

FRENETIC SEARCH
OF EPSTEIN FILES,
AND NOTHING NEW

ENORMOUS OPERATION

F.B.I. and Justice Dept.
Scour for Anything to
Quiet Trump Base

By ADAM GOLDMAN
and ALAN FEUER

WASHINGTON — This spring, the F.B.I. and the Justice Department made an all-out push involving hundreds of employees to scour the Jeffrey Epstein files with a single goal in mind — find something, anything, that could be released to the public to satisfy the mounting clamor from the angry legions of President Trump's supporters.

But after devoting countless hours to the project, working at times around the clock searching databases, hard drives, network drives, cabinets, desks and closets, the bureau and the department finally acknowledged this month that they had little to show for their efforts. They came to realize, for instance, that there was no specific “client list,” which previous investigators had known years ago.

Those conclusions, announced in a memo earlier this month and then repeated this week in a statement by a Justice Department official, capped a frenetic scramble to sort through more than 100,000 pages of materials related to Mr. Epstein, the disgraced financier who died in prison six years ago awaiting trial on sex-trafficking charges. During the inquiry, Justice Department officials diverted hundreds of F.B.I. employees and federal prosecutors from their regular duties to go through the documents at least four times — including once to flag any references to Mr. Trump and other prominent figures.

The bureau's own expert document reviewers raised concerns at one point that the investigation was not only being rushed, but

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More on the White House

A.I. Conservatives call chatbots “woke” and threaten tech companies, using the same playbook as attacks on social media. PAGE A13

LAWSUIT Naming Mayor Eric Adams, the Justice Department says New York is thwarting immigration enforcement. PAGE A16

Trump Clashes
With Fed Chair
In a Rare Visit

Pressing Powell on Cost
of Bank's Renovation

By COLBY SMITH

WASHINGTON — President Trump sparred on Thursday with Jerome H. Powell, the chair of the Federal Reserve, over the cost of renovations to the central bank's headquarters in Washington during a tour of the active construction site. The visit by the president and other top White House officials was arranged to find evidence to back up allegations by the administration that Mr. Powell had mismanaged the costly project.

Mr. Trump was led through the site by Mr. Powell, who is a frequent target of the president's attacks because of the central bank's unwillingness so far this year to lower interest rates. The president has previously called on Mr. Powell to resign before his term is up in May and has also openly toyed with firing him.

The visit escalated the administration's pressure campaign, which has expanded beyond the Fed's handling of the economy to include the \$2.5 billion revamp of two historic buildings by the National Mall that will become the central bank's headquarters.

Accompanying Mr. Trump to the Fed were Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, the Republican chair of the Senate Banking Committee; Russell T. Vought, the head of the Office of Management and Budget; and William Pulte, the director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency. Mr. Vought and Mr. Pulte have led the charge against Mr. Powell, accusing him of gross mismanagement of the Fed.

Other attendees included James Blair, the White House's deputy chief of staff, who was recently appointed to the National Capital Planning Commission, a little-known board that has been thrust into the spotlight because of its role in reviewing the Fed's plans. Mr. Blair has called the new headquarters the “Taj Mahal on the National Mall.” William Scharf, who is also now on the commission and serves as Mr. Trump's staff secretary, and Senator Thom Tillis, Republican of North Carolina, joined as well, alongside others whom Mr. Trump described as “construction professionals.”

Presidents do not typically go to the central bank in an official capacity, reflecting the longstanding independence of the institution

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SAHER ALGHORRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Mohammed Zakaria al-Mutawaq, about 18 months, with his mother, Hedaya al-Mutawaq, who said he was born healthy but was recently diagnosed with severe malnutrition. A doctor said the number of children dying of malnutrition in Gaza had risen sharply.

Young, Old and Sick Starve to Death in Gaza: ‘There Is Nothing’

This article is by **Rawan Sheikh Ahmad, Isabel Kershner and Abu Bakr Bashir.**

HAIFA, Israel — Atef Abu Khater, 17, who was healthy before Gaza was gripped by war, lies in intensive care in a hospital in the north of the Palestinian enclave, suffering from severe malnutrition.

“He is not responding to the treatment,” said his father, A’eed Abu Khater, 48, who has been sheltering in a tent in Gaza City with his wife and five children. “I

feel helpless,” he added in a phone call, his voice strained with grief. “We lost our income in the war. Food is unaffordable. There is nothing.”

Gaza's hospitals have struggled since early in the war to cope with the influx of Palestinians injured and maimed by Israeli airstrikes and, more recently, by shootings meant to disperse desperate crowds as they surge toward food convoys or head to aid distribution sites.

Now, according to doctors in the territory, an increasing number of

A Trading of Blame as
Chaos and Violence
Hit Aid Routes

their patients are suffering — and dying — from starvation.

“There is no one in Gaza now outside the scope of famine, not even myself,” said Dr. Ahmed al-Farra, who leads the pediatric ward at Nasser Hospital in southern Gaza. “I am speaking to you as

a health official, but I, too, am searching for flour to feed my family.”

