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Five Are Killed in Plane Collision in Tokyo
The casualties were all on a Coast Guard plane; 367 passengers and 12 crew members on a commercial jet were evacuated. Page A7.

Gay Resigns
After Charges
Of Plagiarism

This article is by *Jennifer Schuessler, Anemona Hartocollis, Michael Levenson and Alan Blind-er.*

Harvard’s president, Claudine Gay, announced her resignation on Tuesday, after her presidency had become engulfed in crisis over accusations of plagiarism and what some called her insufficient response to antisemitism on campus after the Hamas-led attacks on Israel on Oct. 7.

In announcing she would step down immediately, Dr. Gay, Harvard’s first Black president and the second woman to lead the university, ended a turbulent tenure that began last July. She will have the shortest stint in office of any



KEN CEDENO/REUTERS

Claudine Gay became the president of Harvard in July.

Harvard president since its founding in 1636.

Alan M. Garber, an economist and physician who is Harvard’s provost and chief academic officer, will serve as interim president. Dr. Gay will remain a tenured professor of government and African and African American studies.

Dr. Gay became the second university president to resign in recent weeks, after she and the presidents of the University of Pennsylvania and M.I.T. appeared in a Dec. 5 congressional hearing in which they appeared to evade the question of whether students who called for the genocide of Jews should be punished.

Penn’s president, M. Elizabeth Magill, resigned four days after that hearing. Sally Kornbluth, M.I.T.’s president, has also faced

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New York Trial
May Force Out
N.R.A. Leader

By DANNY HAKIM

For decades, Wayne LaPierre, the National Rifle Association’s longtime leader, has been a survivor. He has endured waves of palace intrigue, corruption scandals and embarrassing revelations, including leaked video that captured his inability to shoot an elephant at point-blank range while on a safari.

But now, Mr. LaPierre, 74, faces his gravest challenge, as a legal showdown with New York’s attorney general, Letitia James, goes to trial in a Manhattan courtroom. Ms. James, in a lawsuit filed amid an abrupt effort by the N.R.A. to clean up its practices, seeks to oust him from the group after reports of corruption and mismanagement.

Much has changed since Ms. James began investigating the N.R.A. four years ago. The organization, long a lobbying juggernaut, is a kind of ghost ship. After closing its media arm, NRATV, in 2019, it has largely lost its voice, and Mr. LaPierre rarely makes public pronouncements. Membership has plummeted to 4.2 million from nearly six million five years ago. Revenue is down 44 percent since 2016, according to its internal audits, and legal costs have soared to tens of millions a year.

When the N.R.A. filed for bankruptcy in Texas nearly three years ago, the step was part of a strategy to move to that state amid the New York investigation. But a Texas judge dismissed the case, saying the N.R.A. was using the filing “to address a regulatory enforcement problem, not a financial one.” Now, longtime insiders say, the organization may be reaching a point where a legitimate bankruptcy filing is necessary.

Even with the N.R.A. moribund, Mr. LaPierre’s legacy as a lobbyist, if not as a marksman, remains intact. The gun rights movement has become a bulwark of red-state politics during his more than three decades at the group’s helm. In recent years, significant federal gun control measures have been a nonstarter for Republicans despite a proliferation of mass shootings.

Mr. LaPierre is among four defendants in the suit brought by Ms. James in 2020. Others include

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Asian Americans Say Careers
In Government Are Curtailed

By EDWARD WONG
and AMY QIN

WASHINGTON — When Thomas Wong set foot in the United States Embassy in Beijing last summer for a new diplomatic posting, it was vindication after years of battling the State Department over a perceived intelligence threat — himself.

Diplomatic Security officers had informed him when he joined the foreign service more than a decade ago that they were banning him from working in China. In a letter, he said, they wrongly cited the vague potential for undue “foreign preference” and suggested he could be vulnerable to “foreign influence.”

