy poem. It is not exactly a

happy one, either. Instead, it celebrates commitment to devotion: “Love’s not time’s fool,” perhaps its most famous phrase, is held up as a toast to living together and aging together. It is one of the poems that, however often it is read aloud, still pricks tear ducts and quiets fidgets.

But during the English Civil Wars in the mid-1600s, the poem may have had a different resonance.

That’s, at least, according to research published last month in The Review of English Studies by an Oxford researcher, Leah Vero-

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Autopsies Find Hackman Died Days After Wife

By NICHOLAS BOGEL-BURROUGHS and JULIA JACOBS

SANTA FE, N.M. — The actor Gene Hackman died from heart disease, probably a week after his wife, Betsy Arakawa, died from the effects of hantavirus, a disease linked to rodents that can cause respiratory failure in rare cases, the authorities said on Friday.

The revelation that the famous and reclusive couple had died of natural causes at their home in New Mexico put to rest much of the speculation that followed the discovery of their bodies on Feb. 26. But it also raised new questions about the state of mind of Mr. Hackman, who investigators said had advanced Alzheimer’s disease, and why the couple was not discovered sooner.

Ms. Arakawa, 65, had run a series of errands on Feb. 11, but the authorities could find no evidence of any activity after that, suggesting that she could have died that day. Mr. Hackman, 95, is believed to have died about a week later, on Feb. 18, according to New Mexico’s chief medical examiner, Dr. Heather Jarrell.

Mr. Hackman was found on the floor of the mudroom in the couple’s home, near his cane, while Ms. Arakawa was found on a bath-

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Anger at Musk Erupts In Cabinet Room Clash With Key Trump Aides

President Signaling Limits on Billionaire

By JONATHAN SWAN and MAGGIE HABERMAN

WASHINGTON — Marco Rubio was incensed. Here he was in the Cabinet Room of the White House, the secretary of state, seated beside the president and listening to a litany of attacks from the richest man in the world.

Seated diagonally opposite, across the elliptical mahogany table, Elon Musk was letting Mr. Rubio have it, accusing him of failing to slash his staff.

You have fired “nobody,” Mr. Musk told Mr. Rubio, then scornfully added that perhaps the only person he had fired was a staff member from Mr. Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency.

Mr. Rubio had been privately furious with Mr. Musk for weeks, ever since his team effectively shuttered an entire agency that was supposedly under Mr. Rubio’s control: the United States Agency for International Development. But, in the extraordinary cabinet meeting on Thursday in front of President Trump and around 20 others — details of which have not been reported before — Mr. Rubio got his grievances off his chest.

Mr. Musk was not being truthful, Mr. Rubio said. What about the more than 1,500 State Department officials who took early retirement in buyouts? Didn’t they count as layoffs? He asked, sarcastically, whether Mr. Musk wanted him to rehire all those people just so he could make a show of firing them again. Then he laid out his detailed plans for reorganizing the State Department.

Mr. Musk was unimpressed. He told Mr. Rubio he was “good on TV,” with the clear subtext being that he was not good for much else. Throughout all of this, the president sat back in his chair, arms folded, as if he were watching a tennis match.

After the argument dragged on for an uncomfortable time, Mr. Trump finally intervened to defend Mr. Rubio as doing a “great job.” Mr. Rubio has a lot to deal with, the president said. He is very

busy, he is always traveling and on TV, and he has an agency to run. So everyone just needs to work together.

The meeting was a potential turning point after the frenetic first weeks of Mr. Trump’s second term. It yielded the first significant indication that Mr. Trump was willing to put some limits on Mr. Musk, whose efforts have become the subject of several lawsuits and prompted concerns from Republican lawmakers, some of whom have complained directly to the president.

Cabinet officials almost uniformly like the concept of what Mr. Musk set out to do — reducing waste, fraud and abuse in government — but have been frustrated by the chain saw approach to upending the government and the lack of consistent coordination.

Thursday’s meeting, which was abruptly scheduled on Wednesday evening, was a sign that Mr.



Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Elon Musk traded barbs.

Trump was mindful of the growing complaints. He tried to offer each side something by praising both Mr. Musk and his cabinet secretaries. (At least one, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who has had tense encounters related to Mr. Musk’s team, was not present.) The president made clear he still supported the mission of the Musk initiative. But now was the time, he said, to be a bit more refined in its approach.

From now on, he said, the secretaries would be in charge; the Musk team would only advise.

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HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A mural was a statement of defiance from Washington’s mayor.

Black Lives Matter Mural Lost In Fight Over Washington Rule

By CAMPBELL ROBERTSON and TIM ARANGO

WASHINGTON — On Wednesday morning in downtown Washington, D.C., Keyonna Jones stood on her artwork and remembered the time when she and six other artists were summoned by the mayor’s office to paint a mural in the middle of the night.

“BLACK LIVES MATTER,” the mural read in bright yellow letters on a street running two city blocks, blaring the message at the White House sitting just across Lafayette Square. In June 2020, when Ms. Jones helped paint the

mural, demonstrations were breaking out in cities nationwide in protest of George Floyd’s murder. The creation of Black Lives Matter Plaza was a statement of defiance from D.C.’s mayor, Muriel E. Bowser, who had clashed with President Trump, then in his first term, over the presence of federal troops in the streets of her city.

But on Tuesday evening, the mayor announced the mural was going away.

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Rethinking ‘College for All’

The idea that every student should aim for a four-year institution, long a rallying cry, faces wide review. PAGE A15

A Renaming Is Reversed

Fort Liberty in North Carolina is again Fort Bragg, but ostensibly not in honor of the Confederate general. PAGE A21



INTERNATIONAL A4-14

Release Reopens Old Wounds

A man convicted over his role in a deadly 2002 bombing was freed in one of the cease-fire exchanges, creating intense emotions for Israelis. PAGE A4

Waiting by Pope’s Bedside

Anxiety and disturbing medical jargon are familiar to anyone who has tended to an ill loved one. The faithful are now seeing both through Francis. PAGE A6

Tariffs Keep Markets Guessing

Investors sent stock prices down this week amid the uncertainty over what President Trump’s inconstancy means for the global economy. PAGE A12

BUSINESS B1-6

Trans Workers ‘Abandoned’

The nation’s primary regulator of workplace discrimination has moved to dismiss cases that may run afoul of an executive order on gender. PAGE B1

Jobs Report Holds Steady

Employers added 151,000 jobs last month, as President Trump was still rolling out his policies. PAGE B1

TRAVEL C7-9

Skiing a Vermont Gem

Bolton Valley has cultivated a niche among Eastern ski areas as an affordable downhill resort. PAGE C9

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A ‘Rocky Horror Show’ Fright

The actor Tim Curry and colleagues recall the cult musical’s misadventure as a Broadway flop in 1975. PAGE C1

German Artist’s Concerns

As his new exhibit opens in two museums in Amsterdam, Anselm Kiefer fears history is repeating itself. PAGE C1



SPORTS B7-9

A Timely Assist for Officials

N.H.L. referees and linespeople have adopted smartwatches that allow them to keep a closer eye on the ice. PAGE B7

A New Closer for the Cubs

Ryan Pressly, a former All-Star, promises to give Chicago the late-game edge that it has been seeking. PAGE B8

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Michael Grunwald

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