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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



President Trump told Sanae Takaichi, Japan’s new prime minister, on Tuesday that the U.S. would offer help on “any favors you need.”

25 States Sue To Safeguard Food Stamps

By TONY ROMM and EMILY COCHRANE

WASHINGTON — More than two dozen states sued the Trump administration on Tuesday over its recent refusal to fund food stamps during the government shutdown, as roughly 42 million low-income aid recipients confronted the risk of hunger and financial hardship starting within days.

The states, including Arizona, California and Massachusetts, described the impending cuts as unnecessary and illegal, and they asked a federal judge to force Washington to maintain benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, starting on Nov. 1.

Roughly one in eight people in the United States receive food stamps, which average around \$187 a month and cost the federal government about \$8 billion monthly. Lawmakers must regularly approve money for the program, though SNAP maintains a sizable reserve to cover any emergencies or shortfalls.

Many congressional Democrats and Republicans had encouraged the Trump administration to use this funding to preserve food stamps into November, with the government expected to remain closed. But the Trump administration declined on Friday to extend that reprieve, even though the Agriculture Department said weeks ago that it could reprogram money to prevent benefit cuts.

In their lawsuit, officials from 25 states and the District of Columbia criticized the Trump administration for that sudden policy reversal, arguing that the federal government had a legal obligation to maintain funding for food stamps, which Congress made permanent in the 1960s.

The suit was filed by a mix of Democratic attorneys general and governors from states including Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Nevada and North Carolina. If they prevail, it could compel U.S.D.A to tap its emergency funds and provide benefits to those states’ residents, though the exact scope of any relief would be up to a judge.

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SHUTDOWN’S COST Millions of Americans may lose assistance for food and utilities. PAGE A19

China Is Racing to Lead World in Nuclear Power

By BRAD PLUMER and HARRY STEVENS

In 2013, construction began on the first two new U.S. nuclear reactors in a generation. Atomic energy was back. Or was it?

Seven years late and \$17 billion over budget, the reactors became two of the costliest ever built. Once again, nuclear power seemed hopeless, at least in the U.S.

Yet over the same period, China built 13 similar reactors, with 33 more underway. And Beijing’s nuclear ambitions are global.

China is quickly becoming the world’s leader in nuclear power,

POWER MOVES
Beijing’s Clean Energy Push

with nearly as many reactors under construction as the rest of the world combined. While its dominance of solar panels and electric vehicles is well known, China is also building nuclear plants at an extraordinary pace. By 2030, China’s nuclear capacity is set to surpass that of the United States, the first country to split atoms to make electricity.

Many of China’s reactors are derived from American and French designs, yet China has overcome the construction delays and cost

overruns that have bogged down Western efforts to expand nuclear power.

At the same time, China is pushing the envelope, making breakthroughs in next-generation nuclear technologies that have eluded the West. The country is also investing heavily in fusion, a potentially limitless source of clean power if anyone can figure out how to tame it.

Beijing’s ultimate objective is to become a supplier of nuclear

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NEW REACTORS The administration said it would back a push to build nuclear plants. PAGE B4



Category 5 Hurricane Batters Jamaica
Rocky Point, in the south, after Melissa struck farther west with 185-m.p.h. winds Tuesday. Page A9.

Democrats Hit Back in Arena of Verbal Combat

By KEN BENSINGER and JESSICA TESTA

On a recent Saturday night, more than 200 people crammed into a Los Angeles studio to watch Steven Bonnell, known online as the progressive streamer Destiny, debate supporters of President Trump.

The attendees, who each paid \$39 to be there, grew excited when a behavioral therapist in a Trump T-shirt took the stage to criticize

Harnessing the Power of Debate Shows

the far left as hypocritical and fragmented. The only mistake the president ever made, he argued, was conceding the 2020 election.

The room groaned, loudly. Then Mr. Bonnell, who has 850,000 subscribers on YouTube, methodically went to work on his oppo-

nent, calmly cataloging actions by Mr. Trump that he categorized as errors and abject failures. The audience, mostly young and male and decidedly left wing, switched to cheering and laughing, thirsty for the action like a crowd at an Ultimate Fighting Championship match.

For years, the political right has leaned hard into debate videos, producing carefully staged contests pitting conservative stars

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Trump Bonds With Takaichi, But No Deals

Friendly Talk in Japan Despite Trade Issues

This article is by **Katie Rogers, Erica L. Green and Javier C. Hernández.**

TOKYO — Inside a gold-drenched palace on Tuesday morning, President Trump heaped praise on Sanae Takaichi, Japan’s new prime minister, telling her that their countries were “allies at the strongest level” and vowing to come to Japan’s aid on “any favors you need.”

Hours later, delivering a speech to hundreds of American troops aboard an aircraft carrier stationed near Tokyo, Mr. Trump stood side by side with Ms. Takaichi, saying that the two had become “very close friends” and adding, “This woman is a winner.”

The joint appearance, which bore all of the markings of one of Mr. Trump’s political rallies, was the capstone of a day in which Mr. Trump and Ms. Takaichi found an easy rapport — watching snippets of the World Series on television, eating lunch at Akasaka Palace in central Tokyo and sharing stories about their mutual friend Shinzo Abe, the former premier who was assassinated in 2022.

But the series of meetings between Mr. Trump and Ms. Takaichi, a hard-line conservative who last week became the first woman to serve as Japan’s prime minister, delivered little in the way of solutions to some of the contentious trade issues between Washington and Japan.

