

“All the News  
That’s Fit to Print”

# The New York Times

**THE WEATHER**

Today, partly cloudy, high 66. Tonight, increasing clouds, low 51. Tomorrow, mostly cloudy, a couple of showers mainly later in the day, high 66. Weather map is on Page B10.

VOL. CLXXV . . . No. 60,882

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TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2026

Prices in Canada may be higher \$4.00



ESTEBAN VANEGAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Hippopotamuses have multiplied along the Magdalena River since the downfall of Pablo Escobar, who kept the exotic animals as pets.

## Lone Infusion Has Potential To Curb H.I.V.

By APOORVA MANDAVILLI

For about a decade, scientists have had remarkable success curbing some blood cancers by modifying a patient’s own immune cells to recognize and kill the malignant cells.

That same approach may help control H.I.V., among the wildest of viruses, scientists will report on Tuesday. After a single infusion of immune cells engineered to recognize the virus, two people in a new study have suppressed their H.I.V. to undetectable levels, one of them for nearly two years.

The data is scheduled to be presented at a gene therapy conference in Boston, but the researchers shared an early copy with The New York Times.

The treatment is years, if not decades, from being widely available, but the study offers what scientists call “proof of concept,” and the tantalizing hope that a single shot could one day offer lifelong relief from H.I.V.

“It is inspiration and a potential road map to get to where we need to go,” said Dr. Steve Deeks, an H.I.V. expert at the University of California, San Francisco, who led the trial.

Other scientists were enthusiastic about the milestone.

“It’s truly amazing that they were able to accomplish this,” said Dr. Hans-Peter Kiem, an oncologist and gene therapy expert at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle, who was not involved in the study.

H.I.V. requires lifelong control because the virus hides out in deep recesses of the body, and comes roaring back when it sees

Continued on Page A15

## They’re Wanted in Colombia: Escobar’s Hippos

By LUIS FERRÉ-SADURNÍ

DORADAL, Colombia — When night falls in this small village, the quiet is broken by the wet, heavy thuds of the town’s 3,000-pound unofficial mascots trudging past gardens, schoolyards and patios.

Along Colombia’s main river, fishing nets once filled with catfish are coming up emptier — replaced by the wake of churning beasts that shouldn’t be there.

Fishermen are terrified to cast their hooks at night.

“They’ve changed our lifestyle,” said Giovanni Contreras, a fisherman, as he navigated his boat past the bulbous eyes of a male hippo

### Some Love the Unruly Herd. Others Back a Euthanasia Plan.

peering at him.

Thousands of miles from their native Africa, hippopotamuses are multiplying in the heart of Colombia, taking over watering holes and wading further into the lives of Colombian communities near the Magdalena River.

It began as a drug lord’s whim: four hippos that Pablo Escobar brought as exotic pets for his sprawling estate in the 1980s. Now

an unruly herd has bedeviled Colombia for decades.

After the kingpin was felled in 1993, his 5,000-acre estate fell with him. Left to their own devices in the lush Colombian countryside, the semiaquatic mammals did what they do best: They lolled in the water, grazed and procreated.

Today, about 200 hippos, native to Africa and declared an invasive species in Colombia, are estimated to be roaming freely, drawing fury, affection and global intrigue. Scientists project their numbers to reach more than 1,000 by 2035, a potential threat to Colombia’s ecosystem.

The Colombian government

Continued on Page A13



AL DRAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

### A \$13 Million Paint Job

The Lincoln Memorial pool update will now cost seven times as much as first promised. Page A18.

## In Eurovision, Israel Used Soft Power to Burnish Its Ailing Image

By MARA HVISTENDAHL and ALEX MARSHALL

GENEVA — Last fall and winter, senior Israeli diplomats urgently contacted officials and television broadcasters across Europe to address a delicate, if unexpected topic: the high camp Eurovision Song Contest.

