

“All the News  
That’s Fit to Print”

# The New York Times

**THE WEATHER**  
Today, near-record warmth, a mix of clouds and sun, high 70. **Tonight**, a late shower, low 55. **Tomorrow**, cloudy, still warm, a few showers, high 67. Weather map, Page A20.

VOL. CLXXIII . . . . No. 60,093      © 2024 The New York Times Company      THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2024      Prices in Canada may be higher      \$4.00



If the TikTok bill were to become law, it could deepen a United States-China cold war over the control of important technologies.

## Officials Shrug As Youths Miss School to Work

**By ANDY NEWMAN**  
On a subway platform in the Bronx recently, a girl in a puffer coat strolled past passengers with a basket of M&M’s, Kit Kats and Trident gum slung across her shoulder. She looked to be 7 or 8. One rider captured her on a video posted on X, calling out, “No parent, no parent, where the parent at?” as she walked by. Of all the manifestations of human misery that the two-year-old migrant crisis has brought to New York City, few trouble the conscience more than the sight of children selling candy on the subway — sometimes during school hours, sometimes accompanied by parents, sometimes not.

On trains and on social media, New Yorkers have asked: Isn’t this child labor? Is it illegal? Shouldn’t someone be doing something to help these children? Children between the ages of 6 and 17 are required to be in school. Children under 14 are not allowed to do most jobs. You can’t sell merchandise in the transit system without a permit. But whose job is it to do something? Recent queries to seven city and state agencies found the consensus to be “not mine.” More than 180,000 migrants have been processed by New York City agencies in the last two years, and about 65,000 are staying in homeless shelters. Many of the newcomers are desperate to find ways to survive in an expensive city, but unable to work legally. Selling food is one of their main sources of income. A 16-year-old recently spotted selling candy on a downtown 1 train in Manhattan at 10:45 on a weekday morning said she was there “because I have to help my parents.” She refused to give her name.

The Department of Education has “attendance teachers” who work to ensure families send their children to school, but they do not go out on patrol. “I think I’ll refer you to the N.Y.P.D. on this,” a spokeswoman wrote. The Police Department said that it issued more than 1,100 summonses last year for “unlawful vending and unlawful solicitation/panhandling” in the subways. But the department declined to say whether officers are instructed to do anything if they see school-age children selling candy during school hours.

Continued on Page A17

## Risking Their Lives to Restore a Phone Network

**By ADAM RASGON**  
JERUSALEM — When Mohammed Sweirky prepared to leave for a work trip in January to repair telecommunications infrastructure that had been destroyed in northern Gaza, his wife and children pleaded with him not to go. Fighting between Israeli troops and Hamas members was still raging in the area, said Mr. Sweirky, who is a technician for Paltel, the largest telecommunications company in Gaza, and his family worried he might not return. But he said he felt he had no choice given that residents there desperately needed their phone

### Frequent Blackouts in Gaza Cripple Health Care and Aid Flow

services restored. “It was painful to say bye,” said Mr. Sweirky, 50, who fled Gaza City at the beginning of the war and is now sheltering with six family members in a garage in Rafah, the territory’s southernmost city. “They were crying, but I couldn’t abandon our mission.” Since the start of the war, Mr. Sweirky’s job has become among the most dangerous in Gaza and also one of the most important. Is-

rael’s bombing campaign against Hamas has pummeled telecommunications infrastructure in Gaza, destroying subterranean fiber cables, damaging data centers and blowing up cell towers. Since the war began, some 50 engineers and technicians at Paltel, one of two Palestinian cell service providers in Gaza, have crisscrossed the enclave to reinstate service in neighborhoods that have been plunged into blackouts for days and even weeks. Paltel — which is dependent on three telecommunication lines that pass through Israel — operates infrastructure in Gaza. Trying to repair that infrastructure has entailed enormous risks for

Continued on Page A6

## The Pandemic’s Toll, in Their Words

Four years after a national emergency was declared, New York Times readers share the moment they realized Covid would change the world. Page A9.



A final visit to her mother.



Locked down, looking out.



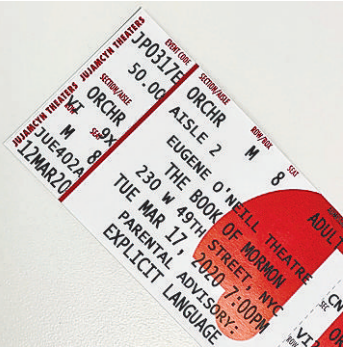
The stress of the E.R.



An impromptu road trip.



Born into a new normal.



A show that they never saw.



A video chat birthday party.



Tears in front of a beacon.



A colorful, vital reminder.

## Raising Stakes, House Passes A TikTok Bill

### Sale or Ban for Chinese App, but Tests Await

This article is by **Sapna Maheshwari, David McCabe and Annie Karni.**

The House on Wednesday passed a bill with broad bipartisan support that would force TikTok’s Chinese owner to either sell the hugely popular video app or have it banned in the United States. The move escalates a showdown between Beijing and Washington over the control of a wide range of technologies that could affect national security, free speech and the social media industry. Republican leaders fast-tracked the bill through the House with limited debate, and it passed on a lopsided vote of 352 to 65, reflecting widespread backing for legislation that would take direct aim at China in an election year. The action came despite TikTok’s efforts to mobilize its 170 million U.S. users against the measure, and amid the Biden administration’s push to persuade lawmakers that Chinese ownership of the platform poses grave national security risks to the United States, including the ability to meddle in elections. The result was a bipartisan coalition behind the measure that included Republicans, who defied former President Donald J. Trump in supporting it, and Democrats, who also fell in line behind a bill that President Biden has said he would sign. The bill faces a difficult road to passage in the Senate, where Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the majority leader, has been noncommittal about bringing it to the floor for a vote and where some lawmakers have vowed to fight it. And even if it passes the Senate and becomes law, it is likely to face legal challenges. But Wednesday’s vote was the first time a measure that could widely ban TikTok for consumers was approved by a full chamber of Congress. The app has been under threat since 2020, with lawmakers increasingly arguing that Beijing’s relationship with TikTok’s parent company, ByteDance, raises national security risks. The bill is aimed at getting ByteDance

