

The New York Times

THE WEATHER

Today, blustery, rather cold, clouds and sun, high 43. Tonight, partly cloudy, low 34. Tomorrow, partly sunny, some afternoon warming, high 52. Weather map, Page A24.

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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00

War Imperils Food Supply Across Globe

Plugged Strait Causes Fertilizer Shortfall

By ANA SWANSON

WASHINGTON — One of the biggest economic casualties of the U.S.-led war in Iran has been the global fertilizer supply.

Shipments of it have piled up on the wrong side of the Strait of Hormuz. In India, Algeria and Slovakia, fertilizer plants have shut down or slowed their output because of rising natural gas prices. China has restricted fertilizer exports. Australian wheat farmers are planting less, and corn and soy farmers in the United States are begging President Trump for relief.

Much of the concern about economic disruptions stemming from the Iran conflict has centered on the higher prices of oil and natural gas. But the cascading effects of the conflict on fertilizer supplies are growing worse by the day, raising prices for farmers globally and threatening to lead to food insecurity in some parts of the world.

Most fertilizer is made using natural gas. So the energy-rich Middle East has become a key global producer of the commodity, second only to Russia. Nearly a third of the world's fertilizer is shipped through the Strait of Hormuz, and many other countries that produce their own fertilizer, like Egypt and Thailand, often do so using natural gas from the Middle East.

Deepika Thapliyal, a fertilizer specialist at Independent Commodity Intelligence Services, a market information provider, said that the disappearance of such a large portion of the world's supply had led to a "very big jump" in fertilizer prices. That was leading to ramifications globally, she said, with major agricultural producers like India facing potential shortages.

The consequences have been far-reaching, affecting farmers in countries that rely on imported fertilizer, including the United States and Brazil. Ms. Thapliyal said those farmers are likely to face higher prices and could be

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ARASH KHAMOOSHI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

IRAN TIGHTENS GRIP Clearing rubble from airstrikes on Tehran. Iran asserted control over the Strait of Hormuz on Friday. Page A6.

Hegseth Blocks 4 Promotions Of Black and Female Officers

This article is by Greg Jaffe, Eric Schmitt, Helene Cooper and Adam Entous.

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth is blocking the promotion of four Army officers to be one-star generals, a highly unusual move that has prompted some senior military officials to question whether the officers are being singled out because of their race or gender.

Two of the officers targeted by Mr. Hegseth are Black and two are women on a promotion list that consists of about three dozen officers, most of whom are white men, senior military officials said.

Mr. Hegseth had been pressing senior Army leaders, including Army Secretary Daniel P. Driscoll, for months to remove the officers'

Some Military Leaders Fear Bias Involved

names, military officials said. But Mr. Driscoll, citing the officers' decades-long records of exemplary service, had repeatedly refused.

Earlier this month, Mr. Hegseth broke the logjam by unilaterally striking the officers' names from the list, though it is not clear he has the legal authority to do so. The list is currently being reviewed by the White House, which is expected to send it to the Senate for final approval. A few female and Black officers remain on the list, military officials said.

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Kennedy's Clout Fades as Snags Endanger His Vaccine Agenda

By SHERYL GAY STOLBERG

WASHINGTON — Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s crusade to scale back Americans' reliance on vaccines has collided with political and legal realities that have endangered the Senate confirmation of one top health official, delayed the nomination of another and diminished his clout in Washington.

A string of developments over the past several weeks have put Mr. Kennedy's vaccine agenda at risk. The confirmation of Dr. Casey Means, President Trump's nominee for surgeon general, is stalled on Capitol Hill, where three Republicans on the Senate Health Committee, including its chairman, have expressed concern about her views on vaccines.

An Unpopular Crusade Tests Momentum

On Thursday, Mr. Trump missed a deadline to nominate a permanent director for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, leaving the agency officially leaderless. The White House is trying to find someone who fits with Mr. Kennedy's broader health agenda but whose views of vaccines are conventional enough to win Senate confirmation.

Last week, a federal judge blocked Mr. Kennedy's changes to the childhood vaccine schedule. And on Wednesday, Dr. Jay Bhat-

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D.H.S.'S FUNDING IS SENT TO HOUSE, AND G.O.P. REVOLTS

FURY OVER SENATE BILL

Hopes Dimming for End to Partial Shutdown of Government

This article is by Carl Hulse, Megan Mineiro and Robert Jimison.

WASHINGTON — House Republicans on Friday angrily rejected a Senate-passed deal to reopen the Department of Homeland Security, threatening to extend the agency shutdown that has crippled airports in a fit of outrage over the agreement their own party struck with Senate Democrats to end the crisis.

After quickly assessing the compromise that passed the Senate early Friday, conservative House Republicans tore into it in harsh terms. They derided it for heaving too closely to the Democratic position by omitting money for Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Border Patrol, the two agencies responsible for carrying out President Trump's immigration crackdown, which are operating under previously approved funds.

