

“All the News  
That’s Fit to Print”

# The New York Times

**THE WEATHER**  
Today, sunshine and a few clouds, breezy, warmer, high 81. **Tonight**, clear, light wind, low 65. **Tomorrow**, mostly sunny, warm, low humidity, high 83. Weather map, Page B8.

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 22, 2025

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



DANIEL PULLEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

**A Churning Erin Passes the Outer Banks**  
The hurricane is unlikely to make landfall, but the East Coast was bracing for high tides, rip currents and flash flooding. Page A16.

**NEWS ANALYSIS**

## Yawning Gap Over Ukraine

*Kremlin Still Demands What Kyiv Won’t Give*

By **STEVEN ERLANGER** and **ANTON TROIANOVSKI**

BERLIN — To hear the Trump administration tell it, the diplomatic flurry of recent days produced breakthrough after breakthrough.

President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia was supposedly ready for an imminent meeting with President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine. The Kremlin had purportedly accepted Western security guarantees for Ukraine effectively as strong as NATO protection. Ukraine was said to be willing to give up huge swaths of territory, at least for now, to end the war.

But nearly a week after what Mr. Trump hailed as a ground-breaking U.S.-Russia summit in Alaska, none of these things have panned out, and the problem of ending Russia’s invasion of Ukraine looks no less intractable. Neither a cease-fire nor a peace settlement looks any closer, and Russia continues to pound Ukraine and its citizens with fierce barrages of missiles and drones.

Both sides may be considering concessions behind closed doors that they are not yet ready to acknowledge in public. European leaders believe that they have Mr. Trump’s ear after their unusual group visit to the White House on Monday, and his commitment to some sort of post-settlement security assurances for Ukraine. Mr. Zelensky survived another White House meeting without humiliation, and he sounded guardedly upbeat about the direction of the talks in comments to reporters on Wednesday.

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More on the White House

**DIVERSITY TABOO** President Trump has promoted a vision of America that diminishes the Black experience. PAGE A14

**LOWERING STANDARDS** An F.B.I. plan for recruitment appears to be part of an effort to shift the focus to fighting crime. PAGE A11

## Menendez Case Raises Hope of Second Chances

By **TIM ARANGO**

LOS ANGELES — For years, Chandrika M. Kelso has worked with Lyle and Erik Menendez in prison, as they became leaders in nonviolence workshops, meditation groups and a hospice program for older, ailing inmates at R.J. Donovan Correction Facility near San Diego.

She heard the gossip on the yards at the prison this year, as the brothers’ case returned to the public spotlight, propelled by two new shows on Netflix and social media campaigns by young people. Gov. Gavin Newsom said he would consider clemency, and a judge in Los Angeles reduced

*Justice Activists Argue for Clients Without Famous Names*

their sentence of life without parole, giving them an immediate chance at freedom.

Many inmates have been envious, Ms. Kelso said, as they learned that the governor was weighing in on the brothers’ life sentences. “That’s not something that’s lost on the other inmates who got life.”

But she also hears another sentiment: “Hey, if they go home, I

have hope that I’ll go home.”

Indeed, while the case has played out as a reckoning with culture and politics of the 1990s — the era’s tough-on-crime policies, the media obsession with celebrity and attitudes about sexual abuse — it has also raised a fundamental moral question. Who deserves a second chance?

Many observers, fellow inmates and participants in the case believe that, while celebrity has certainly worked to the advantage of the brothers, their case may end up helping other inmates who are not well known, and have not benefited from celebrity supporters and media attention.

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IOANA MOLDOVAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Romania’s brown bears are leaving the forests to roam villages, often attacking people and livestock.

## Romania’s National Treasure Becomes Its Terror

By **RUKMINI CALLIMACHI**

CETATUIA, Romania — The intruder emerged from the thick forest just before dawn and approached the entrance of the luxury resort.

The break-in took 23 seconds. The suspect weighed around 400 pounds. His motive: honey.

