

UNEMPLOYMENT
RISES IN WARNING
FOR U.S. ECONOMY

HITS A FOUR-YEAR HIGH

Delayed Data Shows Jobs Added, Though Wage Growth Slowed

By REBECCA DAVIS O'BRIEN

The unemployment rate rose to a four-year high in November, a warning sign for the health of a labor market strained by the Trump administration's cuts to the federal work force and tariffs that have raised the cost of doing business.

Data released by the federal government on Tuesday showed that the jobless rate last month rose to 4.6 percent from 4.4 percent in September, the last month that officials had a full picture of the labor force before the weeks-long government shutdown. It is the highest unemployment rate since September 2021, when the economy was emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the same time, employers added 64,000 jobs in November, partly reversing a decline in October, a gain driven largely by the health care sector. But the federal government shed 168,000 jobs in October and November, as workers hit by deferred resignations came off the payroll, according to the report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Wage growth also slowed to a level not seen since 2021, a measure that comes as more Americans express pessimism about the economy and concerns about affordability.

Analysts and policymakers had hoped that the data released on Tuesday would help clarify the state of the economy after months of conflicting signals. For now, the signs are still mixed.

The report exposed emerging imbalances that could tilt the labor market in either direction in the coming months. And analysts noted that the government shutdown may have complicated the data gathering behind this report, making it less reliable.

"The report is a disappointment, overall," said Beth Ann Bovino, the chief economist at U.S. Bank. "The jobs market is weaker than we saw at the beginning of the year."

Continued on Page A17



Federal agents searched a property near Brown University's campus in Providence, R.I., this week.

Brown's Tradition of Openness Is Now Fractured

By DANA GOLDSTEIN

Brown University is an elite school, set high on a hill, with manicured greens and wrought-iron gates.

But one of its special features is that those gates are often open to the larger city of Providence, R.I. — both physically and metaphorically. City residents are invited to attend many events and, students and professors said, some buildings are often unlocked.

Many academic departments are housed on residential streets, in the tidy Victorian houses that dominate the city's East Side. They sit amid the homes of professors — and Providence's mayor. Thayer and Wickenden Streets, which are packed with restaurants, cafes and shops, are not just popular student hangouts but also hubs for city residents.

Those streets were eerily quiet early this week as the authorities

SPOTLIGHT Kash Patel's impulse to speak too soon revived doubts about his competence. PAGE A19



A memorial included pictures of the students killed in Saturday's shooting, MukhammadAziz Umurzokov, left, and Ella Cook.

continued to search for a shooter that entered a classroom on Saturday afternoon, killing two students and wounding nine others before slipping out into the December darkness and disappearing.

It had already been an extraordinarily difficult year for Brown. As part of its broader campaign

Continued on Page A18

With Films Dramatic or Droll,
Reiner Turned Our Joy Up to 11

Few movies take possession of you like "This Is Spinal Tap," the delightful shaggy-haired 1984 rock 'n' roll parody that turned Rob Reiner into a filmmaker. The movie, about a ridiculous group of heavy-metal rockers, didn't set the world or entertainment industry on fire on its release.

Yet it kick-started an unlikely career that rapidly picked up momentum with crowd pleasers that won love and sometimes awards, and often cleaned up at the box office.

Reiner's gifts as a filmmaker were performance-based and steeped in comedy; he wasn't an auteurist icon like Martin Scorsese, one of the inspirations for the filmmaker character whom Reiner played in "This Is Spinal Tap."

Rather, Reiner made his mark in the stories he told. In their variety, generosity and in their open, unembarrassed appeal to the audience, his movies recalled an earlier era when studio directors raced from set to set, from

one story to the next, making some of the solid and, at times, soaring films that defined Old Hollywood.

In an astonishingly short, fertile period of time starting in the mid-1980s, Reiner directed films as different as the coming-of-age drama "Stand by Me" and the charming fairy tale "The Princess Bride"; persuaded his mother, Estelle, to deliver one of the most famous lines in movies ("I'll have what she's having") in "When Harry Met Sally . . ."; and unleashed Kathy Bates on James Caan in "Misery."

