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By MUJIB MASHAL

campaigns across India for an

election that began on Friday,

Prime Minister Narendra Modi

speaks of his insatiable ambitions

in terms of dinner-table appetite.

nections, cooking gas cylinders -

Mr. Modi reads down the menu of

what he calls the abundant "devel-

opment" he has provided to In-

dia's poor. But he's not stopping

there. "What Modi has done so far

is just the appetizer," he said at one

stop, referring to himself in the

third person, as he often does.

Roofs over heads, water con-

GHAZIABAD, India — As he

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Narendra Modi's legions of supporters make him a heavy favorite to win a third term as prime minister in the vote that began Friday.

But to his critics, Mr. Modi's talk

of a "main course" is an alarm bell

for the future of the world's largest

Mr. Modi, 73, enters the election

a heavy favorite, his party's grip

over India's more populous north-

ern and central heartlands firmer

than ever, the opposition in the

same decisive geography even

more diminished. Yet even with

his place as India's unrivaled

leader seemingly secured, he has

carried out a crackdown on dis-

In the lead-up to the voting,

Continued on Page A6

sent that has only intensified.

democracy.

As Modi's Power Grows, India Cedes Him More

Strong, Beloved Hand

Whom Critics See as

Risk to Democracy

"The main course is yet to come."

porters, a third term would bring

more of what they find so appeal-

ing in him. He is that rare breed of

strongman who keeps an ear to

the ground. He is a magnetic fig-

ure and a powerful orator. He has

built an image as a tireless, incor-

ruptible worker for a country on

To Mr. Modi's legions of sup-

SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2024

Prices in Canada may be higher

## Vote in House Clears Path For Ukraine and Israel Aid Democrats Enable G.O.P. Speaker to Push Package Past Opponents in His Party

By ANNIE KARNI

The 316-to-94 vote cleared the way for the House to bring up the aid package, teeing up separate votes on Saturday on each of its parts. But passage of those measures, each attracting bipartisan support from different coalitions. was not in doubt, making Friday's action the key indicator that the legislation is all but certain to pre-

Should that happen in votes set for Saturday afternoon, the Sen-

On Friday, the rule for considering the bill — historically a straight party-line vote — passed with more Democratic than Republican support, but it also won a majority of G.O.P. votes, making it clear that despite a pocket of deep resistance from the far right, there is broad bipartisan backing for the \$95.3 billion package.

The vote was an enormous victory in the long effort to fund Ukraine as it battles Russian aggression, a major priority of President Biden. It was a triumph against the forces of isolationism within the G.O.P. and a major moment of consensus in a Congress that for the past year has been

But it came only after Speaker Mike Johnson put his job on the line by turning to Democrats in a significant breach of custom in the House, further imperiling his position even as he paved the way

and approved.

On the House floor, Democrats held back their votes until it was clear there was not enough Republican support for the measure to pass without their backing, and then their "yes" votes began pouring in. Ultimately, 165 Democrats voted for the measure, more than the 151 Republicans who supported it.



Speaker Mike Johnson risks his job by turning to Democrats.

"Democrats, once again, will be the adults in the room, and I'm so glad Republicans finally realize the gravity of the situation and the urgency with which we must act," said Representative Jim McGovern of Massachusetts, the top Democrat on the Rules Committee. "But you don't get an award around here for doing your damn

Mr. McGovern blamed a "MAGA minority that doesn't want to compromise" for the long delay on approving aid to Ukraine. But he said that Democrats were providing the votes because "so much more is at stake here than petty partisanship."

It was the second time during this Congress that Republicans Continued on Page A9

WASHINGTON — The House took a critical step on Friday toward approving a long-stalled package of aid to Ukraine, Israel and other American allies, as Democrats supplied the crucial votes to push the legislation past Republican opposition so that it could be considered on the floor.

ate was expected to quickly pass the measure, and President Biden has said he would sign it into law.

mostly defined by its dysfunction.

for the legislation to be voted on

## Tajikistan, Repressed and Poor, Becomes Fertile Ground for ISIS

By NEIL MacFARQUHAR and ERIC SCHMITT

The mother of one of the suspects in the bloody attack on a concert hall near Moscow last month wept as she talked about her son.

How, she wondered, did he go from the bumpy, dirt roads of their village in Tajikistan, in Central Asia, to sitting, bruised and battered, in a Russian courtroom accused of terrorism? Even though he spent five years in Tajik prisons as a teenager, she said he never exhibited signs of violent extrem-

"We need to understand - who is recruiting young Tajiks, why do they want to highlight us as a nation of terrorists?" said the

mother, Muyassar Zargarova. Many governments and terrorism experts are asking the same

Tajik adherents of the Islamic State — especially within its affiliate in Afghanistan known as the Islamic State Khorasan Province (I.S.K.P.), or ISIS-K — have taken increasingly high-profile roles in a string of recent terrorist attacks. Over the last year alone, Tajiks have been involved in assaults in Russia, Iran and Turkey, as well as foiled plots in Europe. ISIS-K is believed to have several thousand soldiers, with Tajiks constituting

more than half, experts said. They have become key to I.S.K.P.'s externally focused campaign as it seeks to gain attention

and more recruits," said Edward Continued on Page A5

# Biden Blocks Drilling in Vast Swath of Alaska

Once forbidden to watch films, Abshir Rageh creates "storytelling that can change lives." Page A4.

