

All the News
That's Fit to Print™

The New York Times

THE WEATHER

Today, breezy, less humid and cooler with a mix of sun and clouds; afternoon sun, high 80. Tonight, clear, low 64. Tomorrow, mostly sunny, high 83. Weather map is on Page D8.

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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



A Celebration in Every Color
The New York City Pride March, the largest of its kind in the country, attracted tens of thousands of paraders on Sunday. Page A15.

French Far Right Gets Big Win, Polling Shows, in Blow to Macron

By ROGER COHEN

PARIS — The National Rally party on Sunday won a crushing victory in the first round of voting for the French National Assembly, according to early projections, bringing its long-taboo brand of nationalist and anti-immigrant politics to the threshold of power for the first time.

Pollster projections, which are normally reliable and are based on preliminary results, suggested that the party would take about 34 percent of the vote, far ahead of President Emmanuel Macron's centrist Renaissance party and its allies, which took about 22 percent to end in third place.

A coalition of left-wing parties, called the New Popular Front and ranging from the moderate socialists to the far-left France Unbowed, won about 29 percent of the vote boosted by strong sup-

Snap Vote's First Round Hints at Drastic Shift

ported among young people, according to the projections.

Turnout was high at about 67 percent, compared with 47.5 percent in the first round of the last parliamentary election, in 2022, reflecting the importance ac-

corded by voters to the snap election. To many it seemed that no less than the future of France was on the line with a far-right party long considered unelectable to high office because of its extreme views surging.

The two-round election will be completed with a runoff on July 7 between the leading parties in each constituency.

The result of voting Sunday

Continued on Page A9

Female Fantasy, Encoded in A.I. In a Retro Loop

What does artificial intelligence sound like? Hollywood has been imagining it for decades. Now A.I. developers are cribbing from the movies, crafting voices for real machines based on dated cinematic fantasies of how machines should talk.

In May, OpenAI revealed upgrades to its artificially intelligent chatbot. ChatGPT, the company said, was learning how to hear, see and converse in a naturalistic voice — one that sounded much like the disembodied operating system voiced by Scarlett Johansson in the 2013 Spike Jonze movie “Her.”

ChatGPT's voice, called Sky, also had a husky timbre, a soothing affect and a sexy edge. She was agreeable and self-effacing; she sounded like she was game for anything. After Sky's debut, Johansson expressed displeasure at the “eerily similar” sound, and said that she had previously declined OpenAI's request that she voice the bot. The company protested that Sky was voiced by a “different professional actress,” but agreed to pause her voice in deference to Johansson. Bereft OpenAI users have started a petition to bring her back.

A.I. creators like to highlight the increasingly naturalistic capabilities of their tools, but their synthetic voices are built on layers of artifice and projection. Sky represents the cutting edge of OpenAI's ambitions, but she is based on an old idea: of the A.I. bot as an empathetic and compliant woman. Part mommy, part secretary, part girlfriend, Sam-

Continued on Page A12



A student in Sharon, Tenn. Pandemic-era children are less likely to have age-appropriate abilities.

Pandemic-Era Babies Are Behind in Basic Skills

By CLAIRE CAIN MILLER and SARAH MERVOSH

The pandemic's babies, toddlers and preschoolers are now school-age, and the impact on them is becoming increasingly clear: Many are showing signs of being academically and developmentally behind.

Interviews with more than two dozen teachers, pediatricians and early childhood experts depicted a generation less likely to have age-appropriate skills — to be able to hold a pencil, communicate their needs, identify shapes and letters, manage their emotions or solve problems with peers.

A variety of scientific evidence has also found that the pandemic seems to have affected some young children's early development. Boys were more affected

than girls, studies have found.

“I definitely think children born then have had developmental challenges compared to prior years,” said Dr. Jaime Peterson, a pediatrician at Oregon Health and Science University, whose research is on kindergarten readiness. “We asked them to wear masks, not see adults, not play with kids. We really severed those interactions, and you don't get that time back for kids.”

The pandemic's effect on older

Continued on Page A12

How N.Y.P.D. Shuts Down Officers' Discipline Cases

Obscure Authority Is Quietly Used to Block Several Dozen Trials in Just a Year

By ERIC UMANSKY

Brianna Villafane was in Lower Manhattan protesting police violence in the summer of 2020, when officers charged into the crowd. One of them gripped her hair and yanked her to the ground.

“I felt someone on top of me and it was hard to breathe,” she said. “I felt like I was being crushed.”

The New York City civilian oversight agency that examines allegations of police abuse investigated and concluded that the officer had engaged in such serious misconduct that it could constitute a crime.

Ms. Villafane received a letter from the oversight agency about its conclusions. “I was happy and I was relieved,” she recalled. The next step would be a disciplinary trial overseen by the New York Police Department, during which prosecutors from the oversight agency would present evidence and question the officer in a public forum.

Then last fall, the police commissioner intervened.

Exercising a little-known authority called “retention,” the commissioner, Edward Caban, ensured the case would never go to trial.

Instead, Mr. Caban reached his own conclusion in private.

He decided that it “would be detrimental to the Police Department's disciplinary process” to pursue administrative charges against the officer, Gerard Dowling, a letter the department sent to the oversight agency said. The force that the officer used against Ms. Villafane was “reasonable and necessary.” The commissioner ordered no discipline.

