

"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

# The New York Times

VOL. CLXXV ... No. 60,698

© 2025 The New York Times Company

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2025

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$6.00



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jason Alfredo Silvas, 24, was among 252 Venezuelan men sent by the Trump administration to the Terrorism Confinement Center.

## Beaten, Trampled and Tear-Gassed After Deportation to a Salvadoran Prison

This article is by Julie Turkewitz, Tibisay Romero, Sheyla Urdaneta and Isayan Herrera.

They said they were shackled, beaten, shot with rubber bullets and tear-gassed until they passed out.

They said they were punished in a dark room called the island, where they were trampled, kicked and forced to kneel for hours.

One man said officers thrust his head into a tank of water to simulate drowning. Another said he was forced to perform oral sex on guards wearing hoods.

They said they were told by officials that they would die in the Salvadoran prison, that the world had forgotten them.

When they could no longer take it, they said, they cut themselves, writing protest messages on sheets in blood.

"You are all terrorists," Edwin Meléndez, 30, recalled being told by officers who added: "Terrorists must be treated like this."

From the moment he took office, President Trump has seized on what he calls the threat posed by Venezuela and its autocratic president, Nicolás Maduro, accusing



In May, a cell search turned violent. José Carmona, 28, left, and Victor Ortega, 25, right, said they were hit by rubber bullets from the guards' guns.

the government and Venezuelan gangs of orchestrating an "invasion" of the United States.

In March and April, the Trump administration made the extraordinary decision to send 252 Venezuelan men to a notorious prison in El Salvador known as the Terrorism Confinement Center, saying they had infiltrated the United States in a form of "irregular warfare."

Mr. Trump accused the men of being members of a dangerous gang, Tren de Aragua, working in lock step with the Venezuelan government. It was an early salvo in the administration's standoff with Mr. Maduro, which has only intensified since then, with U.S. warships blowing up Venezuelan boats and Mr. Trump warning of potential military strikes on Venezuelan soil.

But the men received little to no due process before being expelled to the terrorist prison in El Salvador, and they were abruptly released in July, part of a larger diplomatic deal that included the release of 10 Americans and U.S. residents held in Venezuela.

Mr. Trump, speaking at the United Nations General Assembly in September, praised Salvadoran officials for "the successful and professional job they've done in receiving and jailing so many criminals that entered our country."

In interviews, however, the men sent to the prison described frequent, intense physical and psychological abuse. Beyond the beatings, tear gas and trips to the isolation room, the men said they were mocked or ignored by medical personnel, forced to

*Continued on Page 11*

And now they have helped to make Zohran Mamdani the city's next mayor.

### NEWS ANALYSIS

## In New York, Even Yuppies Are Rebelling

Turning to Mamdani Amid City's Grind

By ELIZA SHAPIRO

Kate Schutzengele, a mother of three living in Brooklyn, has it pretty good, and she knows it.

Ms. Schutzengele, who is 38 and works in technology, is grateful her family could afford their \$50,000 child care bill last year, grateful that she and her husband bought their home when interest rates were low and that they could refinance their mortgage during the pandemic.

She is not complaining. But she also wonders how long her children can reasonably share a single bedroom, with curtains surrounding each of their beds. And when she and her husband look for larger apartments nearby in Kensington, their relatively affordable neighborhood, everything is out of their price range.

"It doesn't feel like there's any next step that we could reasonably achieve," Ms. Schutzengele said.

It's a feeling that is shared by a constituency of young-ish, middle-class-ish New Yorkers who are disillusioned by a city of shimmering wealth that they can't quite seem to access. Rather than seeing a New York of boundless possibility — or at least of apartments with in-unit washers and dryers — they see a mirage.

And now they have helped to make Zohran Mamdani the city's next mayor.

Mr. Mamdani, a 34-year-old democratic socialist, ran on a platform of making one of the most expensive cities in the world more affordable, promising an ambitious, expensive expansion of the social safety net.

"It's so energizing that politics might work for all of the people in this city," Ms. Schutzengele said. "Not just the people who are in power right now."

Mr. Mamdani, of course, owes his victory to many factors.

He is an uncommonly charismatic politician who effectively taught a global master class on how to use social media in cam-

*Continued on Page 23*

## U.S. IS ACCUSED OF BULLY TACTICS ON CLIMATE RULE

### THREATS KILL MEASURE

Nations Were Poised to Ratify Pollution Fee on Cargo Ships

This article is by Lisa Friedman, Max Bearak and Jeanna Smialek.