The bear, captured by security footage that morning in June, used its paw to pry open the sliding glass door of the Grand Hotel Balvanyos before squeezing its

**Brown Bears Run Wild as Habitat Dwindles**

shoulders into the lobby. As a terrified employee sprinted away, it headed to the breakfast buffet and ate all the packets of honey.

It was one of three bear intrusions in June at the four-star hotel, which sits on a mountainside in Romania’s Carpathian range. Another bear entered the resort’s

spa and downed a three-liter jug of massage oil, while a third opened a door into a hotel hallway and chased away a housekeeper.

Romania’s relationship with its bears has come undone. The brown bear — the *Ursus arctos* — is one of the country’s national treasures, interwoven into its mythology. Villagers still host annual bear dances, a ritual that goes back to pre-Christian times, when people believed the animals staved off misfortune. Romania’s brutal Communist dictator, Nico-

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## New York Court Rejects \$500 Million Judgment In Trump’s Fraud Case

*Rest of the Ruling Is Still Under Review*

By **BEN PROTESS** and **JONAH E. BROMWICH**

A divided New York appeals court on Thursday threw out a half-billion-dollar judgment against President Trump, eliminating an enormous financial burden while preserving the fraud case against him, a remarkable turn in the battle between the president and one of his fiercest foes.

One of the judges, Peter Moulton, concluded that while Mr. Trump had done harm in inflating the value of his properties and other assets, “it was not the cataclysmic harm that can justify a nearly half-billion-dollar award to the state.”

But the decision to eliminate the penalty was a rare point of agreement among the five-judge panel, whose lengthy ruling otherwise reflected deep discord.

While the court effectively upheld the fraud judgment against the president, several of the justices raised major questions about the case, which was decided by a state trial judge last year. A primary goal of their decision was to allow Mr. Trump to move to New York’s highest court, giving him another opportunity to challenge the finding that he was a fraudster.

Despite the complexities, Thursday’s ruling handed Mr. Trump a financial victory and a measure of legal validation. It represented a setback for New York’s attorney general, Letitia James, who is one of the president’s foremost adversaries and a target of his wide-ranging retribution campaign. The case had been a career-defining victory after she campaigned promising to bring Mr. Trump to justice.

Mr. Trump responded on social media Thursday, declaring victory and praising the court for having “the Courage to throw out this unlawful and disgraceful Decision.” He added that the case

had been “a Political Witch Hunt, in a business sense.”

Mr. Trump’s company, the Trump Organization, released a statement saying the case was brought out of political malice for the president and that the ruling “unanimously derails the effort to destroy his business.”

Still, the decision fell short of a full vindication. In denying Mr. Trump’s bid to throw out the case, the court kept in place the ruling that he had committed fraud, an ignominious distinction for a sitting American president.

Ms. James, in a statement, said that the court had “affirmed the well-supported finding of the trial court: Donald Trump, his company, and two of his children are liable for fraud.”

Ms. James, who pledged to appeal, filed the case against Mr. Trump and his family real estate business in 2022, accusing them of inflating his net worth to obtain favorable loan terms. After a monthslong trial, the judge over-seeing the case ruled last year that Mr. Trump was liable for conspiring to commit fraud, denting the mogul image that had enabled his political rise.

Thursday’s ruling came almost a year after the five judges, from the Appellate Division for the First Department, heard oral arguments, a delay that reflected the legal and political complexities of a case against a sitting president. Ultimately, the case was so divisive that the judges failed to form a true majority.

Justice Moulton’s opinion upholding the case and wiping out the financial penalties received one additional vote, from the presiding justice, Dianne Renwick.

Another judge, David Friedman, who has been skeptical of

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## Bribe Charges Turn on Money And a TV Role

By **HURUBIE MEKO** and **WILLIAM K. RASHBAUM**

From the moment she started working as chief adviser to Mayor Eric Adams, Ingrid Lewis-Martin wielded immense authority over City Hall, empowered by her 40-year friendship with the mayor and a reputation as his fiercest enforcer.

