

“All the News
That’s Fit to Print”

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, sunshine, afternoon clouds, low humidity, high 86. **Tonight**, partly cloudy, low 70. **Tomorrow**, partly sunny, warm and dry, high 86. Weather map appears on Page B10.

VOL. CLXXIII No. 60,247 © 2024 The New York Times Company THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2024 Prices in Canada may be higher \$4.00



People evacuated from border regions of Russia amid Ukraine’s surprise incursion awaiting distribution of aid from a local nonprofit. NANNA HEITMANN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Religious Right Targeting I.V.F. As Allies Shift

By ELIZABETH DIAS

The pivot seems clear. The Republican Party of the post-Roe era is sidelining anti-abortion activists. Project 2025, the conservative blueprint with innovative abortion bans, has been disavowed by Donald J. Trump. And the new G.O.P. party platform even promises to advance access to in vitro fertilization.

But as Mr. Trump distances himself from the anti-abortion revolution his own administration ushered in, a powerful battalion of conservative Christians has pushed ahead. In recent months, they have quietly laid the groundwork for their fight to restrict not only access to abortion but also to I.V.F.

They are planting seeds for their ultimate goal of ending abortion from conception, both within the Republican Party and beyond it. They face a tough political battle since their positions are largely unpopular and do not reflect majority opinion, particularly on I.V.F.

As they see it, their challenge stretches across generations, not simply a single political cycle. And their approach — including controlling regulatory language, state party platforms and the definition of when life begins — reflects an incremental strategy similar to the one activists used for decades to eventually overturn Roe v. Wade.

“I expect there will be steps backwards as well as what we are working toward, which are long strikes forward,” said R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., who has been newly mobilizing evangelicals against I.V.F.

The fall of Roe itself was far

Continued on Page A18

Unresponsive, Yet Aware, After Damage to Brain

By CARL ZIMMER

When people suffer severe brain damage — as a result of car crashes, for example, or falls or aneurysms — they may slip into a coma for weeks, their eyes closed, their bodies unresponsive.

Some recover, but others enter a mysterious state: eyes open, yet without clear signs of consciousness. Hundreds of thousands of such patients in the United States alone are found to be in a vegetative state or minimally conscious. They may survive for decades without regaining a connection to the outside world.

These patients pose an agonizing mystery both for their families and for the medical professionals

Study Finds Many May Be Able to Think in ‘Vegetative State’

who care for them. Even if they can’t communicate, might they still be aware?

A large study published on Wednesday suggests that a quarter of them are.

Teams of neurologists at six research centers asked 241 unresponsive patients to spend several minutes at a time doing complex cognitive tasks, such as imagining themselves playing tennis. Twenty-five percent of

them responded with the same patterns of brain activity seen in healthy people, suggesting that they were able to think and at least somewhat aware.

Dr. Nicholas Schiff, a neurologist at Weill Cornell Medicine and an author of the study, said the study shows that up to 100,000 patients in the United States alone might have some level of consciousness despite their devastating injuries.

The results should lead to more sophisticated exams of people

Continued on Page A16

A.I. ADVANCE An A.L.S. patient made sounds that came close to matching his true voice. PAGE A16



Mushrooms Sprout in Iowa After decades raising hogs, the Faaborg family struggled for a way out of factory farming. Page A11. ANNICK SJOBARKEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Vagueness Is a Strategy as Harris Prepares Her Economic Message

By JIM TANKERSLEY and ANDREW DUEHREN

WASHINGTON — Vice President Kamala Harris’s sudden ascent to the top of the Democratic ticket has generated a host of questions about her economic agenda, including how much she will stick to the details of President Biden’s positions, tweak

them, or chart entirely new ones.

When she begins to roll out her policy vision this week, Ms. Harris is likely to answer only some of those questions.

During an economy-focused speech on Friday in Raleigh, N.C., Ms. Harris will outline a sort of reboot of the administration’s economic agenda, according to four people familiar with Ms. Harris’s plans.

Expected to Recalibrate Biden Policy Themes

She will lay out an approach relatively light on details, they said. It will shift emphasis from Mr. Biden’s focus on job creation and made-in-America manufacturing, and toward efforts to rein in the

cost of living. But it will rarely break from Mr. Biden on substance.

That strategy reflects the advice economic aides have given Ms. Harris: to be clear and bold in talking about the economy, but not overly specific.

Her ability to do that has been effectively enabled by the unusual circumstances of Mr. Biden’s

Continued on Page A12

Kyiv’s Gamble And Deception To Upend War

Incursion Was Surprise to Enemy and Allies

This article is by Kim Barker, Anton Troianovski, Andrew E. Kramer, Constant Méheut, Alina Lobzina, Eric Schmitt and Sanjana Varghese.

The scenes were decidedly Russian. A Gazprom facility. Flags with the country’s signature three horizontal stripes of white, blue and red. A Pyatyorochka supermarket.

The soldiers posting the videos, verified by The New York Times, were Ukrainian, almost giddily showing off just how easily they had pushed over the border and through Russian lines of defense in the past week.

In the Russian town of Sverdlikovo, a Ukrainian soldier climbed onto another’s shoulders, broke off the wooden post anchored to a town council building and threw the Russian flag to the ground. In Daryino, a town five miles to the west, other soldiers also grabbed a Russian flag. “Just throw it away,” a Ukrainian soldier said, grinning, as another flexed his muscles.

