

“All the News
That’s Fit to Print”

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, plenty of sunshine, brisk and breezy, high 45. **Tonight**, clear and cold, low 31. **Tomorrow**, sunshine and a few clouds, cooler, high 40. Weather map appears on Page B12.

VOL. CLXXIII . . . No. 60,001 © 2023 The New York Times Company WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2023 Prices in Canada may be higher \$4.00



HANNAH REYES MORALES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

On a beach in Senegal. More than 60 percent of those who speak French daily live in Africa, where the youth population is surging.

Through Jokes and Hip-Hop, Africans Are Changing French

By ELIAN PELTIER
ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast — French, by most estimates the world’s fifth most spoken language, is changing — perhaps not in the gilded hallways of the institution in Paris that publishes its official dictionary, but on a rooftop in Abidjan, the largest city in Ivory Coast.
There one afternoon, a 19-year-old rapper who goes by the stage name Marla rehearsed her upcoming show, surrounded by friends and empty soda bottles. Her words were mostly French, but the Ivorian slang and English words that she mixed in made a new language.
To speak only French, “c’est zogo” — “it’s uncool,” Marla, whose real name is Mariam Dosso, said, combining a French word with Ivorian slang. But playing with words and languages, she said, is “choco,” an abbreviation of chocolate meaning “sweet” or “stylish.”
A growing number of words and expressions from Africa are now infusing the French language, spurred by booming populations of young people in West and Central Africa.
More than 60 percent of those who speak French daily now live in Africa, and 80 percent of children studying in French are in Africa. There are as many French speakers in Kinshasa, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, as in Paris.
Through social media platforms like TikTok and YouTube, they are literally spreading the word, reshaping the French language

OLD WORLD, YOUNG AFRICA
The Evolution of a Language
from African countries, like Ivory Coast, that were once colonized by France.
“We’ve tried to rap in pure French, but nobody was listening to us,” said Jean Patrick Niambé, known as Dofy, a 24-year-old Ivorian hip-hop artist listening to Marla on the rooftop. “So we create words from our own realities, and then they spread.”
Walking down the streets of Paris or its suburbs, you can hear people use the word “enjailler” to mean “having fun.” But the word originally came from Abidjan to describe how adrenaline-seeking young Ivorians in the 1980s jumped on and off buses racing through the streets.
The youth population in Africa is surging while the rest of the world grays. Demographers predict that by 2060, up to 85 percent of French speakers will live on the African continent. That’s nearly the inverse of the 1960s, when 90 percent of French speakers lived in European and other Western countries.
“French flourishes every day in Africa,” said Souleymane Bachir Diagne, a renowned Senegalese professor of philosophy and French at Columbia University. “This creolized French finds its way in the books we read, the sketches we watch on television, the songs we listen to.”
Nearly half of the countries in Africa were at one time French colonies or protectorates, and

Continued on Page A12

Zelensky Fails to Sway the G.O.P. In an Urgent Visit to Capitol Hill

This article is by Zolan Kanno-Youngs, Catie Edmondson, Karoun Demirjian and Michael D. Shear.
WASHINGTON — President Biden warned on Tuesday that Russia was celebrating American division over providing aid to Ukraine, as President Volodymyr Zelensky hit a wall of resistance from congressional Republicans during a daylong lobbying blitz in Washington.
Speaking from the White House with Mr. Zelensky by his side, Mr. Biden said failing to support Ukraine would be a gift to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.
“Putin is banking on the United States failing to deliver for Ukraine,” Mr. Biden said at the White House. “We must, we must, we must prove him wrong.”
Republican leaders in Congress have insisted that any aid for Ukraine be paired with tighter security at the southern border, arguing that the migrant crisis had become a threat to national security. But even Republican supporters of more aid for Ukraine appeared to have given up hope of approving it before Congress heads home for the holidays.
Senator Mitch McConnell, the top Republican, suggested that the effort was all but dead for the year, saying it would be “practically impossible” to quickly pass a deal that ties together aid for Ukraine with the kind of border

Time Is Ticking for Aid That’s Tethered to Border Security

Continued on Page A10



HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine, center, on Tuesday.

Court Clears Way for New York Democrats to Redraw House Map

By NICHOLAS FANDOS
New York’s highest court ordered the state to redraw its congressional map on Tuesday, delivering a ruling that offers Democrats a new weapon to wrest control of the House from Republicans in 2024.
The decision could have far-reaching implications in reshaping the House battlefield in a key state. New York Democrats are widely expected to use the opening to try to shift two to six Republican-held swing districts that President Biden won, from Long Island to Syracuse.
The State Constitution still prohibits partisan gerrymandering. But Democrats would need to make only slight alterations to the

Deleting Lines G.O.P. Used to Win Majority
district lines to improve the party’s chances and imperil Republicans’ three-seat majority before the campaign season even begins. “They might have won two or three of those Biden districts back anyway — now it might be five or six,” said Dave Wasserman, an elections analyst with the Cook Political Report. “When you are talking about such a narrow majority in the House, obviously that’s a big deal.”
The 4-to-3 ruling by the State Court of Appeals effectively wiped

Continued on Page A17

Israel Is Losing Support Over War, Biden Says, Exposing Leaders’ Rift

Warns Against ‘Indiscriminate Bombing’