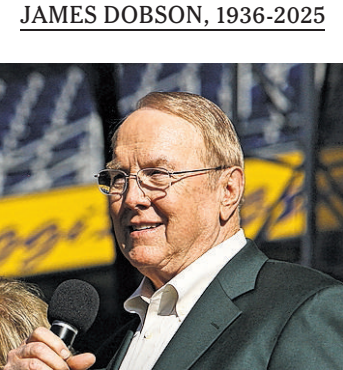
And she wasted little time in using that power to enrich herself and her son, prosecutors said, while acting on behalf of her associates in New York City.

Beginning with charges handed up late last year, and then in four indictments unsealed on Thursday, the Manhattan district attorney’s office painted a damning picture of a city for sale.

In exchange for cash, crab cakes, home renovations and even an appearance on a popular television show, Ms. Lewis-Martin fast-tracked approvals from city agencies, steered contracts to a favored developer and tried to kill a project to build protected bike lanes in Brooklyn, prosecutors said.

In one instance, they said, she cleared red tape for the owner of a Queens karaoke bar who then wired \$50,000 to the business account of her son. But in others, the benefits Ms. Lewis-Martin was accused of receiving verged on the petty, like free food worth approximately \$500 for an event at Gracie Mansion.

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MONICA ALMEIDA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

## Ardent Leader Who Animated Religious Right

By **ROBERT D. McFADDEN**

James Dobson, the evangelical Christian broadcaster who waged war on homosexuality and championed “family values” in a long crusade that made him one of the nation’s most influential leaders of the religious right, died on Thursday at his home in Colorado Springs. He was 89.

A spokeswoman for the family, Jessica Kramer, confirmed the death but did not provide a cause.

In an era of change that revolutionized concepts of family life, child-rearing, marriage and sexual identity, Dr. Dobson was for countless conservative Americans a rockbound beacon of resistance who denounced the “wickedness” of abortion and same-sex marriage, and who advised parents how to communicate better with each other and how to educate and discipline their children.

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**Shack Floating on the Bayou**  
The boat was bound for New Orleans, but the destination mattered less than the lessons learned. PAGE A10

**California’s Counterpunch**  
State leaders greenlit a plan to elect more Democrats with redrawn districts, a swift response to Texas’ map. PAGE A11

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

**Rare Earths Talks in Jeopardy**  
Tariff-fueled tensions between Brazil and the U.S. could derail a promising alliance to unlock the world’s second-largest reserve of the minerals. PAGE A4

**U.S.-E.U. Trade Deal on Paper**  
Washington will keep high tariffs on vehicles imported from the bloc until Europe takes steps to lower its levies on many American products. PAGE A5

**A Clean Energy Trailblazer**  
Accused for years of copying the technologies of other countries, China is now churning out designs that will help curb the use of fossil fuels. PAGE A9

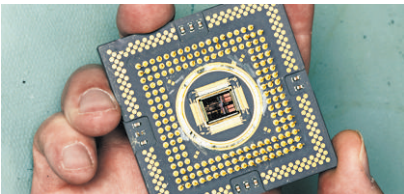
SPORTS B6-10

**Turnaround Leader’s Blueprint**  
After hiring Andy Reid, Kansas City went from rock bottom to perennial Super Bowl contenders. PAGE B6

**Mixed Doubles Plot Twist**  
The U.S. Open was able to get more big names to play, but in the end, last year’s champs retained their title. PAGE B7

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**Photographed Latin America**  
Rodrigo Moya, who documented poverty and protest and created indelible images of Che Guevara and Gabriel García Márquez, was 91. PAGE B12



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**Art Inside the Machine**  
Decades ago, designers etched microscopic doodles onto silicon chips to leave their marks. PAGE B1

**Accusations at Apple Fitness**  
Workers say a star executive was inappropriate and retaliated when they cooperated with an inquiry. PAGE B1

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**A Stage Made of Sand**  
The choreographer Kim Brandt brings an expansive new dance to Rockaway (the beach and the town). PAGE C1

**Fresh Look at Old Mural**  
A colossal 1932 work by N.C. Wyeth re-emerges in a gleaming new round barn after years in storage. PAGE C8

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**David Brooks** PAGE A18



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