

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

THE WEATHER

Today, plenty of sunshine, low humidity, high 87. Tonight, mostly clear, low 71. Tomorrow, sunny, afternoon clouds, not too humid, high 88. Weather map is on Page A14.

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SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00

Train Sabotage Rattles France As Games Start

Cables Cut and Burned on High-Speed Lines

By CATHERINE PORTER and AURELIEN BREEDEN

PARIS — Before dawn on the day of the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympics, arsonists on Friday sabotaged three critical high-speed rail lines, stranding thousands of travelers, heightening security fears and blighting what President Emmanuel Macron hoped to be a moment of national glory.

Around 4 a.m., the arsonists cut through and burned cables used for signaling and security near three rail divides, the French authorities said. The carefully placed strikes snarled end-of-week travel plans for more than a million people, including Parisians leaving for vacation and international travelers en route to the opening ceremony of the Games. Parts of the prized rail system came to a standstill.

A fourth sabotage attempt was foiled, the authorities said, when railway workers doing maintenance work in Vergigny, southeast of Paris, stumbled upon suspicious individuals who fled before any damage was done.

No one was killed or reported injured. The Paris prosecutor's office, which handles major organized crime cases, said it had opened an investigation into what it called criminal vandalism and criminal conspiracy. No immediate claim of responsibility was made.

"This operation was prepared, coordinated, critical points were targeted, which shows they knew enough about the network to know where to strike," Prime Minister Gabriel Attal said.

The sabotage, set at critical junctures on France's Atlantic, North and East rail arteries, meant trains were parked or slowed between Paris and major cities that are hosting some Olympic competitions, including Bordeaux, Marseille, Nice and Lille.

Railway workers hustled to make delicate repairs and traffic

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Hundreds of thousands of spectators gathered to watch the opening ceremony of the 2024 Paris Olympics. More coverage in Sports.

Usha Vance Is Adjusting to Life As Prominent Political Spouse

By JOSEPH BERNSTEIN and KATHERINE ROSMAN

The night before the biggest assignment of her life, Usha Vance stayed up late with her husband, JD Vance. In their rooms at the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee, they went over each other's speeches to the Republican National Convention. She gave notes on his, and he tweaked hers.

In keeping with many intellectual and professional endeavors over the course of their relationship, which got its start at Yale Law School more than a decade ago, they approached the task as a couple.

Their lives were about to undergo a dramatic change. Two

Leaving the Fast Track to Focus on Family

days earlier, former President Donald J. Trump had announced the selection of Mr. Vance as his running mate on the Republican presidential ticket. Mr. Vance was used to the spotlight, having made his name as the best-selling author of the memoir "Hillbilly Elegy" years before he was elected to the United States Senate in 2022, but his wife had remained largely a private figure.

Whatever nerves the self-possessed Mrs. Vance might have

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Arrest of a Mexican Drug Lord, Betrayed by a Son of El Chapo

This article is by Alan Feuer, Natalie Kitroeff and Emiliano Rodriguez Mega.

It sounded like a story ripped from a narco thriller: One of the biggest drug lords in Mexico was lured onto an airplane, flown across the border and presented to American federal agents by the son of his former partner in crime.

As improbable as it may seem, that is exactly what appears to have happened on Thursday evening, when a Beechcraft King Air turboprop landed at a small municipal airport outside El Paso, and off stepped one of the most wanted men in Mexico: Ismael Zambada García, a founder of the notorious Sinaloa drug cartel.

Mr. Zambada García, known as El Mayo, had for decades evaded capture by both Mexican and American officials, living a life of luxurious simplicity in the mountains of Sinaloa — despite the \$15 million U.S. bounty on his head.

But in the end, U.S. officials said, he was betrayed by an unlikely foe: a son of his closest criminal ally, Joaquín Guzmán Loera, the infamous drug lord known as El Chapo, who is now serving a life sentence in an American federal

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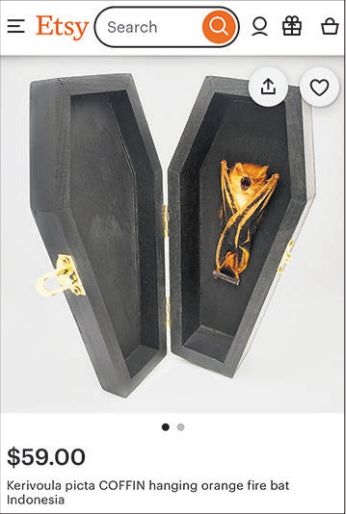
Lured on a Plane and Delivered to the U.S.

