



INTUITIVE MACHINES

**Next Stop, the Moon**  
The lunar lander Athena snapped a selfie on its journey Thursday, with three other private spacecraft along for the ride. Page A20.

Truce Ending,  
Israeli Envoys  
Head to Cairo

**By AARON BOXERMAN**  
JERUSALEM — With the clock running down on the first phase of the cease-fire in Gaza, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sent an Israeli delegation to Cairo on Thursday to hold further talks on extending the truce.  
But even though the initial stage of the truce is set to end on Saturday night, Israel and Hamas appear to have made little progress at forging terms for a comprehensive cease-fire. It was not clear on Thursday whether the Israeli delegation was playing for time or had a serious mandate to bridge the yawning gaps between the two sides.  
The uncertainty has left both Israelis and Palestinians in limbo about the fate of more hostages and Palestinian prisoners, and whether fighting could soon restart.  
“Our only hope is that the cease-fire continues,” said Shamekh al-Dibs, a 36-year-old who has lived in a school-turned-shelter since his home in northern Gaza was destroyed.  
For now, the first six-week phase of the cease-fire is set to conclude without a clear framework to take its place. That does not necessarily mean an immediate return to war: The agreement says the truce can continue as long as negotiators are working on the next steps. But it makes the already fragile deal more precarious.  
Israeli government officials did not provide details about the delegation’s trip to Cairo, and extend-

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GENE HACKMAN, 1930-2025  
Sly and Captivating Master of Everyman Roles

**By ROBERT BERKVIST**  
Gene Hackman, who never fit the mold of a Hollywood movie star but became one all the same, playing seemingly ordinary characters with deceptive subtlety, intensity and often charm in some of the most noted films of the 1970s and ’80s, has died, the authorities in New Mexico said on Thursday. He was 95.  
Mr. Hackman and his wife were found dead on Wednesday at the home in Santa Fe, N.M., where they had been living, according to a statement from the Santa Fe County Sheriff’s Department. The cause of death was unclear and under investigation. Sheriff’s deputies found the bodies of Mr. Hackman; his wife, Betsy Arakawa; and a dog, according to the statement. [Page A20.]  
Mr. Hackman was nominated for five Academy Awards and won

two during a 40-year career in which he appeared in films seen and remembered by millions, among them “Bonnie and Clyde,” “The French Connection,” “The Poseidon Adventure,” “Mississippi Burning,” “Unforgiven,” “Superman,” “Hoosiers” and “The Royal Tenenbaums.”  
The familiar characterization of Mr. Hackman was that he was Hollywood’s perfect Everyman. But perhaps that was too easy. His characters — convict, sheriff, Klansman, steelworker, spy, minister, war hero, grieving widower,

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20TH CENTURY FOX, VIA GETTY IMAGES

Gene Hackman played Detective Jimmy “Popeye” Doyle in “The French Connection” (1971).

Syrian Comics No Longer Pulling Punchlines. At Least for Now.

**By RAJA ABDULRAHIM**  
DAMASCUS, Syria — Sharief al-Homsi shivered, clutched his arms and pretended to go through Syrian regime withdrawal.  
Standing before an audience in Damascus, he was telling a joke that would have been unthinkable until just a few weeks before,

when President Bashar al-Assad was suddenly ousted after more than five decades of his family’s oppressive rule.  
“We need rehab centers. You can’t just take this guy away from our life like that — it has to be gradual,” the 33-year-old comedian and screenwriter said, describing the omnipresent posters and magazine spreads depicting the al-Assad dynasty, to laughter from the crowd. He continued to shake. “They’ll ask us what drug were you addicted to; we’ll say, ‘Bashar al-Assad.’”  
It was a night of stand-up in late December at the Zawaya Art Gallery in the heart of the Syrian capital. Half of the comedians performing that night have been living abroad after fleeing the coun-

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Mexico Places  
Cartel Leaders  
In U.S. Custody

Move Comes as Trump  
Raises Tariff Threat

**By ALAN FEUER**  
The Mexican government on Thursday sent to the United States nearly 30 top cartel operatives wanted by the American authorities, including one notorious drug lord whom U.S. officials had been seeking to bring to justice for 40 years, according to a statement by the Mexican government.  
The handover of so many significant cartel figures to the United States at once was one of the most important efforts by Mexico in the modern history of the drug war to send traffickers to face charges in American federal courts.  
The development came as the Trump administration was leaning hard on the Mexican government to step up its fight against the cartels, and Mexican officials’ concession appeared to be an early win for President Trump in what will likely be a longer struggle against the criminal groups.  
Among those being flown to the United States was Rafael Caro Quintero, a founding member of the Sinaloa drug cartel, who was convicted in Mexico of masterminding the 1985 murder of Enrique Camarena, an agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration, three people familiar with the matter said. Getting hold of Mr. Caro Quintero has for decades been all but an obsession among officials at the agency.  
The transfer of the wanted men, who had been in Mexican custody, came as a high-level delegation from Mexico arrived in Washington to meet with senior U.S. officials to hammer out a security agreement amid tension between the two nations. The U.S. government declined to make any immediate public comment, but the Mexican foreign ministry released a statement announcing the release of the cartel figures.  
“This action is part of the work of coordination, cooperation and bilateral reciprocity within the framework of respect for the sovereignty of both nations,” the statement said.  
In recent weeks, the Trump administration has been engaged in a heated debate over how far — and how hard — to go in pushing the Mexican government to deal with the cartels, which have for years wreaked bloody violence in Mexico and smuggled untold amounts of illegal drugs into the United States.  
Some White House officials have adopted an aggressive posture, advocating unilateral military action against drug lords and