The World Food Program, an arm of the United Nations, said this week that the hunger crisis in Gaza had reached “new and astonishing levels of desperation, with a third of the population not eating for multiple days in a row.”

Dr. al-Farra said the number of children dying of malnutrition had risen sharply in recent days. He described harrowing scenes of people too exhausted to walk.

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HULK HOGAN, 1953-2025

Larger-Than-Life Figure Flung
Pro Wrestling to New Heights

By VICTOR MATHER

Hulk Hogan, whose flamboyance and star power helped transform professional wrestling from a low-budget regional attraction into a multibillion-dollar industry, died on Thursday in Clearwater, Fla. He was 71.

Police and fire department personnel in Clearwater were called to Hogan's home on Clearwater Beach, where Hogan was treated for cardiac arrest, the police said in a “news alert” post on Facebook. He was taken to a nearby hospital, where he was pronounced dead, they said.

Hogan was the face of pro wrestling for decades, with his blond hair and horseshoe mustache, colorful bandannas and massive biceps, which he referred to as “24-inch pythons.”

Even after his wrestling days were over, he remained in the spotlight, most recently when he spoke last year at the Republican

National Convention in Milwaukee, tearing off his shirt to reveal a Trump/Vance shirt underneath. He was earlier involved in a high-profile lawsuit in 2012, bankrolled by the billionaire Peter Thiel, against Gawker, the irreverent media company, after Gawker posted a video of Hogan having sex with a friend's wife. He won the case on invasion of privacy grounds, reaping millions in damages.

Hogan's routine before a wrestling match was guaranteed to send fans into a frenzy. He would cup his hand to his ear to encourage the roaring crowd and tear off his shirt, which was prepped to ease the process. Fans loved him as much for his charm and physique as for his old-fashioned grappling ability.

Hogan was born Terry Gene

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CHRIS CARLSON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hulk Hogan firing up the crowd at WrestleMania 21 in 2005.

Lethal Combat Breaks Out Anew
Across Thai-Cambodian Border

By SUI-LEE WEE

SURIN PROVINCE, Thailand — Gunfire, rockets and bombs dropped by F-16 fighter jets thundered across the long-contested border between Thailand and Cambodia on Thursday, killing at least a dozen people, in a drastic escalation of hostilities between the two neighbors.

The Cambodian and Thai militaries exchanged gunfire in at least six areas in Thailand, according to Thai officials. At least 11 civilians and a soldier were killed and two dozen more people were wounded. Thousands were told to leave their homes near the border.

Thailand responded by sending F-16 jets to strike targets in Cambodia. The Cambodian authorities did not immediately release details about casualties. A group of monks there said they had abandoned their pagoda near the border.

It was the latest deadly conflict to erupt over a decades-old flashpoint between the two countries

— one that is rooted in borders drawn by France when it was a colonial power. Thailand and Cambodia each claim ownership of Prasat Ta Muen Thom, an ancient temple perched on the forested Dangrek mountains that divide the two countries.

The event that prompted the current violence appears to have been a land mine explosion near the temple on Wednesday, in which a Thai soldier lost a leg. Thailand accused Cambodia of laying mines in Thai territory, while Cambodia accused Thai troops of venturing into its territory. The episode followed months of simmering tensions and a fatal skirmish in May that killed a Cambodian soldier.

The current dispute has already prompted a crisis in Thai politics, leading to the suspension of the country's prime minister earlier this month.

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BUSINESS B1-7

Rail Companies May Merge

The combination of Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern could create the first coast-to-coast network. PAGE B1

Russia's Economic Lifeline

The flow of goods through the main border crossing into China underscores the countries' close ties. PAGE B1



INTERNATIONAL A4-9

Gain for a Palestinian State

President Emmanuel Macron said France would recognize Palestinian statehood, in a move that could cause friction with President Trump. PAGE A8

Lethal Blasts Unnerve Syrians

Many of the explosions have been at weapons storage sites, suggesting that ordnance from the long civil war has not been properly secured. PAGE A7

Japan Deal Includes Fund

America's biggest investor will infuse \$550 billion into the U.S., directed by the president, with the U.S. government receiving most of the profits. PAGE A8

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Background Checks Blocked

A California law requiring ammunition buyers to pass checks violates the Second Amendment, a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled. PAGE A17

Democrats' Redistricting Woes

A plan in Texas that could give Republicans at least five more House seats leaves Democrats fuming and without many paths to fight it. PAGE A17

Amy Sherald Cancels Show

The artist said that she made the decision after she learned her painting of a transgender Statue of Liberty might be removed at the Smithsonian. PAGE A14

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Chaotic Fun in Williamstown

Pamela Anderson, Amber Heard and Tennessee Williams on ice highlight a Massachusetts theater festival. PAGE C1

Unbearably Creative

Visitors to an exhibition of outdoor sculptures in the Berkshires are not always of the human variety. PAGE C7



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It's All About the Shoes

When a W.N.B.A. All-Star played in the sneakers she had endorsed, it put the league in an awkward position. PAGE B8

The Bronx Bobblers

If Aaron Boone is holding the Yankees' players accountable for their sloppy play, it hasn't been showing. PAGE B9

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William D. Cohan

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