With down-to-earth humor, flights of fancy and a born entertainer's desire to keep you engaged, Reiner honed his craft, turned comics and theater actors into stars, and gave millions of people pleasure and reasons to go to the movies. Yet despite his success, he always seemed like

Continued on Page A20

UNSHAKABLE BELIEFS In films like "A Few Good Men," Rob Reiner's ideas of honor and morality were as plain as could be. PAGE C1



Party Power in a Shrimp Tower

Whether to save space, wow guests or indulge in nostalgia, tall food is taking over. This edible tree checks all the boxes. PAGE D8.

Sydney Officials See Link
To 'Islamic State Ideology'

NEWS ANALYSIS

A Shaken Australia Searches for a Path

By DAMIEN CAVE

Australia's prime minister blamed "Islamic State ideology" on Tuesday for motivating a father and son accused of killing at least 15 people at a Jewish holiday event in Sydney's Bondi Beach on Sunday.

Hours later, he made a hospital visit to Ahmed el Ahmed, a Syrian immigrant who has become a national hero for grabbing a gun from one of the gunmen before being shot in the shoulder.

The two moments captured competing strains of Australia's struggle to understand the attack, the deadliest act of violence on Australian soil since 1996, and what the recent massacre means for the nation's approach to immigration, antisemitism, gun control and racism.

The authorities identified the older suspect on Tuesday as Sajid Akram, an Indian national who moved to Australia in 1998 and was killed by the police responding to the shooting. His 24-year-old son was born in Australia, officials said. He was reportedly in a coma, and the authorities said two homemade Islamic State flags had been found in the car they drove to the beach.

The disclosures fueled concern about rising antisemitism in Australia, reflected in a string of graffiti and arson attacks over the past 18 months. In a diverse country that relentlessly debates immigration, many are now on edge about Islamist radicalization — and a potential Islamophobic backlash. Fliers online are calling for a "MIDDLE EASTERN BASHING DAY" at a beach south of Bondi where riots to "reclaim" the area occurred 20 years ago.

At the same time, the actions of Mr. el Ahmed, 43, a Muslim shop owner who also immigrated in the 1990s, offered a counterpoint. His mother, in Australia, veiled and speaking Arabic, told reporters she was proud to hear her son was "helping people and saving lives."

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese called him "a true Australian."

Continued on Page A11

Suspects Had Been to a Restive Region of the Philippines

This article is by Victoria Kim, Yan Zhuang, Livia Albeck-Ripka and Thomas Fuller.

The attack on a Jewish celebration in Sydney was motivated by Islamic State extremism, Australia's prime minister said on Tuesday, as investigators probed whether a visit to the southern Philippines last month by the two suspected gunmen had any connection to the mass shooting.

The police found two homemade Islamic State flags in the car that the suspects, a 50-year-old man and his 24-year-old son, drove to the site of the massacre on Sunday, investigators said. The authorities also recovered improvised explosive devices in the car.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the two men appeared to be acting alone and described the shooting as a "meticulous, calculated, coldblooded attack."

"It would appear that this was motivated by Islamic State ideology," he said. On Monday, Mr. Albanese said there was no evidence that the gunmen were "part of a cell."

The attack on the Hanukkah celebration was Australia's worst mass shooting in three decades, killing 15 people and wounding dozens. It has led to debates and recriminations about whether the country has been vigilant enough about extremism and antisemitism in particular.

Officials in Australia and India released more information on Tuesday about the gunmen.

The older gunman, Sajid Akram, was an Indian citizen from Hyderabad, in southern India, who moved to Australia in 1998 in search of a job, according to a statement released on Tuesday by the police in the southern Indian state of Telangana. The statement said that he had married in Australia, where he had two children who are Australian citizens: a son, Naveed, and a daughter.

