



A U.S. C-17 lands at Beijing Capital International Airport ahead of President Trump's visit this week. GREG BAKER AFP/Getty Images

Virus anxiety rises as travelers return

Hantavirus isn't easily transmitted; four Californians exposed are back in the U.S.

BY KAREN GARCIA

In the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, health officials struggled to impress upon the public the grave risks associated with the disease, as well as how easily it could spread.

Now, six years later, public fears have focused on another type of virus that has killed and sickened passengers on a Dutch-flagged cruise ship; four Californians who were exposed to the virus on the ship recently returned to the United States. This time, however, officials are taking a very different approach to messaging surrounding the deadly Andes virus — a type of hantavirus.

Although officials and infectious disease experts have been quick to note the seriousness of the rodent-borne disease, they have also emphasized key differences between hantavirus and COVID-19. Namely, that this virus is far less transmissible.

Public alarm over the illness began to grow after reports that three passengers died aboard the stricken vessel, MV Hondius. Worries grew further over the weekend when officials announced that 18 U.S. cruise passengers had disembarked and were returning home.

On Monday the California Department of Public Health said during a media briefing that four Californians had been exposed to the virus, but none had contracted it. Three of them were cruise ship passengers, while the fourth was a Sacramento resident who was on a plane with an infected person in South Africa.

As of now, all four individuals lack symptoms and appear healthy, according to Dr. Erica Pan, director of the California Department of Public Health.

One passenger, a Santa Clara resident, disembarked the cruise before the outbreak was recognized and returned to California, she said.

"This person was reported to our department last week and is being monitored by the local public health department where they live," Pan said. "The other two passengers disembarked over the weekend in the Canary Islands and have been flown" to a bio-containment facility at the Uni-

[See Hantavirus, A6]

Beijing is taking note of U.S. stumbles in Iran war

Conflict offers China a chance to flex on world stage

BY MICHAEL WILNER

BEIJING — The Trump administration has repeatedly framed the war in Iran as a quick, winnable fight, vowing to defeat the Islamic Republic "totally and decisively" — incomparable to the "dumb" wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But from China's perspective, the parallels are clear. "You can blow everything up — destroy it all," one Chinese official told The Times, describing the Americans, "but you don't have a strategy."

President Trump arrives in Beijing this week for talks with a Chinese government that is confident as ever in its ascendancy on the world stage, taking stock of its lev-

erage and still baffled the U.S. administration chose yet another costly war in the Middle East.

China has watched as the United States, over seven weeks of fighting an out-matched enemy, has depleted nearly half of its stockpiles of high-end munitions — including its THAAD and Patriot batteries — and fired its Army chief of staff, among other Pentagon leaders, who had warned of critical shortages.

Marco Rubio, Trump's national security advisor and secretary of State, has said the military operation that started the war known as Operation Epic Fury "is over."

But the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most vital commercial waterways, remains effectively shuttered.

Iranian attacks in the region continue. And talks between Washington and Tehran have failed to reach a diplomatic agreement to bring a definitive end to the conflict.

"The Chinese have high regard for the operational proficiency of U.S. forces, but they recognize that, thus far at least, the Trump administration has not achieved its core objectives in going to war with Iran," said David Ochmanek, a former deputy assistant secretary of Defense now with the Rand Corp.

The war has given Beijing an opportunity, Ochmanek said, "to double down on the claim they have made for the past year and a half that the [People's Republic of China], not the U.S., is a force for global stability."

[See China, A3]

Scrutiny over LA28's pledge to protect human rights at Games

Besides putting on a \$7-billion sports extravaganza in the summer of 2028, Olympic organizers in Los Angeles have pledged to protect human rights. That means ensuring that homelessness and human trafficking don't get worse as a tsunami of athletes and fans from around the globe flood Southern California.

LA28 organizers outlined how they intend to protect human rights and the most vulnerable in a 35-page report released by the city of Los Angeles last month. The organization pledges to work with a network of local, state and federal agencies to "provide a solid foundation for the Games that uphold the highest standards and leave a positive legacy."

Although LA28 says it worked with a wide variety of organizations to craft the "human rights strategy,"

[See Rights, A6]

Olympics organizer has a strategy, but some groups say it falls short

BY JAMES RAINEY



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

SPENT cartridges are shown at LA Clays Shooting Sports Park, a 2028 Olympics site in South El Monte.



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

PRIMARYLY DISSATISFIED

A political consultant leads effort to return to the state's traditional voting system. CALIFORNIA, B1

Disney gains ally within the FCC

The lone Democrat on the commission denounces its actions against the company and ABC. BUSINESS, A9

Lakers, Thunder meet in Game 4

For coverage of L.A.'s attempt at avoiding elimination, go to latimes.com/sports and the e-newspaper.

