

“All the News
That’s Fit to Print”

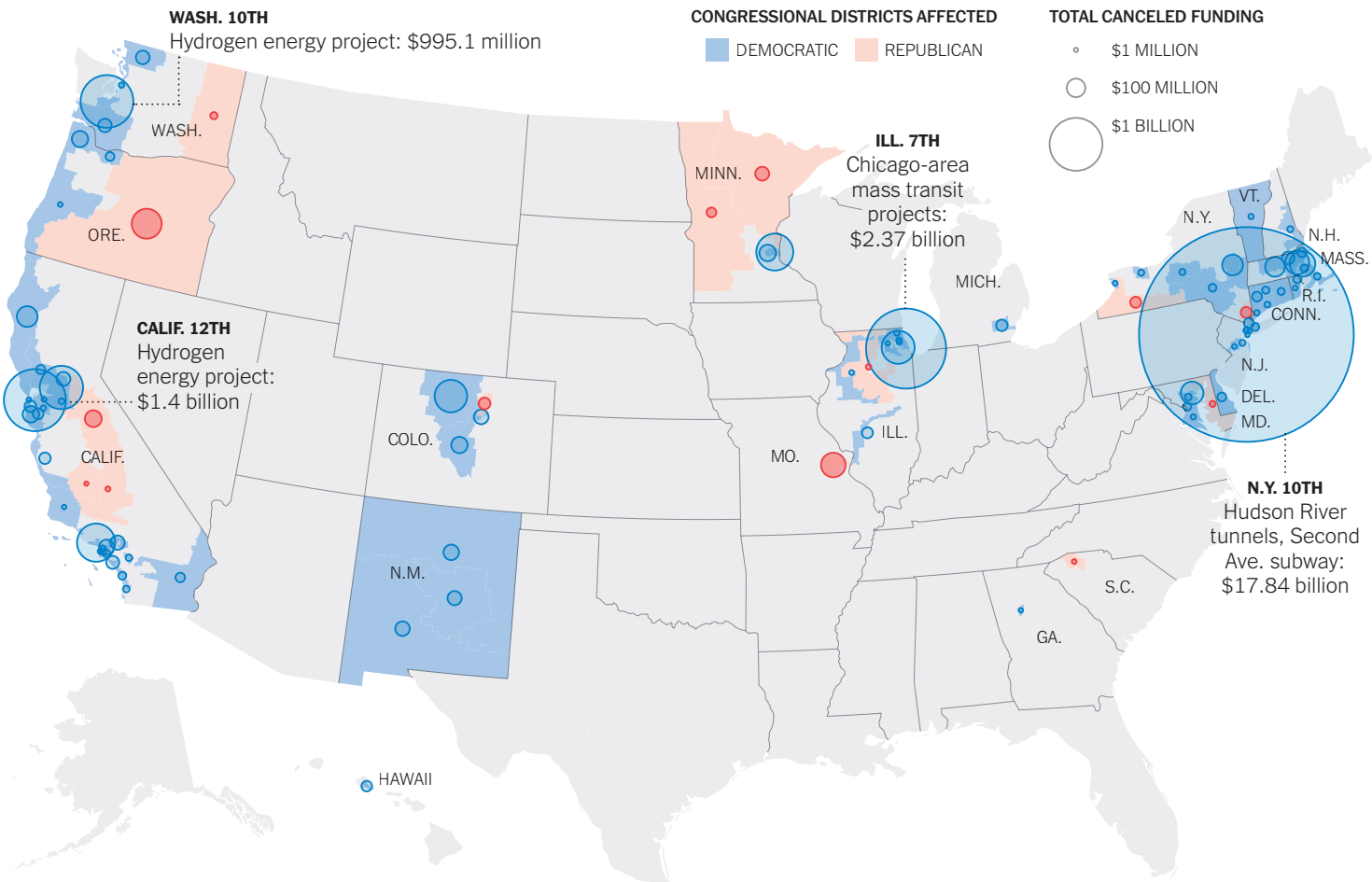
The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, sunny, cool, high 62. Tonight, clear to partly cloudy, low 48. Tomorrow, clouds and some sunshine, slightly higher temperatures, high 65. Weather map is on Page A20.

VOL. CLXXV No. 60,675 © 2025 The New York Times Company FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2025 Prices in Canada may be higher \$4.00

Trump Targets Democratic Areas by Halting Billions

More than 200 infrastructure projects in blue strongholds have had their federal funding cut off during the government shutdown. Page A12.



