

General a Hero  
To the Public,  
Not His Boss

Blamed by Zelensky for  
Summer’s Setbacks

By ANDREW E. KRAMER  
KYIV, Ukraine — He deftly defended his country in Europe’s largest ground war in decades, stalling Russia’s invasion and then pushing it back with everything at hand: natural barriers like rivers, aging weapons and lethal drones, tricky and elements of surprise.  
But the fate of Ukraine’s top commander, Gen. Valery Zaluzhny, now appears to be hanging by a thread — not over his standing in the army, where he is well regarded, but over tensions with Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelensky.  
The president’s frustrations have mounted since it became clear in the fall that Ukraine’s southern counteroffensive, a push that started with high hopes for Ukraine and its backers, had failed. The fighting has since bogged down in bloody, static trench warfare.  
Should Mr. Zelensky dismiss the general, it could create a host of problems for him both in the war and at home. Although Mr. Zelensky embodies his country’s resistance to Russian aggression to many of his supporters abroad, the general is widely hailed as a hero in Ukraine.  
His portrait hangs in coffee shops and bars. Online, he is the subject of countless patriotic memes. Public opinion polls over the fall showed his popularity exceeded Mr. Zelensky’s — a reason, analysts and opposition politicians have said, for the men’s increasingly strained relationship, though the general has never voiced political ambitions.



Gen. Valery Zaluzhny is Ukraine’s top commander.

Military analysts have credited the general with preparing the army in the weeks and days before the invasion, even as Mr. Zelensky’s government publicly downplayed the odds of a Russian attack. General Zaluzhny oversaw not only the defense of the capital, Kyiv, but also the campaigns that thwarted the initial invasion and retook hundreds of square miles.  
Their disagreements aside, Mr. Zelensky would lose military advice from an experienced commander.  
Continued on Page A6



Mark Zuckerberg, Meta’s chief executive, addressing the families of victims of online child abuse during a Senate committee hearing.

Platoonmates  
With Dreams  
Barely Begun

By DAVE PHILIPPS and SEAN KEENAN  
At a dusty military base in northeastern Jordan, Specialist Kennedy Sanders drove bulldozers and road graders. When she had free time, she liked to spend it knitting, or feeding her sneakerhead habit by shopping online for rare pairs of Nike Dunks that she would make her mother unbox for her over FaceTime.  
She spent a lot of hours joking and hanging out with her friend and platoonmate in their Army Reserve engineer unit, Specialist Breonna Moffett, who slept in a nearby rack and was hoping to celebrate returning home this summer by attending a Nicki Minaj concert.  
The two were killed on Sunday, along with another soldier in their unit, Sgt. William Jerome Rivers, in what the Pentagon said was a drone attack by an Iranian-backed militia.  
Both specialists were heavy-equipment operators doing a tough job in a hostile region. They were also young Black women from Georgia who loved hip-hop, laughing with friends and the Army. And they were representative of the type of Americans who increasingly serve in the military these days.  
Black women account for about 36 percent of all enlisted women in the Army, compared with just 14 percent of the civilian female workforce.  
Continued on Page A14

Most Migrants Arrive Believing They Can Stay

By MIRIAM JORDAN  
For decades, single young men, mainly from Mexico and later Central America, did their best to sneak past U.S. border agents to reach Los Angeles, Atlanta and other places hungry for their labor.  
Today, people from around the globe are streaming across the southern border, most of them just as eager to work. But rather than trying to elude U.S. authorities, the overwhelming majority of migrants seek out border agents, sometimes waiting hours or days in makeshift encampments, to surrender.  
Being hustled into a U.S. Border Patrol vehicle and taken to a processing facility is hardly a setback. In fact, it is a crucial step toward being able to apply for asylum — now the surest way for migrants to stay in the United States, even if few will ultimately win their cases.  
We are living in an era of mass migration — fueled by conflict, climate change, poverty and political repression and encouraged by the proliferation of TikTok and YouTube videos chronicling migrants’ journeys to the United States. Some six million Venezuelans have fled their troubled country, the largest population displacement in Latin America’s modern history. Migrants from Africa, Asia and South America are mortgaging their family land, selling their cars or borrowing money from loan sharks to embark on long, often treacherous journeys to reach the United States.  
In December alone, more than 300,000 people crossed the southern border, a record number.  
It is not just because they believe they will be able to make it across the 2,000-mile southern frontier. They are also certain that once they make it to the United States they will be able to stay.  
Forever.  
And by and large, they are not wrong.  
The United States is trying to run an immigration system with a fraction of the judges, asylum officers, interpreters and other personnel that it needs to handle the influx.  
Continued on Page A13



Foot traffic on the bridge at El Chaparral crossing station on Mexico’s side of the border at Tijuana.