Mr. Wong had become a U.S. diplomat thinking that China was where he could have the greatest impact. He had grown up in a Chinese-speaking household and studied in the country. And as a graduate of West Point who had

U.S. Security Risk Cited
Amid China Spy War

done an Army tour in the Balkans, he thought he had experience that could prove valuable in navigating relations with the United States’ greatest military and economic rival.

As he looked into the ban, he discovered that other diplomats — including many Asian American ones — faced similar restrictions. Security officers never gave the exact reasons, and they made the decisions in secret based on information gathered during the initial security clearance process. Thousands of diplomats have been affected by restrictions over the years.

Similar issues range across U.S. government agencies involved in foreign policy and national security.

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A Big Bet on a Pyramid Brings Signs of a Revival to San Francisco

By HEATHER KNIGHT

SAN FRANCISCO — It seemed like the last place one might invest a billion dollars on an office building in October 2020.

San Francisco’s downtown symbolized all that had gone wrong with American cities during the pandemic. The empty office towers. The shops and restaurants boarded up with plywood. The dirty streets, the petty crime, the eerily silent transit stations.

But Michael Shvo, the New York real estate titan, decided there was one building he had to have here, one that has been synonymous with the San Francisco skyline: the Transamerica Pyramid.

Mr. Shvo paid \$650 million for the tower on San Francisco’s Montgomery Street, long hailed as “the Wall Street of the West” for its concentration of financial institutions, including the insurance company after which the triangular skyscraper is named. He then spent another \$400 million to renovate the tower and turn it into an attraction for businesses and visitors alike.

If his bet pays off, the revamped



JIM WILSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Transamerica Pyramid was bought for \$650 million and had a \$400 million renovation.

tower and blocks below could serve as a bellwether for the beleaguered city’s recovery and a road map for other downtowns that have struggled to rebound from the pandemic. The key, Mr. Shvo argues, is turning down-

towns into spaces where people actually want to be, rather than places their bosses say they have to be.

“I’ve always believed in San Francisco. The difference was, I was optimistic with a billion-dol-

lar check in my hand,” Mr. Shvo said, wearing his customary black T-shirt, black jeans and black sneakers while standing on the 36th floor of the Transamerica Pyramid.

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Denmark’s Modern Monarch
Like King Charles III of Britain, Prince Frederik, who will soon ascend to his country’s throne, has embraced environmental issues. PAGE A10

Pounding Kyiv From the Sky
Russia hit Ukraine’s capital with dozens of missiles and drones, part of an escalating cycle of air assaults. PAGE A4

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Cerebral Browns Quarterback
Frank Ryan led Cleveland to the 1964 N.F.L. title and later earned a Ph.D. in mathematics. He was 87. PAGE A17



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No More Trinkets on Bridges
Souvenir vendors who crowded walkways on New York City’s bridges are now barred from selling there. PAGE A11

New Accusation for Menendez
Federal prosecutors said the Democratic senator from New Jersey accepted bribes to help Qatar. PAGE A14

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A Few Tips for Callous Banks
When financial institutions close customer accounts because of “suspicious activity,” chaos and anxiety ensue. It doesn’t have to be this way. PAGE B1

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A Swiftie on the Slopes
The ski racer Mikaela Shiffrin has long seen Taylor Swift as a guide for navigating adversity and success. PAGE B6

The N.F.L. Playoff Picture
The Cowboys and the Eagles, and the Bills and the Dolphins, take their divisional battles into Week 18. PAGE B7

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New Year, New Show
Melanie La Barrie, who brought the role of Angélique in “& Juliet” from the West End to Broadway, flew back to London on New Year’s Eve with “Hometown” on the horizon. PAGE C1

Your Own Starring Roles
Networks have been offering immersive experiences to promote series like “Squid Game” and “Only Murders in the Building.” But are those efforts little more than marketing? PAGE C1

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Salts of the Earth
Table salt, kosher salt, finishing salt: The choices might be confusing, but we can help. Above, fleur de sel being harvested in southern France. PAGE D1

