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Flames and Screams in the Night

A smoldering tent camp on the grounds of a Gaza hospital after an Israeli airstrike. At least four Palestinians were killed. Page A5.

Harris Fighting To Bring Back A Trusted Bloc

This article is by Jennifer Medina, Katie Glueck and Ruth Igielnik.

In the final weeks of the presidential campaign, Vice President Kamala Harris is contending with erosion within the Democratic co-alition that put Barack Obama and Joe Biden in the White House, and growing more dependent on white voters who historically aligned more with Republicans.

Black and Latino voters, two essential pillars of that coalition, have drifted away from Democrats in striking numbers, according to New York Times/Siena College polling.

The defections, if they hold to Election Day, would make Ms. Harris's path to victory far more difficult, complicating her efforts both in big cities like Philadelphia and Detroit and across Sun Belt battlegrounds such as Georgia and Arizona.

A Harris win would also be reliant on support and high turnout from college-educated white voters and suburbanites, including voters who traditionally leaned Republican until the Trump era.

“She’s doing very well in suburban areas that went blue after Donald Trump came into office,” Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute, said. “That’s what’s keeping her in the race right now, while she’s losing a point or two because of the less enthusiastic support among urban men.”

Ms. Harris’s predicament is the clearest display yet of the ways former President Donald J. Trump is creating new political alliances that could fundamentally alter the makeup of the two major parties.

Since Mr. Trump’s ascent nearly a decade ago, Republicans have made inroads with working-class voters across races and ethnicities while Democrats have increasingly become the party of college-educated, upper-income voters.

It’s a potential realignment that many Democrats did not see coming. When Mr. Obama became the first Black president in 2009, his party embraced the assumption that a more diverse electorate would make the party dominant in presidential politics.

And many believed that the rise of Mr. Trump, who enthusiastically stokes racial grievances, would only hasten the arrival of a

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Some Believe in Trump, Without Believing Him

By SHAWN MCCREESH

DETROIT — One of the more peculiar aspects of Donald J. Trump’s political appeal is this: A lot of people are happy to vote for him because they simply do not believe he will do many of the things he says he will.

The former president has talked about weaponizing the Justice Department and jailing political opponents. He has said he would purge the government of non-loyalists and that he

Doubting He’ll Carry Out Dark Threats

would have trouble hiring anyone who admits that the 2020 election wasn’t stolen. He proposed “one really violent day” in which police officers could get “extraordinarily rough” with impunity. He has promised mass deportations and predicted it would be “a bloody story.” And while many of his supporters thrill at such talk, there are

plenty of others who figure it’s all just part of some big act.

There is, of course, evidence to the contrary. During Mr. Trump’s term in office, some of his autocratic talk did become reality. He really did set in motion a Muslim ban; he really did order up investigations of his foes; he really did foment a mob when the election didn’t go his way. But in other instances he was stymied, and a lot of his strongman jaw-jaw remained just that.

That’s the way some of his voters think another term might

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Kmart Shelves Emptied of All But Nostalgia

By ALEXANDRA E. PETRI

When Chrissy Economos and Gloria McCourtney heard that the last full-size Kmart in the mainland United States was closing down, they knew they had to pay their respects, even if the store was more than 1,300 miles away.

As the shelves were quickly emptying at the Kmart in Bridgehampton, N.Y., the two sisters remembered the one in Duluth, Minn., where they grew up. They went to that store as children in the 1980s with their mother and grandmother, who wrote poetry in the Kmart Cafe. When they got their driver’s licenses as teenagers, they killed time by wandering the aisles. Ms. Economos bought her first pregnancy test there. And once they had their own children, the sisters would escape to Kmart for their “mom parties.”

“We would regret it if we didn’t come,” Ms. McCourtney, 39, said.

Kmart was once America’s leading discount store, famous for its “Blue Light Specials” for in-store customers. “Attention Kmart shoppers!” became a catchphrase, uttered by Johnny Carson and Beetlejuice.

Now, at the Bridgehampton store, the announcements seemed stuck in a pandemic-era time warp: Shoppers were asked to stay safe by masking up and social distancing.

After decades of decline, Kmart has now largely disappeared, living on in comedy bits or classic films like “Rain Man,” where Dustin Hoffman’s character only

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ANDREW KELLY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Mannequins with no more clothes to sell, carts with no more specials to carry at the closing Kmart in Bridgehampton, N.Y.

Captured by Israeli Army And Used as Living Shields

Palestinians Forced to Do Dangerous Tasks, Soldiers and Former Detainees Say

This article is by Natan Odenheimer, Bilal Shbair and Patrick Kingsley.

JERUSALEM — After Israeli soldiers found Mohammed Shubeir hiding with his family in early March, they detained him for roughly 10 days before releasing him without charge, he said.

During that time, Mr. Shubeir said, the soldiers used him as a human shield.

Mr. Shubeir, then 17, said he was forced to walk handcuffed through the empty ruins of his hometown, Khan Younis, in southern Gaza, searching for explosives set by Hamas. To avoid being blown up themselves, the soldiers made him go ahead, Mr. Shubeir said.

In one wrecked building, he stopped in his tracks: Running along the wall, he said, was a series of wires attached to explosives.

“The soldiers sent me like a dog to a booby-trapped apartment,” said Mr. Shubeir, a high school student. “I thought these would be the last moments of my life.”

