

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CLXXV No. 60,794

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026

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NATHAN ALLEN SWINGLE, DAVE KUDROWITZ AND CHRIS DEL SESTO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; COMPOSITE IMAGE BY WEIYI CAI/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Head-Spinningly Difficult

Ilia Malinin of the U.S. is the only figure skater to land a quadruple axel in competition. An analysis shows why it's so hard. Page B8.

AGENTS WILL END MINNESOTA SURGE

Immigration Crackdown Led to Tense Protests

This article is by Ernesto Londoño, Mitch Smith and Pooja Salhotra.

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The Trump administration said on Thursday that it was ending its deployment of immigration agents to Minnesota, unwinding an aggressive operation that has stretched for more than two months despite loud opposition from residents and local officials.

For many Minnesotans who had watched the federal government exert its will on their state — wielding law enforcement power and physical force at a scale that had no modern American precedent — the announcement signaled a welcome shift. Still, some expressed skepticism about whether the administration would follow through.

Since the immigration crackdown began late last year, federal agents have shot three people in Minneapolis, including two U.S. citizens who were killed. Officials said agents also arrested more than 4,000 undocumented immigrants in Minnesota, some of whom had been convicted of serious crimes.

The deployment of some 3,000 agents, outnumbering the police forces in Minneapolis and St. Paul, led to extraordinary clashes between residents and officers, as well as volleys of recriminations between state and federal leaders.

Anger over the operation led Democrats in Congress to hold up the budget for the Department of Homeland Security unless it included new restrictions on agents. Barring a breakthrough in negotiations with Republicans, the agency's funding is set to lapse on Saturday, although immigration enforcement will not be immediately affected [Page A13].

For weeks, protesters trailed federal agents through the streets of the Twin Cities, blowing whistles to alert people to their presence and sometimes angrily confronting them. The agents, often traveling in convoys of S.U.V.s with out-of-state license plates, their faces obscured by masks, responded regularly with force and threats of arrest. And while the Democrats who run Minnesota referred to the operation as an illegal occupation, Republicans in

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Ukrainian Who Wore Defiance Is Out of Games

By HEATHER KNIGHT
and TARIQ PANJA

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy — A Ukrainian athlete was disqualified from the Winter Olympics on Thursday over his plans to wear a helmet honoring countrymen killed in the war with Russia, a decision that drew outrage and touched off the biggest crisis of the Games in Italy.

Olympic officials told the athlete, Vladislav Heraskevych, that the helmet violated the Games' prohibition on political speech. Mr. Heraskevych, who competes in skeleton, a sledding event on an ice track, had said this week that he planned to race with it anyway.

FRANCK FIFE/A.F.P. — GETTY IMAGES
Vladislav Heraskevych's helmet depicts killed athletes.

Moments before the competition on Thursday morning, Mr. Heraskevych held talks at the track in Cortina d'Ampezzo with the president of the International Olympic Committee, Kirsty Cov-

entry. The meeting ended with Mr. Heraskevych barred from competing and Ms. Coventry and the athlete's father both in tears after a failure to reach a compromise.

"I felt that it was really important to come and talk to him face to face," Ms. Coventry, who is presiding over her first Olympic Games, told reporters after the meeting.

Ms. Coventry's direct and personal intervention underscored the stakes of a dispute that reverberated from Cortina to Milan, where the I.O.C. leadership is based during the Games, and all the way to Ukraine, where President Volodymyr Zelensky praised Mr. Heraskevych's courage and denounced Olympic officials for

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LAM YIK FEI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Democracy Spills Out

Counting votes Thursday in Bangladesh's first big election since a protest toppled the government.

Why the Disappearance of a Television Host's Mother Has Captivated the Nation

By JESSE McKINLEY

It is the crime drama that Americans cannot look away from.

The apparent kidnapping of Nancy Guthrie, the mother of the television personality Savannah Guthrie, has commanded outsize public attention since her disappearance nearly two weeks ago, suffusing the national psyche even amid a torrent of other news.

Networks and news media out-

lets have covered the twists of the case in day-by-day, sometimes hour-by-hour detail as Ms. Guthrie's homestead near Tucson, Ariz., has become a televised shrine and a focus of internet sleuths.

President Trump has promised the "complete disposal" of law enforcement resources to solve the case, adding an all-caps prayer for her safety: "GOD BLESS AND PROTECT NANCY!" he posted on Feb. 4.

In many ways, the interest in the case can be traced to a confluence of factors that have captured the public's imagination and tapped into their fears: a vulnerable victim, taken out of a seemingly safe home; an unknown perpetrator, seen lurking in a mask; and a celebrity whose agonized pleas are broadcast around the world.

"We're fascinated by evildoers," Jack Shafer, the veteran media critic, said, noting the nation's

past obsessions with kidnapping cases like the Lindbergh baby. "And then you add the celebrity quotient, and it starts to go through the roof."

For a nation with an unceasing appetite for true-crime podcasts and fictional police procedurals, the interest in the Guthrie case may not be surprising. Still, some elements have set it apart, including the universality and relatability of the victim: an elderly mother in peril.

Ms. Guthrie is 84 and in need of medication and help walking. She lived alone and was dropped at her house before being reported missing on Feb. 1. Authorities believe she was kidnapped. And on Tuesday, the F.B.I. and the local sheriff's office released video and still images of the suspect, taken by Ms. Guthrie's doorbell camera, wearing a ski mask and a backpack, trying to block the camera's

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BUSINESS B1-6

Abetting a 'Nation of Renters'

President Trump's plan to bar big investors from acquiring single-family homes has an exemption.



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Trade Deal Sours for Modi

India's prime minister won a big reduction of tariffs, but critics say he undermined the nation's sovereignty.

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