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The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, cloudy, warm, humid, a thunderstorm in the afternoon, high 89. Tonight, partly cloudy, low 69. Tomorrow, sunny, breezy, less humid, high 84. Weather map, Page 32.

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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$6.00



Meta bulldozed an oak forest to build a data center 1,000 feet from the home of Beverly and Jeff Morris in Newton County, Ga.

As Meta Built, Neighbors Saw Faucets Dry Up

By ELI TAN

NEWTON COUNTY, Ga. — After Meta broke ground on a \$750 million data center on the edge of Newton County, Ga., the water taps in Beverly and Jeff Morris's home went dry.

The couple's house, which uses well water, is 1,000 feet from Meta's new data center. Months after construction began in 2018, the Morrises' dishwasher, ice maker, washing machine and toilet all stopped working, said Beverly Morris, now 71. Within a year, the water pressure had slowed to a trickle. Soon, nothing came out of the bathroom and kitchen taps.

Jeff Morris, 67, eventually traced the issues to the buildup of sediment in the water. He said he suspected the cause was Meta's construction, which could have added sediment to the ground-water and affected their well. The couple replaced most of their appliances in 2019, and then again in 2021 and 2024. Residue now gathers at the bottom of their backyard pool. The taps in one of their two bathrooms still do not work.

"It feels like we're fighting an unwinnable battle that we didn't sign up for," said Ms. Morris, a retired payroll specialist.

The couple have spent \$5,000 on their water problems and cannot afford the \$25,000 to replace the well, Ms. Morris said. "I'm scared to drink our own water."

The Morrises' experience is one of a growing number of water-related issues around Newton County, which is an hour-and-a-half drive east of Atlanta and has a

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Push for Transplants Puts Organ Donors at Risk

By BRIAN M. ROSENTHAL and JULIE TATE

Last spring at a small Alabama hospital, a team of transplant surgeons prepared to cut into Misty Hawkins. The clock was ticking. Her organs wouldn't be usable for much longer.

Days earlier, she had been a vibrant 42-year-old with a playful sense of humor and a love for the Thunder Beach Motorcycle Rally. But after Ms. Hawkins choked while eating and fell into a coma, her mother decided to take her off

Rush to Retrieve, Even With Signs of Life

life support and donate her organs. She was removed from a ventilator and, after 103 minutes, declared dead.

A surgeon made an incision in her chest and sawed through her breastbone.

That's when the doctors discovered her heart was beating. She appeared to be breathing. They

were slicing into Ms. Hawkins while she was alive.

Across the United States, an intricate system of hospitals, doctors and nonprofit donation coordinators carries out tens of thousands of lifesaving transplants each year. At every step, it relies on carefully calibrated protocols to protect both donors and recipients.

But in recent years, as the system has pushed to increase transplants, a growing number of patients have endured premature or

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After the Flood
As the Guadalupe River receded, the search for survivors became a search for memories. Page 22.

The Trump-Epstein Bond: Parties, Jets and Women

15 Years of Friendship Before a Falling Out, and Then Their Paths Diverged

By ALAN FEUER and MATTHEW GOLDSTEIN

In the swirl of money and sun-tanned women that was their Palm Beach-and-Manhattan set, Donald J. Trump and Jeffrey Epstein spent nearly 15 years mingling side-by-side as public friends.

There were lavish dinners with boldface names at Mr. Epstein's mansion on the Upper East Side and raucous parties with cheerleaders and models at Mr. Trump's private club and residence at Mar-a-Lago. In between, there were trips back and forth from Florida to New York on one of Mr. Epstein's private jets.

But behind the tabloid glamour, questions have lingered about what Mr. Trump's long association with Mr. Epstein says about his judgment and character, especially as his allies have stoked sinister claims about Mr. Epstein's connections to Democrats. After their relationship ruptured, the disgraced financier ended up behind bars not just once, but two times, after being accused of engaging in sex with teenage girls.

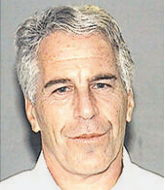
One of the young women who later said Mr. Epstein groomed and abused her was recruited into his world while working as a spa attendant at Mar-a-Lago. Another accuser recalled being eyed by Mr. Trump during a brief encounter in Mr. Epstein's office, and claimed that Mr. Epstein had told Mr. Trump at the time that "she's not for you."

Another woman has said that Mr. Trump groped her when Mr. Epstein brought her to Trump Tower in Manhattan to meet him. Last week, The Wall Street Journal reported that Mr. Trump gave Mr. Epstein a note for his 50th birthday in 2003 that included a sketch of a naked woman and a cryptic reference to a "secret" the two men shared. Mr. Trump has denied writing the message and filed a libel lawsuit on Friday challenging the story. The New York Times has not verified the Journal report.

