

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

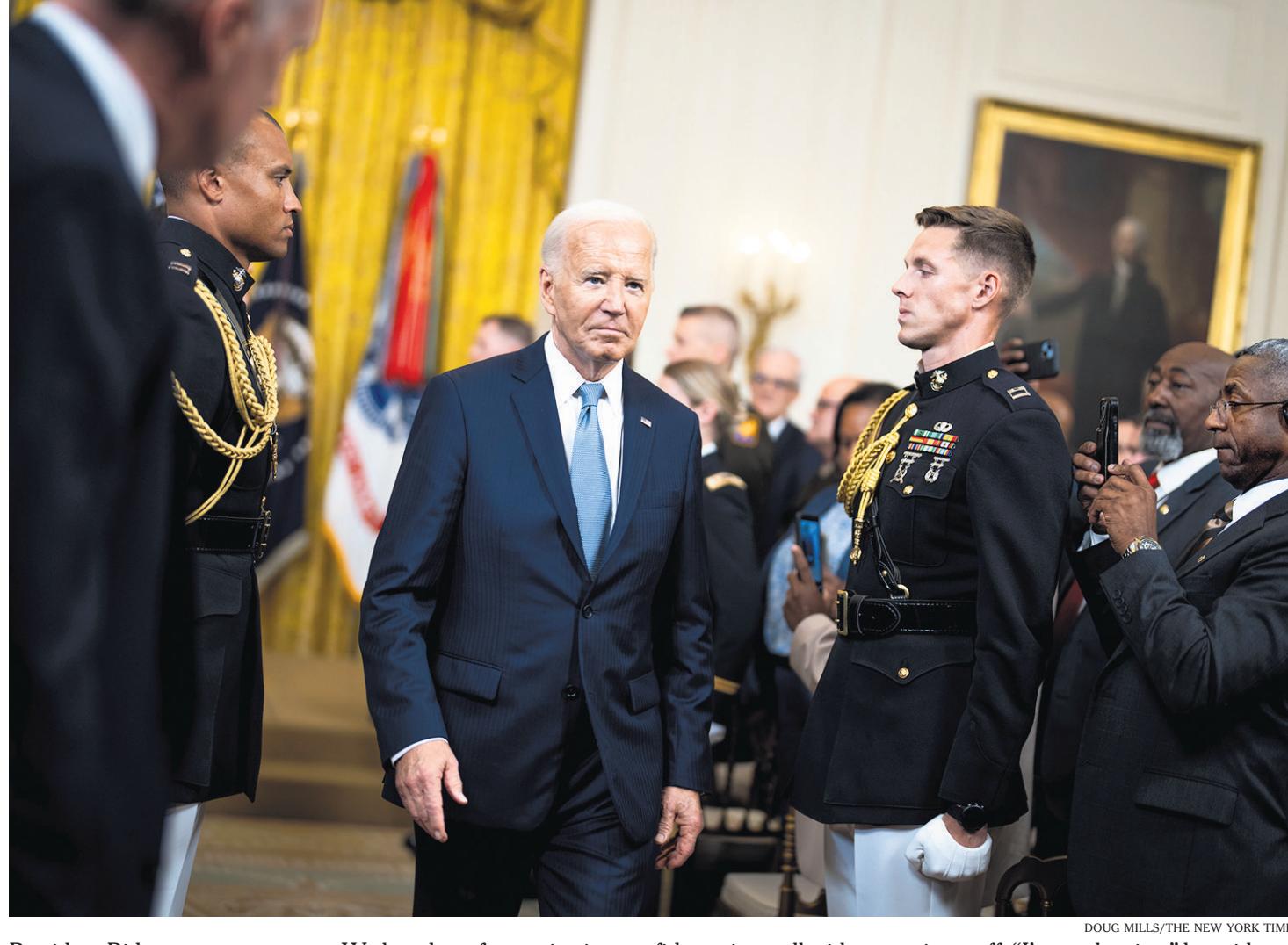
VOL. CLXXIII No. 60,205

© 2024 The New York Times Company

THURSDAY, JULY 4, 2024

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



President Biden at a ceremony on Wednesday, after projecting confidence in a call with campaign staff. "I'm not leaving," he said.

Family Loses All Its Women in India Stampede

By SUHASINI RAJ

SOKHANA, India — Vinod Kumar was away from home on Tuesday, as he usually is for days at a time in search of masonry work, when he got the dreadful call.

All the women in his family, three generations of them, were dead, crushed in a stampede.

