

“All the News
That’s Fit to Print”

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, breezy, clouds and some sun-
shine, high 49. **Tonight**, partly
cloudy, breezy, low 43. **Tomorrow**,
breezy, sunshine and patchy clouds,
high 53. Weather map, Page B5.

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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00

Forced Return After Fleeing Iran’s Regime

A ‘Nightmare’ After the U.S. Deports Dozens

By FARNAZ FASSIHI
and HAMED ALEAZIZ

In the hours before dawn one day in early October, Mehrdad Dalir found himself stranded at a bus station in Iran. He recalls feeling the heavy gaze of passers-by and shivering. He looked out of place, dressed in a prison outfit of sorts: gray sweatpants and sweatshirt, and a pair of blue plastic slippers.

About two days earlier, the U.S. immigration authorities had taken Mr. Dalir from a detention facility inside an airport in Alexandria, La., and forced him aboard a plane to Iran as part of an unusual mass deportation to a country with a poor human rights record that the United States had bombed this year in an effort to set back its nuclear program.

Mr. Dalir, 34, says he was shackled and handcuffed, and not given the chance to change out of the prison clothes he had worn during his time in Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention. Once in Iran, he made his way by metro and bus from Tehran’s international airport to his hometown, Mashhad, in northeast Iran.

After borrowing a cellphone, Mr. Dalir delivered the news to family members still in Mashhad: The United States had sent him back to Iran. “Maman, come and get me,” he told his mother, and broke into a sob. A blue backpack contained all his belongings — a few clothing items, his passport, immigration cards, a cellphone with a dead battery and a \$20 bill. “It feels like I’m in a nightmare,” Mr. Dalir said in a three-hour telephone interview from Iran.

He acknowledged that he had entered the United States illegally in April but said he thought he would have a powerful case for asylum because he has been critical of Islamic Shariah law and a political activist. He didn’t expect to be sent back to Iran.

“I did everything in my power to stop them, but the ICE officials didn’t care. They told me, ‘You are either getting on the plane on your own, or we will tie you and send you back.’”

On Sept. 29, the Trump administration deported a planeload of Iranians, including Mr. Dalir, to Iran after reaching an agreement with Tehran. The U.S.-chartered deportation flight was a first. In the past, Iranian deportees were placed individually on commercial flights to Iran. Organizing a plane to Tehran had taken months of negotiations between American and Iranian officials.

For decades, waves of Iranians fleeing persecution found protection in the United States, including many who were at first unauthorized but later gained asylum.

But President Trump has made mass deportation a cornerstone of his immigration policy and signed an executive order, which went into place on the first day of his administration, banning asylum for migrants who crossed the border illegally. The policy has since been partially blocked by a federal court. The Trump administration announced late last month that it was cutting the number of refugees that could enter the U.S. to a record low of 7,500.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY OKSANA PARAFENIUK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Top, a canal in Vylkove, Ukraine, a Danube River town where men of draft age have vanished to avoid military service. Left, on patrol near the border with Romania; right, selling smoked fish in Vylkove. Women come and go freely in the town, and for some, the changes have been liberating.

Ukraine Draft Evasions Drain a Town of Its Men

By MARIA VARENIKOVA

VYLKOVE, Ukraine — Draft officers picked Ivan up at a traffic stop and dropped him off at a training base, but he went absent without leave from the army after three days. Since then, he has been hiding at home in Vylkove, a small town in southernmost Ukraine, rarely stepping outside.

Almost four years after the full-scale Russian invasion, Ukraine faces the twin challenges of not having enough troops and men avoiding military service. Many

Void in a Fishing Port Opens Up Jobs Once Closed to Women

men of draft age, 25 to 60, have broken the law that prohibits most of them from leaving the country, while others play a cat-and-mouse game with conscription officers or just hunker down at home.

The unique geography and history of Vylkove, a run-down Dan-

ube River fishing port, have made it an exaggerated version of Ukraine in miniature, where draft-age men have all but vanished.

