



Daniella Gilboa was among the four Israeli soldiers, all women, who were released on Saturday and brought back to Israel from Gaza.

## HAMAS RELEASES 4 MORE HOSTAGES

### Soldiers Are Exchanged for 200 Palestinians

This article is by **Patrick Kingsley, Aaron Boxerman, Adam Rasgon and Thomas Fuller.**

JERUSALEM — Hamas on Saturday released four female Israeli soldiers held hostage in the Gaza Strip, in a choreographed ceremony that was the latest sign of the group's effort to project power despite Israel's 470-day military campaign to dislodge them. It was the second release of hostages as part of a cease-fire deal that went into effect nearly a week earlier. Per the agreement, Israel released 200 Palestinian prisoners on Saturday who had been held in Israeli jails.

A line of white buses carrying prisoners left Ofer prison in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Prisoners were also released from another facility near Beersheba in southern Israel, the Israeli prison service said.

Many of the 200 prisoners released on Saturday were serving life sentences for involvement in attacks against Israelis. Around 70 are being exiled abroad as part of the agreement and will not be allowed to return to their homes in the West Bank and Jerusalem, according to a list provided by the Palestinian authorities.

But the prisoner-hostage swap on Saturday did not go entirely to plan. Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, an Israeli military spokesman, accused Hamas of violating the deal by not returning captive Israeli civilians first. Israeli officials said that under the agreement, Arbel Yehud, an Israeli woman held hostage in Gaza, was supposed to be one of the four women released on Saturday.

Israel had been expected to withdraw some of its forces to allow hundreds of thousands of displaced Gazans to head north after Saturday's exchange. But the Israeli prime minister's office said that it would not allow Gazans to head north "until the release of the civilian Arbel Yehud has been arranged," leaving the timing of the troop withdrawal and the residents' return unclear.

Hamas accused Israel of hesitating to fully implement the cease-fire agreement. The dispute

Continued on Page 6

## Marijuana Pushed to Limit in a Race for Profits

This article is by **Katie J.M. Baker, Megan Twohey, Danielle Ivory and Jeremy Singer-Vine.**

At Stiiizy, the best-selling cannabis brand in America, the goal is explicit: producing powerful and cheap marijuana.

Inside its Los Angeles headquarters, crews dust joints with concentrated THC, the intoxicating component of cannabis. They package pocket-size vape cartridges that promise "the highest potency possible." On its website, the company declares that "it has never been easier (or quicker) to get silly high for an affordable price."

Dispensaries operating under the brand of another leading com-

### High THC, Low Prices and Curative Claims Still Shy on Proof

pany, Cookies, have promoted "powerful medical benefits," including "cancer fighting" qualities. A cannabis-infused chocolate bar was, until recently, described as containing properties "beneficial to those suffering" from glaucoma, bacterial infections and Huntington's disease, a devastating genetic illness.

More than a decade after states began legalizing recreational marijuana, businesses are enticing

customers with unproven health claims, while largely escaping rigorous oversight. A New York Times review of 20 of the largest brands found that most were selling products with such claims, potentially violating federal and state regulations. And as companies compete, potency has gone up — with some products advertised as having as much as 99 percent THC — and prices have gone down.

"What we're seeing is really a race to the bottom," said Matt Zehner, a senior analyst at Brightfield Group, which tracks the legal cannabis industry.

Some executives said their companies are trying to navigate

Continued on Page 17



### Pardoning Violence Against Police Officers

Many Jan. 6 rioters were caught on video gruesomely attacking officers with weapons like stun guns, baseball bats and chemical sprays. President Trump freed all of them anyway. Page 20.

## A Vivid Window Into Life in the Middle East, Drawn Open by a French Cartoonist

By **RICHARD FAUSSET**

RENNES, France — One early evening in December, the Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad fled his country as rebel forces advanced on Damascus. In France, three days later, one of the country's most-watched TV news channels turned to a cartoonist for an expert opinion on the news.

"Did you think that this could

have happened so rapidly?" a news anchor for the channel, BFMTV, asked the cartoonist, Riad Sattouf, whose smiling face appeared on a giant video wall.

Over the past decade, Mr. Sattouf, 46, has become one of France's biggest literary stars, thanks largely to his masterwork, "The Arab of the Future," a series of graphic memoirs. Over six volumes, the series tells the

### THE GLOBAL PROFILE

story of Mr. Sattouf's childhood, which was jarringly divided between the Middle East and France, and the disintegration of the marriage between his French mother and his Syrian father.

The books — in a genre known as "bandes dessinées" in France — have sold more than three

million copies and have been translated into some 23 languages. Though told from a child's perspective and drawn in a deceptively simple style, they touch on some of the thorniest questions about the compatibility of the Western and Arab worlds. They are also suffused with a subtle but withering social satire.

For Mr. Sattouf, this posture informs not only his art, but the

way he interprets the world. In his TV appearance in December, he told viewers that the fall of Mr. al-Assad was a moment of "immense hope" for Syria. But when asked to predict what might happen next, he warned that he tended to see things "extremely pessimistically."

"I keep my fingers crossed," he said, "that a terrible dictatorship

Continued on Page 10

## Shattering the Bounds Of the Oval Office

### From Mass Pardons to D.E.I. Snitches, Trump's First Days Defy Norms

By **PETER BAKER**

WASHINGTON — On his first full day back in the White House, President Trump reveled in his return to power and vowed to do what no president had ever done before. "We're going to do things that people will be shocked at," he declared.

