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Portraits of Ukrainian civilians held captive by Russia, at the Media Initiative for Human Rights office in Kyiv, Ukraine.

## Ukrainian Civilians Captured by Russia Face Special Terrors

By JEFFREY GETTELMAN

KYIV, Ukraine — At the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Mykola Zakhzhyyi, a 37-year-old father of two young boys, jumped on his motorcycle and zoomed off from his house in the suburbs of Kyiv.

He told his wife he wanted to see what was going on with the Russian troops who had just invaded their area.

He did not come back that night. Or the next. Or that month. Or the month after that.

"I was in shock," said his wife, Iryna. "And the kids kept asking, When's Dad coming home?"

Dad, a heating and water technician, had become one of hundreds of Ukrainian civilians taken by Russian forces from oc-

### They Disappear Into a World Where Their Routine Is Hunger and Beatings

cupied areas of Ukraine and shunted through a constellation of Russian prisons in a new kind of gulag.

They are a class of prisoners languishing incommunicado deep within the penal system of an enemy state. Some have died in captivity, and relatively few have been released. Those who have been freed, like Mr. Zakhzhyyi, say they were tortured, nearly starved and tormented constantly.

He described his nearly yearlong ordeal,

which he said included regular beatings with a plastic pipe and a paltry diet of ground-up fish heads, in a series of face-to-face interviews from Makariv, his suburb outside of Kyiv, Ukraine's capital.

He also provided paperwork showing he had been incarcerated in Russia. Ukrainian human rights investigators and government officials corroborated that he had been taken prisoner by Russian forces and the accounts of a half-dozen others like him who were interviewed by The New York Times.

The details of how Mr. Zakhzhyyi said he was treated could not be verified independently, but everything he said fit with a growing body of reports and investigations into the abuse of prisoners in Russian cus-

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TOM STOPPARD, 1937-2025

## Dramatist Whose Wit Put a New Spin on Shakespeare, and Love

By BRUCE WEBER

Tom Stoppard, the Czech-born English playwright who entwined erudition with imagination, verbal pyrotechnics with arch cleverness, and philosophical probing with heartache and lust in stage works that won accolades and awards on both sides of the Atlantic, earning critical comparisons to Shakespeare and Shaw, has died at his home in Dorset, England. He was 88.

The death was announced in a statement from United Agents, which represented him. No other details were provided.

Few writers for the stage — or the page, for that matter — have exhibited the rhetorical dazzle of Mr. Stoppard, or been as dauntless in plumbing the depths of intellect for conflict and drama. Beginning in 1966 with his witty twist on "Hamlet" — "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead" — he soon earned a reputation as the most cerebral of contemporary English-language playwrights, venturing into vast fields of scholarly inquiry — theology, political theory, the relationship of mind and body, the nature of creativity, the purpose of art — and spreading his work across the centuries and continents.

Among his best known plays are "The Real Thing" (1982), a

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Tom Stoppard in 1992 on the set of "The Real Inspector Hound," which spoofed theater critics.

NATIONAL A11-17, 20

### Unlocking a Male Fortress

Less than 10 percent of heart and lung surgeons in the country are women. Some vow to change that.

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### Trump's Policies Upset Town

First, Newport, Ore., lost its Coast Guard rescue chopper. Then came word that ICE wanted a new facility.

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### Netanyahu Requests a Pardon

Israel's prime minister made the contentious appeal weeks after President Trump had made the same request to the Israeli president.

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### Pope Welcomed in Lebanon

Christians from across the region gathered to greet the pontiff in a country still reeling from a war between Israel and Hezbollah last year.

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### Climate Denial Is Surging

Ten years after the Paris accord, political shifts and the spread of disinformation online have undermined efforts to respond to the threat.

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### TikTok Shop: A Lot Like QVC

The popular app's online marketplace is growing rapidly, driven by its own users and influencer advertisements that look like infomercials.

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### Children Ask About Privilege

Some parents turn to books or movie nights to facilitate discussions. But they don't have all the answers.

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#### Poet With a Musical Ear

Ellen Bryant Voigt's work included "Kyrie," a suite of sonnets about the 1918 influenza. She was 82.

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### Some Bubbles Will Burst

The last regular-season weekend in F.B.S. left more teams with playoff cases than there are berths.

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### Baseball Behind Bars

Playing for the San Quentin Giants has given prisoners a chance to win, and to find their way.

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### ARTS C1-6

### Rescuing a Nashville Carousel

Art lovers seek the return of the shuttered merry-go-round, which was created by the artist Red Grooms.