“Who’s left?” asked Ivan, 42, speaking on the condition that his last name be withheld for his safety. “Women, the elderly and men who try not to go out unnecessarily.”

National identity is not so deeply rooted in this region, which has changed hands repeatedly between countries, and enthusiasm

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DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Honoring Veterans and Bragging of ‘Very Big’ Deal

At Arlington Cemetery on Tuesday, President Trump lauded soldiers but talked politics. Page A13.

Comet’s Close Encounter Takes Strange Turn to Alien Speculation

By KENNETH CHANG

Kim Kardashian excitedly quizzed the leader of NASA just before Halloween.

“Wait . . . what’s the tea on 3I Atlas?!!!!!!!!!!!!!!?” she wrote on X.

Ms. Kardashian was inquiring about a comet called 3I/ATLAS

that is swinging through our corner of the universe.

Sean Duffy, the acting administrator of NASA and himself a former reality television star, responded with encouragement, like a high school science teacher.

“Great question!” he said, explaining that “3I” labeled it as the third object known to have come

from outside our solar system.

He reassured her that, whatever she might have heard about the comet’s possible origins, there was no reason to be alarmed.

“No aliens,” he said. “No threat to life here on Earth.”

This clump of rock, dust and ice, and whether it was sent by some intelligent beings, is suddenly a

hot item on many people’s minds.

Ms. Kardashian asked about it. So did Joe Rogan on his podcast. A surge of people queried Google about NASA’s planetary defenses.

Andrew Siemion is the principal investigator for Breakthrough Listen, which is using large radio telescopes to search for extrater-

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Soaring Health Costs Keep Pressure on Trump

Potential Midterm Peril After Shutdown

By MARGOT SANGER-KATZ and SHAWN MCCREESH

WASHINGTON — The longest government shutdown in U.S. history is coming to an end, but the central issue that caused it — the staggering cost of health care — isn’t going away anytime soon. It will continue to bedevil President Trump, especially as the midterm elections draw closer.

The burden is now on Mr. Trump and Republicans to bring down costs or risk peril in the those elections, after a splinter group of Democrats agreed to end the shutdown by dropping their party’s demand to extend certain health insurance subsidies. Despite repeated promises to offer an alternative to Obamacare, Mr. Trump has nothing much to show on the issue, beyond a vague plan to send money directly to policyholders.

“We want a health care system where we pay the money to the people instead of the insurance companies,” he told reporters in the Oval Office Monday. “We’re going to be working on that very hard over the next short period of time.”

Mr. Trump’s statement highlights the pressure on Republicans to articulate their own vision to improve the affordability of health care now that the subsidies that millions of people rely on to pay for coverage are set to expire by the end of the year. Like Mr. Trump, Republicans in Congress who have spent years attacking Obamacare have

not offered up a serious alternative, since their failed effort to repeal the law in 2017.

The White House declined to provide more details of Mr. Trump’s latest idea. But the proposal assumes that giving patients a bigger role in purchasing their own care will lead to lower costs and better health outcomes.

The evidence that such an approach could significantly lower costs is not strong. Most health spending goes to very sick people who don’t have much choice in the care they receive. Research suggests that financial incentives and information about prices can shape behavior for patients seeking elective care. But that kind of spending is a small share of the country’s health care bill.

Millions of Americans who will lose access to subsidies when the current formula expires are looking at a jump in premiums, in some cases hundreds of dollars a month or more. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that two million Americans will lose insurance altogether next year as the prices rise. Mr. Trump seems to be arguing that the subsidy money should not be used to help people buy insurance, but rather be offered to the same people in special accounts.

Extending the extra subsidies
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CONSEQUENCES Despite hand-wringing by Democrats that the party caved, some see a potential win in the outcome. News Analysis. PAGE A11

INFIGHTING A deal prompted Democratic backlash, against the Senate defectors who supported it, and the leader who did not. PAGE A11

G.O.P. Skeptics In Kansas Resist On Remapping

By MITCH SMITH

The top Republicans in Kansas were ready to join President Trump’s redistricting push and redraw the state’s political map to deliver another seat in Congress to Republicans. Democrats feared that a special session to pass new district lines was inevitable.

