



A damaged house in Kashmir on Sunday. India and Pakistan said they had agreed to a cease-fire, but fears of more unrest persisted.

## Qatar Is Said To Give Trump Official Plane

This article is by Maggie Haberman, Eric Schmitt and Glenn Thrush.

The Trump administration plans to accept a luxury Boeing 747-8 plane as a donation from the Qatari royal family that will be upgraded to serve as Air Force One, which would make it one of the biggest foreign gifts ever received by the U.S. government, several American officials with knowledge of the matter said.

The plane would then be donated to President Trump's presidential library when he leaves office, two senior officials said. Such a gift raises the possibility that Mr. Trump would have use of the plane even after his presidency ends.

While a Qatari official described the proposal as still under discussion and the White House said that gifts it accepted would be done in full compliance with the law, Democratic lawmakers and good government groups expressed outrage over the substantial ethical issues the plan presented. They cited the intersection of Mr. Trump's official duties with his business interests in the Middle East, the immense value of the lavishly appointed plane and the assumption that Mr. Trump would have use of it after leaving office. Sold new, a commercial Boeing 747-8 costs in the range of \$400 million.

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## U.S. and Israel Show Cracks In Their Bond

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR

JERUSALEM — When Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met President Trump at the White House in February, the two men could not have been more in sync. The president had designated Houthi militants in Yemen as a terrorist organization. They both spoke of stopping Iran from acquiring a nuclear bomb. Mr. Trump even mused about expelling Palestinians from Gaza.

“You say things others refuse to say,” Mr. Netanyahu gushed in the Oval Office, with cameras running. “And then, after the jaws drop, people scratch their heads. And they say, ‘You know, he’s right.’”

Two months later, in another White House visit, Mr. Netanyahu sat almost silently next to the president for more than a half-hour as Mr. Trump expounded on topics having nothing to do with Israel.

That meeting, in April, underscored a growing divide between the two men, who are increasingly in disagreement on some of the most critical security issues facing Israel.

As Mr. Trump heads this week to the Middle East for his first major foreign trip, the president has, for now, rejected Mr. Netanyahu's desire for joint military action to take out Tehran's nuclear abilities. Instead, Mr. Trump has begun

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## Huddled Overnight in Kashmir As the Shelling Shook the Walls

By SHOWKAT NANDA

GARKOTE, Kashmir — As night fell, we could see in the distance hills dotted with glowing white specks — homes tucked into the slopes of the Pakistani side of Kashmir. The town behind us, on the Indian side, was also shimmering.

My friend was hopeful. “Lights are a good sign,” he said. “Means nothing will go wrong tonight.”

But as we settled into dinner, an announcement rang out from a nearby mosque: “Citizens, especially in border areas, are advised to remain indoors.”

As if in concert, the lights on both sides of the border flickered out, and darkness blanketed the valley. The announcement had sounded mundane, but Kashmiris knew what it meant.

The shelling was about to begin. I have spent much of my career covering unrest across Kashmir. At the end of a reporting trip at the

Line of Control, I looked forward to staying with my old friend Irshad Khwaja and his family in Garkote, a village on the Indian-administered side.

The day before, early Wednesday, tensions between India and Pakistan had flared up into a military clash that would play out as two confrontations being fought in parallel.

The more conspicuous one — attracting global attention and alarming world leaders — was an advanced aerial engagement, as India and Pakistan launched missiles and drones across the 2,000-mile border they share. The exchange of strikes between

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**HIGH DANGER** The nature of the clash between India and Pakistan could signal more frequent battles ahead. News Analysis. PAGE A12

## California’s Sluggish, Dysfunctional Journey to High-Speed Rail

By JOHN BRANCH

On a recent Friday, Mark Wasser, an eminent-domain lawyer from Sacramento, embarked on a one-day road trip of more than 500 miles. It is one that he has taken often over the past decade.

A tall and trim man in his 70s, dressed in jeans and a flannel shirt, Mr. Wasser folded himself into the driver's seat of his car and aimed south. He drove toward dozens of California's high-speed rail construction projects scattered across the vast farmland of the Central Valley.

No one has represented more eminent domain cases involving the rail project than Mr. Wasser. In the long distances between stops, visiting clients and seeing the changing landscape, he pondered something that Gov. Gavin Newsom had said a few days before.

Mr. Newsom was a guest on “Real Time With Bill Maher” when the host blamed lawyers, lobbyists, contractors, environmentalists, unions and others for the delays.

“The biggest delay on high-speed rail,” Mr. Newsom replied, “has been taking 2,270 properties under eminent domain and ultimately getting the environmental work cleared.”



IAN C. BATES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Though California voters approved a high-speed rail plan in 2008, no track has yet been laid.

It was a bold and pointed casting of blame for a project that is a running joke — a not-running joke — and a punchline for government inefficiency and bureaucratic entanglement. California's high-speed rail ex-

## Tide of Consensus Swept Quiet American to Papacy

### Cardinals at Conclave Describe How a Man Many Didn’t Know Grew in Favor

This article is by Jason Horowitz, Emma Bubola, Elizabeth Dias and Patricia Mazzei.

VATICAN CITY — The cardinals electing a new pope to lead the Roman Catholic Church left the Sistine Chapel exhausted and hungry.

A meditation to start the conclave had dragged on and pushed their first vote deep into Wednesday evening. It had resulted in an inconclusive tally, with three main contenders. Keeping their vow of secrecy, they returned to Casa Santa Marta, the guesthouse where they were sequestered without their phones, and started talking.