Notes: Grants are grouped by the congressional district of the grant recipient. The work funded by the grant could occur in the same district, a different district, or across multiple districts and states. Data is as of Oct. 14.

LAZARO GAMIO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Less FEMA Aid Flows to Areas Hit by Disaster

By SCOTT DANCE

Life is inching back to normal in the town of Cave City seven months after a tornado slammed into its corner of northeastern Arkansas. The only grocery store is about to reopen. Crews are starting to dig the foundation for a rebuilt funeral home.

But the town — like so many others facing daunting recoveries from recent disaster — has had to go it alone, Mayor Jonas Anderson said.

The Trump administration denied Cave City’s requests for Federal Emergency Management Agency money to help it recover. Mr. Anderson was forced to forge ahead anyway, racking up a bill of about \$300,000 he said could end up eating 15 percent of the small town’s annual budget.

Some of the nearly 2,000 residents have gotten federal help. FEMA agreed to cover repairs to the more than 50 homes damaged or destroyed when 165-mile-per-hour winds struck in March. The state pledged relief money, too. But Mr. Anderson said Cave City is carrying more of the burden of recovery than expected.

“We’re making a really good recovery not because of some big FEMA reimbursement we got, but in spite of not getting it,” Mr. Anderson said. “People here are super resilient.”

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Long-Sought C.I.A. Secret Is Found in a Library

By JOHN SCHWARTZ

The sculptor Jim Sanborn opened his email account one day last month expecting the usual messages from people claiming to have solved his famous, decades-old puzzle.

Mr. Sanborn’s best known artwork, Kryptos, sits in a courtyard at the C.I.A. headquarters in Virginia. A sculpture that evokes and incorporates secrets, Kryptos displays four encrypted messages in

Documents Filed at the Smithsonian Unlock a Sculptor’s Puzzle

letters cut through its curving copper sheet. Since the agency dedicated it in 1990, cryptographers both professional and amateur had solved three of the passages, known as K1, K2 and K3.



DREW ANGERER/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Two journalists found the solution to the final passage of Jim Sanborn’s artwork Kryptos, which sits at C.I.A. headquarters.

But the fourth, K4, remained stubbornly uncracked.

Mr. Sanborn, who is 79, was in the final stages of auctioning off the puzzle’s solution. The auction house had estimated that the text of that passage, along with other papers and artifacts related to the sculpture, would bring between \$300,000 and \$500,000. He has said he intends to use the proceeds to help manage medical expenses for possible health crises, and to fund programs for people with disabilities.

But the email he received on Sept. 3 threatened that plan. Its subject line contained the first words of the final passage of K4. The body of the email showed the rest of the solved text.

What led to that moment is a blend of mishandled paperwork and nerdy spycraft. An amateur cryptographer and his friend had found the solution in plain view for anyone willing to dig through the archives of the Smithsonian Institution.

The hidden text had been uncovered, with potentially damaging effects for the sale — what is the value of a secret that someone else knows?

The person who tracked down the solution, Jarrett Kobek, is a journalist and novelist long fascinated by Mr. Sanborn’s work. In the announcement from RR Auction, the company running the sale, he saw a reference to copies of the “coding charts” used to encrypt the message; the originals, it said, were at the Smithsonian.

Mr. Kobek lives in California, so

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Mamdani, Reaching Out to Jews, Finds Supporters and Skeptics

By LISA LERER and KATIE GLUECK

The tension spilled out of the synagogue onto the sidewalk.

Zohran Mamdani, the Democratic nominee for mayor of New York City, was walking into what should have been friendly territory: a liberal Reform congregation in Park Slope, a neighborhood in Brooklyn synonymous with

progressive politics.

But from the moment he arrived last Sunday afternoon, it was clear that even here, Mr. Mamdani would face skepticism and anxiety about some of his foundational beliefs.

Protesters waving Israeli flags stood on the steps of the main sanctuary of the synagogue, Congregation Beth Elohim, chanting “shame.” And inside, at a closed-

Trying to Heal Unease Over Israel Stance

door meeting, synagogue leaders posed questions to Mr. Mamdani reflecting the fears that have grown among some in the Jewish community in the two years since the Oct. 7 attacks in Israel.

“Many of us are afraid that your words and your silences — even though I do not believe that you intend this — will be read as permission by people on the left who want to do us harm, and that someone’s going to try to come into this building to kill us,” said Rabbi Rachel Timoner, who leads Congregation Beth Elohim, according to several attendees.

