

“All the News
That’s Fit to Print”

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, windy, rain, some heavy, tapering to a spotty shower, high 57. Tonight, clearing, windy, colder, low 30. Tomorrow, sun then clouds, high 38. Weather map is on Page B12.

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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



HANNAH YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

‘Withdrawal Crisis’ in Philadelphia

A veterinary sedative, mixed into fentanyl, can kill those who quit too quickly. Above, volunteers responding to the crisis. Page A11.

U.S. TO HALT CARE FOR TRANS YOUTH

Plan Would End Funding if Sites Offer Therapy

This article is by **Azeen Ghorayshi, Amy Harmon and Reed Abelson.**

The federal government on Thursday acted to put an end to gender-related care for minors across the nation, threatening to pull federal funding from any hospital that offered such treatment.

The move reflects the laserlike focus on the issue by President Trump, who in his first days in office called gender treatments for minors “a stain on our Nation’s history.” The administration’s action is not just a regulatory shift but the latest signal that the federal government does not recognize even the existence of people whose gender identity does not align with their sex at birth.

If finalized, the proposed new rules, announced by Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. at a news conference Thursday morning, would effectively shut down hospitals that failed to comply. Medicare and Medicaid account for nearly 45 percent of spending on hospital care, according to KFF, a nonprofit health policy research group.

It follows other efforts by the administration to pull back from or eliminate policies that recognize gender identities beyond being born male or female.

“We want our hospitals returning to healing, not harming, the patients entrusted in their care, or they’re going to pay a very steep price,” Dr. Mehmet Oz, the administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, said at the news conference.

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Claim of Stolen Oil Hits Nerve in Venezuela

By **SIMON ROMERO**

BOGOTÁ, Colombia — President Trump and his top advisers could not be more blunt in their claims: The United States created Venezuela’s oil industry. Venezuela stole American oil fields through nationalizations. Now, the United States wants those assets back.

Those assertions have been used to justify the U.S. blockade on tankers under sanction going to and from Venezuela. They have also pushed oil, alongside illicit drugs, to the center of the Trump administration’s pressure campaign against Venezuela’s

Assertion From Trump Raises Hackles Over National Treasure

leader, Nicolás Maduro.

But the assertions also play into a core tenet of the Bolivarian revolutionary movement started in Venezuela by Hugo Chávez, Mr. Maduro’s predecessor and mentor, in the 1990s: that the United States is plotting to seize Venezuela’s oil.

“When they make the claim, ‘We’re going for land, for oil,’ it

really discounts the depth to which Venezuelans understand oil as part of our birthright,” said Alejandro Velasco, a historian of modern Venezuela at New York University.

It is difficult to overstate the mythical importance oil holds in Venezuela. Like beauty pageant winners and baseball, oil is a source of national pride and a prism through which Venezuelans often compare their society to others.

Venezuela’s oil reserves rank among the world’s largest, even if production has declined as a result of mismanagement, cor-

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ADAM GRAY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Bishop Ronald A. Hicks with Cardinal Timothy Dolan at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Manhattan.

Pope Names Illinois Bishop to Take Dolan’s Place

By **ELIZABETH DIAS and MAYA KING**

Pope Leo XIV on Thursday named an Illinois bishop to replace the powerful conservative Cardinal Timothy Dolan as leader of New York’s Roman Catholic archdiocese, a selection that signals his embrace of a more mild and unifying style after the political upheaval of Pope Francis’s papacy, while preserving the spirit of that pope’s reforms.

New York Archdiocese to See Style Change

The naming of Bishop Ronald A. Hicks to be the next Roman Catholic archbishop of New York is one of the most anticipated decisions of Pope Leo’s young papacy, his first major move indicating the direction he wants the church to take in his home country. Bishop

Hicks is scheduled to be installed as archbishop on Feb. 6 at St. Patrick’s Cathedral.

The appointment echoes Pope Leo’s own ascent earlier this year, the unexpected elevation of a little-known bishop from Chicago with a longtime focus on pastoral work and smooth governance.

Soft-spoken and steady, Bishop Hicks, 58, has led the Diocese of Joliet, Ill., since Pope Francis appointed him in 2020. The bishop

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‘Don’s Best Friend’

How Epstein and Trump Bonded Over the Pursuit of Women

By **NICHOLAS CONFESSORE and JULIE TATE**

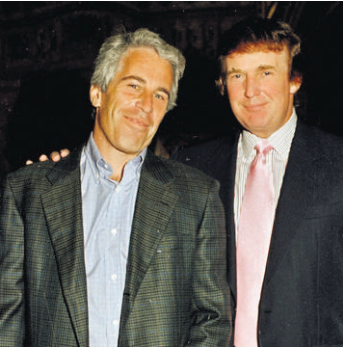
Jeffrey Epstein was a “terrific guy” and “a lot of fun to be with.” He and Donald J. Trump also had “no formal relationship.” They went to a lot of the same parties. But they “did not socialize together.” They were never really friends, just business acquaintances. Or “there was no relationship” at all. “I was not a fan of his, that I can tell you.”

For nearly a quarter-century, Mr. Trump and his representatives have offered shifting, often contradictory accounts of his relationship with Mr. Epstein, one sporadically captured by society photographers and in news clips before they fell out sometime in the mid-2000s. Closely scrutinized since Mr. Epstein died in a Manhattan jail cell during Mr. Trump’s first term, their friendship — and questions about what the president knew of Mr. Epstein’s abuses — now threatens to consume his second one.