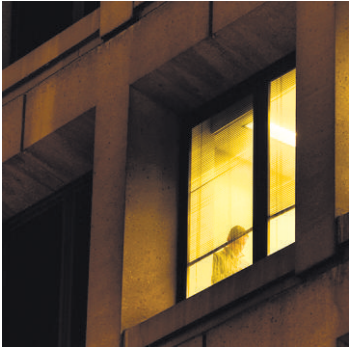
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CABINET LEADERS  
WRESTLE CHAOS  
OF MUSK’S CUTS

KEEPING TRUMP HAPPY

Secretive Consultations  
and Quiet Grumbling  
After Email Edict

*This article is by Michael D. Shear, Julian E. Barnes and Eric Schmitt.*  
WASHINGTON — In the East Room of the White House on Saturday night, the director of the F.B.I., Kash Patel, was huddling with Tulsi Gabbard, the director of national intelligence.  
It was just a few hours after Elon Musk threatened to fire federal workers who failed to send an email describing what they did during the workweek. The two cabinet officials found a quiet spot to confer on the sidelines of a dinner for the nation’s governors.  
Obeying Mr. Musk’s order could reveal national security secrets and other sensitive information, they agreed, according to three



ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES

F.B.I. employees were told not to respond to a directive.

people familiar with the conversation. Mr. Patel and Ms. Gabbard were still wholeheartedly behind Mr. Musk’s goal of slashing the size of the federal work force. But they could not allow their workers to follow the directive, even if it would defy Mr. Musk — and, more important, annoy the president.  
Across the top ranks of the government, there were more conversations. Ms. Gabbard spoke with John Ratcliffe, the C.I.A. director. Chiefs of staff and senior personnel officers at the Defense Department and other agencies consulted one another about what to do, even as managers around the country fielded panicked questions from employees about whether they were at risk of being fired from their jobs.  
Cabinet secretaries at major agencies found themselves struggling to figure out how to respond

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What to Call a Body of Water?  
A Widening Gulf on the Coast.

*This article is by Rick Rojas, Katelyn Wolfe and Jennifer Reed.*  
CUT OFF, La. — In southernmost Louisiana, where the land on the map looks like grains of rice and okra in a bowl of gumbo, the body of water alongside it has always played a potent role. It has carried in ancestors, allowed for the industries that became the region’s backbone, delivered devastating storms and eroded the coast, lately at an aggressive clip.  
Living near the water has required understanding its rhythms and their consequences. But for generations, one thing most people on the Gulf Coast have not thought much about was what to call it.  
“It’s always been the Gulf of Mexico,” said Kenneth Armand, 62, standing outside his home in tiny Cut Off, La., just yards away from Bayou Lafourche, on the

state’s southern coast. “Ever since I was born.”  
When President Trump issued an executive order last month to rename it the Gulf of America, communities along the coast found themselves thinking about the basin in a way many never had before.  
For many Gulf Coast residents, the change was surprising, if not puzzling — the order was unexpected and not exactly responding to a groundswell. Still, many have accepted it, seeing the move as a reflection of how central the body of water is to the country’s identity and economy.  
“God’s greatest country!” said Mr. Armand’s wife, Jeanie, 76. “Everybody’s calling it the Gulf of America now.”  
Flora-Bama, a beloved beach bar in Pensacola, Fla., has had to keep restocking \$27 T-shirts emblazoned with “Gulf of America,” a

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INTERNATIONAL A4-12  
**Pilgrims Wade Into the Ganges**  
The world’s largest spiritual gathering brought hundreds of millions to the confluence of two Indian rivers. PAGE A6

**No Delay on Trump Tariffs**  
Citing the fentanyl problem, the president said tariffs on Mexico and Canada would begin on Tuesday. PAGE A4

NATIONAL A13-20  
**Human Versus A.I. Therapists**  
Chatbots posing as therapists may encourage users to commit harm, federal regulators were warned. PAGE A13

**Moscow-Like Chill in D.C.**  
The Trump administration’s moves evoke the early days of President Vladimir V. Putin’s reign in Russia. PAGE A15

OBITUARIES A21, B10  
**‘Gossip Girl’ Actress**  
Michelle Trachtenberg, a touchstone of millennial youth culture who grew up onscreen, also starred in “Buffy the Vampire Slayer.” She was 39. PAGE B10



SPORTS B6-9  
**The Indispensable .186 Hitter**  
Despite extremely low offensive numbers, the veteran catcher Austin Hedges is a beloved teammate. PAGE B6

**‘Good Thing’ in U.S. Loss**  
The women’s national soccer team used the SheBelieves Cup to assess talent and look to the future. PAGE B9

BUSINESS B1-5  
**A Sudden Embrace of Business**  
The uncertain reaction in China to Xi Jinping’s recent display of warmth made sense: Executives are eager for a reset after years in the cold but remain ever wary of meddling. PAGE B1

**Topsy-Turvy Times for Nvidia**  
Nvidia lost \$600 billion in market value in a day last month, yet it posted a quarterly profit rise of 80 percent. Still, underwhelmed investors sent shares down 8.5 percent on Thursday. PAGE B1

OPINION A22-23  
**David Brooks** PAGE A23



WEEKEND ARTS C1-12  
**Still Keeping the Beat**  
At 84, the drummer Billy Hart, whose discography includes credits on more than 600 albums, is releasing another by his long-running quartet. PAGE C1



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