Over dinner, as one gluten-free cardinal picked over vegetables and others shrugged at the simple fare, they weighed their choices. Cardinal Pietro Parolin, 70, the Italian who ran the Vatican under Pope Francis, had entered the conclave as a front-runner but hadn't received overwhelming support during the vote. The Italians were divided, and some of the cardinals in the room had become bothered by his failure to emphasize the collaborative meetings that Francis prioritized for governing the church.

Cardinal Peter Erdo of Hungary, 72, backed by a coalition of conservatives that included some African supporters, had no way to build momentum in an electorate widely appointed by Francis.

That left Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, 69, a quiet American dark horse who had surprisingly emerged in the evening's vote as a source of particular interest.

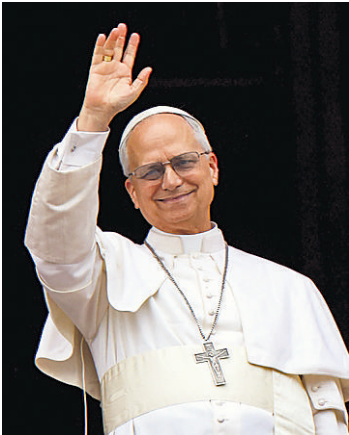
A missionary turned religious order leader, turned Peruvian bishop, turned Vatican power player, he checked many of the boxes that a broad array of cardinals hoped to fill. His seeming ability to be from two places at once — North and South America — pleased cardinals on two continents. As the prelates sounded out the Latin American cardinals who knew him well, they liked what they heard.

During the dinner, Cardinal Prevost avoided any obvious politicking or machinations, cardinals said. By the next morning, he had transformed into an unsuspecting juggernaut who ultimately left lit-

tle room for rival candidacies and ideological camps.

“You begin to see the direction and say, ‘Oh my goodness, I’m not going to use my five days’ worth of clothes,’” joked Cardinal Pablo Virgilio Siongo David of the Philippines. “It’s going to be resolved very fast.”

Interviews with more than a dozen cardinals, who could divulge only so much because of secrecy rules that carry the penalty of excommunication, and accounts from Vatican insiders told the story of how Cardinal Prevost became Pope Leo XIV. The swift, stunning and taboo-smashing consensus around an American unfamiliar to many outside the church came on Thursday among an unwieldy College of Cardinals



FRANCO ORGLIA/GETTY IMAGES

Pope Leo XIV. By the third vote, his momentum was clear.

with many new members who didn't know one another. They had different interests, languages and priorities, but a single choice.

After the death of Francis on April 21, cardinals from around the world began arriving in Rome. They joined powerful players in the Vatican who ran the church's bureaucracy, including Cardinal Prevost, whose career Francis had boosted.

Despite his intimate under-

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**PRAYERS FOR PEACE** In his first Sunday address, the new pope called for an end to war and relief for civilians in Gaza. PAGE A8

## To Scientists, a Medical Marvel. Foes See a Dangerous Weapon.

By KATE ZERNIKE

To scientists who study it, mRNA is a miracle molecule. The vaccines that harnessed it against Covid saved an estimated 20 million lives, a rapid development that was recognized with a Nobel Prize. Clinical trials show mRNA-based vaccines increasing survival in patients with pancreatic and other deadly cancers. Biotechnology companies are investing in the promise of mRNA therapies to treat and even cure a host of genetic and chronic diseases, including Type 1 diabetes and multiple sclerosis.

But to some state legislators, mRNA therapies are “weapons of

mass destruction” and a public health threat. They argue that these vaccines are untested and unsafe, and will be pumped into the food supply to “mass medicate” Americans against their will. Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the nation's top health official, has falsely called the mRNA shots against Covid “the deadliest vaccine ever made.”

Short for messenger RNA, mRNA exists naturally in every cell of every living organism — its discovery in 1961 was also celebrated with a Nobel Prize. But its

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### A Deadly Legacy in Syria

The civil war is over, but land mines buried in fields, buildings, even in rubble, are as dangerous as ever. PAGE A6

### Hamas Pledges to Free Hostage

The group did not say when it would release Edan Alexander, the last living American citizen held in Gaza. PAGE A11

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### Pushing Back on Sludge

Maryland's plan to send a toxic fertilizer that the state has restricted to Virginia has stoked fears of contaminated farms and fisheries. PAGE A17

### Accusations of Cover-Ups

The Appraisal Institute, a real estate group, faces concerns that one of its leaders has a history of harassing women. He has denied the claims. PAGE A20

### Tufts Student Back in Boston

Freed after her detention in a federal facility, Rumeysa Ozturk expressed joy, gratitude and continued faith in American democracy. PAGE A16



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### Ground Zero for Housing Woes

Barcelona's crisis mirrors a broader affordable-housing crunch spreading rapidly across Europe. PAGE B1

### Decade-Long Quest for Battery

A start-up aims to perfect a solid-state battery that can make electric cars cheaper than gasoline vehicles. PAGE B1

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### Gauging the Art Market

Six bellwether works in the spring auctions may provide some indication of whether a recovery seems to be in the cards, after a few years of declining profits and high rollers. PAGE C1

### The Tastiest Jamboree

A North Carolina festival founded by the musician Rhiannon Giddens featured a host of twangy banjos and groovy basses. But the buttery biscuits may have been the highlight. PAGE C1

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### Jessica Grose

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### Finally, Her Own Shoes

A'ja Wilson, widely considered the W.N.B.A.'s best, finally got a signature sneaker. That's been rare for a Black player in the league. PAGE D1