Continued on Page A13

**COMPLICATED** It’s not clear how much of TikTok would be for sale, or who could afford it. PAGE B1

## PLAN TO SIMPLIFY AID FOR COLLEGE MADE IT WORSE

### ADMISSIONS IN CHAOS

#### Education Dept.’s Errors Leave Students and Schools in Lurch

**By ERICA L. GREEN and ZACH MONTAGUE**

WASHINGTON — There were just days left to process a batch of federal financial aid applications when Education Department officials made a fateful discovery: 70,000 emails from students all over the country, containing reams of essential data. They were sitting in an inbox, untouched. That discovery last week started a panicked, three-day crash effort by more than 200 of the department’s employees, including Richard Cordray, the nation’s top student aid official, to read through each of the emails one by one and extract crucial identifying information required for financial aid. The students’ futures depended on it. “It needs to get untangled,” Mr. Cordray told his staff members on Thursday, according to recordings of two back-to-back meetings that The New York Times obtained. “So, you know, I’m getting pretty impatient.” An exasperated staff member shot back, “We worked all night long — literally — all night.” It was another setback in the botched rollout of a new version of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known as FAFSA, that millions of families and thousands of schools rely on to determine how students will pay for college. Three years ago, Congress ordered the Education Department to revamp the new form to make it easier and more accessible. It has been anything but.

For nearly six months, students and schools navigated a bureaucratic mess caused by severe delays in launching the website and processing critical information. A series of blunders by the department — from a haphazard rollout to technical meltdowns — have left students and schools in limbo and plunged the most critical stage of the college admissions season into disarray. In a normal year, students would be sorting through their financial aid offers by now, giving them plenty of time to prepare for

Continued on Page A12

## Heirs Granted Nazi-Looted Art Are Still Waiting, 17 Years Later

**By NINA SIEGAL**  
AMSTERDAM — In a museum storage depot in Amersfoort, the Netherlands, a 17th-century painting by a Dutch old master is packed away, unseen and unappreciated. Once the property of an elderly British-Jewish couple living in France, it was seized by Nazi collaborators during World War II and sold to Hermann Göring, Hitler’s second in command. Because of an administrative error in the war’s aftermath, it ended up in the Netherlands, where it was displayed in a museum for decades. The collectors’ heirs sought its return in 2006, and the country investigated the case and recommended restitution the next year. But the family still doesn’t have the painting back, and they don’t know when that will ever happen. Standing between the family and the painting are a few missing documents and a diligent Dutch civil notary who won’t let it go until he gets them.



“Unloading the Hay Wagon” by Isaac van Ostade is in limbo.

“We, the heirs, are regarded in the Dutch system as crooks who are eager to make money on a sale, not as victims of looting,” said Alain Monteagle, a 77-year-old retired history teacher who has led the family’s quest for the painting’s return. “The longer this goes on, the more complicated it becomes, and eventually there

Continued on Page A7

#### INTERNATIONAL A4-8

##### Giving Up, for Now

Geert Wilders, a Dutch hard-right icon, is seeking a coalition government after failing to gain the top office. PAGE A8

##### Russia Pivots for Trade

A new railway link through Iran will allow Moscow to skirt restrictions and connect with areas far south. PAGE A4



#### NATIONAL A9-17

##### Spotting Colon Cancer Early

Doctors say a blood test shows promise as a screening method for patients reluctant to undergo colonoscopies or conduct at-home fecal tests. PAGE A17

##### The Filibuster’s Tenuous Status

The Senate’s signature procedural tactic is losing two of its staunchest defenders in Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Joe Manchin III. PAGE A12

##### Consent at a Sex Club

A Brooklyn community that champions sexuality is navigating a fraught line between creating a freewheeling space and keeping its members safe. PAGE A10

#### SPORTS B6-9

##### A Hockey Comeback

Eight years after a mysterious illness halted Cody Hodgson’s rising N.H.L. career, he’s back on the ice. PAGE B6

#### OBITUARIES B10-11

##### Aristocrat, Actress and Artist

Ira von Fürstenberg, the Italian-born princess and Fiat heiress who enjoyed many careers, was 83. PAGE B11

#### THURSDAY STYLES D1-8

##### They Love Her, Even in Red

The onetime Trump aide Alyssa Farah Griffin is now a liberal favorite. PAGE D1

#### ARTS C1-6

##### Response to a Racist Mural

Rather than remove an offensive 1927 mural, Tate Britain commissioned an artist to address it head-on. PAGE C1

##### A Poetic Wonder Redeems

A New York premiere by the hip-hop choreographer Rennie Harris capped an uneven night at the Joyce. PAGE C6



#### BUSINESS B1-5

##### Leaving the Wallet Behind

A life of relying on your phone is attainable, but it requires preparation and some compromises. PAGE B1

##### Malaysia Rises as Tech Hub

U.S. and European companies looking to diversify from China are expanding around Southeast Asia. PAGE B1

#### OPINION A18-19

##### Lydia Polgreen

PAGE A18

