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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00

THE WEATHER

Today, sunny, warmer, light winds, high 78. Tonight, a few clouds, warm, a light breeze, low 67. Tomorrow, partial sunshine, a light breeze, high 86. Weather map, Page B12.



POOL PHOTO BY EVAN VUCCI



KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES



MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS



KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Clockwise from top left: President Trump and China's President Xi Jinping visiting Zhongnanhai Garden in Beijing on Friday; directing a motorcade at the garden compound; talking with reporters on Air Force One; a performance ahead of Mr. Trump's departure.

An Occasion For Mocking, If Cautiously

Chinese Get Peek at Xi Past Usual Staging

"The whole world is watching our meeting," Xi Jinping, the Chinese leader, said as he welcomed President Trump to the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. That wasn't an overstatement. Cameras from different countries were trained on the leaders of the world's largest economies, allowing pundits to pick apart the diplomatic meaning of their words and gestures. Those cameras offered a rare opportunity for Chinese people, too: seeing Mr. Xi up close and from angles not usually presented by state media.

And some found the visuals an occasion for comedy.

On China's censored internet, political humor and honest online discussion are dangerous. Talking about Mr. Xi is the top taboo. The danger is grave within the country, and even Chinese people living abroad fear for their families back home. So to comment on the summit, Chinese speakers flocked to Threads, X and other open platforms that are banned in China, some scaling the Great Firewall with a VPN.

The many jokes and ironic comments posted offered a window both into how the more liberal-minded Chinese public views Mr. Xi and his leadership style, and into how political opinion survives when it has nowhere else to go. When criticizing leadership directly can lead to jail, jokes become more than jokes. They are, as some people commented, equal parts hilarious and heartbreaking, an act of trying to find humor in absurdity and cruelty. (These humorous takes remain anonymous, even when posted on platforms outside the Great Firewall, and the users can be difficult to track down.)

Mr. Xi, the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao Zedong, is on the front page of the official People's Daily nearly every day. He dominates the

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SUMMIT REVERSES HARD-LINE VIEWS ON TIES TO CHINA

FEW DETAILS ON DEALS

Trump Adopts a Tone of Conciliation With a Confident Xi

By ANTON TROIANOVSKI and DAVID E. SANGER

BEIJING — In 2024, Donald J. Trump said China was "killing us as a country." Last year, he complained that President Xi Jinping of China was "very tough, and extremely hard to make a deal with." His tariffs on China reached 145 percent at one point.

The whiplash that followed culminated in the pageantry in Beijing this week.

As Air Force One took off from the Chinese capital on Friday, it remained unclear what deals, if any, President Trump had clinched with Mr. Xi. But the two-day summit in Beijing underscored how far he has shifted the foundations of American policy toward China in the wake of his humbling retreat from last year's trade war. He has thrown aside the adversarial approach of his first years in office, the Biden administration and the beginning of his own second term.

What's more, he has largely waved aside the warnings outlined in the Pentagon's annual, unclassified accounting of China's capabilities and intentions, which lays out a plan to push the United States out of the Western Pacific, engulf Taiwan, claim more territory in the South China Sea and escalate cyberattacks on the United States. He acknowledges that these threats are real. He has just reversed his view of how to deal with them.

In Beijing, Mr. Trump clapped for Chinese children waving American flags, toasted the "special relationship" between the American and Chinese people, called Mr. Xi a "great leader" and exclaimed that the garden where he walked with Mr. Xi held "the most beautiful roses anyone's ever seen." When Mr. Trump introduced the Chinese leader to the 17

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A 'Working-Class' Candidate's Complex Résumé

This article is by Lisa Lerer, Katie Glueck and Sophie Park.

SULLIVAN, Maine — Graham Platner, the presumptive Democratic nominee in one of the country's marquee Senate races, has catapulted to national stardom, propelled by an image as a veteran and working-class oysterman who embodies the economic struggles of blue-collar Americans.

As he campaigns across Maine and raises his profile in the national news media, Mr. Platner frequently cites his financial circumstances as a central credential for office.

"I'm a working-class guy that lives a working-class life," he told a local Maine television station. "There's an authenticity there that most other politicians just

Maine Senate Hopeful's Back Story Muddies His Own Image

can't provide because it's inauthentic for them."

Recently, as he wooed voters at an American Legion hall in the small town of Sabattus, Mr. Platner repeated what has become a routine campaign line: "I've never been close to money and power."

More than two dozen interviews, reviews of his financial documents and a visit to his hometown reveal a back story that defies easy categorization, complicating the blue-collar image cultivated by Mr. Platner and his campaign.

Mr. Platner is an oysterman, a combat veteran and a former harbor master from tiny Sullivan. He is also the son of a Dartmouth College-educated lawyer, the grandson of a famed Connecticut architect and a graduate of a private high school.

His parents have offered him privileges and connections and have helped him financially. Mr. Platner has described his mother, who owns an upscale restaurant, as his oyster farm's biggest customer.

On large expenses, including his home, he has received assistance from his father. His father also paid for his and his wife's travel, lodging and fertility treatments in Norway this year, according to a person with knowledge of the financial arrangement

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U.S. to Apply Terror Statutes Inside Mexico

This article is by Ernesto Londoño, Alan Feuer and Jack Nicas.