Of all the thousands of words that Mr. Trump uttered during his fact-challenged, talkathon-style opening days as the nation's 47th president, those may have been the truest. No matter that much of what he was doing he had promised on the campaign trail. He succeeded in shocking nonetheless.

Not so much by the ferocity of the policy shifts or ideological swings that invariably come with a party change in the White House, but through norm-shattering, democracy-testing assertions of personal power that defy the courts, the Congress and the ethical lines that constrained past presidents.

He freed even the most violent of the rioters who assaulted the Capitol in his name four years ago. Out of pique over questions of loyalty, he stripped former advisers facing credible death threats of their security details. Disregarding a law passed with bipartisan support and upheld by the Supreme Court, he allowed the Chinese-owned TikTok app to remain in use in the United States despite serious national security concerns.

Not satisfied to simply eliminate diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, he ordered government workers to snitch on anyone suspected of not going along or face "adverse consequences," a practice familiar to anyone of a certain age who lived in Russia. He fired at least a dozen inspectors general who monitor departments for corruption and abuse in a late-night purge on Friday, ignoring a law requiring him to give Congress

30 days' notice and provide specific reasons.

In doing so, Mr. Trump in effect declared that he was willing and even eager to push the boundaries of his authority, the resilience of American institutions, the strength of the nearly two-and-a-half-century-old system and the tolerance of some of his own allies. Even more than in his first term, he has mounted a fundamental challenge to expectations of what a president can and should do, demonstrating a belief that the rules his predecessors largely followed are meant to be bent, bypassed or broken.

"He's using the tools of government to challenge the limits on the post-Watergate presidency," said Brendan Nyhan, a government professor at Dartmouth College. "Some of these efforts will be turned back by the courts, but the level of anticipatory obedience we're seeing from business, universities and the media is unlike anything I've seen in my lifetime."

Not everything that shocked people in Mr. Trump's first week necessarily violated presidential standards. Any time a president from one party takes over from

Continued on Page 21



President Trump started by doing what he had promised.

## The Technology That Could Fuel Trump's Immigration Offensive

This article is by **Adam Satariano, Paul Mozur, Aaron Krolik and David McCabe.**

Apps and ankle monitors that track asylum seekers in real time wherever they go. Databases packed with personal information like fingerprints and faces. Investigative tools that can break into locked phones and search through gigabytes of emails, text messages and other files.

These are pieces of a technology arsenal available to President Trump as he aims to crack down on illegal immigration and carry out the largest deportation operation in American history. To do so, his administration can tap a stockpile of tools built up by Democrats and Republicans that is nearly unmatched in the Western world, according to an analysis by The New

York Times.

A review of nearly 15,000 contracts shows that two agencies — Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and Citizen and Immigration Services — have spent \$7.8 billion on immigration technologies from 263 companies since 2020.

The contracts, most of which were initiated under the Biden administration, included ones for tools that can rapidly prove family relationships with a DNA test to check whether, say, an adult crossing the border with a minor are related. (Families are often treated differently from individuals.)

Continued on Page 13

**BY THE NUMBERS** There are myriad categories of immigrants vulnerable to deportation. PAGE 14

### INTERNATIONAL 4-11

#### C.I.A. Favors Lab Leak Theory

The agency took a closer look at the conditions of high-security research labs in Wuhan province to help explain the origins of the pandemic. PAGE 11

#### Young Lives Disrupted in Haiti

Gunfire and bandits have left hundreds of thousands of children with no chance for formal learning in schools. PAGE 8

### OBITUARIES 25-27

#### Civil Rights Activist

Arrested at a lunch counter, Thomas Gaither chose jail over bail — and energized a movement. He was 86. PAGE 25



### SPORTS 28-31

#### Australian Open Breakthrough

Sixteen years after emerging as a teen phenom, Madison Keys captured her first major singles title. PAGE 28

#### In Buffalo, They Still 'Billieve'

Devotion to the Bills runs deep, despite their lack of Super Bowl titles. Is this, finally, their season? PAGE 30

### METROPOLITAN

#### It's Lonely at the Top

The chef at a private restaurant on the 100th floor of a luxury residential tower in Manhattan is proud of his creations but yearns for affirmation. PAGE 1

### NATIONAL 12-23

#### Hegseth's Goals vs. Reality

The new defense secretary's vision runs counter to the military's apolitical tradition and efforts for a force that mirrors America. News Analysis. PAGE 21

### SUNDAY OPINION

#### Charles Piller

PAGE 6



### SUNDAY STYLES

#### How to Have The Talk

Many families are facing a political reckoning when liberal parents see their sons embracing MAGA. PAGE 4

#### Step Aside, Mona Lisa

For the first time in its 231-year history, the Louvre is hosting an exhibition devoted to fashion. PAGE 1

### SUNDAY BUSINESS

#### A Start-Up's Claim of a Miracle

ExThera Medical and its partner treated late-stage cancer patients in Antigua, out of the reach of American regulators. Then patients started dying. PAGE 6

#### A Push to Make Sports a Major

The idea of offering a college degree in sports has gained momentum now that college athletes can be paid, and Nike is positioning itself as a lobbyist to make it a reality. PAGE 1



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