

“All the News  
That’s Fit to Print”

# The New York Times

VOL. CLXXIII . . . No. 60,165 © 2024 The New York Times Company SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2024 Prices in Canada may be higher \$4.00

## Trump’s Allies Nudge TikTok Toward Right

### Uptick in Support on Liberal-Friendly Site

By ANJALI HUYNH

Donald Trump isn’t on TikTok. And he may not need to be, as his allies and surrogates transform it in his favor. The social-media platform, though still regarded as a hub for Democratic voices and liberal causes, has seen an uptick of right-wing, pro-Trump influencers since the last presidential election.

The increase comes as President Biden signed legislation that would force a sale of TikTok by its Chinese owner or would have it banned in the United States. That law has triggered a backlash from young voters who backed Mr. Biden overwhelmingly in 2020, some of whom are also opposing his administration’s support of Israel’s war in Gaza. An internal analysis within TikTok found nearly twice as many pro-Trump posts as pro-Biden ones on the platform since November: 1.29 million pro-Trump posts versus 651,000 pro-Biden posts.

“If we allow the Democrats and the leftist organizations and leftist influencers to have a monopoly on the content that’s produced on TikTok, we will lose the next generation of Americans,” said C.J. Pearson, a social-media influencer with nearly 149,000 followers on TikTok who co-chairs the Republican National Committee’s youth advisory council.

But TikTok still presents challenges as the former president seeks to regain the White House. Among the right, TikTok’s reach remains overshadowed by that of other social media platforms. Although a super PAC backing Mr. Trump joined TikTok this month, it remains unclear whether his unpopularity with young voters, who are on the platform in large numbers, will make it difficult for him to find widespread support. And Republican politicians — including Mr. Trump — have largely resisted joining the platform, with many having vocally opposed it.

Mr. Trump didn’t just oppose TikTok: He attempted to ban it several times as president, citing security concerns about the app’s Chinese ownership as young people used it to mobilize against him in 2020. Yet over the last month,

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Mona Setherley brought flowers to the abandoned rowhouse where her son, Bruce, was found dead from an overdose.

## How Baltimore Became the Overdose Capital

6,000 People Dead in Six Years as Fentanyl Flooded the City’s Streets

This article is by Alissa Zhu, Nick Thieme and Jessica Gallagher.

BALTIMORE — Across the city, the death toll has mounted. Fatal drug overdoses have occurred on a third of the city’s blocks. Bodies have been found in motels and vacant houses, at parks and the football stadium, around the corner from City Hall and outside the Health Department. In one grim month alone, 114 people succumbed.

People in Baltimore have been dying of overdoses at a rate never before seen in a major American city.

In the past six years, nearly 6,000 lives have been lost. The death rate from 2018 to 2022 was nearly double that of any other large city, and higher than nearly all of Appalachia during the prescription pill crisis, the Midwest during the height of rural meth labs or New York during the crack epidemic.

A decade ago, 700 fewer people here were being killed by drugs each year. And when fatalities be-



For years, Baltimore was known for its innovative approach, including a broad public information campaign.

gan to rise from the synthetic opioid fentanyl, so potent that even minuscule doses are deadly, Baltimore’s initial response was hailed as a national model. The city set ambitious goals, distributed Narcan widely, experimented with ways to steer people into treatment and ratcheted up campaigns

to alert the public.

But then city leaders became preoccupied with other crises, including gun violence and the pandemic. Many of those efforts to fight overdoses stalled, an examination by The New York Times and The Baltimore Banner has found.

Health officials began publicly sharing less data. City Council members rarely addressed or inquired about the growing number of overdoses. The fact that the city’s status became so much worse than any other of its size was not known to the mayor, the deputy mayor — who had been the health commissioner during some of those years — or multiple council members until they were recently shown data compiled by Times/Banner reporters. In effect, they were flying blind.

Little of the urgency that once characterized the city’s response is evident today. Since 2020, officials have set fewer and less ambitious goals for their overdose prevention efforts. The task force managing the crisis once met monthly but convened only twice in 2022 and three times in 2023. By then, fewer people were being revived by emergency workers, fewer people were getting medication to curb their opioid addiction through Medicaid and fewer people were in publicly funded

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**THE WEATHER**  
Today, mix of clouds and sun, not as warm, high 81. **Tonight**, mostly cloudy, low 62. **Tomorrow**, partly sunny, an afternoon thunderstorm, high 80. Weather map, Page A14.

## HUNGER SURGING AS AN OFFENSIVE PUMMELS RAFAH

### OFFICIALS FEAR FAMINE

#### International Court Adds Pressure on Israel to Exit Gaza City

This article is by Vivian Yee, Bilal Shbair and Matthew Mpoke Bigg.

CAIRO — For weeks, the Gaza Strip’s southernmost city, Rafah, was one of the few places where desperate Gazans could find some aid and food. Bakeries sold bread; fuel powered generators; markets were open, if expensive.

But since Israeli forces began an incursion in the city this month — effectively closing the two main crossings where aid enters — Rafah has become a place of fear and dwindling supplies. Bakeries have shuttered. So have malnutrition treatment centers. The price of the firewood that many people now use to cook has doubled. Tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers have grown so expensive that they are sold by the piece, not by the kilogram.