The leaders signed two vaguely worded agreements — one declaring a “new golden age of the US-Japan alliance,” and another to cooperate on expanding the supply chain for rare earth metals. With both countries essentially agreeing to keep negotiating, Ms. Takaichi bought more time to strategize over how to spend the \$550 billion her debt-strapped government has promised to invest as part of an earlier trade deal with the United States.

In front of the troops, Mr. Trump, who has been pressing Japan to spend more on defense, said he had approved an order of missiles to supply Japanese F-35 jets.

“I’ve just approved the first batch of missiles,” Mr. Trump said to the crowd of service members on Tuesday afternoon. “I just want to tell Madam Prime Minister, they’ve been waiting for those missiles, and we got them here right away.”

During his speech at the Yokosuka Naval Base, the president said that the carmaker Toyota

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THE WEATHER
Today, mostly cloudy, breezy, afternoon sprinkles, high 55. **Tonight**, cloudy, breezy, rain and drizzle, low 51. **Tomorrow**, windy, rain, high 60. Weather map appears on Page A20.

U.S. ATTACKS KILL 14 ABOARD BOATS OFF PACIFIC COAST

FOUR VESSELS STRUCK

Deadliest One-Day Toll Since Pentagon Drug Operation Began

By HELENE COOPER and ERIC SCHMITT

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration launched another round of deadly strikes on vessels it accused of smuggling drugs, killing 14 people in four boats in its growing military campaign off the Central and South American coasts, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Tuesday.

Mr. Hegseth said that the strikes — three of them — took place on Monday in international waters and that there had been one survivor. They bring the overall death toll to 57 in the campaign, which began in September.

A U.S. military official, discussing operations on the condition of anonymity, said the lone survivor was picked up in waters near the coasts of Mexico and Guatemala.

Mr. Hegseth said that Mexican search and rescue authorities had “accepted the case and assumed responsibility for coordinating the rescue,” but he did not release further details.

“The four vessels were known by our intelligence apparatus, transiting along known narco-trafficking routes and carrying narcotics,” Mr. Hegseth said in a post on social media announcing the strikes and accompanied by a video. He said eight men were on the boats in the first, four men were on the boat in the second strike and three men were on the boat that was struck third.

He did not provide geographic details beyond saying the strikes took place in the eastern Pacific. After launching a series of strikes in the Caribbean near the coast of

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Pete Hegseth announced the strikes in a social media post.

At This Texas Children’s Clinic, Suspicion of Vaccines Is Invited

By EDGAR SANDOVAL

AMARILLO, Texas — On a warm October day, Victoria Rodriguez tried to soothe her restless daughter as the girl fidgeted on an examining table of a West Texas children’s clinic. Pia Habersang, the registered nurse who runs the clinic, leaned closer. “How is her speech?” she asked.

“She doesn’t talk,” Ms. Rodriguez said, paused and then added, “She is kind of saying ‘no’ more.”

Ms. Rodriguez was insistent that her daughter, diagnosed with autism, needed care from the Pediatric Wellness Center of Amarillo, where parents are greeted with messages professing the side effects of vaccinations and possible connections to autism — connections that medical experts say have been debunked in several medical studies.

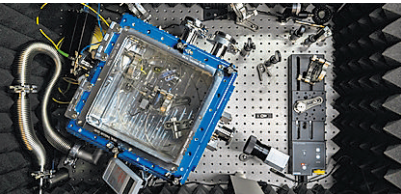
Dr. Habersang is a registered nurse with a doctorate in child and

youth studies from Nova Southeastern University, but is not herself a medical doctor; she runs the center with her husband, who is a physician. She begins her initial medical sessions with new patients’ parents by discussing her concerns about vaccines, the addition of aluminum salts to shots and the rise in autism diagnoses that she insists is connected to vaccination rates.

If a child has a genetic predisposition to autism, she tells parents, early exposure to a vaccine that contains small amounts of aluminum salts, as well as factors like a diet high in saturated fats and sugar, can accelerate toxicity in

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TEXAS LAWSUIT The state pursues unproven claims linking Tylenol to autism. PAGE A18



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Substrate, a San Francisco start-up, believes it has a method to compete with the Dutch giant ASML. PAGE B1

OpenAI Opens for Business
The company is becoming a more traditional for-profit entity while giving its parent a \$130 billion stake. PAGE B1

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The prime minister accused Hamas of violating the cease-fire deal by firing on Israeli troops and failing to return the bodies of dead hostages. PAGE A8

Feud Imperils U.S. Drug Fight
President Trump is cutting aid to Colombia, whose leader, Gustavo Petro, calls the boat strikes murder. PAGE A7

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Canvassers for New York mayoral candidates fanned out across the city amid a surge in early voting. PAGE A12



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Whole Foods is navigating the debate over healthy eating, even as the issue has become more politicized. PAGE D1

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Basketball and Dua Lipa are on the agenda during a jaunt with Malala Yousafzai, who is trying to balance activism and married life. PAGE C1

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The W.N.B.A.’s rapid growth comes with a downside for the league’s longtime fans as well as newcomers: soaring costs to attend games. PAGE B7

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His Art Conjured Movie Magic
Drew Struzan painted riveting and realistic posters for Indiana Jones films, right; the “Star Wars” franchise; and the “Back to the Future” trilogy. He was 78. PAGE B12



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