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### 'Rage Bait' Is Word of the Year

The term for online content that is "designed to elicit anger" beat out "biohack" and "aura farming."

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### OPINION A18-19

#### David Byler

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### THE WEATHER

Today, breezy early, partly cloudy, high 41. Tonight, mainly clear in the evening, cloudy late, low 33. Tomorrow, rain, mixed with snow at the onset, high 40. Weather map, Page B5.

## Elite Unit of Justice Dept. Sees Exodus Despite Wins

### Success at Supreme Court, but Unease Over Fiery Filings and Close Trump Ties

By ABBIE VANSICKLE and ANN E. MARIMOW

WASHINGTON — On a spring evening this year, more than a hundred lawyers and guests filled the Justice Department's Great Hall to mark the end of an era.

The invitation-only event celebrated the retirement of Edwin S. Kneedler, who, over a 46-year career in the Office of the Solicitor General, had argued 160 cases on behalf of the government before the Supreme Court — a modern record.

Standing in front of statues depicting the "Spirit of Justice" and the "Majesty of Law," speakers praised the traditionally fierce independence of the solicitor general's office, the elite unit inside the Justice Department that represents the federal government before the justices. But some in the crowd grew uneasy, as the event's theme served as a striking contrast to a shift underway since President Trump took office in January.

Led by D. John Sauer, Mr. Trump's former personal lawyer, the solicitor general's office has appeared to be an unusually functional corner of a Justice Department that has been rocked by mass departures and internal chaos. The office has racked up a record of wins on emergency applications filed to the Supreme Court that even liberal critics describe as impressive.

But behind the scenes, people familiar with the office say it has

been affected by the politicization spreading through the rest of the department.

By Mr. Kneedler's farewell on May 29, several other lawyers had also departed, adding to a number that would swell to nine, or more than half of the office's frontline attorneys, by late November. It is an unusually high turnover, even for the first year of a new administration after a White House change of party. And new hires at the traditionally bipartisan office have leaned more Republican than in the past.

White House lawyers, who have typically had a carefully circumscribed relationship with the office, have also become more involved in its work since Mr. Trump began his second term, sending

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KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Turmoil is growing at Solicitor General D. John Sauer's office.

## With Pardon, a Contradiction In a Campaign Against Drugs

By TYLER PAGER

President Trump and his top aides have said that drug cartels present one of the most pressing dangers to the United States, and have promised to eradicate them

from the Western Hemisphere.

**NEWS ANALYSIS** As part of that effort, Mr. Trump signaled on Saturday that he was ratcheting up his campaign against drug cartels, saying in a social media post that airspace above and surrounding Venezuela should be considered

"CLOSED IN ITS ENTIRETY."

Less than 24 hours earlier, Mr. Trump had announced on social media that he was granting a full pardon to Juan Orlando Hernández, a former president of Honduras who had been convicted in the United States of drug trafficking charges in what was seen

as a major victory for authorities in a case against a former head of state. That pardon has not yet been officially granted.

The two posts displayed a remarkable dissonance in the president's strategy, as he moved to escalate a military campaign against drug trafficking while ordering the release of a man prosecutors said had taken "cocaine-fueled bribes" from cartels and "protected their drugs with the full power and strength of the state — military, police and justice system." In fact, prosecutors said that Mr. Hernández, for years, allowed bricks of cocaine from Venezuela to flow through Honduras en route to the United States.

Senator Tim Kaine, Democrat of Virginia, called the pardon

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## Zillow Quietly Removes Scores Of Climate Risk From Listings

By CLAIRE BROWN

Zillow, the country's largest real estate listings site, has quietly removed a feature that showed the risks from extreme weather for more than one million home sale listings on its site.

The website began publishing climate risk ratings last year using data from the risk-modeling company First Street. The scores aimed to quantify each home's risk from floods, wildfires, wind, extreme heat and poor air quality.

But real estate agents complained they hurt sales. Some homeowners protested the scores and found there was no way to challenge the ratings.

Last month Zillow stopped displaying the scores after complaints from the California Re-

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gional Multiple Listing Service, which operates a private database funded by real estate brokers and agents. Zillow relies on that listing service and others around the country for its real estate data. The California listing service, one of the largest in the country, raised concerns about the accuracy of First Street's flood risk models.

"Displaying the probability of a specific home flooding this year or within the next five years can have a significant impact on the perceived desirability of that property," said Art Carter, California Regional Multiple Listing Service's chief executive officer.

In a statement, Zillow spokeswoman Claire Carroll said the

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