

“All the News  
That’s Fit to Print”

# The New York Times

**THE WEATHER**  
Today, humid, clouds and sunshine, afternoon thunderstorms, high 85. **Tonight**, an evening thunderstorm, cloudy, low 66. **Tomorrow**, less humid, high 86. Weather map, Page B6.

VOL. CLXXIII . . . . No. 60,163      © 2024 The New York Times Company      THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2024      Prices in Canada may be higher      \$4.00

When the U.S. pulled out of Afghanistan, it left secrets in the desert. The New York Times identified hundreds of civilians abducted in the largest campaign of forced disappearances of the war. It all led back to one man.



Abdul Baqi, a spare parts dealer, said his son went missing in 2016.



Malika, whose son also vanished in 2016, accused officials of cowardice.

## AMERICA’S MONSTER

How the United States Backed Kidnapping, Torture and Murder in Afghanistan

By **AZAM AHMED** and **MATTHIEU AIKINS**

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — The convoy rumbled into the Taliban heartland, a white desert littered with stones. Over the loudspeakers at the local mosque, the Afghan police officers ordered everyone to gather: The commander was here.

Dozens assembled in the mud square to listen as Abdul Raziq, one of America’s most important partners in the war against the Taliban, stood before the crowd, gesturing at two prisoners he had brought along to make his point.

The prisoners knelt with their hands bound as Raziq spoke to his men. A pair of his officers raised their rifles and opened fire, sending the prisoners into spasms on the reddening earth. In the silence that followed, Raziq addressed the crowd, three witnesses said.

“You will learn to respect me and reject the Taliban,”



Abdul Raziq, a critical U.S. partner.

Raziq said after the killings, which took place in the winter of 2010, according to the witnesses and relatives of both men. “Because I will come back and do this again and again, and no one is going to stop me.”

For years, American military leaders lionized Raziq as a model partner in Afghanistan, their “if only” ally in the battle against the Taliban: If only everyone fought like Raziq, we might actually win this war, American commanders often said.

He ruled over the crucial battleground of Kandahar during a period when the United States had more troops on the ground than in any other chapter of the war, ultimately rising to lieutenant general thanks to the backing of the United States. American generals cycling through Afghanistan made regular pilgrimages to visit him, praising his courage, his ferocious war fighting and the loyalty he commanded from his

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## In Surprise, Sunak Calls for U.K. Vote on July 4

By **MARK LANDLER**

LONDON — Prime Minister Rishi Sunak of Britain on Wednesday called a snap general election for July 4, throwing the fate of his embattled Conservative Party to a restless British public that appears eager for change after 14 years of Conservative government.

Mr. Sunak’s surprise announcement, from a rain-spattered lectern in front of 10 Downing Street, was the starting gun for six

### Tories’ 14-Year Hold on Power Is Endangered

weeks of campaigning that will render a verdict on a party that has led Britain since Barack Obama was America’s president. But the Tories have discarded four prime ministers in eight years, lurching through the serial chaos of Brexit, the coronavirus pandemic and a cost-of-living crisis.

With the opposition Labour Party ahead in most polls by double digits for the last 18 months, a Conservative defeat has come to assume an air of inevitability. For all that, Mr. Sunak is calculating that Britain has had just enough good news in recent days — including glimmers of fresh economic growth and the lowest inflation rate in three years — that his party might be able to cling to power.

“Now is the moment for Britain  
*Continued on Page A13*

## Turbulence in ‘Fairy Tale’ Life Of Running Mate for Kennedy

By **KIRSTEN GRIND**

OAKLAND, Calif. — When Robert F. Kennedy Jr. was considering potential running mates for his presidential run, his shortlist was initially topped by two well-known men with unusual résumés: Aaron Rodgers, the N.F.L. quarterback and frequent purveyor of conspiracy theories, and Jesse Ventura, the former governor of Minnesota and professional wrestler known as “The Body.”