Sajid Akram was shot and killed by police at the scene of the shooting. Naveed Akram was injured.

Sajid Akram's relatives in India told the police that he had rarely been in touch with them, visiting six times since his departure, the

Continued on Page A10

Dropping Her Guard, a Top Aide
Talks of Trump's 'Score Settling'

By PETER BAKER

WASHINGTON — President Trump's chief of staff said she tried to get him to end his "score settling" against political enemies after 90 days in office, but acknowledged that the administration's still ongoing push for prosecutions has been fueled in part by the president's desire for retribution.

Susie Wiles, the White House chief of staff, told an interviewer that she forged a "loose agreement" with Mr. Trump to stop focusing after three months on punishing antagonists, an effort that evidently did not succeed. While she insisted that Mr. Trump is not constantly thinking about retribution, she said that "when there's an opportunity, he will go for it."

Ms. Wiles made the comments in a series of extraordinarily unguarded interviews over the first year of Mr. Trump's second term with the author Chris Whipple that were being published on Tuesday by Vanity Fair. Not only did she confirm that Mr. Trump is using criminal prosecution to retaliate against adversaries, she also acknowledged that he was



Susie Wiles, the chief of staff, gave Vanity Fair 11 interviews.

not telling the truth when he accused former President Bill Clinton of visiting the private island of the sexual predator Jeffrey Epstein.

Over the course of 11 interviews, Ms. Wiles offered pungent assessments of the president and his team: Mr. Trump "has an alcoholic's personality." Vice President JD Vance has "been a conspiracy theorist for a decade" and

Continued on Page A15

NATIONAL A13-21, 24

Toxic Runoff in Alaska

A warmer, rainier Arctic means 200 rivers are "rusting," a yearly regional checkup documented. PAGE A24

Beauty Brings Safer Streets

Environmental design interventions play a subtle role in helping Philadelphia reduce gun violence. PAGE A13



INTERNATIONAL A4-12

Eyeing Venezuela's Oil Fields

The White House says it is confronting the country's leader to curb drug trafficking. But gaining access to vast energy reserves is a priority. PAGE A8

Fleeing Saudi Arabia

Many single mothers and their children are trapped there. Edith, a worker from Kenya, was adamant that her daughter would not be among them. PAGE A6

Poaching of Rare Elephants

More than a dozen Bornean elephants have been killed — including five beheaded — in Malaysia in the past 18 months, the authorities said. PAGE A12

BUSINESS B1-5

Avoiding China's Stranglehold

Japan built its own supply chain for crucial rare-earth minerals after an embargo by Beijing 15 years ago. It could be a model for others. PAGE B1

A.I.'s Role in Electricity Costs

Senators want information from tech firms on the effects of data centers' energy use on utility bills. PAGE B1

FOOD D1-8

Party With Holiday Desserts

What makes these showstoppers so satisfying is how anyone can make them for a dramatic tableau. PAGE D1

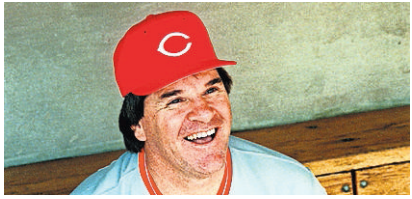
SPORTS B6-9

A W.N.B.A. Money Rift

Contract talks between the league and its players show big differences in revenue-sharing proposals. PAGE B8

Yeas and Nays on Rose

Peers of the career hits leader, who is no longer barred, weigh in on if he should become a Hall of Famer. PAGE B6



ARTS C1-6

New Art for the High Line

The artist Tuan Andrew Nguyen will resurrect a towering ancient Buddha that the Taliban demolished. PAGE C5

Century-Old Opera Still Stuns

Alban Berg's masterpiece "Wozzeck" which debuted in the shadow of World War I, will break your heart. PAGE C1

OPINION A22-23

Bret Stephens PAGE A22

