



KLARA SIMONOVA/GETTY IMAGES

Heathrow was eerily quiet on Friday after a power loss that the airport’s chief executive said was equal to that of a midsize city.

## HEATHROW COMES TO A STANDSTILL

### World Travel Disrupted as Fire Shuts Airport

This article is by Megan Specia, Lynsey Chutel, Eshe Nelson and Thomas Fuller.

LONDON — London’s Heathrow Airport was plunged into chaos after a fire at an electrical substation shut down operations at one of Europe’s busiest air hubs, forcing the airport to cancel or divert more than 1,000 flights on Friday and removing a global linchpin of air travel.

Heathrow’s chief executive, Thomas Woldbye, described the disruption as “unprecedented,” telling reporters on Friday that the airport had lost power equal to that of a midsize city, and that though a backup transformer worked as it should, there had not been enough to power the entire airport.

Flights resumed late on Friday, but Mr. Woldbye said, “We expect to be back in full operation, so 100 percent operation as a normal day” by Saturday.

The British authorities said the counterterrorism police would lead the investigation into the cause of the blaze, which broke out at an electrical substation in North Hyde, northeast of Heathrow. But the Metropolitan Police in London said later Friday, “After initial assessment, we are not treating this incident as suspicious, although inquiries do remain ongoing.”

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## Sudan’s Military Recaptures Presidential Palace

By DECLAN WALSH

KHARTOUM, Sudan — Sudanese military forces recaptured the devastated palace early Friday in the battle-scarred capital, Khartoum, signaling a potential turning point in Sudan’s devastating civil war, now approaching its third year.

Soldiers posted triumphant selfie videos at the entrance of the devastated palace, which overlooks the Nile River, after days of heavy fighting with the Rapid Support Forces, or R.S.F., the powerful paramilitary group that the army is battling for control of Sudan.

“We’re inside!” shouted an unidentified officer as cheering soldiers swarmed around him in one video posted Friday morning.

### A Big Symbolic Step in Reclaiming a Capital Reduced to Ruins

Still, the R.S.F. fought back for the rest of the day on Friday, firing missiles from armed drones that hovered over the palace compound, Sudanese military officials said. One of them struck a crew from Sudan’s state television station, killing two journalists and a driver.

Two officers from the military’s

media wing, including its top official in Khartoum, were also killed in the attack outside the palace.

The palace, an emblem of power in Sudan for two centuries, appeared to be in ruins. But retaking it was a major symbolic victory for Sudan’s army, which lost most of Khartoum to the R.S.F. in the early days of the war in April 2023, leaving its forces confined to a handful of embattled bases scattered across the vast city.

It was a strategic win, boosting the military’s drive to expel the paramilitaries from Khartoum entirely, following a six-month counteroffensive that has swung the balance of the war in the military’s favor.

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IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Sudanese Army sniper unit observed R.S.F. positions from a deserted apartment in Khartoum.

## 278 Unexpected Days on the Space Station Pays What, Now?

By YAN ZHUANG

If your eight-day work trip was unexpectedly extended by nine months, you might expect to rack up some overtime pay.

Not so for Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore, the NASA astronauts who spent 278 extra days on the International Space Station after their spacecraft malfunctioned, before finally returning to Earth on Tuesday.

But despite their ordeal, and the danger of space travel, when it comes to pay, Ms. Williams and Mr. Wilmore were treated effec-

tively like government employees who take a work trip. They received no overtime.

“While in space, NASA astronauts are on official travel orders as federal employees,” Jimi Russell, a spokesman for the agency’s Space Operations Mission Directorate, said via email.

Like other federal employees on work trips, they do receive an “incidentals” allowance of \$5 per day, Mr. Russell said.

This means that in addition to their annual salary — about \$152,258, according to NASA — Mr. Wilmore and Ms. Williams received around \$1,430 for their 286

### No Overtime, but \$5 a Day for ‘Incidentals’

days in space.

What incidental expenses might they have incurred? It’s unclear. Usually, these are “fees and tips given to porters, baggage carriers, hotel staff, and staff on ships,” according to the U.S. General Services Administration.

Ms. Williams and Mr. Wilmore did not exactly see their extended stay as a hardship. “I love being

up here in space,” Ms. Williams told reporters in September.

Still, if a \$5 per diem seems low for a job that causes enough muscle and bone loss for you to need a gurney when you return to Earth, spare a thought for Clayton Anderson, who spent 152 days aboard the space station in 2007.

Mr. Anderson said his per diem was about \$1.20.

Being an astronaut was his dream job, Mr. Anderson said on social media in 2022, “but it IS a government job with government pay.”

He added: “I would have done WAY better with mileage!”

## Trump Rejects Access by Musk To China Plans

### Military’s Secrets Draw Rare Line for an Ally

This article is by Eric Schmitt, Eric Lipton, Julian E. Barnes, Ryan Mac and Maggie Haberman.

WASHINGTON — A top-secret briefing for Elon Musk on the U.S. military’s plan for any war that might break out with China was called off after The New York Times reported late Thursday that it was about to happen. On Friday, President Trump said that Mr. Musk should not be given access to the war plan.

Providing Mr. Musk access to some of the nation’s most closely guarded military secrets would be a dramatic expansion of his already extensive role as an adviser to Mr. Trump and leader of his effort to slash spending and purge the government of people and policies they oppose.

