



GUERCHOM NDEBO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Life After a Rebel Takeover

Hundreds of thousands of people in the Congolese city of Goma face a precarious future under a Rwanda-backed militia. Page 11.

Trump’s Recall
Of Foreign Aid
Worsens Crises

This article is by Sui-Lee Wee, Declan Walsh and Farnaz Fassihi.

In famine-stricken Sudan, soup kitchens that feed hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped in a war zone have shut down. In Thailand, war refugees with life-threatening diseases have been turned away by hospitals and carted off on makeshift stretchers. In Ukraine, residents on the frontline of the war with Russia may be going without firewood in the middle of winter.

Some of the world’s most vulnerable populations are already feeling President Trump’s sudden cutoff of billions of dollars in American aid that helps fend off starvation, treats diseases and provides shelter for the displaced. In a matter of days, Mr. Trump’s order to freeze nearly all U.S. foreign aid has intensified humanitarian crises and raised profound questions about America’s reliability and global standing. “Everyone is freaking out,” Atif Mukhtar of the Emergency Response Rooms, a local volunteer group in the besieged Sudanese capital, Khartoum, said of the aid freeze. Soon after announcing the cut-off, the Trump administration abruptly switched gears. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said last week that “life-saving humanitarian assistance” could continue, offering a respite for what he called “core” efforts to provide food, medicine, shelter and other emergency needs. But he stressed that the reprieve was “temporary in nature,”

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Beyond Chaos of Freeze, a Bipartisan Thorn

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR

WASHINGTON — When President Trump said on Wednesday that his order to freeze federal spending was about “scams, dishonesty, waste and abuse,” he was echoing promises made by his predecessors in both parties. Yes, the memo was a sweeping attempt to remake what he calls a “woke” government in his image. Yes, it was part of his retribution agenda to purge the “deep state” of his perceived enemies. And yes, it was an assertion of presidential power that threatened to undermine a core congressional authority — the power to direct federal

A Shared Goal to Cut
Spending. But How?

spending. But beneath all that, it was also one of the most far-reaching attempts to somehow reverse the seemingly inexorable growth of the federal government, an issue that resonates with some Democrats as well as most Republicans. Mr. Trump’s order was blocked by a federal judge, but the chaos and confusion it caused may make it even harder to achieve his desired goal. Democrats now appear energized to oppose any effort by

the president to slash programs, and government unions have issued new statements vowing to protect their workers from cuts. Organizations that receive federal money are now worried and wary. But there is no indication that Mr. Trump is likely to give up. In a social media post on Wednesday, Karoline Leavitt, the White House press secretary, referred to a series of executive orders signed by Mr. Trump, saying that “the President’s EO’s on federal funding re-

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EXPANDING REACH Elon Musk’s team was given access to the federal payment system. PAGE 18



ROBERTO SCHMIDT/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Florida A&M’s band entertained fans before Super Bowl XXXIX in 2005 in Jacksonville, Fla.

In L.A., the Usual Fire Playbook Wasn’t Enough

This article is by Shawn Hubler, Alexandra Berzon, Soumya Karlamangla, Thomas Fuller and Danny Hakim.

LOS ANGELES — Dave Gomborg had been watching the wind, his concern mounting. A veteran fire weather specialist at the National Weather Service, he understood the high and low pressure systems that ginned up the

infamous Santa Anas that blew periodically through Southern California. This wasn’t that. High in the upper atmosphere, powerful currents were forecast to align with the fast-moving air off the desert, threatening a rare supercharged windstorm — all in a region that had seen less than a quarter-inch of rain over the last eight months. The National Weather Service held a conference call with South-

ern California fire and emergency management officials on Jan. 3, warning that a “truly historic event” was due in four days, with the possibility of fires that would spread with extraordinary speed. Even an amateur weather watcher was worried: “Altadena, we have a problem,” he warned his followers. Yet neither days of lead time

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A Close-Knit Skating Family, Gone in an Instant

By AMY QIN and JULIET MACUR

FAIRFAX, Va. — The young Chinese couple had put in place nearly all the building blocks for a successful new life in America: graduate degrees, a tight-knit community of friends and promising careers. Then, in 2008, after years of trying for a baby, there came the final

missing piece: a son, Edward. The couple, Kaiyan Mao and Yu Zhou, invested everything in the precious son whom they jokingly called Fugui, meaning riches and honor in Chinese. They moved to a top public school district in the Northern Virginia suburbs. They enrolled Edward in piano, martial arts and dance. Then there was figure skating, of course — Edward’s passion. Even as they devoted them-

selves to their son’s academic and extracurricular development, Mr. Zhou and Ms. Mao were far from the stereotypical Asian tiger parents; rather, they encouraged him to make his own decisions and pursue his own path, friends and coaches recalled. “They were not over the top, but they were always there,” said Edward’s skating coach, Kalle Strid,

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TRADE WAR LOOMS
AS TRUMP IMPOSES
ROUND OF TARIFFS

Threatens Even Higher Levies if Mexico,
Canada or China Follows Suit

This article is by Ana Swanson, Alan Rappeport and David E. Sanger.