An investigation by The New York Times found that Israeli soldiers and intelligence agents, throughout the war in Gaza, have regularly forced captured Palestinians like Mr. Shubeir to conduct life-threatening reconnaissance missions to avoid putting Israeli soldiers at risk on the battlefield.

While the extent and scale of such operations are unknown, the practice, illegal under both Israeli and international law, has been used by at least 11 squads in five cities in Gaza, often with the involvement of officers from Israeli intelligence agencies.

Palestinian detainees have been coerced to explore places in Gaza where the Israeli military believes that Hamas militants

have prepared an ambush or a booby trap. The practice has gradually become more widespread since the start of the war last October.

Detainees have been forced to scout and film inside tunnel networks where soldiers believed fighters were still hiding. They have entered buildings rigged with mines to find hidden explosives. They have been told to pick up or move objects like generators and water tanks that Israeli soldiers feared concealed tunnel entrances or booby traps.

The Times interviewed seven Israeli soldiers who observed or participated in the practice and presented it as routine, commonplace and organized, conducted with considerable logistical support and the knowledge of superiors on the battlefield. Many of them said the detainees were handled and often transported between the squads by officers from Israel’s intelligence agencies, a process that required coordination between battalions and the awareness of senior field commanders. And though they served in different parts of Gaza at different points in the war, the soldiers largely used the same terms to refer to human shields.

The Times also spoke to eight soldiers and officials briefed on the practice who all spoke on the condition of anonymity in order to discuss a military secret. Maj. Gen. Tamir Hayman, a former chief of military intelligence who is routinely briefed by top military and defense officials on the conduct of the war, confirmed the use of one version of the practice, saying that some detainees had been coerced into entering tunnels while others had volunteered to accompany troops and act as their

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India’s Diplomats Are Expelled By Canada in Criminal Inquiry

By MATINA STEVIS-GRIDNEFF

Toronto — Canada accused the Indian government on Monday of homicide and extortion intended to silence critics of a Indian living in Canada, escalating a bitter dispute that began last year with an assassination of a Sikh activist.

Canada expelled India’s top diplomat and five others, saying they were part of a vast criminal network. India reciprocated, expelling six Canadian diplomats.

The two countries have been in an intense dispute following the assassination in Canada of a prominent Sikh cleric, Hardeep Singh Nijjar. The government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said at the time that his killing had been orchestrated by the Indian

government.

Canada is home to the largest Sikh community outside India, where the religious minority lives mostly in the northwestern state of Punjab. The Indian government says that some Sikhs in Canada are actively involved in a secessionist movement that seeks to carve a Sikh homeland known as Khalistan out of India.

Canadian officials said their investigation had focused on the Indian government’s involvement in a campaign aimed at Canadian Sikh activists.

The breakdown in the relationship between the two countries has gone all the way to the top. Mr.

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Despite ‘Shaken Baby’ Doubts, Man May Be Executed in Texas

By J. DAVID GOODMAN

HOUSTON — Texas is preparing for the execution this week of an autistic man, Robert Roberson, who was convicted of killing his 2-year-old daughter in a case that has drawn intense scrutiny for its reliance on a questionable diagnosis of shaken baby syndrome.

A majority of the Republican-dominated Texas House has called for the execution to be halted. The detective who helped obtain the murder conviction now says he is “firmly convinced that Robert is an innocent man.”

Mr. Roberson would be the first

person executed in a shaken baby case, his lawyers said. The diagnosis, a medical determination that abuse has caused serious or fatal head trauma, gained prominence more than three decades ago and led to a spate of criminal convictions. As evidence emerged that the diagnosis was not always reliable, some have since been reversed.

In Mr. Roberson’s case, the defense has insisted that no crime was committed at all. Lawyers have presented new evidence and

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Science Pushback in Africa

An anti-malaria campaign has been targeted online by pro-Russian activists, part of an effort to spread fear and mistrust of the West. PAGE A4

China Holds War Games

Chinese aircraft and ships surrounded Taiwan after its president rejected Beijing’s claim over the island. PAGE A8

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Ensuring domestic stocks of pharmaceutical ingredients means licensing otherwise illegal plants. PAGE B1

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Some birds migrate long distances every autumn. How do they manage it? A flight chamber was built to find out. PAGE D5

Going Deep in Alaska

Researchers investigate an explorer’s decades-old theory. Below, descending into a cave in Ruth Glacier. PAGE D8



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Citizens of Here, and There

Decades after Mexico began offering dual nationality, some U.S.-born children of Mexican immigrants are claiming citizenship in the country. PAGE A9

The Risk of Mobile Homes

Millions of Americans live in the flimsy structures. When catastrophe strikes, they’re often on their own. PAGE A17

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Soaring on a New Stage

The veteran dancer Isaac Hernández is bringing leading-man vibes to the American Ballet Theater. PAGE C1

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Steps Forward, Not Stumbles

Kyrie Irving, who has generated controversy at previous stops during his time in the N.B.A., has revived his career and found happiness with the Dallas Mavericks at age 32. PAGE B7

A Hard-to-Shake Albatross

By advanced metrics, Deshaun Watson is having one of the worst N.F.L. quarterback performances of the century. But the Browns have few, unpleasant options for getting rid of him. PAGE B9

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Campaigner for Equal Pay

Lilly Ledbetter sued Goodyear, helping to pave the way for the 2009 Fair Pay Act and leading to a lifetime of activism. She was 86. PAGE A20