On Aug. 6, Ukraine launched an audacious military offensive, planned and executed in secrecy, with the aim of upending the dynamics of a war it has appeared to be losing, town by town, as Russian troops have ground forward in the east. The operation surprised even Kyiv’s closest allies, including the United States, and has pushed the limits of how Western military equipment would be permitted to be used inside Russian territory.

For Russia, it was a moment nearly as shocking as the mercenary Yevgeny V. Prigozhin’s march on Moscow in June 2023: the vaunted security state that President Vladimir V. Putin had built crumbled in the face of the surprise attack, failing in its basic task of protecting its citizens. And the unwritten social contract that has largely accompanied Mr. Putin’s 30-month campaign — that most Russians could get on with their normal lives even as he waged war — was cast into question anew.

Mostly on the defensive since a failed counteroffensive last year, Ukraine has pushed seven miles into Russia along a 25-mile front and taken dozens of Russian soldiers as prisoners, analysts and Russian officials say. The governor of Russia’s Kursk region said on Monday that Ukraine controlled 28 towns and villages there. More than 132,000 people have been evacuated from nearby areas, Russian officials said.

“Russia brought war to others,

Continued on Page A6

U.S. SAYS ISRAEL IS AT END OF LINE WITH WAR IN GAZA

MILITARY’S GOALS MET

Calling for Negotiations to Free Hostages and End the Fighting

This article is by Helene Cooper, Julian E. Barnes, Eric Schmitt and Adam Rasgon.

WASHINGTON — Israel has achieved all that it can militarily in Gaza, according to senior American officials, who say continued bombings are only increasing risks to civilians while the possibility of further weakening Hamas has diminished.

With the Biden administration racing to get cease-fire negotiations back on track, a growing number of national security officials across the government said that the Israeli military had severely set back Hamas but would never be able to completely eliminate the group.

In many respects, Israel’s military operation has done far more damage against Hamas than U.S. officials had predicted when the war began in October.

Israeli forces can now move freely throughout Gaza, the officials said, and Hamas is bloodied and damaged. Israel has destroyed or seized crucial supply routes from Egypt into Gaza. About 14,000 combatants in Gaza have been killed or captured, the Israeli military said last month. (The U.S. intelligence agencies use different, more conservative methodologies to estimate Hamas casualties, though the precise number remains classified.)

The Israeli military also asserted that it had eliminated half the leadership of the Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, including the top leaders Muhammad Deif and Marwan Issa.

But one of Israel’s biggest remaining goals — the return of the roughly 115 living and dead hos-

Continued on Page A9

Officials say further attacks only raise the risk to civilians.



Officials say further attacks only raise the risk to civilians. RAMADAN ABED/REUTERS

Pelosi Nudged Biden to Exit. Now 50-Year Bond Is at Risk.

By ANNIE KARNI

WASHINGTON — When Joseph R. Biden Jr. visited San Francisco as a freshly minted senator and single father in the early 1970s, it was a well-known local fund-raiser and stay-at-home mother of five, Nancy Pelosi, who lent him her Jeep to get around town.

Over the next five decades, the two old-school Catholic Democrats who grew up in the era of Elvis Presley and were inspired by the election of the country’s first Catholic president, John F. Kennedy, cultivated a natural friendship.

They discovered that they both carried rosaries in their pockets. They learned how to wield power in Washington as leaders of top-tier congressional committees: the House Intelligence and Appropriations Committees for her, the Senate Foreign Relations and Judiciary Committees for him.

In May, at the twilights of their long careers, Mr. Biden, 81, awarded Ms. Pelosi, 84, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, anointing her the “greatest speaker of the House of Representatives in history.”

That was then. In July, Ms. Pelosi began pushing for Mr. Biden to exit the presidential race, and the two have not spoken since he made the difficult decision to step aside. There are multiple reports that Mr. Biden is angry with her. (On Wednesday, a person close to him said he was “unhappy” with the way things went.)

Ms. Pelosi has been making the rounds on a book tour, which has

Continued on Page A15



Japan’s Leader Stepping Down
Fumio Kishida, whose popularity as prime minister was never high, bowed to pressure within his party. PAGE A4

Heat Threatens Education
Children are facing many more extreme weather hazards that can undermine global gains in learning. PAGE A10

Hunter Biden Sought U.S. Help
The president’s son approached the State Department while his father was vice president, recently released administration records show. PAGE A15

Civil Trial for Shooter’s Parents
A case against the parents of a teenager who killed 10 people at a Texas school focuses on parental liability. PAGE A18

Baseball’s Endangered Species
Switch-hitters are increasingly rare from youth leagues to the majors, especially among American-born players. PAGE B6



How Sweden Leads Europe
The country outperforms in tech, has a roster of \$1 billion-plus start-ups and is a model of growth. PAGE B1

U.S. Ponders Splitting Google
The Justice Department is discussing scenarios to remedy the tech giant’s dominance in online search. PAGE B1

A Picture of Greed
A sometimes hilarious project by the artist Christoph Büchel at the Prada Foundation in Venice uses the liquidation of a pawnshop to consider capitalism’s impact on the planet. PAGE C1

Making Up for Lost Time
For her first headlining tour in an innovative three-decade career, Missy Elliott unleashed a relentless and exhilarating display of theatrical ambition at Barclays Center in Brooklyn. PAGE C1

Farah Stockman
PAGE A20



Resplendent in Denmark
Copenhagen Fashion Week doesn’t draw the same crowds that shows in New York, London, Milan or Paris do. That isn’t such a bad thing. PAGE D6

