

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CLXXIV No. 60,585

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SATURDAY, JULY 19, 2025

Prices in Canada may be higher \$4.00

BONDI ASKS JUDGE TO OPEN RECORDS ON EPSTEIN CASE

GRAND JURY TESTIMONY

Trump Is Trying to Ease Pressure From Both Parties for Details

By BENJAMIN WEISER and MICHAEL GOLD

The Justice Department asked a federal judge on Friday to unseal grand jury testimony from the prosecution of the disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein. The move came amid growing pressure from both parties for the Trump administration to release more information about the case.

The request was filed in Federal District Court in Manhattan, where Mr. Epstein was awaiting trial on sex-trafficking charges six years ago when he was found dead by hanging in his jail cell. The New York City medical examiner ruled the death a suicide.

The government also sought the unsealing of grand jury testimony from the case of Ghislaine Maxwell, the socialite who in a 2021 trial was convicted of helping Mr. Epstein facilitate his sex-trafficking scheme and sentenced to 20 years in prison. She has appealed her conviction.

"Public officials, lawmakers, pundits and ordinary citizens remain deeply interested and concerned about the Epstein matter," Attorney General Pam Bondi and her deputy, Todd Blanche, wrote in a motion to the court seeking to unseal the transcripts. "The time for the public to guess what they contain should end."

Mr. Epstein's relationships with powerful people, and the manner of his death, have fueled conspiracy theories for years, particularly among a portion of Mr. Trump's right-wing base. Lately members of Congress from both parties have joined the calls for the government to release more information about its investigation.

Mr. Trump ordered Ms. Bondi to make the request hours after The Wall Street Journal reported on a 50th birthday greeting it said Mr. Trump sent Mr. Epstein in 2003, including a sexually suggestive drawing, an expression of friendship and a reference to secrets they shared.

The president vehemently denied the report, which The New York Times has not verified. On Friday, he filed a lawsuit in Florida against The Journal; its publisher, Dow Jones; Rupert Murdoch, the founder of News Corp, the parent company of Dow Jones; Robert Thomson, the News Corp chief executive.

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A Father's 'Everything,' Taken From Him Aboard a Tragic Flight

By PRAGATI K.B. and MUJIB MASHAL

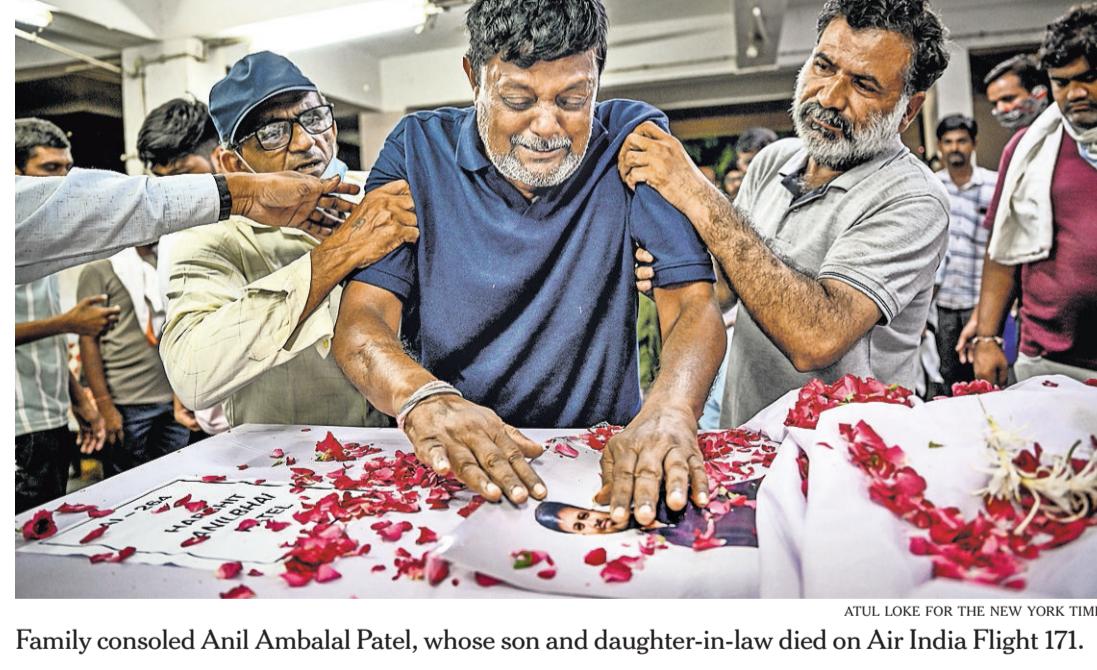
AHMEDABAD, India — Before dawn, in the solitude of his upstairs room, Anil Ambal Patel prepared to say a last goodbye to the couple who had brought love back into his life.