Bats Were Already Struggling. Now They're Selling on EBay.

By RACHEL NUWER

Some of the bright orange bats were framed in shadow boxes, their boldly striped wings spread wide. Others were mounted in miniature coffins with shiny fittings. A few were promoted as Halloween or Christmas gifts.

Bigger, more charismatic species like elephants and tigers usually come to mind when the illicit animal trade is mentioned. But a study published this month has revealed a flourishing black market in stuffed and mounted bats that, until now, has gone



An Etsy listing this month for the species Kerivoula picta.

Thriving Black Market Trade Raises Worries for Populations

largely unnoticed. In the United States, especially, bats are openly sold, intact or as skeletons, on e-commerce sites like Etsy, eBay and Amazon.

"If people aren't discerning, they might think they're buying products that are sustainably sourced, but they're not," said Nistara Randhawa, an epidemiologist and data scientist at the University of California, Davis, and a co-author of the study, which appeared in The European Journal of Wildlife Research. "Instead, they could be inadvertently supporting the population decline of this bat species in the wild."

Other researchers first noticed a worrisome number of bats for sale on eBay in 2014. Dr. Randhawa and her colleagues followed up on that observation with a more systematic study. From October to December 2022, they regularly searched for listings on eBay, Etsy and Amazon. Many types of bats appeared in the results, but they focused primarily on Kerivoula picta, a species from Asia known as the painted woolly bat or fire bat, because its distinctive orange fur and striped wings

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Sprawling Fire Getting Bigger

A blaze in California has burned more than 164,000 acres, the state's largest this year. Page A18.

G.O.P. Is Set to Pounce on Harris's Embrace of Teachers' Unions

By DANA GOLDSTEIN and NICHOLAS NEHAMAS

In a speech to an ecstatic crowd of union teachers on Thursday in Houston, Vice President Kamala Harris previewed the education issues that she wants to focus on in her abbreviated campaign for the White House: student loan forgiveness, protecting schools from

gun violence and resisting Republican attempts to restrict curriculums.

"While you teach students about our nation's past, these extremists attack the freedom to learn and acknowledge our nation's true and full history," she said to applause and cheers. "Including book bans. Book bans in this year of our Lord 2024!"

But Ms. Harris's speech to members of the American Federation of Teachers also ignored several crucial education issues that could put her on shakier political ground — and that Republicans are already seeking to tie her to.

There was no mention of the long-term negative effects of pandemic-era school closures, which local teachers' unions pushed to

extend. She did not address whether families should have greater access to charter schools, private-school vouchers or public funds for home-schooling — all options that the unions argue reduce funds for traditional public schools.

Nor did Ms. Harris mention debates over antisemitism and free

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Motels Are Having a Moment

What's old is new again, and the humble roadside motel is now appealing to younger travelers.

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A Comeback for Digital Coin

One of the most scam-ridden corners of the cryptocurrency industry — meme-coins — has roared back.

Page B1

NATIONAL A10-19

Trump Wavers on Debate

The former president suggested moving a planned September showdown with Vice President Kamala Harris from ABC News to Fox.

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Two Dead in Murder-Suicide

The shooting took place just a half block from Gracie Mansion, the mayor's official residence, and was related to a child-custody dispute.

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Harris Sizes Up Mark Kelly

The Arizona senator, a Navy veteran and former astronaut, has a strong political résumé. But a bigger asset is his expertise on the border.

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INTERNATIONAL A4-9

A Rare Call From Russia

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin heard from his Russian counterpart about a suspected Ukrainian operation. What happened next is murky.

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Blinken Assures Asia Allies

As he visits the region, officials will press the secretary of state about Donald Trump and Kamala Harris.

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Keeping It Real

A traveler's pleasure can come from visiting places like grocery stores, barbershops and public pools.

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ARTS C1-6

The Longest Time

After a 10-year residency at Madison Square Garden, the singer-songwriter Billy Joel has some new plans.

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Broken Hearts Club

As romance fiction booms, a group that has helped the genre and its writers since 1980 filed for bankruptcy.

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SPORTS D1-12

W.N.B.A.'s Money Crunch

Fans and brands have embraced the league, but its financial success hasn't fully reached players.

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Returning From Egypt

Quarterback Aaron Rodgers explained his trip and settled into practice with the New York Jets.

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OPINION A20-21

Michelle Goldberg

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