

“All the News  
That’s Fit to Print”

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## What a Soldier Left Behind

Sgt. Kennedy Sanders’s belongings were shipped home to her parents after she was killed in a drone attack. They included her dog tags, a makeshift phone system, a quarter with what looked like blood, jewelry and Polaroids. Page A12.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

## Hotels in N.Y. Pick Migrants Over Tourists

By LUIS FERRÉ-SADURNÍ

In late 2022, as thousands of migrants began to arrive in New York City, city officials scrambled to find places to house them. They quickly found takers: hotels that were still struggling to recover from the pandemic-driven downturn in tourism. Dozens of hotels, from once-grand facilities to more modest establishments, closed to tourists and began exclusively sheltering migrants, striking multimillion-dollar deals with the city. The humanitarian crisis became the hotel industry’s unexpected lifeline in New York; the hotels became a safe haven for tens of thousands of asylum seekers. Two years in, as the city’s peak tourism season is about to begin, the migrant crisis has helped dramatically shift the hotel landscape in New York. The conversion of hotels to shelters has sharply decreased the supply of rooms just as tourist demand has risen, nearly to prepandemic levels, and is projected to match a record high.

The migrant shelters — along with other factors that include inflation, the loss of Airbnb short-term rentals and an expected decline in new hotel construction — have propelled the nightly cost of an average room to record levels. The average daily rate for a hotel stay in New York City increased to \$301.61 in 2023, up 8.5 percent from \$277.92 in 2022, according to CoStar, a leading provider of commercial real estate data and analysis. During the first three months of 2024, when prices traditionally dip, the average stay

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## In a Center of Kabbalah, Israelis Arm for a Fight

By DAMIEN CAVE

SAFED, Israel — Eyal Ben-Ari tugged at the heavy assault rifle hanging over his shoulder as he tiptoed out of his pink house at sunrise, hoping not to wake his wife or six children. Walking to synagogue in Safed, a hill town above the Sea of Galilee known for centuries as a center of kabbalah, or ancient Jewish mysticism, he said he still didn’t feel great about the gun. Sleeping with the rifle under his pillow, he worried about it being stolen. After his 13-year-old son came home with a toy replica, Mr. Ben-Ari considered returning the real thing, doubting his decision to join the newly formed civilian militia that had given him the weapon.



AMIT ELKAYAM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Eyal Ben-Ari carrying his personal weapon at home in Safed, Israel, near the Lebanon border.

## Fearing Another Oct. 7, Residents Scramble to Acquire Guns

“I feel like it’s very — artificial,” he said, struggling to find the right word in English, looking down at the gun. “It’s not human. It’s not life.” At the synagogue, men with graying beards and black suits — all fellow members of the Chabad movement, an ultra-Orthodox sect of Judaism — slapped Mr. Ben-Ari on the back. They were happy to see him. Happy to see his gun. It was the only one there, but far from unique. In this small city near the Lebanon border, where

Hezbollah’s rockets have often rained down in recent months, Israel’s deep sense of vulnerability has led to a surge of citizens arming themselves. In Safed, as in the rest of Israel, people fear a repeat of Oct. 7, when gunmen with Hamas crossed from Gaza into Israel and killed 1,200 people in rural villages, army bases and cities, according to Israeli authorities. The police and the military were slow to respond that day. In many communities, the only ones fighting back were volunteers with rapid response teams that are known in Israel as Kitat Konenut. Before the attack, much of Safed didn’t think it needed such a group. For decades, this city of 40,000 has drawn the very rich

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## Rising Arsenal Across China: Eyes and Ears

## Xi Tightens His Grip to Fend Off Any Unrest

By VIVIAN WANG

BEIJING — The wall in the police station was covered in sheets of paper, one for every building in the sprawling Beijing apartment complex. Each sheet was further broken down by unit, with names, phone numbers and other information on the residents. Perhaps the most important detail, though, was how each unit was color-coded. Green meant trustworthy. Yellow, needing attention. Orange required “strict control.” A police officer inspected the wall. Then he leaned forward to mark a third-floor apartment in yellow. The residents in that unit changed often, and therefore were “high risk,” his note said. He would follow up on them later. “I’ve built a system to address hidden dangers in my jurisdiction,” the officer said, in a video by the local government that praised his work as a model of innovative policing. This is the kind of local governance that China’s top leader, Xi Jinping, wants: more visible, more invasive, always on the lookout for real or perceived threats. Officers patrol apartment buildings listening for feuding neighbors. Officials recruit retirees playing chess outdoors as extra eyes and ears. In the workplace, employers are required to appoint “safety consultants” who report regularly to the police. The Chinese Communist Party has long wielded perhaps the world’s most sweeping surveillance apparatus against activists and others who might possibly voice discontent. Then, during the coronavirus pandemic, the surveillance reached an unprecedented scale, tracking virtually every urban resident in the name of preventing infections. Now, it is clear that Mr. Xi wants to make that expanded control permanent, and to push it even further. The goal is no longer just to address specific threats, such as the virus or dissidents. It is to embed the party so deeply in daily life that no trouble, no matter how seemingly minor or apolitical, can even arise. Mr. Xi has branded this effort the “Fengqiao experience for a new era.” The Beijing suburb in the propaganda video, Zhangjiawan, was recently recognized in state media as a national exemplar of the approach. “Fengqiao” refers to a town where, during the Mao era, the

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**THE WEATHER**  
Today, cooler, a morning shower, an afternoon thunderstorm, high 70. Tonight, a late thunderstorm, low 65. Tomorrow, sun and clouds, high 83. Weather map is on Page B6.