### By LISA FRIEDMAN

Making Movies in Somalia

The Biden administration expanded federal protections across millions of acres of Alaskan wilderness on Friday, blocking oil, gas and mining operations in some of the most unspoiled land in the country.

The Interior Department said it would deny a permit for an industrial road that the state of Alaska had wanted to build through the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve in order to reach a large copper deposit with an estimated value of \$7.5 billion. It also announced it would ban drilling in

#### A Conservation Legacy, or an Economic Jam?

more than half of the 23-millionacre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, an ecologically sensitive expanse north of the Arctic Circle.

Together, the two moves amount to one of biggest efforts in history to shield Alaskan land from drilling and mining. They are expected to face challenges from industry as well as from elected leaders in Alaska, where oil and gas revenues make up much of the

state's budget and where mining is a main driver of the economy.

BRIAN OTIENO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

"Alaska's majestic and rugged lands and waters are among the most remarkable and healthy landscapes in the world, sustaining a vibrant subsistence economy for Alaska Native communities," President Biden said in a statement.

Part of an environmental blitz ahead of Earth Day, the Alaska announcements are designed to help Mr. Biden cement his climate and conservation legacy and win back voters still angry over a decision he made last year to approve Wil-

Continued on Page A16

#### By JONAH E. BROMWICH and MAGGIE HABERMAN

**NEWS ANALYSIS** 

Israel and Iran

Suppress Urge

By PATRICK KINGSLEY

JERUSALEM — The rela-

tively limited scope of Israel's

overnight strikes on Iran, and a

subdued response from Iranian

officials, may have lowered the

chances of an immediate escala-

tion in fighting between the two

countries, analysts said on Fri-

While Israel is still fighting

wars on two fronts, against Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, the likelihood of a third front has ebbed, at least for now.

For days, there have been fears that a forceful Israeli re-

turning a tit-for-tat confrontat

to treat its successful defense

Foreign leaders advised Israel

against Iran's missile barrage as

a victory that required no retalia-

tion, warning against a counter-

stabilize a region already roiled

by Israel's wars with two Iranian

allies, Hamas and Hezbollah, and

tensions with a third, the Houthis

But when it finally came early

attack that might further de-

on Friday, Israel's strike ap-

peared less damaging than ex-

and state-run news outlets to

downplay its significance, at

pected, allowing Iranian officials

In public, only one high-rank-

Continued on Page A8

into a wider war.

in Yemen.

least for now.

sponse to Iran's attack on southern Israel last weekend could prompt an even more aggressive riposte from Iran, potentially

For Escalation

"Are these your posts?" the

judge asked. The slight, silver-haired woman stood at a lectern in the icy-cold courtroom on the 15th floor of the Manhattan Criminal Courts Building. She blinked under the lights as she was questioned, standing about 12 feet from the man who had inspired the social media messages nearly a decade before.

They were hers, she confirmed, and the judge directed her to read them aloud. It took her a moment to get to the crux of the first, which

### Potential Jurors Jarred by Their Own Words

Old Social Media Posts Haunting Trump Trial

dated back to 2016.

"Let's be civil," she read. "And try to protect the rights of the many at risk should we fail to stop the election of a racist, sexist, narcissist ... " She interrupted herself. "Oops. That sounds bad."

It was just one of several such inquisitions this week as lawvers and the judge asked prospective jurors, who live in deeply Democratic Manhattan, to explain so-

cial media posts that were critical of him as president or as a candidate. The posts were apparently unearthed by researchers working for the legal team represent-

ing Donald J. Trump. Prosecutors asked their own questions, but for the most part did not delve into the prospective jurors' posting histories. It was the defense team that expressed the most concern about what had happened online, an appropriate focus for lawyers representing the most online of presidents.

Mr. Trump thrived on social media. Using Twitter, a platform that Continued on Page A13

SPORTS B6-10

### Success Through Friendship

The Knicks' Jalen Brunson, Josh Hart and Donte DiVincenzo have been buddies since college. PAGE B6

### **Judge Denies Top Trainer**

Horses guided by Bob Baffert will not be allowed to compete in this year's Kentucky Derby. PAGE B10

### NATIONAL A11-17

Clamping Down on Polluters The E.P.A. will shift the cost of cleaning up two "forever chemicals" away from taxpayers. PAGE A16

**INTERNATIONAL A4-10** 

## Turkey Quake Trial Opens

Over 300 people died when a residential complex toppled. Survivors hope to punish the men who built it. PAGE A10



### **Abundant but Tortured Poems**

Two lyrically bountiful albums released by Taylor Swift almost singularly focus on romantic love — her own — and spiteful tales of heartbreak. PAGE C1

OPINION A18-19

Lydia Polgreen

PAGE A19

### **BUSINESS B1-5**

Hanging on to Mortgage Rates On a scale not seen in decades, many Americans are stuck in homes they would rather leave, due to the current high rates. PAGE B1

**OBITUARIES B11-12** 

### Fiercely Debated Philosopher

Daniel C. Dennett insisted that religion was an illusion and that free will was a fantasy. He was 82. PAGE B11

### **Allman Brothers Guitarist**

Dickey Betts, known for his fiery style, wrote and sang the band's biggest hit, "Ramblin' Man." He was 80.