Broadcasters wanted to ban Israel from Eurovision and threatened to boycott the contest over the war in Gaza. Some even accused the Israeli government of

unfairly influencing the results through a mass voting campaign.

Israel perhaps had bigger diplomatic concerns than a pop music competition, even one that reaches 166 million viewers around the world. A United Nations commission had recently accused Israel of committing genocide, which it vigorously denied. And world leaders were recognizing Palestinian statehood, which it had long opposed.

“I am a little bit surprised why this is a matter that the embassy is

### A Broad and Prolonged Effort to Sway Votes

looking into,” Stefan Eiriksson, the head of Iceland’s national broadcaster, wrote to an Israeli diplomat who wanted to discuss Eurovision last December.

This previously undisclosed diplomatic push to keep Israel in Eurovision was just one aspect of a drama that unfolded over the

past year around the world’s most watched cultural event. To the Israeli government, Eurovision became more than just a celebration of glittery outfits, gay pride and pyrotechnic staging. It became a chance, through strong showings by its singers, to burnish the country’s flagging reputation and rally international support.

This year’s competition starts on Tuesday, after the biggest crisis in Eurovision’s 70-year history. Iceland and four other countries

Continued on Page A6

## As Xi Elevated His Generals, Doubts Grew

### Expansive Purge After Remolding Military

By CHRIS BUCKLEY

The purge China’s leader, Xi Jinping, has inflicted on the military elite was plain to see at a recent legislative meeting. A year earlier, state television footage showed around 40 generals in the room. This time, there were only a handful.

Yet Mr. Xi indicated that an upheaval that rivaled those of the Mao era was not over. Stony-faced, he warned the remaining officers to beware of disloyalty.

“The military,” he said, “must never have anyone who harbors a divided heart toward the party.”

It was a rare public reference by Mr. Xi to one of the worst political crises of his 13 years in power: He had lost faith in the military leadership that he had spent a decade remolding.

“When Xi uses the words ‘divided heart,’ they are heavy with meaning,” said Chien-wen Kou, a professor at National Chengchi University in Taiwan. The phrase is found in ancient Chinese treatises that counsel rulers against treacherous generals, including a volume Mr. Xi has kept on his bookshelf.

“Even his most trusted and important confidants have fallen,” Professor Kou said. “Who else can gain his trust?”

The crisis threatens one of Mr. Xi’s great feats: the transformation of the Chinese military into a formidable force with new aircraft carriers, hypersonic missiles and an expanding nuclear arsenal. And it comes as China’s rivalry with the United States has intensified, and as the Trump administration has put American firepower, and its limits, on vivid display in Venezuela and Iran.

China’s war readiness may be disrupted for years by the very cleanup that Mr. Xi has said is necessary to purify and strengthen the ranks. What once looked like a limited crackdown on corruption became a sweeping dismissal of dozens of top officers, and culminated in the downfall early this year of Zhang Youxia, China’s top uniformed commander, who had appeared to be a confidant of Mr. Xi’s.

The final break between them came, by some accounts, when Mr. Xi sought to promote the general leading the cleanup to a position rivaling General Zhang’s. General Zhang objected. Months later, he was out.

The gravity of the campaign was on stark display again last week, when a military court sen-

Continued on Page A8

## What Asia Fears Most On Summit

### Sweeping Trade Deal May Imperil Security

By DAMIEN CAVE

Poland will soon host production lines for South Korean tanks. Australia is buying warships from Japan. Canada will send uranium to India, while India offers cruise missiles to Vietnam, and Brazil builds military transport planes for the United Arab Emirates.

All of these deals were sealed in the past few weeks. Each one represents an attempt by middle powers to protect themselves as the conflict in Iran throttles global energy supplies, and as a high-stakes summit between President Trump and Xi Jinping of China looms.

Global polls show the world has little trust in the United States and China. Mr. Trump and Mr. Xi have both used their enormous leverage over trade and security to coerce or punish. And in response, smaller nations are behaving as if they are stuck in “Godzilla” or “Dune” — moving



KACPER PEMPEL/REUTERS

Polish soldiers on exercises in a South Korean-made tank.

quietly in small groups, trying not to provoke the wrath of petulant giants.