Mr. Trump has never been accused of wrongdoing in connection with the Epstein case, and has said he had "no idea" that Mr. Epstein was abusing young women. In response to a request for comment about the president's history with Mr. Epstein, Karoline Leavitt, the White House press secretary, said that Mr. Trump had barred Mr. Epstein from his Mar-a-Lago club "for being a creep."

"These stories are tired and pathetic attempts to distract from all the success of President Trump's administration," she said in a

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Jeffrey Epstein

Inspectors General Are Worried Doing Job Could Get Them Fired

By LUKE BROADWATER

WASHINGTON — Even as President Trump fired a string of government watchdogs early in his second term, René L. Rocque, who investigates waste and abuse in the Education Department, decided to put her head down and keep doing her job.

The department stonewalled her request for details about how the Trump administration's cuts were affecting students and teachers, but Ms. Rocque kept going. In May, she notified Congress that she was facing "unreasonable denials and repeated delays."

The administration, it seems, was fed up. Within days, Mr. Trump ordered Ms. Rocque demoted and gave the job of acting inspector general to someone else.

The message to thousands of workers in inspectors general offices was clear: Be careful what you choose to investigate or you might be out of a job.

Mr. Trump has fired or demoted more than 20 inspectors general or acting inspectors general since he took office six months ago, hobbling offices that for years have served as a check on waste, fraud

and abuse. In the 2024 fiscal year alone, the inspectors general fired by Mr. Trump identified more than \$50 billion in waste and abuse, according to a congressional report whose findings were confirmed by The New York Times.

In nearly a dozen interviews with The Times, current and former staff members said there was a fear inside inspectors general offices that simply doing their jobs could get them fired. One former employee said the interim leader at his office was "paralyzed with fear"; another said his office was nervous about going forward with investigations that could prompt political blowback; a third rattled off a list of agency staff members who had quit, jeopardizing investigations.

Many of those interviewed requested anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly or because they feared retribution.

The long-term effects of Mr. Trump's drive to eradicate oversight are still coming into focus. But the situation inside the offices, which were created during

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It Takes Gags and Grit to Be the Last Newspaper Hawker on the Streets of Paris

By ROGER COHEN

PARIS — Among the literary cafes and the chic boutiques of the St.-Germain-des-Prés quartier of Paris, an impish man with a wad of newspapers makes the rounds, his trademark cry of "Ça y est!" or "That's it!" echoing down narrow cobblestone streets.

Ali Akbar of Rawalpindi, Pakistan, is a man with a ready smile who has been hawking newspapers for a half-century. Sometimes he spices his offerings with made-up stories. "Ça y est! The war is over, Putin asks forgiveness!" was one recent pitch that caused grim hilarity.

From the Café de Flore to the Brasserie Lipp, two famed establishments where food and culture are intertwined, Mr. Akbar plies

THE GLOBAL PROFILE

a dying trade in a dwindling commodity. He is considered to be the last newspaper hawker in France.

The profession may have reached its zenith in Paris in 1960, when Jean Seberg was immortalized on film with several newspapers under her arm

crying "New York Herald Tribune!" as she strolled on the Champs-Élysées pursued by Jean-Paul Belmondo.

Nobody in Jean-Luc Godard's classic movie "Breathless" is buying The Trib except Belmondo, who is unhappy the paper has no horoscope but unhappier still to discover that his charm makes little impression on the beauty and faux

American innocence of Seberg, yet another foreigner smitten by Paris and angling to make a buck.

Mr. Akbar is one of them, too. "Sah-Yay!" is roughly how his cry to buy sounds. Through persistence and good humor he has become "part of the cultural fabric of Paris," said David-Hervé Boutin, an entrepreneur

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Ali Akbar has been selling in Paris for more than 50 years.

INTERNATIONAL 4-14	METROPOLITAN	SUNDAY STYLES	SUNDAY BUSINESS	SUNDAY OPINION
The Trump Playbook in Japan With his calls to limit foreign workers and put "Japanese First," Sohei Kamiya has brought a fiery right-wing populism to Sunday's elections. PAGE 6	Waldorf Astoria Glistens Anew One of New York City's grandest hotels closed for renovations in 2017. After billions of dollars, it returns, reborn for the 21st century. PAGE 1	How the Birkin Bag Was Born The practical accessory has long been an obsession for many fashionistas. But what did its namesake, the actress Jane Birkin, think of it? PAGE 4	Courting Young Conservatives The influencer Brett Cooper, who plays by the internet's rules, represents a new breed of Republican commentator. She just got a job at Fox News. PAGE 4	Meghan O'Rourke PAGE 6

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