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U.S. Admiral In Boat Strikes Exits Abruptly

Commander Has Held Post for Under a Year

By ERIC SCHMITT and TYLER PAGER

WASHINGTON — The military commander overseeing the Pentagon’s escalating attacks against boats in the Caribbean Sea that the Trump administration says are smuggling drugs said on Thursday that he was stepping down.

The officer, Adm. Alvin Holsey, is leaving his job as head of the U.S. Southern Command, which oversees all operations in Central and South America, even as the Pentagon has rapidly built up some 10,000 forces in the region in what it says is a major counter-drug and counterterrorism mission.

It was unclear why Admiral Holsey is suddenly departing, less than a year into what is typically a three-year job, and in the midst of the biggest operation in his 37-year career. But one current and one former U.S. official, both of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss personnel matters, said that Admiral Holsey had raised concerns about the mission and the attacks on the alleged drug boats.

In a statement on social media, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth made no mention of any friction with his four-star commander. “On behalf of the Department of War,” said Mr. Hegseth, using the name of the department he now prefers, “we extend our deepest gratitude to Admiral Alvin Holsey for his more than 37 years of distinguished service to our nation as he plans to retire at year’s end.”

Nor did Admiral Holsey publicly voice any policy objections, urging his command’s 1,200 military service members and civil-

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BOLTON INDICTED ON HIS HANDLING OF U.S. SECRETS

A TOTAL OF 18 COUNTS

A Bitter Enemy of Trump Who Faced Scrutiny Under Biden

This article is by *Devlin Barrett, Glenn Thrush and Minho Kim.*

WASHINGTON — John R. Bolton, the national security hawk and former adviser to President Trump who became one of his most outspoken critics, was indicted by a federal grand jury in Maryland on Thursday on charges of mishandling classified information.

An 18-count indictment accused Mr. Bolton of using personal email and a messaging app to share more than 1,000 pages of “diary” notes about his day-to-day activities as Mr. Trump’s national security adviser in 2018 and 2019. The notes, which were sent to two family members who did not have security clearances, included national defense information, such as details classified as top secret, according to the indictment.

President Trump and his former aide parted bitterly toward the end of his first term, and the president greeted the news with grim satisfaction. “He’s a bad guy,” Mr. Trump said on Thursday in response to a question from a reporter at the White House about Mr. Bolton. “That’s the way it goes.”

While Mr. Bolton is part of a string of perceived enemies of the president to become prosecutorial targets, the federal investigation into him gained momentum during the Biden administration, when U.S. intelligence agencies gathered what former officials

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AMY OSBORNE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Roy Lee, Cluely’s chief executive, at home in Cluely’s office in San Francisco. His start-up leased apartments for its employees.

In San Francisco’s A.I. Frenzy, Rentals Are Scarce and Costly

By NATALLIE ROCHA

SAN FRANCISCO — After Roy Lee’s artificial intelligence start-up, Cluely, landed \$5.3 million in venture capital funding this spring, he orchestrated a San Francisco real estate coup.

In May, Cluely leased eight apartments for its employees at a new luxury complex — where rents start at \$3,000 a month and reach \$12,000 a month for penthouse units — just a one-minute walk from its office in the city’s South of Market neighborhood. The apartments were a mix of one-bedroom and two-bedroom

units in the 16-story building, which offers a fitness center, a rooftop bar, and concierge and housecleaning services.

“Going to the office should feel like you’re walking to your living room, so we really, really want people close,” said Mr. Lee, 22, who chose not to move into the apartments and lives in Cluely’s office, which is housed in a loftlike single-family home. “I feel like I’m more trying to build a frat house, and you don’t commute to a frat house.”

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INTERNATIONAL A4-11

China’s Rare Earth Restrictions
Beijing’s latest effort to weaponize global supply chains is modeled on the American technology controls that it has long criticized. PAGE A7

NATIONAL A11-19

Bible Mandate Is Rescinded
Oklahoma’s school superintendent said he had “no plans” to enforce his predecessor’s order to put Bibles in the state’s classrooms. PAGE A19

SPORTS B7-10

Dysfunction in Chapel Hill
When the University of North Carolina hired Bill Belichick, he pledged to bring an N.F.L. approach to the football program. It isn’t going well. PAGE B7

WEEKEND ARTS C1-12

Actress Makes Opera Debut
Performing in Donizetti’s “La Fille du Régiment” at the Metropolitan Opera, Sandra Oh has already perfected the art of waving a fan with sass. PAGE C1

OPINION A22-23

Jessica Grose PAGE A22
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