Lingering in his bed, the city around him still asleep, he stared at the two faces on his phone screen: his son, Harshit, and his daughter-in-law, Pooja. He stared and stared, and then moved the phone close to his lips, giving each forehead a kiss.

They were gone now, and what little joy he had finally found after years of hardship was gone, too. On this day, he would be with them once more as he scattered their ashes in the Narmada River, where three streams meet.

Twelve days earlier, Mr. Patel, a 60-year-old widower who works

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ATUL LOKE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Family consoled Anil Ambal Patel, whose son and daughter-in-law died on Air India Flight 171.

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

Floods Kill Dozens in Pakistan

Relentless rain pounded several cities across vast rural stretches in the province of Punjab.

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A Stunning Isle's 'Ferry Fiasco'

With aging ferries delayed sometimes for days, life goes haywire on an island off Scotland's northwest coast.

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NATIONAL A10-19

New Power for Faith Leaders

The I.R.S. now allows clergy members to endorse political candidates to their congregations. How could that affect the New York mayor's race?

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Flash Flood Season Is Now

The elements that combine to create flash flooding are most common during the middle of summer, when temperatures are highest.

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Proposed N.I.H. Cuts

Slashing funds for research and health agencies will curtail development of promising medications, the Congressional Budget Office said.

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SPORTS B7-9

Views From W.N.B.A. Players

Will Caitlin Clark be the face of the league in five years? A leaguewide poll placed her atop a list of several contenders for that distinction.

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Keys to M.L.B. Trade Deadline

The ace, the shutdown closer and more: We examine the seven types of players in the greatest demand.

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TRAVEL C7-8

Magical Island in Italy

Favignana, off the Sicilian coast, is known for its stone quarries, clear waters and tuna.

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BUSINESS B1-6

Challenge for 'Rice Minister'

Shinjiro Koizumi has scrambled to cut Japan's soaring rice prices ahead of this weekend's high-stakes election.

PAGE B1

American Drone Deficit

A four-day test in Alaska highlighted how far the U.S. lagged China in modern military technology.

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ARTS C1-6

Filmmaker on 'Superman'

Taking on directing duties while also helping to oversee DC Studios has been a challenge for James Gunn.

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Immigrants Vanish, Onscreen

Imagined as absurd in 2004, the Indie film 'A Day Without a Mexican' now seems like cinéma vérité.

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OPINION A22-23

Michael Grunwald

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THE WEATHER

Today, partly sunny, late thunderstorms, high 83. Tonight, cloudy, thunderstorms, low 74. Tomorrow, clouds and sun, thunderstorms, high 87. Weather map, Page B10.

Migrants in El Salvador Swapped for Americans Detained in Venezuela

Deal Releases Over 250 Expelled by U.S.

By JULIE TURKEWITZ and HAMED ALEAZIZ

Ten Americans and U.S. permanent residents who had been seized by the Venezuelan authorities and held as bargaining chips were freed Friday in exchange for the release of more than 250 Venezuelan migrants whom the Trump administration sent to a prison in El Salvador.

The release of the Americans and permanent residents was described by the State Department, while the release of the Venezuelans was announced by the president of El Salvador, Nayib Bukele, on X.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement that the 10 U.S. citizens and permanent residents had been arrested and jailed in Venezuela "without proper due process" and called for the "restoration of democracy in Venezuela."

The capture and imprisonment of the Americans had been part of the Venezuelan government's efforts to gain an upper hand in negotiations with the Trump administration, while the detention of the Venezuelans in El Salvador played a high-profile role in President Trump's promise to deport millions of immigrants.