For the rest of the day, Mr. Kumar and his three sons went from hospital to hospital searching for their loved ones among the bodies of the 121 people who had died when a large gathering of a spiritual guru broke into deadly panic.

Close to midnight, they found the bodies of his wife, Raj Kumari,

Three Generations Die at Gathering of Guru Who Offered Hope

42, and daughter, Bhumi, 9, at the government hospital in Hathras, laid out on large slabs of ice among the dozens others in the corridor.

"Why did you leave me just like that? Who will scold the children now and push them to go to school?" Mr. Kumar wailed at the feet of his wife.

But he couldn't afford to be entirely lost in grief yet. The body of

his mother was yet to be found. He bent over to pick up his daughter for one last embrace. Bhumi wore a yellow top, and her hair was tied in a ponytail with a pink band.

"Let her sleep," Nitin, Mr. Kumar's oldest son, told him, pulling the girl away from his father to lay her back on the slab so they could continue the search.

"I don't know when I will find my mother's body," he said, moving on with the search. "I want to do their last rites together."

Mr. Kumar's mother, Jaimanti, was the family's matriarch. And she was its main devotee to the guru, keeping his posters at home and frequenting his sermons.

Continued on Page A6

NO STAR QUALITY, BUT HE'S FAVORED

In Britain, Starmer Yanks Labour to the Center

By STEPHEN CASTLE
and MARK LANDLER

LONDON — Keir Starmer, the leader of Britain's Labour Party, nodded sympathetically as a young mother recalled, in harrowing terms, how she had watched closed-circuit television footage of the fatal stabbing of her 21-year-old son, whose heart was pierced with a single blow.

"Thank you for that," a somber Mr. Starmer said to the woman and other relatives of victims of knife attacks, as they stood around a wooden table last week, discussing ways to combat violent crime. "It's really, really powerful."

It was not the most feel-good campaign event for a candidate the week before an election that his opposition party is widely expected to win. But it was entirely in character for Mr. Starmer, a 61-year-old former human rights lawyer who still behaves less like a politician than a prosecutor bringing a case.

Earnest, intense, practical and not brimming with charisma, Mr. Starmer finds himself on the cusp of a potential landslide victory without the star quality that marked previous British leaders on the doorstep of power, whether Margaret Thatcher, the 1980s free-market champion, or Tony Blair, the avatar of "Cool Britannia."

And yet Mr. Starmer has managed an arguably comparable political feat: Less than a decade after entering Parliament, and less than five years after his party suffered its worst election defeat since the 1930s, he has remade Labour with ruthless efficiency into an electable party, pulling it to the center on key policies while capitalizing on the failings of three Conservative prime ministers.

"Don't forget what they have done," Mr. Starmer told a rally in London on Saturday, pacing the stage in a pressed white shirt with sleeves rolled up. "Don't forget party-gate, don't forget the Covid contract, don't forget the lies, don't forget the kickbacks."

In listing this parade of Conservative scandals and crises, he brought the crowd of 350 to its feet.

Continued on Page A8

Biden Weighing Future As Trump's Lead Grows In Fallout From Debate

On All Sides, Most Doubt Incumbent's Ability to Govern

By SHANE GOLDMACHER

Donald J. Trump's lead in the 2024 presidential race has widened after President Biden's fumbling debate performance last week, as concerns that Mr. Biden is too old to govern effectively rose to new heights among Democrats and independent voters, a new poll from The New York Times and Siena College showed.

Mr. Trump now leads Mr. Biden 49 percent to 43 percent among likely voters nationally, a three-point swing toward the Republican from just a week earlier, before the debate. It is the largest lead Mr. Trump has recorded in a Times/Siena poll since 2015. Mr. Trump leads by even more among registered voters, 49 percent to 41 percent.

Doubts about Mr. Biden's age and acuity are widespread and growing. A majority of every demographic, geographic and ideological group in the poll — including Black voters and those who said they will still be voting for him — believe Mr. Biden, 81, is too old to be effective.

Overall, 74 percent of voters view him as too old for the job, up five percentage points since the debate. Concerns about Mr. Biden's age have spiked eight percentage points among Democrats in the week since the debate, to 59 percent. The share of independent voters who said they felt that way rose to 79 percent, nearly matching the Republican view of the president.

