

THE WAR IN DARKNESS



Sonya Liakh was diagnosed with eye cancer at age 2, which took away her sight even as Russia’s invasion of Ukraine disrupted her treatment.

A Strong-Willed Struggle Against a Pitiless Disease

Article and Photographs by LYNSEY ADDARIO

CHERNIVTSI, Ukraine — Splayed out on a pink bedspread, wearing a pink tank top and surrounded by stuffed pink unicorns, 6-year-old Sonya Liakh unscrewed the port to the catheter in her chest. She took a pre-filled syringe of morphine from the tray held by the nurse beside her, deftly inserted the syringe into her port, and pushed the contents into her jugular vein. Her medication was one of the few things Sonya could still control. Russia’s invasion had uprooted her life, as it had so many lives in Ukraine. It had killed her father at the front line and dealt a debilitating blow to

her health, delaying her chemotherapy and allowing a rare form of cancer to rob her of her vision and ravage her body. And so, this past spring, as the cancer spread from her eyes to the rest of her head and then to her back, mouth and neck — and as the subtle lumps grew more pronounced — Sonya insisted on injecting herself. The daunting health challenges facing sick and disabled children in Ukraine are a cruel reminder that the war’s tentacles stretch far beyond the front line. They have suffered from misdiagnoses, lapses in treatment, a lack of access to specialized food and physical therapy, displacement and the unrelenting

stress of war. Frequent power outages have endangered those dependent on oxygen and other machines requiring electricity. In the face of these obstacles, families with sick and disabled children are carving out their own paths for survival in hospitals, orphanages and private homes, often with the help of humanitarian groups. Organizations like Tabletochki and BlueCheck Ukraine are supporting children with cancer, autism, cerebral palsy and a range of physical and psychological needs. Living with her family in the Kirovohrad region of

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A Nobel Honor
To the Survivors
Of Atom Bombs

This article is by Hannah Beech, Hisako Ueno and Kiuko Notoya. Cities blasted to rubble. Burned bodies and flayed flesh. Invisible waves of radiation coursing through the air. And the indelible image of a mushroom cloud. The atomic bombs dropped by the United States on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki showed the world what an apocalypse looks like. Tens of thousands of people died in the immediate aftermath. But some emerged from the devastation. Struggling with survivors’ guilt and sick with illnesses caused by the radiation, they were shunned for years as living reminders of the human capacity to engineer horror. On Friday, Nihon Hidankyo, a collective of Japanese atomic bomb survivors, was awarded the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize for its decades-long campaign to rid the world of nuclear weapons. The group was honored by the Norwegian Nobel Committee for “demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again.” The survivors of the bombings — more than 100,000 are still living — “help us to describe the indescribable, to think the unthinkable, and to somehow grasp the incomprehensible pain and suffer-

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TYLER PASCIAK LARIVIERE/CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Rare Glimpse of the Northern Lights

Watching an aurora borealis from Montrose Point in Chicago on Thursday. Viewers were dazzled across much of the U.S. Page A22.

India Lawmakers Own and Operate Sugar Mills Exploiting Labor

By MEGHA RAJAGOPALAN and QADRI INZAMAM

MUMBAI, India — In the sweltering sugar fields of the western Indian state of Maharashtra, abusive practices such as debt bondage and child labor have long been an open secret. But in 2019, a state lawmaker named Neelam Gorhe documented a new level of brutality: Female workers were getting unnecessary hysterectomies at alarmingly high rates. She presented her findings to

the state’s health minister and alerted the region’s sugar regulator. She called on her government colleagues to ensure that workers received basic services including toilets, running water and a minimum wage — all in accordance with Indian law. Yet most lawmakers apparently ignored the report, or read it and moved on. They launched no further investigation and passed no laws. The abuses, detailed in an investigation that ran in The New York Times, remain as wide-

Abused Workers Have
Little Recourse

spread as ever, and young women continue to be coerced into unnecessary and potentially life-altering hysterectomies. The reason, to many in Maharashtra, is obvious. Sugar is among the state’s most important industries, one that sells to big brand buyers such as Coca-Cola

and Pepsi, and is heavily controlled by the political elite. Most of the state’s sugar mills are led by sitting lawmakers or political figures, a new investigation by The New York Times and The Fuller Project found. That includes at least 21 state lawmakers, four members of the national Parliament, five government ministers and nearly 50 former officials. Mill bosses come from every party — both in government leadership and opposition — including

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Aides to Trump
Seek Protection
At Biden’s Level

This article is by Kate Kelly, Maggie Haberman, Jonathan Swan and Eileen Sullivan. Former President Donald J. Trump’s campaign has requested a series of additional security measures, including military assets, in conversations with the White House and the Secret Service because of continuing threats to his safety, according to four people briefed on the matter. The conversations came amid suggestions from some Trump aides that they felt hamstrung from having Mr. Trump campaign the way they would like to because of the security threats, including his ability to travel where he wants and appear outside at rallies. In exchanges with the White House chief of staff, Jeffrey D. Zients, and the acting Secret Service director, Ronald L. Rowe Jr., in the last two weeks, Susie Wiles, Mr. Trump’s top campaign adviser, said that Mr. Trump had been forced to move, reschedule or cancel key events because of limits on the service’s available resources, according to the people. The campaign’s requests for more security, one of the people said, included sophisticated, classified military assets that are used only for sitting presidents; the

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Living With Hate in Ohio
A young Haitian family loved their new home in Springfield, until a false rumor changed everything. PAGE A14

Hurricane Milton’s Aftermath
Floridians returned to neighborhoods without power and filled with piles of soggy, stinking debris. PAGE A22

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Hiker in U.K. Blazes a Trail
Moved by the racial disparity she saw outdoors, Rhiane Fatinikun founded Black Girls Hike to make Britain’s countryside more inclusive. PAGE A4

Pleading for a Cease-Fire
Lebanon’s leader urged the U.N. to adopt a truce resolution a day after airstrikes in central Beirut. PAGE A12

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Experian’s Pitch for Debit Card
The company says that having one may help lift credit scores, but there are things to consider. PAGE B1

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Aboriginal Art in New York
The biggest show of bark paintings ever mounted in the United States is on view at the Asia Society. PAGE C1

Five Waterside Bicycle Rides
Scenery, bird-watching, wildlife viewing and fall leaf peeping are among the perks of these U.S. bike routes. PAGE C7

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Faltering Down the Stretch
Breanna Stewart came up short twice in the New York Liberty’s loss in overtime to the Minnesota Lynx in Game 1 of the W.N.B.A. finals. “We just take it on the chin,” she said. PAGE B10

N.I.L. Money Before College
A Missouri law allowing high schoolers to earn from endorsements, if they commit to attending a public university in the state, has helped a football program attract elite players. PAGE B6

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Creator of Mystical Monument
For 40 years, James Magee built a group of stone and steel buildings in the West Texas desert to house works that few saw. He was 79. PAGE B12

