

PARIS

OLYMPICS



WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

CITY OF LIGHT BEAMS

A light show projects from the Eiffel Tower during the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympics in Paris. Ninety boats carried Olympic athletes down the River Seine in a steady rain and the ceremony closed with a performance by Celine Dion. **SPORTS, B12**

A NEWS CRISIS IN CALIFORNIA

Long Beach once looked immune to journalism trend

LBPost.com seemed to be keeping news desert at bay — until recent setbacks.

By JAMES RAINEY

For a few shining years, which ended abruptly this spring, Long Beach looked like it might be a rare exception: a California city with a thriving and feisty media outlet. The Long Beach Post had some of the best of 20th century print journalism, but delivered as an on-line alternative that featured a salty old columnist, sharp coverage of City Hall and investigations into some of the city's leading institutions and stickiest social problems. Over much of the last six years, LBPost.com became an essential stop for those intent on understanding California's seventh-largest city. It nurtured a sense of place in a community long struggling to

escape the shadow of Los Angeles. But in recent months the popular website suffered a series of sharp setbacks — the exit of the Post's principal financial backer, major staff reductions and a fierce rebellion by former employees who have started their own alternative news site. LBPost.com, the city's media disrupter, has become the disrupted. The result is that Long Beach — home of one of the nation's busiest ports, the headquarters of the California State University system, a burgeoning aerospace technology industry, and the shopworn but still floating Queen Mary — has less in-depth civic news, neighborhood features and public engagement. Local journalism strangled by shaky finances has become the norm across America. But the disruption feels particularly painful in this city of 459,000 because locals [See Long Beach, A8]



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

LONG BEACH Mayor Rex Richardson, who says the city is “becoming a news desert,” has called for a media “incubator” to help provide logistical and financial backing to journalism.

Harris’ stance on migration becomes complex

As VP, she was given an unwinnable mission on a fraught issue at center of 2024 race.

By KATE LINTHICUM, ANDREA CASTILLO, PATRICK J. McDONNELL AND KEVIN RECTOR

MEXICO CITY — Speaking in Guatemala City on her first foreign trip as vice president, Kamala Harris issued a stern message to Central Americans. “I want to be clear to folks in this region who are thinking about making that dangerous trek to the United States-Mexico border,” she said. “Do not come. Do not come.” Her 2021 remarks were widely scorned by rights advocates as arrogant and out of touch with the complex mix of poverty, violence and other factors that drives people to leave their countries. Later, as border crossings surged, Harris’ words would be mocked by Republicans as evidence that the Biden administration had no plan when it came to halting migration. The episode underscored the political pitfalls of an issue expected to play a key role in this year’s presidential race — and the formidable nature of the foreign policy portfolio that [See Harris, A6]

How did U.S. catch Sinaloa’s ‘El Mayo’?

U.S. authorities arrest cartel boss and son of ‘El Chapo’ at a private airport near El Paso.

By KEEGAN HAMILTON AND KATE LINTHICUM

MEXICO CITY — Even among Mexican cartel bosses — a bunch known for lavish wealth, daring escapes and extreme brutality — Ismael “El Mayo” Zambada stood out. He was a longtime partner of Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán, and together they built the Sinaloa cartel into a global empire. Taking on an almost mythic status, he is rumored to have judges, generals and even presidents of Mexico in his pocket. And despite more than four decades on the run as one of the world’s most wanted fugitives, he had never spent a single night in jail. Until Thursday. [See Zambada, A4]

Park fire explodes into state’s largest this year



NOAH BERGER Associated Press

THE PARK FIRE burns along Highway 32 in Forest Ranch, Calif. Experts say the blaze’s explosive growth is due to a perfect storm of hot, dry conditions, combustible vegetation and a landscape that hasn’t burned in decades.

By HAYLEY SMITH AND GRACE TOOHEY

Just before 3 p.m. Wednesday afternoon, as temperatures in Butte County simmered around 106 degrees, a man pushed a burning car down a gully in Chico in what authorities say was an act of arson. Within minutes, the flaming vehicle ignited tall grasses that had sprung up in the wake of a wet winter but dried out in recent weeks. Soon, live oak trees and grapevines were burning, and wind-driven embers were shooting down canyons and along ridges of the Lassen foothills, catching new vegetation as they touched down. By nightfall, the Park fire had grown to 6,000 acres, and by the following morning its size had expanded sevenfold. As of Friday, the fire had surpassed 178,090 acres — the largest so far this year in California — with no containment and few signs of slowing down. Experts say the fire’s explosive growth is due to a perfect storm of hot, dry con-

ditions, combustible vegetation and a landscape that hadn’t burned in decades. The remote terrain has made it challenging for crews to gain access to the blaze’s swelling perimeter, and the firefight could be long and arduous as they struggle to gain a foothold. “This is really the first fire in the past several years in California that I would call extraordinary — and that’s not a good thing,” Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with UCLA, said in a briefing. “This fire is a big deal. [See Park fire, A10]

Netanyahu’s visit dimmed by timing

Israeli leader courted Trump, praised Biden and heard tougher tone from Harris. **PERSPECTIVES, A2**

Superheroes to the rescue?

Marvel hopes “Deadpool & Wolverine” will boost franchise. **BUSINESS, A9**

Weather Sunshine.

L.A. Basin: 85/62. **B8**

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