The poll offers early empirical evidence of what many Democrats have feared: that Mr. Biden's faltering debate performance has further imperiled his chances against Mr. Trump this fall. Some

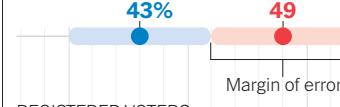
Continued on Page A15

THE NEW YORK TIMES/ SIENA COLLEGE POLL

JUNE 28 TO JULY 2

If the 2024 presidential election were held today, who would you vote for if the candidates were Joe Biden and Donald Trump?

LIKELY VOTERS



Source: Based on a New York Times/Siena College poll of 1,532 voters nationwide conducted from June 28 to July 2, 2024 | Note: The margin of error for likely voters is +/- 2.9 points. For registered voters it is +/- 2.8 points.

LILY BOYCE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

THE WEATHER
Today, cloudy, humid, spotty thunderstorms, high 85. Tonight, humid, thunderstorms, low 73. Tomorrow, cloudy, humid, thunderstorms, high 87. Weather map is on Page B10.

President Tells Allies the Next Few Days Will Be Critical

By KATIE ROGERS

WASHINGTON — President Biden has told key allies that he knows the coming days are crucial and understands that he may not be able to salvage his candidacy if he cannot convince voters that he is up to the job after a disastrous debate performance last week.

According to two allies who have spoken with him, Mr. Biden has emphasized that he is still deeply committed to the fight for re-election but understands that his viability as a candidate is on the line.

The president sought to project confidence on Wednesday in a call with his campaign staff, even as White House officials were trying to calm nerves among the ranks inside the Biden administration.

"No one's pushing me out," Mr. Biden said in the call. "I'm not leaving."

Vice President Kamala Harris was also on the line.

"We will not back down. We will follow our president's lead," she said. "We will fight, and we will win."

Still, Mr. Biden's allies said that the president had privately acknowledged that his next few appearances heading into the July 4 holiday weekend must go well, particularly an interview scheduled for Friday with George Stephanopoulos of ABC News and campaign stops in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

"He knows if he has two more events like that, we're in a different place" by the end of the weekend, said one of the allies, referring to Mr. Biden's halting and unfocused performance in the debate. That person, who talked to the president in the past 24 hours, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive situation.

The accounts of his conversations with allies are the first indication to become public that the president is seriously considering whether he can recover after a devastating performance on the debate stage in Atlanta last Thursday.

A new poll from The New York Times and Siena College showed that former President Donald J. Trump now leads Mr. Biden 49 percent to 43 percent among likely voters nationally, a three-point swing toward the Republican from just a week earlier, before the debate. The six-point deficit underscored the growing challenges to the campaign and could make it harder to hang on, although some insiders had worried

Continued on Page A16

Looking at Risks and Rewards Of Switching Party's Nominee

By ADAM NAGOURNEY
and JIM RUTENBERG

With President Biden under pressure to drop his bid for a second term, his party has been thrust into uncharted territory, struggling with a long list of risks and rewards as it faces the prospect of replacing Mr. Biden less than two months before the party convention.

No presumptive nominee has withdrawn this late in the process. But no party has faced the challenge the Democrats face today: a nominee dogged by doubts about his mental acuity; his ability to beat his rival, former President Donald J. Trump; and his fitness

Gambling on Bringing Energy, Not Division

to serve another four years as president

All of this has left Democrats struggling with critical questions: Is it easier to defeat Mr. Trump with or without Mr. Biden at the top of the ticket? Is it riskier to go with a new candidate or stick with a president who appears headed for defeat?

On Wednesday, a New York Times/Siena College poll found that Mr. Trump's lead over Mr. Biden

Continued on Page A17



NOAH BERGER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thousands Evacuate California Fire

A wildfire that began Tuesday north of Sacramento has burned more than 3,000 acres. Page A13.

Odd Contest: Go Slow, Save Whales, Win a Prize

California Ships Reduce Speed Voluntarily

dangerous whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

"It's good for the environment, and we make sure the public knows about it," said Sean Hastings, a resource protection coordinator at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and a founder of the award program, which was created by a coalition of national marine sanctuaries, air quality districts and other nonprofit groups. "That's the motivation."

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

Ruling Rooted in Trump's View

The top court's conservative majority seemed to embrace Donald J. Trump's convictions about tit-for-tat partisan prosecutions. News Analysis. PAGE A20

For Republican leaders, sweeping anti-regulatory rulings by the justices are the big payoff for their efforts. PAGE A20

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14

dangered whales migrate through and feed in. The prize, known as Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies, comes with a sculptural whale-tail trophy and bragging rights.

Continued on Page A14