Instead, Mr. Kennedy made a surprise pick — a woman and a little-known figure with an unusual background: Nicole Shanahan.

Ms. Shanahan, 38, a onetime Silicon Valley lawyer, has never held public office and has scant name recognition. But she was selected after Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Ventura fell through as vice-presidential candidates and Mr. Kennedy’s campaign needed money to fund its efforts to get onto state ballots,

three people familiar with the events said. And money was something that Ms. Shanahan could provide in abundance.

Ms. Shanahan has a fortune of more than \$1 billion that stems  
*Continued on Page A16*



Nicole Shanahan, a lawyer, has a fortune of over \$1 billion.



### A Moment of Solace

Cassie Marckmann, left, with Jeri Pickrell a day after a powerstorm hit Greenfield, Iowa. Page A15.

## Flag Tied to Jan. 6 Flew at Another Alito Home

*This article is by Jodi Kantor, Aric Toler and Julie Tate.*

Last summer, two years after an upside-down American flag was flown outside the Virginia home of Supreme Court Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr., another provocative symbol was displayed at his vacation house in New Jersey, according to interviews and photographs.

This time, it was the “Appeal to Heaven” flag, which, like the inverted U.S. flag, was carried by rioters at the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Also known as the Pine Tree flag, it dates back to the Revolutionary War, but largely fell into obscurity until recent years and is now a symbol of support for former President Donald J. Trump, for a religious strand of the “Stop the Steal” campaign and for a push to

remake American government in Christian terms.

Three photographs obtained by The New York Times, along with accounts from a half-dozen neighbors and passers-by, show that the Appeal to Heaven flag was aloft at the Alito home on Long Beach Island in July and September of 2023.

A Google street view image  
*Continued on Page A19*

NATIONAL A14-21

### \$2 Million to Uvalde Families

The Texas city agreed to pay most of the families of schoolchildren who were shot in a 2022 massacre, and to overhaul its police force. *PAGE A21*

### Vote on Contraception Access

Senator Chuck Schumer plans to push for a vote on a bill to protect access to birth control, in an effort to spotlight Republicans’ opposition. *PAGE A20*

### Mass Transit Lifeline in Limbo

The government provided \$69.5 billion in relief during Covid-19, but now many systems face cutbacks. *PAGE A14*

INTERNATIONAL A4-13

### Ukraine’s Use of U.S. Weapons

The Biden administration is debating whether to lift a ban on firing American arms into Russian territory. *PAGE A6*

### Funeral in Tehran

Hamas’s political leader spoke at ceremonies for Iran’s president and other victims of a helicopter crash. *PAGE A4*



BUSINESS B1-5

### Neuralink Patient Still Upbeat

Elon Musk’s experiment with implanting a computerized brain device developed serious flaws, but the subject, who is paralyzed, has few regrets. *PAGE B1*

### Funding Necessary Housing

Neighborhood groups are uniting to finance mixed-use developments to create places to live and work. *PAGE B1*

SPORTS B7-10

### The Ultimate Team Player

The Boston Celtics guard Jrue Holiday has mentored many N.B.A. players with help from his wife, Lauren. *PAGE B7*

ARTS C1-6

### Lonely Damsel in the Desert

“Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga” delivers an origin story of a brutalized character that’s exciting but also sad. *PAGE C1*

### A New Breed of Star at Cannes

Dogs like Messi from “Anatomy of a Fall” get attention on the red carpet for themselves and their owners. *PAGE C1*



THURSDAY STYLES D1-6

### Your Invite Isn’t in the Mail

When two siblings started Paperless Post in 2009, some saw its digital invitations as a fad. They weren’t. *PAGE D1*

### Neither Carson Nor Hudson

No longer polishing silver and folding napkins, today’s butlers might wear shorts and procure helicopters. *PAGE D5*

OPINION A22-23

### Jennifer Weiner

*PAGE A22*