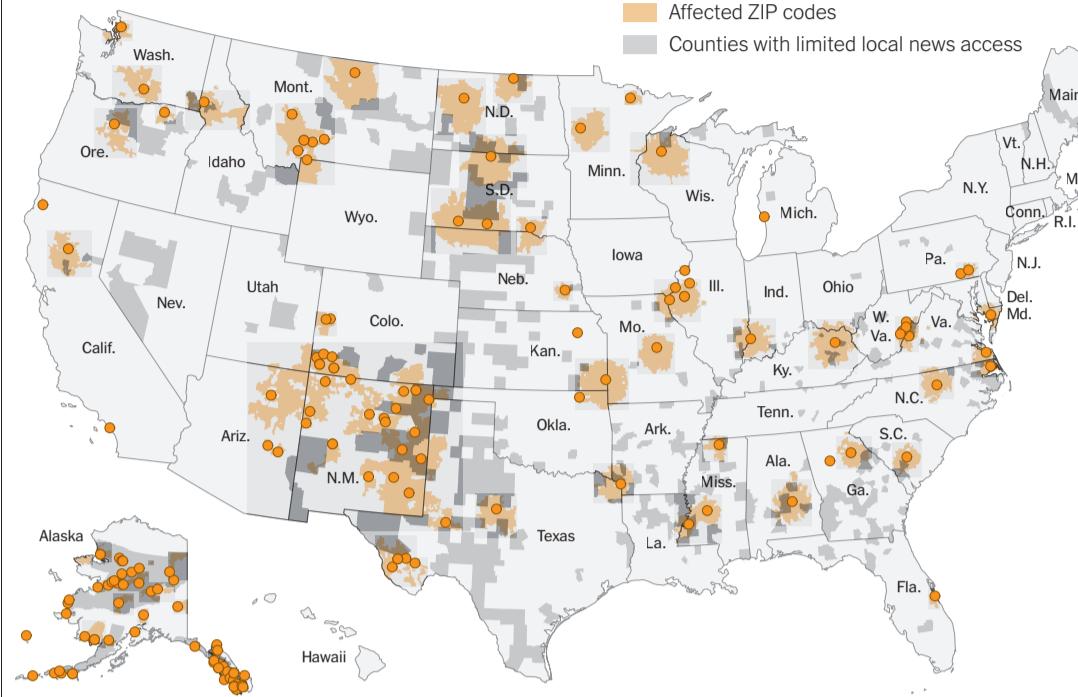
The Trump administration has

"We have prayed for this day for

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Where Public Media Cuts Will Bite

In their own states, G.O.P. senators mostly favored defunding local stations. Page A14.



Sources: Analysis of at-risk organizations and their stations' locations by Public Media Company, based on data from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Data on news access by county is from the Medill Local News Initiative. Note: Dots represent cities where there are stations operated by at-risk organizations.

ELENA SHAO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

After Decades Trying, G.O.P. Guts PBS and NPR

By JIM RUTENBERG

They tried under Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush. Newt Gingrich gave it a go when he controlled

the House, and Bob Dole did, too, when he held power in the Senate.

But for five decades, Republicans failed time and again to choke off federal funding for public broadcasting. Some were afraid of being accused of avicide (for "killing Big Bird" of "Sesame Street"), while others appreciated

Changed Media World Made Fertile Ground for Defunding

their local public stations (and the airtime they personally received) — always stopping the party short of turning their threats against PBS and NPR into law.

That they have finally been able to do it now, voting on Friday to claw back \$1.1 billion in

public broadcasting funds, on one level speaks to the power of President Trump. His threat to support primary challenges against any Republicans who might try to block the cuts all but guaranteed they would go through this time.

"Republicans who supported public media for their entire careers are voting to kill it, and there is only one reason: Donald Trump," said Senator Edward J. Markey of Massachusetts, who has been at the center of efforts to protect public media for decades.

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FEDERICO PARRA/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Deported migrants who had been jailed in El Salvador landed in Venezuela on Friday after a prisoner exchange with the U.S.

Divisive Legacy For Netanyahu, The Class of '67

By KENNETH P. VOGEL

WASHINGTON — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel provoked strong reactions around the world when he announced at the White House this month that he had nominated President Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize.

While it drew much less attention, his suggestion during his trip to the United States that he would make a different nomination for a much more parochial honor is inflaming tensions about 150 miles north of Washington.

"Next time I'm here, we go down to Cheltenham High School, near Philadelphia, and I'll nominate you for the hall of fame," Mr. Netanyahu told Mark Levin, the conservative commentator, during a Fox News interview that aired last week.

Earlier in the interview, the men discussed their shared connection to the public high school in Cheltenham Township. Mr. Netanyahu, who graduated in 1967, was born in Israel but lived in Cheltenham for several years with his family while his father taught at a local Jewish college; Mr. Levin, class of 1974, was born and raised in the area. Mr. Netanyahu has al-

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Insurers Reject More Requests For Medicines

By SARAH KLIFF

Prescription drug denials by private insurers in the United States jumped 25 percent from 2016 to 2023, according to a new analysis of more than four billion claims, a practice that has contributed to rising public outrage about the nation's private health insurance system.

The report, compiled for The New York Times by the health analytics company Komodo Health, shows that denial rates rose from 18.3 percent to 22.9 percent. The rejections went up across many major health plans, including the country's largest private insurer, UnitedHealthcare.

The data offers a rare look into the largely hidden world of rejected insurance claims. While some government-funded health plans are required to publish their denial rates, most private insurers keep that information confidential. Komodo draws from private databases that collect denial details from pharmacies, insurers and intermediaries.

Claim denials are "quite opaque, and a lot of decisions are made by private actors," said Dr. Aaron Schwartz, a health economist at the University of Pennsylvania.

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