"House Republicans are not going to be any part of any effort to reopen our borders or to stop immigration enforcement," Speaker Mike Johnson said at a news conference on Friday afternoon. "This gambit that was done last night is a joke."

Calling the Senate-passed deal engineered by Senator John Thune, Republican of South Dakota and the majority leader, "ridiculousness," Mr. Johnson said the House would instead take up a stopgap measure to fund the entire department until late May.

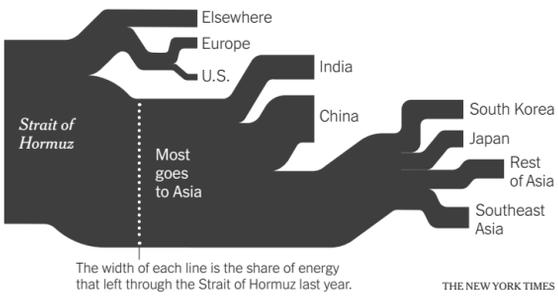
That dimmed the prospects of a quick end to the partial shutdown. Such a bill would be dead on arrival in the Senate, where Democrats have been rejecting similar proposals for more than a month. Any change the House makes would require senators, who have now scattered to their states for a two-

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The Choking of Hormuz

Inside a global journey of oil and gas, now upended by war. Page A8.

Where oil and gas typically go



The width of each line is the share of energy that left through the Strait of Hormuz last year.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

He Sought Epstein's Support, And Now Confronts the Cost

Longtime Fund-Raiser Frets, 'I'm in the Files'

By ELI SASLOW

BEACON, N.Y. — David Ross had already withdrawn from the art world, resigned from his job and issued a series of public apologies about being "mortified" and "ashamed" before the latest email landed in his inbox. He sat next to his wife, Peggy, in the quiet comfort of their home in Beacon, N.Y., far from the circles of power where he'd spent much of his life. But even here, each new message carried the possibility of another disaster.

"Regarding correspondence with Jeffrey Epstein, I have the following questions," the email began.

Ross, 77, scanned through the message as his stomach dropped. He noticed that the sender was not a lawyer or a prosecutor but his neighbor, a community blogger who lived a few blocks away. She wanted to know about a flight he'd taken to New Mexico in the 1990s. She wanted to know if he was still volunteering on a city tax board or serving as chairman

at a local nine-hole golf course. "This mess is swallowing every little corner of our lives," Peggy said. "What does the golf course have to do with anything?"

"Because I'm tainted," he said. "I'm in the files."

When the Justice Department released millions of pages of Epstein files earlier this year, it exposed a web of abuse that stretched across decades and continents. But the files also revealed something subtler and more endemic: a vast circle of billionaires, academics and fund-raisers like Ross who had never been accused of participating in Epstein's crimes or visiting his island but had nonetheless helped sustain him by cashing his checks, hosting him at galas and laundering his reputation with their own.

As the public reckoned with the weight of their silence, Ross had spent the last months conducting his own accounting.

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TOP: JACK MANNING/THE NEW YORK TIMES; ABOVE, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Cuba in Photos, Then and Now

Images from The Times and others record nearly seven decades of political turmoil, economic crises and ordinary life. Page A10.

NATIONAL A15-21, 24

Gas Bubbles In Your Beer

A pub in California is pulling carbon dioxide from the air to carbonate pints. If the business model works, it could give the industry a boost. PAGE A15



INTERNATIONAL A4-14

Cleaning Up Politics in Nepal

A leaked report on the deadly violence and mass arson that broke out last year has put the new leader under pressure to ensure accountability. PAGE A4

Restrictions on Maduro's Team

A judge questions why the U.S. has blocked Venezuela from paying for the former leader's defense. PAGE A14

TRAVEL C7-9

36 Hours in Shanghai

In China's second-largest city, daily life runs almost entirely through apps, offering great convenience. PAGE C9

BUSINESS B1-6

Soaring Cost of Energy

The price of diesel fuel has risen faster than gasoline this month, and those higher costs are likely to have a major effect on consumer prices. PAGE B1

Missed Clues to Link With Iran

Binance, the world's largest crypto exchange, is under fire after investigators found accounts moving \$1.7 billion to entities traced to Tehran. PAGE B1

Back in the Anchor Chair

A little more than two months after the disappearance of her mother, Savannah Guthrie will return to host "Today" on NBC on April 6. PAGE B3

ARTS C1-6

Theater Ticket Showdown

For half of the price of a great seat at a Broadway show, you can see "Paddington" in London's West End. PAGE C1

A Free Home for Artists

In San Francisco, the writer Dave Eggers and the artist JD Beltran have come up with Art + Water. PAGE C1



SPORTS B7-10

Woods Charged With D.U.I.

The golf icon was uninjured in a crash in which his vehicle rolled over, as it did in his 2021 accident. PAGE B9

A Terror for Tampa Bay Foes

Nikita Kucherov is scoring at a historic pace and leading the Lightning to another season of title contention. PAGE B7

OPINION A22-23

Lydia Polgreen

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