Families hide what canned goods they still have. They eye their emptying sacks of flour, calculating how long they will last.

“There’s always something missing in the tent,” said Ahmed Abu al-Kas, 51, who is sheltering in Rafah with his family. “If we have bread, we don’t have water. If we have firewood, we don’t have some basic vegetables.”

For months, international aid officials and health experts have warned that famine will come for Gaza unless Israel lifts barriers keeping most humanitarian aid out, the fighting stops and vital services such as health care and clean water, which must be in place to fend off malnutrition, are restored.

None of those conditions have been met.

If anything, circumstances have become worse in some places. Little fuel is entering to power the aid operations, hospitals or municipal services. Hunger is spreading.

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**ISOLATION** Israeli policy analysts say the nation is risking a political tsunami. News Analysis. PAGE A9

## Women’s Soccer Success Transforms Hearts, Minds and a City

By RORY SMITH and MARÍA GARRIDO

BARCELONA, Spain — A little more than an hour before the game begins, the gates outside Johan Cruyff Stadium swing open and a thousand or so fans rush inside. Some scurry to the turnstiles. Others wait patiently at the merchandise stalls, anxious to buy a jersey, a scarf, a commemorative trinket.

The busiest and longest line, though, forms outside a booth offering fans the chance to have a photograph taken with their heroes. In a couple of minutes, it snakes all the way back to the entrance, populated by doting parents and spellbound preteens hoping they arrived in time.

They have come to see the most dominant women’s soccer team on the planet. Barcelona Femení has been Spanish champion every year since 2019. It has not lost a league game since last May, a run during which eight of its players also lifted the Women’s World Cup. On Saturday, the team can

win its third Women’s Champions League title, which crowns the best professional team in Europe, in four seasons.

That success has turned the team’s standouts into global stars and the club into what often seems like a juggernaut. It has also transformed Barcelona, and the



Aitana Bonmatí, right, the reigning world player of the year, has helped lead Barcelona Femení to the Champions League final.

broader region of Catalonia, into the global heartbeat of women’s soccer, a case study in what happens when the women’s game wins the same prominence as the men’s.

On the city’s streets, jerseys bearing the name of Alexia Putellas or Aitana Bonmatí, Barça Fe-

men’s biggest stars, are just as common as those with the names of an icon of the men’s team. And on the region’s soccer fields, a boom is playing out, with what was once a male-dominated space now awash in women and girls.

The number of registered female soccer players in Catalonia has doubled in the past six years, and it is expected to grow exponentially in the decade to come. There are more coaches, more clubs, more teams, more games, more leagues.

The young fans queuing for a photo were not hoping for a picture with a distant hero. They were hoping, instead, to be close enough to touch the women who have helped make all of that real.

From the age of 11 until she was 14, Marta Torrejón said, she never played soccer against another girl. She had, in her younger days, when she was representing neighborhood teams. But from the moment she joined Espanyol — the smaller of the two professional soccer clubs in Barcelona — her

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## A Landmark Settlement Forces N.C.A.A. Schools to Pay Players

By BILLY WITZ

Since its founding, the N.C.A.A. has operated with a business model that defined the college athlete as an amateur. Over the years, as college sports evolved into a mega-enterprise, lawsuits and labor actions chipped away at that model, which came to be increasingly seen as exploitative in big-money sports like football and men’s basketball.

But the N.C.A.A.’s \$2.8 billion settlement on Thursday night in a class-action antitrust lawsuit represents the heaviest blow — and perhaps a decisive one — to that system.

If approved by a U.S. district judge in California, the settlement would allow for the creation of the first revenue-sharing plan for college athletics, a landmark shift in which schools would directly pay their athletes for playing.

This sea change, though, also carries its own questions, according to critics. Those include

### If Approved, There Are More Issues to Solve

whether women would be compensated fairly, whether smaller conferences would bear a disproportionate burden of the settlement and whether this framework would do anything to limit the power of collectives — the booster-funded groups that entice players with payments to hopscotch from school to school.

“It’s both a historic and deeply flawed agreement,” said Michael H. LeRoy, a law professor at the University of Illinois. “The idea that schools are paying millions of dollars to the people who are selling the TV contracts and filling the seats — that’s good. But it closes one Pandora’s box and opens four or five others.”

In recent years, college athletes had already made significant

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INTERNATIONAL A4-10	NATIONAL A11-21	BUSINESS B1-6	OBITUARIES B11-12	OPINION A22-23
<b>Missionaries in Haiti Killed</b> The latest assault by Haitian gangs left three people, including two American missionaries and a local pastor, dead in Port-au-Prince. PAGE A4	<b>Outrage at Raid in Arkansas</b> An airport director in Little Rock sold firearms at gun shows. Federal agents thought he was breaking the law and invaded his home, killing him. PAGE A11	<b>D.C.’s Downtown Downturn</b> Angry shop owners in Washington want the federal government to make a more concerted effort to get people to return to their offices. PAGE B1	<b>Known for ‘Super Size Me’</b> The documentarian Morgan Spurlock chronicled his month spent eating nothing but McDonald’s in a 2004 Oscar-nominated film. He was 53. PAGE B12	<b>Jessica Grose</b> PAGE A22

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