

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CLXXIV No. 60,574

© 2025 The New York Times Company

TUESDAY, JULY 8, 2025

Prices in Canada may be higher \$4.00

KILL ZONE IN EAST IS PINNING DOWN UKRAINE'S TROOPS

KEY REGION ON BRINK

Kyiv Strains to Supply or
Rescue Its Forces as
Russia Closes In

By CONSTANT MÉHEUT
and OLHA KONOVALOVA

DRUZHKIVKA, Ukraine — It was the dead of night, and the Ukrainian infantryman was writhing in a tree line from serious injuries to his legs, shoulder and lung.

His unit had told him by radio that it could not send anyone to evacuate him. The road to its base in a nearby city, Kostiantynivka, had become a kill zone. "There were too many drones flying around," recalled the infantryman, Oleh Chausov, as he described the experience.

Instead, he was told, the brigade would try to get him out with a small, robot-like tracked vehicle remotely operated from miles away and less visible to Russian drones than an armored carrier.

When the vehicle arrived, Mr. Chausov dragged himself aboard, his wounded legs dangling. But within 20 minutes, the vehicle hit a mine and blew up, he said. Miraculously, Mr. Chausov survived, crawled out and took shelter in a nearby trench.

He was back to square one, still trapped on the battlefield.

The operation in May — detailed in separate accounts from Mr. Chausov and an officer from his unit, the 93rd Mechanized Brigade, and captured in drone footage shared with The New York Times — underscores the dire conditions Ukrainian troops face defending Kostiantynivka.

The city stands directly in the path of Russia's summer offensive in the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine, which has seen Moscow's troops make some of their biggest monthly territorial gains since 2022. Russia now controls more than two-thirds of Donetsk. But to seize the rest of the region, it must take urban centers still under Ukraine's control and vital to its army logistics.

That makes Kostiantynivka a

Continued on Page A6

County in Texas Rejected System For Flood Alerts

This article is by Jesus Jiménez,
Margarita Birnbaum, Danny Ha-
kim and Mike Baker.

KERRVILLE, Texas — Eight years ago, in the aftermath of yet another river flood in the Texas Hill Country, officials in Kerr County debated whether more needed to be done to build a warning system along the banks of the Guadalupe River.

A series of summer camps along the river were often packed with children. For years, local officials kept them safe with a word-of-mouth system: When floodwaters started raging, upriver camp leaders warned those down-river of the water surge coming their way.

But was that enough? Officials considered supplementing the system with sirens and river gauges, along with other modern communications tools. "We can do all the water-level monitoring we want, but if we don't get that information to the public in a timely way, then this whole thing is not worth it," said Tom Moser, a Kerr County commissioner at the time.

Continued on Page A18



BUSINESS B1-5

China's 'Village' of Coders

Home to companies like Alibaba and DeepSeek, Hangzhou is the place to be for aspiring tech titans.



PAGE B1

U.S. Stalls on Russia Sanctions

The lack of new restrictions has let Moscow acquire what it needs in its conflict with Ukraine.

PAGE B1

TORTURE TACTICS

Echo Grim Era In South Africa

Freedom Fighters Now Oversee Brutal Police

By DANEEL KNOETZE
and JOHN ELIGON

JOHANNESBURG — During the worst days of apartheid, South Africa's white-led police force terrorized Black people with a brutal interrogation tactic that involved suffocating them, often with plastic bags.

After apartheid, South Africa adopted a constitution that explicitly outlawed such torture methods and signed international treaties committed to prevent it.

But a New York Times analysis of government data has found that, three decades after apartheid, the police in South Africa continue to use the same suffocation method — known as tubing — when interrogating suspects.

From 2012 to 2023, an average of three people per week filed complaints that the police had tubed them during interrogations, according to the analysis done by The Times in collaboration with Viewfinder, a South African journalism nonprofit that reports on police misconduct.

The findings represent a striking contradiction. A government led by freedom fighters who helped liberate Black South Africans from apartheid is now overseeing a police force that tortures them, betraying a promise not to repeat the atrocities of the country's former oppressors.

"I'm really shocked because it brings back very, very, very bad memories," said Khulu Mbatha, a veteran of the liberation party, the African National Congress, when told of the findings. "The leadership of the A.N.C., when they came to power in 1994, made it clear: No soul should be subjected to that."

In its simplest form, tubing involves pulling a plastic bag over someone's head and fastening it around the neck. In the tubing complaints analyzed by The Times, some victims described being tortured in front of their wives or children, or being brutalized in clandestine locations.