Today, Officer Dowling is a deputy chief of the unit that handles protests throughout the city.

His case is one of dozens in which Commissioner Caban has used the powers of his office to intervene in disciplinary cases against officers who were found by the oversight agency to have committed misconduct.

Since becoming commissioner last July, he has short-circuited cases involving officers accused of wantonly using chokeholds, deploying Tasers and beating protesters with batons. A number of episodes were so serious that the police oversight agency, known as the Civilian Complaint Review

Board, concluded the officers likely committed crimes.

As is typical across the United States, New York's police commissioner has the final say over officer discipline. Commissioners can and often do overrule civilian oversight boards. But Mr. Caban's actions stand out for ending cases before the public disciplinary process plays out.

“What the Police Department is doing here is shutting down cases under the cloak of darkness,” said Florence L. Finkle, a former head of the C.C.R.B. and current vice president of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement. Avoiding disciplinary trials “means there's no opportunity for transparency, no opportunity for the public to weigh in, because nobody knows what's happening.”

Indeed, the department does not publish the commissioner's decisions to retain cases, and the civilian oversight agency makes those details public only months after the fact. Civilians are not told that the Police Department ended their cases.

To piece together Commissioner Caban's actions, ProPublica obtained internal records of some cases and learned details of others using public records, lawsuits, social media accounts and other sources.

Retention has been the commissioner's chief method of intervention. He has prevented the cases of 54 officers from going to trial in his roughly one year in office — far more than any other commissioner, according to an analysis of C.C.R.B. data. His predecessor,

Continued on Page A16



DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
Edward Caban, the New York City police commissioner.

Biden Campaign Spends Days Cleaning Up a 90-Minute Mess

This article is by Lisa Lerer, Shane Goldmacher and Katie Rogers.

In the wee hours of Friday morning, not long after President Biden had walked off the stage from a disastrous debate, his campaign chair, Jen O'Malley Dillon, acknowledged in a series of private calls with prominent supporters that the night had gone poorly but urged them not to overreact.

Later on Friday, top White House aides worked the phones, with Mr. Biden's chief of staff, Jeff Zients, calling the Democratic leader of the Senate, Chuck Schumer, to check in, according to a person familiar with the call. And by the afternoon, the Biden campaign had transformed its weekly all-staff call into a virtual pep talk to dispel any doubts creeping into the campaign offices in Wilmington, Del., and beyond.

“Nothing fundamentally changed about this election last night,” said Quentin Fulks, Mr. Biden's deputy campaign manager, according to a recording of the all-staff meeting. “We're going to get punched. We're going to punch back. We're going to get up when we get punched.”

The 48 hours after the debate were a frenzied campaign within a campaign to save Mr. Biden's suddenly teetering candidacy, a multiday damage-control effort to pressure and plead with anxious Democratic lawmakers, surrogates, activists and donors to stand by the president, the party's presumptive nominee.

After a frenetic run of seven campaign events across four states since the debate, Mr. Biden himself is taking a pause for a pre-planned family gathering at Camp David. He arrived late on Saturday and will be joined by his wife, Jill Biden, the first lady, as well as the Biden children and grandchildren, according to two people familiar with the scheduling.

The gathering, for a family photo shoot, was scheduled in the spring, according to those people. But the timing and circumstances of Mr. Biden being surrounded by the very family members who have been crucial in his past decisions to run for the presidency — or to sit out a race — have heightened the stakes and scrutiny surrounding the Camp David retreat.

Continued on Page A13



SPORTS D1-7

Injuries Can't Sack Him

Jim McMahon has been the football icon that fans themselves wanted to be. He still is. Kind of.

PAGE D1

The Shohei Ohtani Challenge

Pitchers share their approaches to the daunting task of trying to get the Dodgers hitter to make an out.

PAGE D6

INTERNATIONAL A4-10

Brazil's Queen of Drag Queens

Pablo Vittar is a pop superstar and L.G.B.T.Q. activist at home. The next task on the list: Achieving world domination. The Global Profile.

PAGE A4

U.S. Debate's Fallout in Israel

President Biden's stumbling performance in Atlanta last week has shaken up the Israeli media, worried about a perception of U.S. weakness.

PAGE A8

Tory Support Dims in U.K.

As elections approach on Thursday, more than half of Britons who voted for the Conservative Party the last time say they plan to move on.

PAGE A6



BUSINESS B1-5

The World of Luxury Produce

Fruit may be a staple. It can also be a pricey status symbol prized for flavor, rarity and appearance.

PAGE B1

Wall Street Firms Poach Talent

Top lawyers, especially those favored by private equity clients, are being offered huge pay packages.

PAGE B1

NATIONAL A11-16

It's Brutus, Not Bruno!

At a barbershop in Colorado, stylists and customers discussed the etiquette of remembering friends' pets' names. Some owners don't care, but others find a lapse hard to forgive.

PAGE A11

Milking Machines Suspected

Scientists say a small experiment that traced the bird flu outbreak among dairy cattle to farm production machinery raised hopes that the virus can potentially be contained.

PAGE A11

OPINION A18-19

David French

PAGE A19



ARTS C1-6

Seriously Synchronized

A new book puts a sport in a wide historical frame, showing how the idea of women going into the water has driven and reflected social change.

PAGE C1