WASHINGTON — Over 100 countries were poised last month to approve a landmark deal to slash pollution from cargo ships. That's when the United States launched a pressure campaign that officials around the world have called extraordinary, even by the standards of the Trump administration's combative nature, according to nine diplomats on its receiving end.

An ambassador from Asia was told that, if he voted in favor of the plan, his country's sailors would no longer be allowed to disembark at American ports. Caribbean diplomats were told that they could be blacklisted from entering the United States. And Marco Rubio, the secretary of state, personally called officials in several countries to threaten financial penalties and other punishments if they continued to support the agreement to cut ship pollution.

These and other threats, including tariffs, sanctions and the revocation of diplomats' U.S. visas, effectively killed the deal, according to the nine American, European and developing-nation diplomats directly involved in the negotiations. They spoke on the condition of anonymity out of fear of retribution from the Trump administration.

The White House, the State Department and the Energy Department strongly denied that American officials made personal threats or intimidated diplomats. In statements and interviews, they acknowledged derailing the deal and repeated their opposition to international efforts to address climate change. They said the shipping fee would have hurt the American economy.

A State Department senior official also noted that the United States worked with Saudi Arabia to defeat the shipping fee and that helped other countries that had reservations about the agreement.

*Continued on Page 18*

## Saving Streets From Asphalt? Knees of Steel.

By WINNIE HU

Reeve Cherry got on his hands and knees next to a pile of granite stones on a Lower Manhattan street, and reached back into the past.

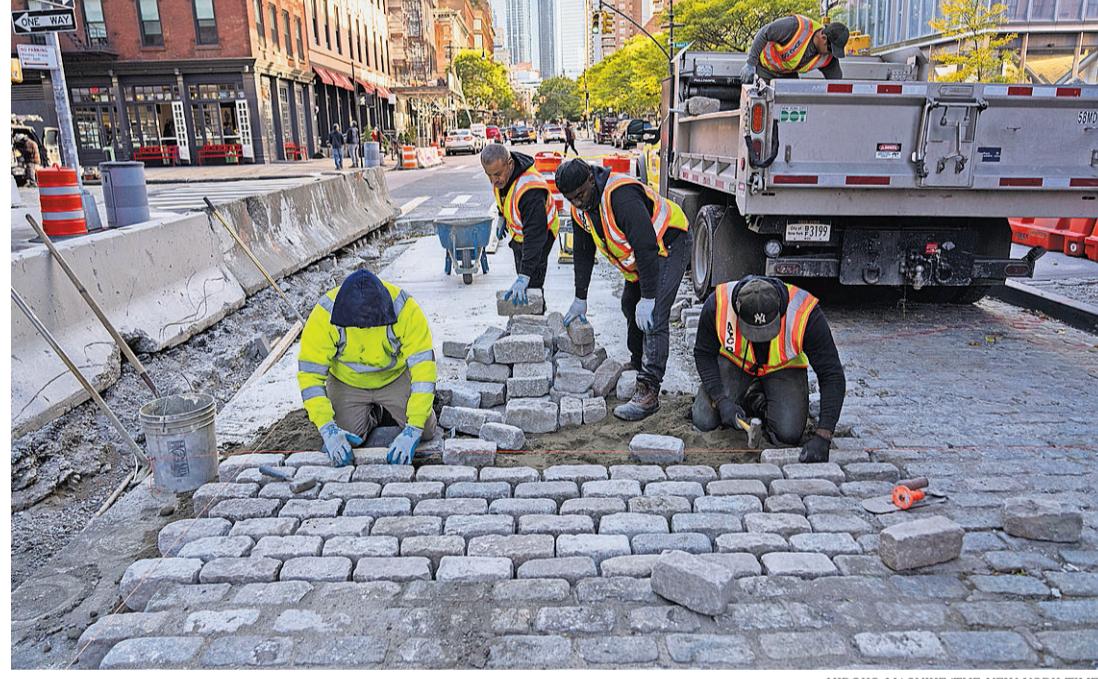
Mr. Cherry, who works for the New York City Transportation Department, repairs cobblestone streets that were built for horses and carriages but that are now pummeled by cars and trucks.

These streets date back to when New York, now the largest city in the United States, was a Dutch outpost. And in the more than three and a half centuries since, the painstaking way the stones must be laid by hand has not changed.

"Unfortunately, there's no way to reinvent how to do cobblestones," said Mr. Cherry, 42, who was wearing kneepads.

