

“All the News
That’s Fit to Print”

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, hot, humid, afternoon thunderstorm, high 91. **Tonight**, thunderstorms early, warm, humid, low 76. **Tomorrow**, heavy thunderstorms, high 89. Weather map, Page A22.

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Bomb Laid Months Earlier Killed a Leader of Hamas

Device Said to Have Been Set Off Remotely

This article is by **Ronen Bergman**, **Mark Mazzetti** and **Farnaz Fassihi**.

Ismail Haniyeh, a top leader of Hamas, was assassinated on Wednesday by an explosive device covertly smuggled into the Tehran guesthouse where he was staying, according to seven Middle Eastern officials, including two Iranians, and an American official.

The bomb had been hidden approximately two months ago in the guesthouse, according to five of the Middle Eastern officials. The guesthouse is run and protected by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and is part of a large compound, known as Neshat, in an upscale neighborhood of northern Tehran.

Mr. Haniyeh was in Iran’s capital for the presidential inauguration. The bomb was detonated remotely, the five officials said, once it was confirmed that he was inside his room at the guesthouse. The blast also killed a bodyguard.

The explosion shook the building, shattered some windows and caused the partial collapse of an exterior wall, according to the two Iranian officials, members of the



A photograph provided to The New York Times shows damage to a guesthouse in Tehran.

Revolutionary Guards briefed on the incident. Such damage was also evident in a photograph of the building shared with The New York Times.

Mr. Haniyeh, who had led Hamas’s political office in Qatar, had stayed at the guesthouse several times when visiting Tehran, according to the Middle Eastern officials. All of the officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to share sensitive details about the assassination.

Iranian officials and Hamas said Wednesday that Israel was responsible for the assassination, an assessment also reached by several U.S. officials who requested anonymity. The assassination threatened to unleash another wave of violence in the Middle East and upend the ongoing negotiations to end the war in Gaza. Mr. Haniyeh had been a top negotiator in the cease-fire talks.

Israel has not publicly acknowledged responsibility for the killing, but Israeli intelligence officials briefed the United States and other Western governments on the details of the operation in the immediate aftermath, according to the five Middle Eastern officials.

On Wednesday, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken said that the United States had received no advance knowledge of the assassination plot.

In the hours after the killing, speculation immediately focused on the possibility that Israel had killed Mr. Haniyeh with a missile strike, possibly fired from a drone or a plane, similar to how Israel had launched a missile on a military base in Isfahan in April.

That missile theory raised questions about how Israel might have been able to evade Iranian air defense systems again to execute such a brazen airstrike in the capital.

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JOURNALISTS AND DISSIDENTS FREED FROM RUSSIA IN SWAP OF 24 INMATES



ERIC LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

President Biden with relatives of the three released Americans on Thursday at the White House. “Their brutal ordeal is over,” he said.

West Releases an Assassin and 8 Others in a Painstakingly Negotiated Deal

By **ANTON TROIANOVSKI** and **MARK MAZZETTI**

BERLIN — A prisoner swap on Thursday among seven countries freed the Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich and two other Americans held in Russia, along with several jailed Russian dissidents, in a deal whose size and complexity has no parallel in the post-Soviet era.

The trade freed 15 people imprisoned by Russia and one by its ally Belarus, in return for eight held in Western countries, including a convicted assassin and several held as Russian spies.

It was all the more remarkable for taking place two and a half years into Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, which the Kremlin has cast as a war for Russian survival against the United States and its



From left, the Americans Evan Gershkovich, a reporter; Paul Whelan, a Marine veteran; and Alsu Kurmasheva, an editor.

allies who are arming and financing Kyiv.

The deal, culminating a long and elaborate web of negotiations behind the scenes, delivered a diplomatic victory for President Biden, who has long pledged to bring home imprisoned Americans and to support Russia’s ruth-

lessly repressed democracy advocates, journalists and war critics.

“Their brutal ordeal is over, and they’re free,” Mr. Biden said at the White House, speaking of the freed Americans, whose relatives flanked him. “Moments ago, their families and I were able to speak to them on the phone from the

Oval Office,” he said, and he wished them “welcome almost home.”

The exchange took place at the international airport in Ankara, Turkey’s capital, and involved seven planes ferrying the 24 prisoners from the United States, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Norway and Russia, according to the Turkish government, which has positioned itself as a mediator between Moscow and the United States throughout the war in Ukraine.

It was a triumph of a different sort for President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, who has long highlighted his loyalty to Russian agents captured abroad. In nearly a quarter-century in power, he has leveraged the Russian law enforcement and court systems for political advantage, using them as

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Tech Lapses Let Gunman Evade Secret Service

By **ERIC LIPTON** and **DAVID A. FAHRENTHOLD**

WASHINGTON — After a week of oversights and failures, the officers protecting former President Donald J. Trump at a campaign rally in Butler, Pa., still had one last chance to get it right. The chance lasted about 30 seconds.

It began when a local police officer peered over the roof of the AGR International warehouse near the rally grounds and found the suspicious man he and other officers were hunting. Ninety minutes of confusion about Thomas Crooks’s intentions and whereabouts had ended in an instant.