## PUTIN UNLEASHES PURGE OF LEADERS GUIDING MILITARY

## A DELAYED SHAKE-UP

## President Waits Till War Goes His Way, in a Trademark Move

By PAUL SONNE  
and ANATOLY KURMANAEV

BERLIN — Periodic outcries over incompetence and corruption at the top of the Russian military have dogged President Vladimir V. Putin’s war effort since the start of his full-scale invasion of Ukraine in early 2022. When his forces faltered around the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, the need for change was laid bare. When they were routed months later outside the city of Kharkiv, expectations of a shake-up grew. And after the mercenary leader Yevgeny V. Prigozhin marched his men toward Moscow, complaining of deep rot and ineptitude at the top of the Russian force, Mr. Putin seemed obliged to respond. But, at each turn, the Russian president avoided any major pub-



ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO/AP

President Vladimir Putin and ex-minister Sergei K. Shoigu.

lic moves that could have been seen as validating the criticism, keeping his defense minister and top general in place through the firestorm while shuffling battlefield commanders and making other moves lower on the chain. Now, with the battlefield crises seemingly behind him and Mr. Prigozhin dead, the Russian leader has decided to act, changing defense ministers for the first time in more than a decade and al-

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**RUSSIAN JAMMING** Some U.S. weapons are said to be vulnerable to electronic warfare. PAGE A7  
**SABOTAGE** Russian military intelligence seeks to reduce European support for Ukraine. PAGE A6

## Modi’s Brand of Welfare Creates Relief, and Loyal Voters, in India

By SUHASINI RAJ and ALEX TRAVELLI

AMETHI, India — Durga Prasad, an 80-year-old farmer, was resting under the shade of a tree in front of his home when the party workers came. An app on their smartphones could tell them in an instant who Mr. Prasad was, whom he might vote for — and why he should be grateful to India’s prime minister, Narendra Modi. “You get installments of 2,000 rupees, right?” asked a local official from Mr. Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party, or B.J.P. Mr. Prasad concurred. He receives \$72 a year through a farmers’ welfare program started and branded by Mr. Modi. “Do you get rations?” the official then asked, though he already knew the answer. He had made his point. Such handouts are among the most distinctive parts of Mr.

Modi’s mass appeal. The country’s new airports, diplomatic prestige and booming stock markets may look like Mr. Modi’s calling card, but for the 95 percent of Indians who earn too little to file income taxes, small infusions of cash and household goods matter more. And Mr. Modi’s party is organized to make the most of them in the national election that ends early next month. India’s welfare programs are vast in reach and scope. Under the biggest, 821 million Indians are entitled to five-kilogram (11-pound) sacks of free rice or wheat every month. The government started doling out grain to prevent hunger early in the pandemic and has since committed \$142 billion to the program. Mr. Modi’s face began appearing on the sacks in

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## ‘Very Simple Taco’ Vaults a Mexican Stand to Michelin Stardom

By JAMES WAGNER

MEXICO CITY — Over a week ago, Taquería El Califa de León was simply one of Mexico City’s nearly 11,000 registered taco shops, though there are undoubtedly many more that aren’t. Sure, it had been around nearly 60 years and was popular, especially among politicians who worked nearby. But it was mostly a locally

known taco stand. Then, on May 14, life changed completely for the cash-only taquería that has barely enough room to stand, sells four kinds of tacos — three beef, one pork — and whose grill radiates intense heat. That day, the Michelin Guide, the world’s most widely recognized arbiter of fine dining, released its first Mexican edition. Of the 18 establishments in

## Accolade Draws Lines Down the Block

Mexico awarded at least one Michelin star, many of them fancy restaurants, El Califa de León was the only street-food stand. (Outdoor food stands in other parts of the world have been awarded Mi-

chelin stars.) Business has surged since. Wait times have gone from 10 minutes to as long as three hours. A nearby shop started renting out stools to customers in line. More workers were hired to help meet the soaring demand. Tourists from all over the world are showing up, many snapping photos as the food is prepared. Sales,

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ARTS C1-8

## No Ordinary Music Gig

Joining a premier military band offers stability for classical musicians. But signing up means shipping out. PAGE C1

## Portal Acts as Our Mirror

The video art installation connecting New York and Dublin is only as nice as we are when we’re around it. PAGE C3

NATIONAL A12-17, 20

## Severe Weather Hits the South

At least 14 deaths were reported in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas in the wake of heavy storms. Millions of Americans were under threat. PAGE A20

## Hillary Clinton’s Tough Words

In an interview for a coming book, she took Democrats and women to task on abortion rights, and warned of the stakes of the 2024 election. PAGE A13

## Changing Face of Montana

Out-of-state transplants, drawn during the pandemic, have caused prices to soar and created new uncertainty in the state’s crucial Senate race. PAGE A15



INTERNATIONAL A4-11

## Deadly Prelude in South Africa

A photographer documented the unrest that preceded the country’s first free election in 1994. PAGE A4

## Fatal Fires Roil India

Disasters over the weekend that killed at least 34 prompted arrests and exposed long-term gaps in safety. PAGE A7

BUSINESS B1-4

## Musk’s Anti-Biden Posts

The billionaire owner of X has been using his social-media platform to criticize the president for his health and immigration policies, according to a New York Times analysis. PAGE B1

## Ad-Free TV’s Fleeting Moment

Ads are here, there and almost everywhere on streaming services now. One by one, the services have added 30- and 60-second ads in exchange for a slightly lower subscription price. PAGE B1

OPINION A18-19

## Michelle Cottle

PAGE A19



SPORTS D1-8

## Some Blasts From the Past

There’s more to the stories of these home runs than how far they went, like the shot Ted Williams hit that is immortalized at Fenway Park. PAGES D4-5