Adams Contends With an Ally  
Turned an Unlikely Adversary

By JEFFERY C. MAYS  
As Mayor Eric Adams battles low poll ratings, a federal investigation and potential challengers to his re-election in New York City, a Democratic ally has emerged as an unexpected adversary: Adrienne Adams, the City Council speaker.  
Ms. Adams, who shares many of the mayor’s moderate stances, has become one of his most powerful and vocal critics, unifying the most diverse City Council ever and empowering it as a forceful wedge against him.  
On Tuesday, Ms. Adams led the Council in overriding the mayor’s veto of a bill banning the use of solitary confinement in the city’s jails and another bill requiring police officers to record the race, age and gender of most people they stop.  
The actions were an unusual rebuke of a New York City mayor by his Democratic colleagues: It was only the second time in nearly a decade that the Council has overridden a mayor’s veto.  
When she was chosen as Council speaker in 2022, Ms. Adams was seen as a compromise candidate, a moderate Democrat who had worked closely with Mayor Adams.  
Continued on Page A17

Hey There, TikTok Viewers. I’m Losing My Job. Wanna Watch?

By YIWEN LU  
SAN FRANCISCO — “I am about to get laid off,” Folashade Ade-Banjo spoke to the camera while positioning her phone, “and you are about to see it.”  
In a five-minute TikTok video last month, Ms. Ade-Banjo, a 30-year-old Los Angeles marketing professional, was shown sitting quietly at her desk and staring at her computer, a pained look on her face as she nodded that she was ready to start. She was being laid off by a tech giant. The video racked up a half million views and thousands of comments within hours.  
“One of my resolutions for this year was to be a lot more open and honest with things I struggle with in my own life, so part of that is revealing parts of my life that may not be as glamorous,” Ms. Ade-Banjo said in an interview.  
As companies from the start-up Discord to Google have shed hundreds of jobs in recent weeks, some tech workers are taking to social media to share their layoff experiences, and many of these videos have gone viral. They show people crying as they talk with human resources or going through their daily routine knowing a mysterious appointment on their calendar is likely to result in their termination.  
Continued on Page A16

Tech Workers Filming  
Layoffs, and Tears



NATIONAL A11-17  
N.J. Transit Riders Gripe  
The governor says major improvements justify a 15 percent fare increase. Customers disagree.  
PAGE A11

A Slow Turn Toward Trump  
A network of wealthy Republican donors is reluctantly opening the door to the former president.  
PAGE A15

INTERNATIONAL A4-10  
Donors Rally Behind UNRWA  
At least 12 nations signaled they would continue to back the refugee aid group under the right conditions.  
PAGE A8

Possible Brexit Solution  
Britain outlined the power-sharing deal it made in Northern Ireland, which reduces checks on trade.  
PAGE A9

SPORTS B8-12  
Those Poor Guys  
Men are often recruited to practice against women’s college basketball stars like Caitlin Clark and JuJu Watkins. You can guess what happens.  
PAGE B8



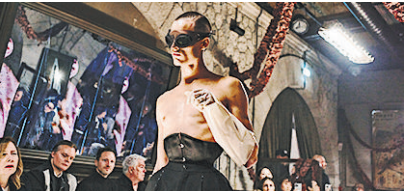
ARTS C1-6  
Embodying an Orchestra  
Can one piano capture the grandeur of Rachmaninoff’s symphonic music? Inon Barnatan is giving it a try.  
PAGE C5

Grammy Favorites  
Taylor Swift and SZA are among the young women poised for big nights at the awards show on Sunday.  
PAGE C1

BUSINESS B1-7  
Whom Is the V.R. Headset For?  
The Apple Vision Pro “spatial computing” device is a marvel, and prohibitively expensive, but it may hold some appeal to sentimental parents, movie buffs, show-offs and shut-ins.  
PAGE B1

PGA Tour Raises \$1.5 Billion  
The funding from U.S. investors, led by the Fenway Sports Group, raises questions about whether a deal to combine forces with Saudi Arabia’s sovereign fund is still necessary.  
PAGE B1

OPINION A20-21  
Gail Collins  
PAGE A21



THURSDAY STYLES D1-6  
A Fashion Show Gone Viral  
In celebrating John Galliano’s “return to his roots,” Vanessa Friedman wonders if we have missed the point.  
PAGE D5