“Long gun!” the officer broadcast over the local law enforcement radio system, according to congressional testimony from the Secret Service this week.

It was urgent news that should have instantly traveled to a command center shared by the local police and the Secret Service, and then to agents close enough to throw their bodies in front of Mr. Trump. They still had time to disrupt an assassination attempt.

But the radio message never got to the Secret Service, and 30 seconds later Mr. Crooks unleashed his first shots.

That dropped communication was one of several instances where technologies that might have protected Mr. Trump from getting shot on July 13 did not — either because they malfunctioned, were improperly deployed or the Secret Service decided not to use them in the first place.

The Secret Service, for instance, turned down offers to use

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Trump Elevates Racial Attacks To Center Stage

By **KEN BENSINGER**

When former President Donald J. Trump questioned Vice President Kamala Harris’s racial identity on Wednesday, he lifted a longstanding and false line of attack from the fringes of political discourse to the very center of a presidential campaign.

For years, rivals and critics have lodged accusations that Ms. Harris shifts her personal identity to her political advantage, and that she is, in fact, not who she claims to be. Those attacks, based on falsehoods, misinformation and conspiratorial notions, have increased dramatically in the week and a half since she emerged as Democrats’ all-but-certain standard-bearer.

Just hours after President Biden announced that he would not seek a second term, the right-wing agitator Laura Loomer posted on the social media site X that Ms. Harris “pretends to be black” as part of what she called a “delusional, Democrat DEI quota.”

The next day, Tucker Carlson, the former Fox News host who spoke at the Republican National Convention last month, said on his popular interview show that the vice president was “sort of Black, sort of Indian.” The rapper Lil Pump, a Trump supporter who has some 20 million followers across Instagram, TikTok and X, said on Sunday that “Kamala Harris isn’t even black . . . she’s Indian.”

Their comments, seemingly aimed at suggesting to Black voters that the Democratic candidate

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DANIEL BEREHULAK/THE NEW YORK TIMES

As Gold as It Gets

Three years after withdrawing in Tokyo, Simone Biles earned the Olympic all-around gold medal, making her the third woman to do so twice. Sunisa Lee, the 2021 champion, took bronze. Page B7.

Weekly Walks Helped Mayor Gain Following

By **ALI WATKINS**

In a world that seems consumed by the trials of capitalism and the unyielding pressure to work, Robin Leach, the British television personality who died in 2018, noted one place that did it differently: In Italy, Mr. Leach said, they add work and life onto food and wine.

Luciano Fregonese, the mayor of Valdobbiadene — a rural town of 10,000 people in Italy’s picturesque northeast, famous for its Prosecco — has lived such truths.

“It’s not easy, because every weekend there is one or two or three or maybe more events to attend to, and every event it is common to drink wine, or Prosecco, and also to eat,” the mayor said in an interview, with the help of a translator. “It’s not easy to say ‘no.’”

Such are the burdens of a three-term mayor in this lush region of Italy, where Mr. Fregonese — concerned about the toll the job was taking on his health — has added a new assignment to his regular

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Signs That Maduro Lost Badly

The New York Times analyzed partial voting data in Venezuela, and they cast doubt on the official results. PAGE A5

Trying to Stall a Sinking Future

The cheesemaking city of Gouda in the Netherlands is subsidizing as sea levels rise, imperiling the industry. PAGE A4



NATIONAL A12-17

Pentagon Data on Suicides

A military report broken down by occupation finds the highest rates among categories of troops that often work and train around weapons blasts. PAGE A13

Utah Abortion Ban Blocked

Utah’s supreme court ruled that the state cannot enforce its near-total ban on abortion while a challenge to the law proceeds in the courts. PAGE A16

Border Arrests Fall in July

The total is expected to come in under 60,000 for the month, down from a peak of 250,000 in December after stricter measures were put in place. PAGE A17

BUSINESS B1-6

‘Super Bowl of Tax’

Lawmakers and lobbyists are gearing up for a big debate next year over expiring measures in former President Donald J. Trump’s tax law. PAGE B1

97.5% Discount for a Building

The sale price of 135 West 50th Street in Midtown was a sign of how much the pandemic upended the market. PAGE B1

OBITUARIES A18-19

Chronicer of a Black Family

Gail Lumet Buckley wrote two books on her forebears, including her mother, Lena Horne. She was 86. PAGE A19

WEEKEND ARTS C1-10

A Dreamlike Collaboration

The Brazilian musician Milton Nascimento teams up with the American jazz musician Esperanza Spalding. PAGE C1

Across Continents and Cultures

The mainstream art world seems to be finally catching up to the works of Pacita Abad, who died in 2004. PAGE C1



SPORTS B7-12

Gender Controversy at Games

An Italian boxer’s bout with a fighter who had been barred from a women’s event lasted 46 seconds. PAGE B11

Panther Power

Julius Peppers will become the first player drafted by Carolina to enter the Pro Football Hall of Fame. PAGE B12

OPINION A20-21

Jessica Bennett

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