WASHINGTON — President Trump on Saturday followed through with his threat to impose stiff tariffs on Mexico, Canada and China, setting the stage for a destabilizing trade war with the United States’ largest trading partners. Mr. Trump hit Canada and Mexico with tariffs of 25 percent on all goods, with a carve-out for Canadian energy and oil exports. Those will be taxed at 10 percent. Mr. Trump also placed a 10 percent tariff on Chinese goods. The levies are to go into effect just after midnight on Tuesday, and will be added on top of existing tariffs.

The president said he was imposing the tariffs to stem the flow of migrants and illegal fentanyl into the United States. But his administration did little to explain what further steps were needed to remove the tariffs. Mexico and Canada have adopted measures to curb illegal border crossings. Such crossings at the U.S.-Mexico border are at their lowest level since 2020, though still higher than during much of Mr. Trump’s first term.

Mexico has also stepped up efforts to stymie the smuggling of fentanyl into the United States, including making its largest-ever seizure of fentanyl doses in December. Canada has deployed more drones, helicopters and enforcement officers to better secure the border. It is not clear what additional steps the Chinese government has recently taken, if any, beyond its previous law enforcement collaboration with the United States on the fentanyl trade. Mr. Trump discussed fentanyl with President Xi Jinping of China in a phone call during his first week in office.

Mr. Trump’s weeks of threats to impose tariffs have given Canada, Mexico and China plenty of time to think about ways to retaliate with tariffs of their own. Canada has indicated it will tax Florida orange juice, Tennessee whiskey and Kentucky peanut butter. The decision to hit those products, at least initially, is strategic: They come from states with Republican senators and with voters who elected Mr. Trump in 2024. But Mr. Trump’s executive orders contained a clause aimed at discouraging governments from fighting back. If Mexico, Canada or China retaliates with their own levies, the orders state that the United States could answer with even higher levies. And unlike in Mr. Trump’s first term, when American companies that import goods could seek exemptions to the tariffs, a White House official said that no similar process would be set up this time. Asked what the countries could

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Canada, above, and Mexico face major economic hits.

GO-TO TACTIC For the president, tariffs aren’t a tool, but a foundation. News Analysis. PAGE A9

Marching Back to Super Bowl
With High-Stepping Bravura

By EMMANUEL MORGAN

Long before Michael Jackson, the Rolling Stones and Rihanna, there was Freddie Colston. Colston was just a 20-year-old student from tiny Fairbanks, La., when he traveled to Los Angeles in January 1967. He had grown up in a home without indoor plumbing, but now he was staying in lavish accommodations with about 180 other members of the Grambling College marching band. Soon they would high-step onto the field at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum to perform in the halftime show of the very first Super Bowl. “When we heard that crowd, it was like a spirit got into us, and we were walking on a cloud,” said Colston, 77, who played the cymbals. “Our step was higher, and the beat

was faster.” In the decades before the National Football League recruited stars to perform at the Super Bowl halftime show — the rapper Kendrick Lamar will headline on Feb. 9 at this year’s game in New Orleans — it frequently relied on dynamic marching bands from Grambling and other historically Black colleges and universities. With nicknames like Human Jukebox (Southern University) and Sonic Boom of the South (Jackson State University), the musical groups are known for their creative formations and flamboyant showmanship. And the tradition has endured even as the Super Bowl has morphed into a corporate playground of ad-

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NATIONAL 12-20

Leaving W.H.O. Poses Risks

The decision to pull out of the international health agency could deprive the U.S. of crucial scientific data. PAGE 12

Canceling Transgender Care

After an executive order, two children were told they could not get gender-affirming treatment. PAGE 16

SPORTS 24-27

Secrets of the Dad Bod

Patrick Mahomes and Nikola Jokic are sports superstars with body types that challenge what we typically understand about athleticism. PAGE 25



INTERNATIONAL 4-11

The Magic of Moo Deng

The pygmy hippopotamus’s celebrity has transcended internet fame in Thailand, with endorsement deals and hordes visiting her zoo. PAGE 4

SUNDAY OPINION

Lydia Polgreen

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METROPOLITAN

After an Assault, Optimism

Joseph Lynskey, who survived being pushed onto subway tracks in Manhattan, has been working to heal. PAGE 1

Power Sharing in Jeopardy

A way of distributing the benefits of solar power is thriving, but President Trump may undermine it. PAGE 1

SUNDAY STYLES

Still Not Chasing Likes

Three years after starting a club meant to fight social media’s grip on young people, many original members are gaining new converts in college. PAGE 1



ARTS & LEISURE

Idina Menzel Is Out on a Limb

The actress, a fan favorite since “Rent,” is going back to Broadway in the new musical “Redwood.” PAGE 4

What Inspires Billie Eilish

Ahead of the Grammy Awards, the singer discusses her album “Hit Me Hard and Soft.” PAGE 8

SUNDAY BUSINESS

An Outlier Looks Inward

Bill Gates, who turns 70 this year, is about to publish “Source Code: My Beginnings,” an examination of his childhood. It is the first of three projected volumes of memoirs. PAGE 4

Where A.I. Replaced Humans

Sebastian Siemiatkowski, the chief executive of the tech company Klarna, takes evident pride in the artificial intelligence that has taken the place of a large number of jobs. PAGE 1