Innocent Sebediela was accused of stealing a television, and taken to a police station south of Johannesburg. Officers sprayed pepper spray into a plastic bag

Continued on Page A11



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARASH KHAMOOSHI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Above, a crater caused by a missile strike on the administrative office inside Evin prison in Tehran. Below left, the aftermath of a direct hit on the prison's 47-bed hospital. Below right, a room in a prosecutor's office. The prison's chief prosecutor was killed.



After Iran Prison Bombing, a 'Tunnel of Horror'

Israeli Attack Drew Fury From Both Rulers and Dissidents

This article is by Farnaz Fassihi,
Parin Behrooz and Leily
Nikounazar.

Ceilings, walls and wooden cabinets collapsed into heaps of jagged debris in the prison's visitor center. Scorched papers and brightly colored case files lay scattered amid broken bricks and tangled wires in the administration

building. Shattered glass covered patient beds and equipment in the infirmary.

Evin prison in Tehran stands out in Iran as a singular symbol of oppression, its notorious reputation reaching far beyond the country's borders. For five decades, Iran's rulers, from the shah to the clerics, have used Evin as the place to punish dissent with de-

tention, interrogation, torture and execution.

When Israel struck the prison with missiles on June 23, the attack generated widespread condemnation and fury in Iran, even among opponents of the authoritarian government.

The strikes were the deadliest of the 12-day Israel-Iran war. Iran has said 79 people were killed and

dozens injured in the Evin attack, but casualty numbers are expected to rise.

Among the dead and wounded were visiting family members of prisoners, social workers, a lawyer, physicians and nurses, a 5-year-old child, teenage soldiers guarding the doors as part of mandatory military service, adminis-

Continued on Page A8



SEAN RAYFORD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Inundated in North Carolina

Floodwaters toppled over a spillway in Carthage on Monday after a storm's heavy rain. Page A17.

A.I. Job Interviewers Want to Know the Real You

By NATALLIE ROCHA

SAN FRANCISCO — When Jennifer Dunn, 54, landed an interview last month through a recruiting firm for a vice president for marketing job, she looked forward to talking to someone about the role and learning more about the potential employer.

Instead, a virtual artificial intelligence recruiter named Alex sent

Using Virtual Agents to Winnow Applicants

her a text message to schedule the interview. And when Ms. Dunn got on the phone at the appointed time for the meeting, Alex was waiting to talk to her.

"Are you a human?" she asked.

"No, I'm not a human," Alex replied. "But I'm here to make the interview process smoother."

For the next 20 minutes, Ms. Dunn, a marketing professional in San Antonio, answered Alex's questions about her qualifications — though Alex could not answer most of her questions about the job. Even though Alex had a friendly tone, the conversation

Continued on Page A19

Trump Revives Trade War

President Trump said Japan and South Korea, two of America's closest allies, would face tariffs of 25 percent unless they reach an agreement.

PAGE A10

What Remains of U.S.A.I.D.

The few hundred programs that survived DOGE's purge may outline the future of foreign aid.

PAGE A12

SPORTS B6-9

Keaton Anthony, a college star who went undrafted, is now one step from Major League Baseball.

PAGE B6



ARTS C1-6

Almost Ready to Pounce

A textile artist applies a can-do spirit to the creation of imaginative animal costume heads for performers.

PAGE C5

Musician on a Mission

The viola has been overlooked throughout its history. Lawrence Power has made a career of changing that.

PAGE C1

NATIONAL A14-20

China Ties Haunt Harvard

With its endowment shrinking after the 2009 recession, the university turned to international donors, including China, to bolster its finances. Republicans are questioning the relationship.

PAGE A15

From Food Aid to Dog Dish

Kansans created Food for Peace, for 70 years a font of rural income and pride. Now, at least one grain broker is trying to sell wheat that once fed a hungry postwar world as dog food.

PAGE A14

OPINION A22-23

Bruce Handy

PAGE A23



HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The colorings used in M&Ms will face warnings and bans.

showing they were linked to behavioral problems in children, critics scoffed at his voluntary approach. Yet his peer-pressure campaign appears to have produced some results. Last month, Nestle and ConAgra joined Kraft Heinz, General Mills and PepsiCo in signing on to the secretary's plan.

Candy manufacturers, which lean on artificial colorings for the bright treats they market to chil-

Continued on Page A20



SCIENCE TIMES D1-8

Oyster Farming's Big Challenge

Hatcheries are exploring ways to protect shellfish from an increasingly acidic ocean, but Trump budget cuts may thwart those efforts.

PAGE D1