Weather Not as warm. L.A. Basin: 72/58. B6



Democratic elders face new voices in races

The House challenges underline debate over generational power, the party's direction.

BY JUSTINE MCDANIEL AND ANA CEBALLOS

WASHINGTON — In Napa and surrounding counties, Rep. Mike Thompson's once-easy reelection contest is turning into something of a race. In the Sacramento area, Rep. Doris Matsui is facing one of her most serious challengers in two decades. In Los Angeles, a former White House climate official wants to unseat Rep. Brad Sherman.

In these districts and others, newcomers are challenging some of the most recognizable Democratic names in California politics in the June 2 primary election.

The challenges are part of a national wave reshaping the debate over generational power and the direction of the Democratic Party ahead of the 2026 midterms, when party leaders hope to retake control of the House. They reflect — and capitalize on — restlessness among progressive voters frustrated with the status quo, worried about affordability and looking for fresh leadership.

The question of when elder lawmakers should step aside has dogged both parties for years, from the late-career health scares of senators including Republican Mitch McConnell and Democrat Dianne Feinstein to the generational debates sparked by progressive figures such as Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani.

The debate reached a critical moment for Democrats in 2024, when President Biden withdrew from his reelection campaign under pressure over his age and mental acuity. In California, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, 86, has chosen to retire at the end of her current term.

Now, a handful of California's primary contests have revived a predictable debate: Some in the party see the argument that lawmakers in their 70s and 80s should step aside as ageist and naive; others argue Democrats need to allow for generational turnover, particularly after the party's 2024 failure to beat President Trump.

"The Democratic Party has not been delivering, and

the power structure there is crumbling," said Eric Jones, 35, an entrepreneur who is challenging Thompson in the newly redrawn 4th District. "Where's the hope? Where's the dreaming? Where's the future? I don't see any of that coming out of this current political class."

Incumbents argue that trading experience for a fresh face is a false promise. In statements to The Times, several pointed to their legislative accomplishments. "Now is not the time for on-the-job training," said Thomas Dowling, a spokes-

[See Democrats, A7]

A GOP feud in a rare red district

Redrawn Southland House map pits Reps. Kim and Calvert. They are going all-in.

BY HANNAH FRY

It's a showdown that — regardless of the outcome in the June 2 primary election — probably won't have Republicans in a celebratory mood.

The battle for the 40th Congressional District representing a swath of inland Orange County and portions of San Bernardino and Riverside counties is happening in one of Southern California's only remaining solidly red districts. But that doesn't provide much solace, experts say.

The shuffling of districts after the passage of Proposition 50, which gave Democrats in Sacramento the authority to redraw the state's congressional districts in favor of Democratic candidates, is pitting two current members of the House — Young Kim (R-Anaheim Hills) and Ken Calvert (R-Corona) — against each other.

The two are also fending off challenges from a host of Democrats and an independent candidate who says she hopes to win votes from those disenfranchised by

[See Republicans, A7]

Mayor faces 10 years, resigns over China ties

Arcadia's Eileen Wang aided propaganda as a foreign agent prior to time in office, feds say.

BY BRITNEY MEJIA AND REBECCA ELLIS

Eileen Wang, an Arcadia city leader facing charges of acting as an illegal foreign agent of China, resigned Monday after reaching an agreement to resolve the federal case.

Wang, who served as mayor of the San Gabriel Valley suburb, entered into a plea agreement with prosecutors over charges that she acted under the control of the People's Republic of China to promote propaganda in the U.S. between 2020 and 2022, according to court filings.

Wang, who was previously elected to the City Council in November 2022, stepped down as mayor on Monday hours after the plea agreement was unsealed. Arcadia officials and Wang's attorneys said the conduct

described by federal authorities occurred before Wang was elected.

Wang appeared in federal court in downtown Los Angeles during a brief hearing Monday, where a judge instructed her lawyers to set a date when she would formally enter a guilty plea.

The maximum sentence for the charge is 10 years in prison.

Dressed in a blue suit jacket and skirt and accompanied by four lawyers, Wang listened to the proceeding through a Mandarin interpreter. She sniffled throughout, wiping at her eyes and her nose with her hand and a tissue.

The magistrate judge ordered a \$25,000 bond and for her to surrender all of her passports and travel documents. Assistant U.S. Atty. Amanda B. Elbogen asked that the judge order Wang to refrain from any communication with the Chinese government, including consular officials in the U.S.

"Individuals in our country who covertly do the bidding of foreign governments undermine our democracy,"

[See Wang, A7]