In a metropolis of steel-and-glass skyscrapers, Mr. Cherry is one of six bricklayers who are caretakers of a disappearing piece of New York history that has been largely torn up or paved over with asphalt.

Today, only 15 of the city's 6,300



Specialty bricklayers preserve a quaint side of New York City: cobblestones. Kneepads are handy.

miles of streets are cobblestone. While that figure has remained the same for more than a decade, it was nearly ten times that — 140 miles — in Manhattan alone in 1949, according to a 2017 study commissioned by the Historic Districts Council, a preservation group.

"They're such a wonderful link to our past and there's clearly a charm to them that asphalt just simply does not have," said Andrew Berman, the executive director of the group Village Preservation.

As a practical matter, asphalt streets are smoother to cross and

less expensive and labor-intensive to maintain. And it is not only cobblestone streets that have vanished over time but also the skilled artisans needed to care for them. So few people know how to lay cobblestones that the Transportation Department hires bricklayers

*Continued on Page 24*

## Sierra Club Is Mired in Discord After Its Push for Social Justice

By DAVID A. FAHRENTHOLD and CLAIRE BROWN

The Sierra Club calls itself the "largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization in the country." But it is in the middle of an implosion — left weakened, distracted and divided just as environmental protections are under assault by the Trump administration.

The group has lost 60 percent of the four million members and supporters it counted in 2019. It has held three rounds of employee layoffs since 2022, trying to climb out of a \$40 million projected budget deficit.

Its political giving has also dropped. Federal campaign-finance records show \$3.6 million in donations from the Sierra Club during the push to defeat Donald J. Trump in 2020, but none as Mr. Trump stormed back to the presidency in 2024.

And this year, as the Trump administration returned better organized and better prepared than in its first term, the Sierra Club was the opposite. While Mr. Trump boosted coal power, canceled wind farms and rolled back pollution limits, the club was consumed by



ARTHUR SCHATZ/LIFE, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

Members of the Sierra Club at the Grand Canyon in 1966.

internal chaos, culminating when the board fired its executive director, Ben Jealous, a former president of the N.A.A.C.P.

"Sierra Club is in a downward spiral," a group of managers wrote to the club's leadership in June, in a letter reviewed by The New York Times.

That spiral helps Mr. Trump. But it was not his doing. The Sierra Club did this to itself.

During Mr. Trump's first term, when the Sierra Club was flush with donations, its leaders sought

*Continued on Page 26*

### INTERNATIONAL 4-13

#### A 7-Year Sentence for What?

The Russian activist Aleksandra Skochilenko had been imprisoned for replacing supermarket price tags with antiwar stickers.

PAGE 4

#### Vietnam's New Globalists

In a world of increasing protectionism, few countries are still excited about globalization. None may be more into it than Vietnam.

PAGE 8

#### The Dream of Outlasting Time

Longevity labs, "immortality islands" and grapeseed pills are part of China's national project to conquer aging, despite sometimes shaky science.

PAGE 6

### ARTS & LEISURE

#### More Magic for Grande

The pop superstar reinvented herself in the first "Wicked," but the sequel shows she still has surprises in store.

PAGE 6

### SUNDAY OPINION

#### Ezra Klein

PAGE 7

### NATIONAL 14-24, 26

#### Families in Limbo Over SNAP

In many states, it was unclear how a Supreme Court order allowing the interruption of food stamp payments might affect recipients.

PAGE 19

#### All-Out Gerrymandering War

Some experts say the nationwide fight over redrawing legislative districts is a crisis for democracy.

PAGE 24

### METROPOLITAN

#### What to Call This Criminal?

He has used many names as he cycled in and out of prison, but his true identity remains unknown.

PAGE 1

### SUNDAY STYLES

#### Suiting Up For Mayor

Zohran Mamdani's campaign offered a master class in on-message millennial dressing.

PAGE 1

#### Generation Absurd

Young people just laugh when adults try to decipher the meaning of terms like "6-7."

PAGE 12

### SUNDAY BUSINESS

#### Promised Revival Never Came

A newly elected Republican senator offered hope for a dying paper mill company and its unionized workers in Chillicothe, Ohio. But the private equity owners had other ideas.

PAGE 4

#### Too Much Milk in Switzerland

The country's dairy farmers produced a bumper harvest of milk. But President Trump's steep tariffs have forced them to consider ways to cut back, including slaughtering cows.

PAGE 1



0 354753 6