The New York Times

Today, cloudy, moderate humidity, a shower, high 72. **Tonight,** cloudy, rain, low 66. **Tomorrow,** mostly cloudy, humid, a thunderstorm late, high 79. Weather map, Page B10.

VOL. CLXXIII No. 60,262

© 2024 The New York Times Company

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 2024

Prices in Canada may be higher

Postal Service Faces Hurdles With Overhaul

Late Mail Delivery and Inflation Stifle Plan

By MADELEINE NGO

WASHINGTON — More than three years ago, the U.S. Postal Service unveiled a sweeping 10year plan meant to steer the organization out of a financial crisis. The plan, which included consolidating locations, raising prices and lengthening promised delivery times, was meant to stabilize an agency that had lost \$87 billion over the past 14 years.

That effort has run into major obstacles. Early attempts to modernize the delivery network temporarily led to worse service in areas like Atlanta and Richmond, Va., where the agency has rolled out new regional processing and distribution centers.

The Postal Service's long-term financial viability also remains in doubt. Revenue is up, but expenses have climbed, in large part because inflation has surged in recent years and driven up labor expenses. The agency has also called for administrative action that would adjust its pension costs, which has not occurred. At the same time, the Postal Service is grappling with declining mail

In early 2021, Postal Service management initially projected that it would break even by fiscal year 2023. Instead, the agency, which is supposed to be self-sustaining, lost \$6.5 billion that year and is projected to lose an additional \$6.3 billion this fiscal year.

Lawmakers have pushed back on the changes, in part because of complaints about mail service in their districts. In May, a bipartisan group of 26 lawmakers sent a



A U.S. Postal Service distribution center in Palmetto, Ga.

letter to the agency's leaders expressing concern about the decline in on-time delivery in regions where there have been major changes. The lawmakers also called on the agency to pause changes to its processing network until its regulator fully studied their potential impact.

In response, Louis DeJoy, the postmaster general, said the agency would pause some of the changes until January and move forward with others that were underway.

In a lengthy interview, Mr. De-Joy defended the 10-year plan. He acknowledged that officials faced some initial challenges but said that the agency had long been in a "death spiral" and that he wanted to accelerate many of the changes. He also noted that service in the

Continued on Page A16



That Bus Ride Could Cost \$100

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority began issuing summonses to crack down on fare evasion on New York's buses. Page A17.

Senate Allies Tipped Scales In Biden's Exit

By CARL HULSE

WASHINGTON - Senator Jack Reed, the West Point graduate, Army veteran and Rhode Island Democrat who leads the Armed Services Committee, is hardly known as a troublemaker prone to rash statements.

So when Senate Democrats gathered privately with President Biden's top political advisers last month to assess Mr. Biden's capacity to remain the Democratic presidential nominee, the decision by the normally taciturn Mr. Reed to be among the first to speak was notable. What was even more remarkable was what he said, according to two attendees: If Mr. Biden wanted to stay in the race after a disastrous debate performance that underscored concerns about his condition and mental acuity, he should submit to examination by two independent neurologists who were willing to report their findings at a news con-

It was a striking position for a Democratic loyalist to take, and one that underscored the near unanimity among Senate Democrats in the room that day that Mr. Biden should not continue as the party's nominee. It was just one of a series of extraordinary moments during a closed-door session on July 11 that would lead Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the majority leader, to schedule a face-to-face meeting with the president days later in which he urged Mr. Biden

The effort by Mr. Schumer and Senate Democrats to persuade Mr. Biden to step aside was a more pivotal factor than previously

Continued on Page A13

A California Corruption Wave as Money Pours In

By RALPH VARTABEDIAN

LOS ANGELES — Jose Huizar's downfall at Los Angeles City Hall was as stunning as his rise to success, a political tragedy that, like many in the land of dreams, has become a familiar

Born to a large family in rural Mexico and raised in poverty near the towering high rises of downtown Los Angeles, he overcame enormous odds to graduate from the University of California, Berkeley, Princeton University and U.C.L.A. law school.

He returned to his old neighborhood in East Los Angeles to run for the school board and eventuWith Little Oversight, Politicians Are Often **Bribery Recipients**

ally the City Council, where he gained control of the influential committee that approves multimillion-dollar commercial development projects across the city.

His spectacular fall - after F.B.I. agents caught him accepting \$1.8 million worth of casino chips, luxury hotel stays, prostitutes and a liquor box full of cash from Chinese developers — was cast by federal prosecutors as an

epic Hollywood tale. They persuaded a judge in January to sentence him to 13 years in prison on charges of tax evasion and racket-"He was the King Kong of L.A. City Hall for many, many years,"

Mack E. Jenkins, chief of the criminal division at the U.S. attorney's office in Los Angeles, told the court. "And with his fall, a lot of devastation was left in his wake."

This week, when Mr. Huizar is scheduled to report to prison, he will become the third recent Los Angeles City Council member to go down as part of corruption investigations, part of a much larger circle of staff aides, fund-raisers,

Continued on Page A15



Second Day of Raid in West Bank

Walls were riddled with bullet holes after an Israeli military operation in the West Bank. Page A6.

NEWS ANALYSIS

\$4.00

'Forever Wars' Are at an End. Not to Trump.

Seeking to Bring Back Successful 2016 Issue

By JONATHAN WEISMAN

The extraordinary altercation on Monday between Trump campaign aides and an Arlington National Cemetery official over political photography on sacred military ground is playing out in a hyperpartisan moment when war records and former President Donald J. Trump's respect for military service are already up for debate.