Then something surprising happened. Some Republicans refused.

The pushback on the Plains leaves in place, at least for now, the one Democratic-leaning congressional district in Kansas. It comes as a small but rising number of lawmakers across the country, Republicans and Democrats, have balked at joining the drive to carve up congressional districts to boost their side’s odds in the midterm elections.

The national flurry of remapping, set off this summer when Texas Republicans drew a new one at the president’s behest, happened quickly in several states. But growing resistance from state lawmakers, for reasons both practical and philosophical, has put a chill on the effort.

When the Republican governor of Indiana called a special session for redistricting last month, the Senate Republicans said the votes were not there. Maryland Democratic leaders are divided. And in Kansas, where top Republicans had hoped to meet about a new map last Friday, House leaders failed to get enough support.

The debate over remapping in Kansas is not over, and new boundaries could still pass when lawmakers return for their regu-

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2026 Will Test Dueling Visions Of Democrats

By SHANE GOLDMACHER

The victories last week of a democratic socialist in the New York mayor’s race and two moderate Democrats in the governors’ races in Virginia and New Jersey represented only the beginning of the battle over the future of the Democratic Party.

On one side are centrists like Abigail Spanberger of Virginia, who declared in her victory speech that voters had chosen “pragmatism over partisanship” and promised “actionable policies.” On the other are progressives like Zohran Mamdani of New York, who warned hours later against bowing “at the altar of caution.”

“Democrats,” he said, “can dare to be great.”

Now the stage is set to test those dueling visions in the 2026 midterm elections, which will feature a staggering number of consequential Democratic primary races, especially in contests for the Senate.

States holding competitive Democratic primaries for Senate include Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan and Minnesota — and that is just the places that start with “M.”

At stake is the party’s positioning on a host of issues: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, whom to tax and by how much, transgender rights, the role of money in politics, how expansive a health care agenda to pursue, what type of new energy production to embrace, and how to craft a left-wing or center-left answer to President Trump’s populism.

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Bison Fill the SNAP Void

In one of its largest harvests ever, the Blackfeet tribe in Montana turned to its herd to help feed its members. PAGE A12

Lawsuits Over Flood Deaths

Parents of campers and counselors who died in the July 4 Texas floods said Camp Mystic leaders were negligent. PAGE A16

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

How Panama Was Different

The similarities between the seizure of Gen. Manuel Noriega in 1989 and Venezuela in 2025 are dangerously misleading, some analysts warn. PAGE A9

Iraq Votes for a Parliament

Over 7,700 candidates from 114 party lists are vying for 329 seats. Iranian influence remains a concern. PAGE A4

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Stepping Out of a Shadow

Ruth Childs, niece of the choreographer Lucinda Childs, got over being intimidated by her aunt’s triumphs. PAGE C1



BUSINESS B1-7

Becoming a Beauty Power

Amorepacific, above, is one of many South Korean cosmetics lines expanding their reach into the U.S. PAGE B1

A Hollywood Safety Net Frays

Commercial production shoots, which have long helped sustain entertainment workers, continue to plummet. PAGE B1

SPORTS B8-11

New Generation of Gamblers

The sports betting boom has drawn in millions of young men. Recovery efforts for the problem gamblers among them may be lagging those for the older casino habitués. PAGE B10

Hoping for a Title at Last

Emanuel Sharp long dwelled on his key mistake in Houston’s loss to Florida in the N.C.A.A. men’s basketball tournament final last season. He then got to work on trying for redemption. PAGE B8

OPINION A18-19

Bret Stephens

PAGE A19



FOOD D1-8

A Crescendo of Cuisine

A night at the opera can really work up an appetite. When the curtain goes down onstage, it goes up at the Met’s restaurant, bars and staff cafeteria. PAGE D8