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR
WASHINGTON — President Biden told Israel’s leaders on Tuesday that they were losing international support for their war in Gaza, exposing a widening rift with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who rejected out of hand the American vision for a postwar resolution to the conflict.
Mr. Biden delivered the blunt assessment of America’s closest ally in the Middle East during a fund-raiser in Washington, where he described Mr. Netanyahu as the leader of “the most conservative government in Israel’s history,” which doesn’t “want anything remotely approaching a two-state solution” to the country’s long-running dispute with Palestinians.
The president said that Israel had support from Europe and much of the world as well as the United States, but he added that “they’re starting to lose that support by the indiscriminate bombing that takes place.”
The president’s remarks came hours after Mr. Netanyahu pledged to defy weeks of American pressure to put the Palestinian Authority in charge of Gaza once the fighting ends. Mr. Netanyahu ruled out any role there for the group, which now governs Palestinian society in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.
Until Tuesday, the United States had largely backed Israel both in action and in rhetoric — supporting the assault on Gaza, fending off calls for a cease-fire at the United Nations and authorizing the sale of thousands of tank shells to the Israelis.
“There is disagreement about ‘the day after Hamas,’” Mr. Netanyahu said in a video statement posted on social media. He said he hoped the two governments could reach an agreement about what happens after the war ends, but he vowed not to allow threats to Israel’s population to continue.
“After the great sacrifice of our civilians and our soldiers, I will not allow the entry into Gaza of those who educate for terrorism, support terrorism and finance terrorism,” Mr. Netanyahu said. “Gaza will be neither Hamastan nor Fatahstan.”
Fatah is the political faction, a rival to Hamas, that controls the Palestinian Authority, which was ousted from Gaza in 2007 but still administers parts of the West Bank.
In his remarks at the fund-raiser, Mr. Biden pledged to continue that support for Israel’s effort to protect itself, saying that “we’re not going to do a damn thing other than protect Israel in the process. Not a single thing.”
“Without Israel as a free-standing state, not a Jew in the world is safe,” he added.
But he also described his response to Mr. Netanyahu’s private assertion that the United States had “carpet-bombed” Germany and dropped the atomic bomb on Japan.
“I said, ‘Yeah, that’s why all these institutions were set up after World War II, to see to it that it didn’t happen again,’” Mr. Biden

Continued on Page A9

Defying Critics, Harvard Sticks With Its Leader

This article is by Jeremy W. Peters, Dana Goldstein and Anemona Hartocollis.
As universities across the country strained under pressure to take a public position on the Oct. 7 attack on Israel by Hamas, few were as tormented as Harvard.
First, university officials said nothing when a pro-Palestinian student group wrote an open letter saying that Israel was “entirely responsible” for the violence. Harvard followed up with a letter to the university community acknowledging “feelings of fear, sadness, anger, and more.” After an outcry, Harvard’s president, Claudine Gay, issued a more forceful statement condemning Hamas for “terrorist atrocities” while urging people to use words that “illuminate and not inflame.”
The difficult and divisive questions over how universities should respond when student demonstrations cross a line into threatening, disruptive and harmful came to a head at Harvard over the last week, as Dr. Gay faced calls to resign after her widely criticized appearance before a congressional committee looking into antisemitism on campus.
When asked whether threatening Jewish people with genocide would violate the school’s code of conduct, she equivocated.
On Tuesday, Harvard’s governing body said it stood firmly behind Dr. Gay, offering her a unani-

Continued on Page A18



ALAMY

Free-ranging cats devour over 2,000 species, a study warned.

Menu à la Cat: Alfresco Buffet Has Downsides

By CATRIN EINHORN
Everyone can agree on one thing: It’s not the cats’ fault they’re bad for wildlife. Cats are carnivores. Their talent for preying on rodents is a big reason their ancestors and ours started hanging around together in the first place. But then, people carried cats around the world, into ecosystems that weren’t equipped for such predators.
Wherever they are, they stalk. They pounce. They kill. They eat.
Now, researchers have documented the breadth of cats’ global buffet. A study published on Tuesday in the journal Nature Communications found that free-ranging domestic cats (including feral ones) eat more than 2,000 species, raising renewed concerns about

Continued on Page A21

INTERNATIONAL A4-14	SPORTS B7-10, 12	ARTS C1-8	FOOD D1-14	OPINION A22-23
Sunak Wins Deportation Vote The British prime minister’s contentious proposal to send asylum seekers to Rwanda moved forward, but it still faces stumbling blocks. PAGE A14	Still a Record After 40 Years On Dec. 13, 1983, the Nuggets and the Pistons combined for the highest-scoring game in N.B.A. history, with the help of just two 3-pointers. PAGE B7	Resurrecting van Gogh An attempt at championing the painter’s legacy is taking place at a Paris museum, where a lifelike doppelgänger of the artist chats with visitors. PAGE C1	A Delectable 2023 What have been the most beloved recipes, notable restaurants, compelling cookbooks and can’t-miss dishes of the year? We have some ideas. PAGE D1	Thomas L. Friedman PAGE A22
0 354613 9				

THE FINAL 6 WEEKS
OF
THE FINAL SONDHEIM MUSICAL

 The New York Times
Best of Theater 2023

HERE WE ARE MUST CLOSE JANUARY 21  **THESHED.ORG**