The controversy has shaken Mr. Trump’s iron hold on his base like no other. Loyal supporters have demanded to know why the administration has not moved more quickly to unearth the convicted sex offender’s remaining secrets. In November, after resisting months of pressure to release more Epstein-related documents held by the federal government — and facing an almost unheard-of revolt among Republican lawmakers — Mr. Trump reversed himself, signing legislation that requires their release beginning this week.

Mr. Epstein had a talent for acquiring powerful friends, some of whom have become ensnared in the continuing scrutiny of his

crimes. For months, Mr. Trump has labored furiously to shift himself out of the frame, dismissing questions about his relationship with Mr. Epstein as a “Democrat hoax” and imploring his supporters to ignore the matter entirely. An examination of their history by The New York Times has found no evidence implicating Mr. Trump in Mr. Epstein’s abuse and trafficking of minors.



DAVIDOFF STUDIOS/GETTY IMAGES

Jeffrey Epstein was a frequent Mar-a-Lago guest in the 1990s.

But the two men’s relationship was both far closer and far more complex than the president now admits.

Beginning in the late 1980s, the two men forged a bond intense enough to leave others who knew them with the impression that they were each other’s closest friend, The Times found. Mr. Epstein was then a little-known financier who cultivated mystery around the scope and source of his self-made wealth. Mr. Trump, six years older, was a real estate scion

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Trump Aims to Strip Citizenship Of More Foreign-Born Americans

By **HAMED ALEAZIZ**

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration plans to ramp up efforts to strip some naturalized Americans of their citizenship, according to internal guidance obtained by The New York Times, marking an aggressive new phase in President Trump’s immigration crackdown.

The guidance, issued on Tuesday to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services field offices, asks that they “supply Office of Immigration Litigation with 100-200 denaturalization cases per month” in the 2026 fiscal year. If the cases are successful, it would represent a massive escalation of denaturalization in the modern era, experts said. By comparison, between

2017 and this year to date, there had been just over 120 cases filed, according to the Justice Department.

Under federal law, people may be denaturalized only if they committed fraud while applying for citizenship, or in a few other narrow circumstances. But the Trump administration has shown a zeal for using every tool at its disposal to target legal and illegal immigrants, leading activists to warn that such a campaign could sweep up people who had made honest mistakes on their citizenship paperwork and sow fear among law-abiding Americans.

The guidance comes as Mr. Trump

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PETER ARNETT, 1934-2025

Reporter on Scene in Vietnam And as Bombs Fell in Baghdad

By **ROBERT D. McFADDEN**

Peter Arnett, an intrepid Associated Press combat correspondent who won a Pulitzer Prize for coverage of the Vietnam War and who became one of the world’s best-known television reporters on the scene of wars and insurrections for 18 years with CNN, died on Wednesday in Newport Beach, Calif. He was 91.

His daughter, Elsa, said the cause was prostate cancer.

From Vietnam’s jungles to Iraq, where he interviewed President Saddam Hussein, Mr. Arnett broke news and rules, infuriated national leaders and inspired generations of journalists. He was twice among the last Western TV

broadcasters in Baghdad — as the Persian Gulf War began in 1991 and as an American-led coalition invaded in 2003.

Over 45 years, by his own account, he covered 17 wars in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Latin America, first for The Associated Press and later for CNN and other television and print organizations. He made television documentaries, wrote two books, lectured widely and in 1997 interviewed Osama bin Laden, the leader of the Qaeda terrorist organization, somewhere in Afghanistan.

His first dispatch from a war zone was a scoop on a coup in Laos

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INTERNATIONAL A4-10

Australia Mourns Matilda

Sydney’s Jewish community gathered for the funeral of the youngest victim of the Bondi Beach massacre. PAGE A10

Mass Kidnapping Terror

Survivors of the St. Mary’s Catholic School abduction in Nigeria recall their harrowing ordeal and release. PAGE A4

NATIONAL A11-21

D.N.C. Scraps Election Report

Ken Martin, the Democratic National Committee chairman, said that releasing the autopsy he had ordered would be a distraction for the party. PAGE A18

Reiner’s Struggle Resonates

The son charged in the Reiner murders was battling addiction, an affliction that millions of people face. PAGE A20

OBITUARIES A24, B11

A Titan of Avant-Garde Ballet

Hans van Manen, 93, rose from poverty to become one of the Netherlands’ most revered choreographers. PAGE B11



BUSINESS B1-5

China Senses a U.S. Retreat

Beijing is showing off its prowess at building infrastructure, aiming for the “deep anxiety” in Americans. PAGE B1

U.S. Inflation Slowed to 2.7%

Data collection issues skewed the latest Consumer Price Index report, clouding the picture for the Fed. PAGE B1

SPORTS B7-10

Solace for the Snubbed

Before there was the College Football Playoff, there was the Bowl Championship Series. But there was always controversy, with some teams feeling unfairly excluded. PAGE B7

So Much for Retooling

The Islanders’ quick start, stacking up wins against some of the N.H.L.’s strongest contenders, has forced the team to reconsider its expectations for the season. PAGE B10

OPINION A22-23

David French

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WEEKEND ARTS C1-10

The Surrealistic Imagination

An ambitious exhibition in Philadelphia takes a look at an artistic movement’s triumphs and shortcomings. Above, “The Dream” by Salvador Dalí. PAGE C1