“It’s fifty shades of hedging,” said Richard Heydarian, a Filipino political scientist at Oxford University. Or, as Ja Ian Chong, a security analyst in Singapore put it, “No party wants to cross Beijing and now Washington, too.”

For countries watching from afar, dread and hope hover over the Trump-Xi meeting in Beijing, which is scheduled for this week. In Asia, which has been hit hardest and fastest by oil shortages caused by the war and China’s tight control of oil-product exports, the mood is particularly grim. Interviews with officials, and statements from leaders

Continued on Page A9

## A.I. Push and Layoffs at Meta Pile Misery on Its Work Force

This article is by Kalley Huang, Eli Tan and Kate Conger.

SAN FRANCISCO — In an internal post last month, Meta told its U.S. employees that it was making a change that would affect tens of thousands of them.

What employees typed into their computer, how they moved their mouse, where they clicked and what they saw on their screen would be tracked, Meta said. The goal, the company said, was to capture employee data so Meta’s artificial intelligence models could learn “how people actually complete everyday tasks using computers.”

Many workers immediately revolted. In online comments, they denounced the tracking as a privacy violation, calling it antisocial and callous.

“This makes me super uncomfortable,” an engineering man-

ager wrote in a comment in response to the announcement, which was reviewed by The New York Times. “How do we opt out?”

“There is no option to opt-out on your corporate laptop,” replied Andrew Bosworth, Meta’s chief technology officer. Employees reacted by posting more than 100 angry and surprised emojis, according to the messages.

Mark Zuckerberg, Meta’s chief executive, has staked the future of his company on A.I. by weaving the powerful technology into apps like Facebook and Instagram and spending hundreds of billions of dollars on developing A.I. models and data centers. But as the Silicon Valley company tries to transition from an internet firm to an A.I. organization, its embrace of the technology has been awkward and, at times, downright ugly.

Meta is pushing its 78,000 employees to adopt A.I. tools and fac-

Continued on Page A19



INTERNATIONAL A4-13

### Biking Past Apartheid’s Legacy

A reporter joined a group of cyclists on a route meant to highlight Cape Town’s lingering racial barriers. PAGE A11

### Rushing to Treat Hantavirus

It has been hard to attract interest for viruses that have not been considered a top priority, scientists say. PAGE A12

BUSINESS B1-5

### Retailers Bet on Walk-Ins

Walmart, Target and Dollar General are among those investing in remodeling thousands of existing stores, even as shoppers veer online. PAGE B1

### Inside the Court Circus

Elon Musk and Sam Altman, two tech billionaires, have brought props and traded icy stares. PAGE B1

OBITUARIES A21, 24

### Fiery Hall of Fame Manager

Bobby Cox led Atlanta to success in the 1990s, and he holds the M.L.B. mark for ejections. He was 84. PAGE A21



SPORTS B6-9

### Leading the Knicks Back

Jalen Brunson has made Madison Square Garden an N.B.A. mecca of spirit and success once again. PAGE B6

### Meet the New Mr. Cub

Second baseman Nico Hoerner has become the face of the franchise and a favorite of his teammates. PAGE B7

NATIONAL A14-20

### Abortion Pill Access Extended

Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. has paused until at least Thursday a ruling against the F.D.A. that would restrict access by mail to mifepristone. PAGE A15

SCIENCE TIMES D1-8

### Promising A.L.S. Treatment

A clinical trial shows that a new drug can improve the breathing and strength of a small subset of patients affected by the usually fatal disease. PAGE D1

OPINION A22-23

### Gary Sernovitz

PAGE A22



ARTS C1-6

### Coming Up One Cow Short

A family is seeking the return of a painting it thought was by Rubens. But a tally of the animals pictured suggests that the artwork is a copy. PAGE C1



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