



Crowd-control munitions were deployed on protesters in Minneapolis after federal agents shot and killed a man there on Saturday.

## After Maduro, They're Scared To Voice Hope

This article is by **Tibisay Romero, Jack Nicas and Patricia Sulbarán.**

BARCELONA, Venezuela — The boys were there for a water balloon fight. It was an annual tradition to start Carnival celebrations in Barcelona, a working-class coastal city in Venezuela's east. But only two days after the capture of the nation's president, Nicolás Maduro, all of their shouting and laughing was not sitting well with the authorities.

Local police officers and National Guard soldiers arrived in force and, according to two of the boys and the relatives of four others, fired shots. The boys and young men — aged 13 to 25 — scattered, but the police arrested 25 of them. Two days later, state prosecutors filed charges.

Their crime? Treason. “I’m going to screw you all over,” one of the boys, 17, recalled a police officer telling him after his arrest, using an expletive. “You all support Donald Trump.”

This past week, a reporter and a photographer from The New York Times visited the neighborhood where most of the detainees live and interviewed two of the boys and seven of their family members. Many of them, as well as other Venezuelans across the country, spoke on the condition of anonymity out of fear of reprisal from the government. Those interviews revealed that, under the Venezuelan interim government backed by the Trump administration, citizen surveillance and repression are alive and well.

President Trump has praised Venezuela's interim leadership as highly cooperative, particularly in opening up U.S. access to the country's oil. Those leaders, who

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## Data From Children Misused for ‘Race Science’

By **MIKE MCINTIRE**

Genetic researchers were seeking children for an ambitious, federally funded project to track brain development — a study that they told families could yield invaluable discoveries about DNA's impact on behavior and disease.

They also promised that the children's sensitive data would be closely guarded in the decade-long study, which got underway in 2015. Promotional materials included a cartoon of a Black child saying it felt good knowing that “scientists are taking steps to keep my information safe.”

The scientists did not keep it safe.

A group of fringe researchers thwarted safeguards at the Na-

### Researchers Thwarted N.I.H. Safeguards for Brain Study

tional Institutes of Health and gained access to data from thousands of children. The researchers have used it to produce at least 16 papers purporting to find biological evidence for differences in intelligence between races, ranking ethnicities by I.Q. scores and suggesting that Black people earn less because they are not very smart.

Mainstream geneticists have rejected their work as biased and unscientific. Yet by relying on ge-

netic and other personal data from the prominent project, known as the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study, the researchers gave their theories an air of analytical rigor.

Members of the research group were ineligible to obtain data from the ABCD project. But one of them gained access through an American professor who was already being investigated by the N.I.H. over his handling of another child brain study.

Their papers have provided fodder for racist posts on social media and white nationalist message boards that have been viewed millions of times. Some of the papers are cited by A.I. bots like ChatGPT and Grok in response to queries

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WILLIAM DESHAZER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

### A Wintry Walk

A bridge in Nashville on Saturday. A fierce storm put most of the country in a deep freeze. Page 13.

## At 79, Brazil’s New Film Star ‘Feels Like a Hug’

By **ANA IONOVA**

RIO DE JANEIRO — Even shielded by dark sunglasses, Tânia Maria de Medeiros Filha can't step outside these days without fans fawning over her.

“Wherever I go, people recognize me,” the 79-year-old actress said. “It’s marvelous,” she added. “But it hasn’t gone to my head.”

No, Ms. Medeiros doesn’t have

a decades-long career as a leading lady of Brazilian cinema. In fact, she has just a few credits to her name, some of them as an extra. Before setting foot on a film set for the very first time a few years ago, she spent her days weaving rugs in her sleepy hometown in Brazil's northeast.

Now, Tânia Maria, as she is commonly known, is causing a major cinematic stir at home and

abroad with a show-stealing performance in Brazil's latest buzzy film, “The Secret Agent.”

With a modest but captivating 11 minutes onscreen, Tânia Maria has drawn praise from international film critics, grabbed newspaper headlines and amassed more than 100,000 followers on social media in just months. And the movie that has catapulted her to

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## When Betting Taints Sports, Do the Fans Care?

By **TANIA GANGULI**

When the podcaster Van Lathan heard about the sports-betting and poker indictments that ensnared two active N.B.A. figures last fall, it didn't make him want to stop watching the N.B.A.

In fact, just the opposite. Mr. Lathan, who hosts shows about sports and culture on The Ringer, previously had little interest in the

Portland Trail Blazers. But when the team's head coach, Chauncey Billups, was arrested by the F.B.I. on the second day of the N.B.A. season and accused of working with the Mafia, Mr. Lathan wanted to know how the team would react. So he tuned in that night.

He wasn't alone. In the days after the arrests, the N.B.A. had its most-watched opening week

since 2017. Viewership the night the F.B.I. held its news conference was 60 percent higher than for the previous year. The league announced Mr. Billups and Terry Rozier, the player involved, had been placed on leave, and then resumed promoting its new season. “Nothing affected the games,” said Mr. Lathan, who argues that sports fans, particularly N.B.A.

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The massacre of protesters offers hints about growing tensions inside the ruling system as the supreme leader's rule comes under strain. PAGE 4

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The Taliban are suspicious of the internet, but a start-up in Afghanistan is building tools to transform aid. PAGE 7

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#### The Rising Stars of Sobriety

A generation of influencers at a members-only club is rejecting alcohol, but not giving up the party. PAGE 1



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Our travel suggestions include Vietnam, above, a Tanzanian conservation area and Winnie-the-Pooh's England.

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Fashion has begun exaggerating, or distorting, the female form as never before. What's behind this new brand of body modification? PAGE 7

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A religious fervor has been sweeping up some users of our newest and most powerful technologies. PAGE 1

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Luke Thompson is assuming the lead in the show, and he's bringing Shakespearean depth with him. PAGE 10



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Sean McVay, who has the most playoff wins of any N.F.L. coach before their 40th birthday, has led his team to the N.F.C. championship game. PAGE 23

### SUNDAY OPINION

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### SUNDAY BUSINESS

#### Making a Living by Wagering

Their job is betting on prediction markets, and some are making fortunes by betting on political or weather events or whether President Trump will say certain words. PAGE 4

#### Sudden Stop in Their Careers

As employment among Black female professionals continues to drop, many of them are turning to each other to vent, give pep talks, provide advice and share job updates. PAGE 1