But the conflict at Arlington Cemetery's Section 60, reserved for those recently killed in America's wars abroad, points to a deeper issue for Mr. Trump and his core foreign policy identity: The 2024 presidential campaign between the former president and Vice President Kamala Harris is the first in 24 years to unfold without an active American ground war.

Mr. Trump's rise in 2016 signified a major break from the foreign policy orthodoxy of both major parties, which believed in a U.S.-led internationalism and the projection of force abroad, whether it was the wars launched by George W. Bush in Afghanistan and Iraq or the conflicts embraced by Democrats to thwart ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and Bosnia and to end a dictatorship in Libya. That year, it was the Republican, Mr. Trump, who spoke of ending war, and the Democrat, Hillary Clinton, who bore the unpopular mantle of military aggression with her vote authorizing the invasion of Iraq and her muscular diplomacy as secretary of

Mr. Trump has used the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan during the Biden administration to resurrect his critiques of the "forever wars" that in part powered his movement. Now, he warns of a looming "World War III," promises to end the war in Ukraine before he is inaugurated and brags that his relationships with authoritarian leaders like Xi Jinping of China, Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and Kim Jong-un of North Korea will restore stability and allow him to focus on securing domestic tranquillity.

Mr. Trump is the candidate of peace through strength, said Brian Hughes, a Trump campaign senior adviser, while Ms. Harris is "the candidate of war because as 'the last person in the room' with Biden before the Afghanistan debacle, we are closer than ever to a world war than any other time in the last 50

But to Mr. Trump's political opponents, his arguments are having trouble sticking in part because voters do not believe his warnings of imminent American warfare.

"The problem for Trump is that this is yet another issue where he ran promising the voters something, he had four years to do it, and he didn't get it done," said Conor Lamb, a former Marine and former Democratic House member from west-

Continued on Page A12

Adams Has a Re-election Pitch: He's 'Dinkins 2'

By JEFFERY C. MAYS

Mayor Eric Adams began his monthly Q. and A. radio program with an unusual self-introduction. "I'm your mayor, Eric Adams,"

he said recently on WBLS-FM, a popular R&B station in New York City. "David Dinkins 2, I like to

Two days later, Mr. Adams reinforced the message. At an event

A Comparison Is Aimed at Black Voters

celebrating Haitian heritage, he again portrayed himself as a sequel to Mr. Dinkins, the city's first Black mayor. He repeated the line the next day, at a gathering of older New Yorkers in East Harlem.

Invoking Mr. Dinkins, and his history as a one-term mayor, has become a central theme in Mr. Adams's re-election strategy. At every event where the mayor has an audience with his base halls with older adults, ethnic heritage celebrations, guest appearances on Black radio - Mr. Adams has argued that his accomplishments are being dismissed Continued on Page A15

By MARK LANDLER LONDON — A public inquiry into the case of Lucy Letby, a British neonatal nurse convicted of killing seven babies, has come under fire from scientific and medical experts who have called for it to be delayed or broadened to consider whether the deaths could have been caused by other

Experts Say Convictions Missed Key Factors

U.K. Inquiry Skirts Nurse's Guilt in Infant Deaths

The inquiry, set to begin on Sept. 10, will cast a fresh spotlight on one of the most haunting murder cases in recent British history. Conscientious and well liked by her colleagues, Ms. Letby was

found guilty of killing seven infants, and trying to kill seven others, in a busy public hospital in 2015 and 2016.

Ms. Letby, 34, was sentenced to life in prison last year, and her requests for appeals have so far been denied. But questions about the handling of the investigation and the evidence used to convict her have grown harder to ignore,

Continued on Page A9



BUSINESS B1-5

A Resort, With a Desk Hoping to lure workers back to the

office, companies are designing luxe spaces to compete with home. PAGE B1

Encryption in the Spotlight

The charges against Telegram's founder raised concerns about the app's approach to privacy and security. PAGE B1

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

Protecting Swift and Her Fans

The C.I.A. provided information that helped thwart a plot to attack a Taylor Swift concert this month in Austria, the agency's deputy director said. PAGE A4

A Presidential Inheritance

Donald J. Trump blames President Biden for global crises. Historically, the reality is much more complex. PAGE A8

OBITUARIES A20

Urged Pope to Ordain Women

Sister Theresa Kane, 87, used a speech before Pope John Paul II to call for equality in the Roman Catholic Church.



WEEKEND ARTS C1-10

The Great Museum Road Trip

From Ithaca to Buffalo, art is overflowing in upstate New York. Above, an exhibition at Cornell University. PAGE C1

Tom Cruise's Vulnerable Year

In 1999, the actor starred in "Eyes Wide Shut" and "Magnolia," opening himself up in ways he rarely has since. PAGE C1

NATIONAL A10-17

Losing the Right to Vote

More than a million Americans, many with disabilities, live under a courtapproved guardianship. Many states block them from voting under laws that can be centuries old.

Sparring Over Death Penalty

In Missouri, a St. Louis County prosecutor is fighting the state's attorney general for the life of a man convicted of a 1988 murder. He is scheduled to be executed on Sept. 24.

OPINION A18-19

Mara Gay

PAGE A18



SPORTS B6-9

A Hallowed Hoops Haven

A half century after expanding its adaptive recreation program, the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is the bedrock for wheelchair basketball.