It would also bring into sharp relief the questions about Mr. Musk’s conflicts of interest as he ranges widely across the federal bureaucracy while continuing to run businesses that are major government contractors. In this case, Mr. Musk, the billionaire chief executive of both SpaceX and Tesla, is a leading supplier to the Pentagon and has extensive financial interests in China.

The Times reported on Thursday that Mr. Musk was originally going to visit the Tank, a secure conference room at the Pentagon, for a briefing with top military leaders about the China war plan, according to two U.S. officials. A third said Mr. Musk was expected to discuss China, but provided no details beyond that.

The top-secret briefing was to include Adm. Christopher W. Grady, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, the head of the military’s Indo-Pacific Command; and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth briefing Mr. Musk on the details of U.S. efforts to counter China in the event of a military conflict, according to the two officials. The discussion was expected to include other matters.

But the Tank visit was called off after The Times’s report on it, according to a person with knowledge of the matter. Instead, Mr. Musk met with Mr. Hegseth and Admiral Grady in the defense secretary’s office.

Mr. Musk ultimately spent

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## CEDING TO TRUMP, COLUMBIA AGREES TO ALTER POLICIES

### FACING FUNDING FREEZE

### Signaling New Stage in a President’s Feud With Elite Institutions

By TROY CLOSSON

Columbia University agreed on Friday to overhaul its protest policies, security practices and Middle Eastern studies department in a remarkable concession to the Trump administration, which has refused to consider restoring \$400 million in federal funds without major changes.

The agreement, which stunned and dismayed many members of the faculty, could signal a new stage in the administration’s escalating clash with elite colleges and universities. Harvard, Stanford, the University of Michigan and dozens of other schools face federal inquiries and fear similar penalties, and college administrators have said Columbia’s response to the White House’s demands may set a dangerous precedent.

This week, the University of Pennsylvania was also explicitly targeted by the Trump administration, which said it would cancel \$175 million in federal funding, at least partly because the university had let a transgender woman participate on a women’s swim team.

Columbia, facing the loss of government grants and contracts over what the administration said was a systemic failure to protect students and faculty members “from antisemitic violence and harassment,” opted to yield to many of the administration’s most substantial demands.

The university said it had agreed to hire a new internal security force of 36 “special officers” who will be empowered to remove people from campus or arrest them. The wearing of face masks on campus will also be banned for the purpose of concealing identity

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### Migrant Crackdown Widens

The Trump administration is now snaring legal immigrants whom it deems to be security threats as well as some tourists. Page A12.

### MEXICO DISPATCH

## At an ‘Extermination Camp,’ Traces of Missing Loved Ones

By PAULINA VILLEGAS

TEUCHITLÁN, Mexico — Irma González recognized the gray backpack in the photo. It was the same one her son had used for high school and the one he had taken with him for his first job three years ago, just before he vanished.

When Ms. González, 43, saw the images on television of bone fragments and scattered personal belongings uncovered on a ranch in western Mexico, her heart sank. Had her son, Jossel Sánchez, met his fate there? Were his remains there somewhere? Or had a criminal group brought him to that place only to take him elsewhere?

Standing about 300 feet away from the entrance of the Izaquirre ranch on Wednesday, surrounded by sugar cane fields and barren hills, she was desperate for answers.

“I just want to find my son, dead or alive,” she said while sobbing and pleading with local police officers who had cordoned off the site to let her inside.



FRED RAMOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Cremation ovens were found at a ranch in a Mexican village.

Ms. González echoed the sorrow felt by countless other Mexicans searching for missing loved ones, which has been shattered by a mixture of hope and despair. This emotional turmoil followed the discovery by search volunteers two weeks ago of a ranch outside La Estanzuela, a small, dusty Mexican village near Guadalajara in Jalisco state.

Inside the abandoned site, members of the search group,

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### Abandoned and Ostracized

In Michigan, Arab Americans are angry about airstrikes in Gaza and the sense that there is nowhere to turn. PAGE A11

### Risk Tests Needed for Bridges

After a Baltimore collapse, the Brooklyn Bridge and Golden Gate join dozens flagged for assessments. PAGE A19

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Mainly Alawite families are running to Lebanon amid clashes between government forces and backers of the ousted dictator Bashar al-Assad. PAGE A7

### Deeper Dive Into Letby Case

Dr. Shoo Lee says his research should not have been cited to help convict a British nurse of killing babies. PAGE A9

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### Flannery O’Connor’s Artworks

The darkly comic Southern novelist’s paintings are getting an audience — and updating her legacy. PAGE C1

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### Office Market Turning Up

Sales of office buildings jumped nearly 21 percent last year, and leasing activity is up, too. Companies appear to be looking for more space as work-from-home policies peter out. PAGE B1

### Fate of Your Student Loans

President Trump’s executive order to dismantle the Department of Education would not cancel your debt. Another federal entity would have to take over collecting what you owe. PAGE B1

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While Jordan Chiles awaits the result of an appeal of an Olympic gymnastics decision, she has shifted focus to a push for a title at U.C.L.A. PAGE B7

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### 36 Hours in Singapore

A multireligious, multilingual, multicultural wonder where skyscrapers and shopping malls sit alongside churches and mosques. PAGE C8



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