The Trump administration this week instructed federal prosecutors to use terrorism statutes to target Mexican officials complicit in the narcotics trade, a significant escalation in its campaign against drug trafficking from Mexico, according to a U.S. official familiar with the remarks.

That new directive was announced Wednesday by Aakash Singh, an associate deputy attorney general, during an internal conference call with prosecutors in regional offices and represents an aggressive new tactic in the administration's counternarcotics strategy that is almost certain to further strain its relationship with Mexico.

The initiative is the latest expansion of a hard-line policy that has defined President Trump's agenda since his return to the White House last year, when he signed an executive order designating Latin American drug cartels as terrorist organizations. Within months, the U.S. military began blowing up boats in the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean, killing nearly 200 people the administration says are drug smugglers.

The Justice Department directive, which has not been previously reported, comes two weeks after federal prosecutors in New York indicted the governor of Mexico's Sinaloa state, who is also a member of the country's governing party, and nine other current and former Mexican officials. Days earlier, the death of two Central Intelligence Agency officers in a car crash in Mexico revealed a

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RAMON ESPINOSA/ASSOCIATED PRESS

In Cuba, Short on Fuel and Hope

Playing dominoes by phone light in Havana, plagued by power outages. The C.I.A. chief traveled there on Thursday. Page A6.



SOPHIE PARK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Graham Platner, a Democratic nominee, is a combat veteran, oysterman and a prep school alum.

From TV to T.P., Why Your Life Is Subscriptions

By SOPAN DEB

If it seems as if much of your life has a subscription now — your TV, your car, even your white noise machine — you would be correct.

Take Eleanor Lewis, a 35-year-old software engineer in Brooklyn who is paying for a video game she is no longer interested in. She has subscribed to D&D Beyond — an accompaniment to the original role-playing game — for what to her feels like "forever."

Companies Cashing In With Repeat Charges

"I haven't played Dungeons & Dragons in like five years," Ms. Lewis said. "I literally do not even like Dungeons & Dragons, but I'm stuck with this stupid Dungeons & Dragons Beyond on a subscription I can't figure out how to get rid of."

That is but one example of products or services that can take up long-term residence in credit card statements. There are your streaming channels. Shopping sites, like Amazon Prime. Wholesale clubs for household goods, like Costco. The ink for your printer. Cloud storage and the tools that make your computer useful, like image-editing software.

It could even be your underwear. Car washes. The bed where

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U.S. Alleges Iran Link in Plots on Jewish Sites

By BENJAMIN WEISER and OLIVIA BENSIMON

A commander of an Iranian-backed militia has been charged with plotting to attack Jewish sites in the United States, including a synagogue in New York City, and carrying out terror attacks in Europe as part of a broader campaign of retaliation by Iran since the war began in February.

A criminal complaint unsealed on Friday accused the command-

Case Against Militant Includes N.Y. Target

er, Mohammad Baqer Saad Daoud al-Saadi, of planning at least 20 attacks against U.S. and Israeli interests in Europe and Canada since late February. Mr. al-Saadi was detained in Turkey recently and handed over to U.S. authorities, Mr. al-Saadi's lawyer said in

federal court in Manhattan on Friday. Mr. al-Saadi did not enter a plea.

Mr. al-Saadi, according to the complaint, is a commander of Kataib Hezbollah, an Iraqi militia that is a proxy for Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and has helped Tehran project power across the region, including through attacks on American forces and diplomatic targets.

Since the U.S. and Israeli militaries, Mr. al-Saadi's lawyer said in

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NATIONAL A10-18

Where Did All the AK-47s Go?

A family of guns that was once ubiquitous in the U.S. firearms marketplace has started to vanish. PAGE A10

Mysterious Absences

Members of the House and Senate often stay silent about medical conditions that affect their ability to work. PAGE A16

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

Taiwan Leader's Secret Flight

The president's team unwittingly officials in Beijing with a borrowed jet, pulling off an audacious diplomatic journey to southern Africa. PAGE A9

Missed Chance for Republicans

Deferential lawmakers failed at crucial milestones to try to limit the president's war powers. PAGE A7

ARTS C1-6

Lisa Ann Walter, Ever Brash

Amid a midcareer renaissance, the "Abbott Elementary" and "Parent Trap" star is returning to stand-up. PAGE C1



SPORTS B8-11

Breaking Through Barriers

Women in horse racing, including the jockey Katie Davis, above, discussed the myriad challenges they faced. PAGE B8

Words Are Part of the Game

Don't tell Sabres Coach Lindy Ruff the era of using comments in the media to get an on-ice edge is over. PAGE B11

BUSINESS B1-7

Preparing in an Unsafe World

Poland, a stalwart on military spending, is training its citizens in civil defense while they balance their lives during economic turmoil. It is also enlarging its professional armed forces. PAGE B1

Test for Qatar's Energy Sector

Since the start of the war in the Middle East, Iranian strikes and a blockade have paralyzed its gas production, creating a technical bottleneck likely to stall exports for years. PAGE B1

OPINION A20-21

Jason Furman

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THE MAGAZINE



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