

MOSCOW STEPS UP
PACE OF INVASION
AMID PEACE TALKS

PUTIN GAINS LEVERAGE

Russia Still Balks at Calls
for Truce as Civilian
Casualties Mount

By ANATOLY KURMANAEV
BERLIN — After incremental gains for months, Russian forces are advancing on Ukrainian battlefields at the fastest pace this year. They are bombarding Ukrainian cities with some of the biggest drone and missile strikes of the war. They have even opened another front in northern Ukraine.

The Kremlin’s summer offensive appears to be underway.

Military analysts say it is clear that Russian forces this month began their latest concerted attempt to achieve a breakthrough, even as Moscow’s representatives have engaged in the first direct peace talks with Ukraine since 2022.

In particular, Russian forces are pushing into the remaining Ukrainian-controlled territory in the Donbas area in the east, in the fourth year of a conflict that has become a war of attrition. They used the winter lull to build up equipment reserves, improve battlefield communications and tweak the tactics and technical abilities of attack drones, said the military analysts.

Despite some localized battlefield successes, the pace of Russia’s advances remains slow, and few analysts expect it to achieve a decisive victory this summer that would reshape the war.

Russia’s intensified bombing campaign and mounting civilian casualties are already hurting geopolitically. President Trump has stopped praising President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and threatened new American sanctions against Russia. Ukraine is deepening its alliance with major European nations. And the Ukrainian public is more skeptical than ever of Russia’s peace overtures.

“What Vladimir Putin doesn’t realize is that if it weren’t for me, lots of really bad things would have already happened to Russia, and I mean REALLY BAD,” Mr. Trump said in a social media post on Tuesday. “He’s playing with fire!”

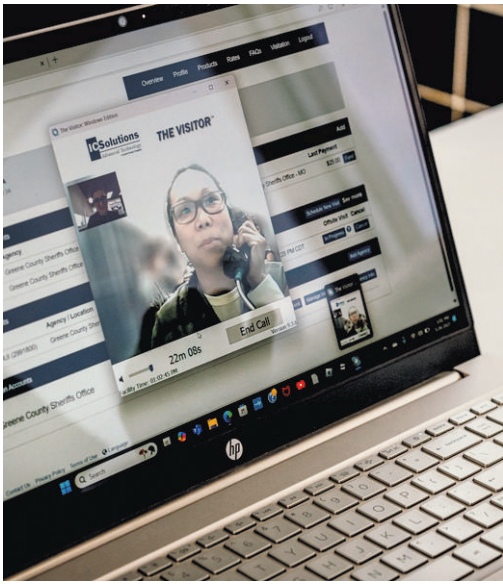
The Kremlin, in typical fashion, has not directly commented on the offensive or announced its commencement. Mr. Putin has said merely that the Russian forces are creating a “buffer zone” with Ukraine to protect Russian civilians from enemy raids. He has also repeated his mantra that the war will end only when Russia eliminates the “root causes” of the conflict, a shorthand for wide-ranging demands that Ukraine and its allies see as subjugation.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMIE KELTER DAVIS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

‘Everyone Knows Carol’: In Missouri,
Immigrant’s Arrest Stuns a Deep-Red Town



Ming Li Hui, who is originally from Hong Kong and is known as Carol, on a call from jail this week. Top, colleagues at John’s Waffle and Pancake House in Kennett, Mo.

By JACK HEALY
KENNETT, Mo. — The first sign of trouble came early this month when Carol didn’t show up for her shift at John’s Waffle and Pancake House. She was as reliable as the sun rising over the rice and melon fields in her adopted hometown, Kennett, Mo., a conservative farming hub of 10,000 people in the state’s southeastern boot heel, where “Missouri” becomes “Missour-uh.” In the 20 years since she arrived from Hong Kong, she had built a life and family in Kennett, working two waitressing jobs and cleaning houses on the side. She began every morning at the bustling diner, serving pecan waffles, hugging customers and reading leftover newspapers to improve her English. “Everyone knows Carol,” said Lisa Dry, a Kennett city councilwoman. That all ended on April 30, when federal immigration officials summoned Carol, 45, whose legal name is Ming Li Hui, to their office in St. Louis, a three-hour drive from Kennett. Her partner, a Guatemalan immigrant, had voiced suspicion about the sudden call. But “I didn’t want to run,” Ms. Hui said in a jailhouse phone interview. “I just

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A Sacred Garment Has Mormon Women Abuzz

By LAUREN JACKSON
Some Mormon women are obsessed with something illicit. They’re phoning friends, calling in favors and paying for international shipping to get it: a sacred tank top. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has redesigned its temple garments, which are worn by faithful members under their clothes. The garments are effectively underwear that, until recently, looked like white short-sleeve shirts and knee-length shorts. Now, the church has removed the sleeve on some designs, turning them into tank tops. The church is releasing the tops to its more than 17 million mem-

Church’s New Tank Top
Reflects a Change in
Public Perception

bers around the world in phases. Last October, it quietly announced that the new garments would first be available to members in “hot, humid” climates like those in Africa and Asia. They aren’t sanctioned for wear in the United States yet, but that hasn’t stopped American influencers from sourcing them — and showing them off in recent videos online. “I was like: I want them now. I

will get them at all costs. I will fly to Japan if I need to,” said Andrea Fausett, a 31-year-old influencer based in Hawaii. She secured a few tops from a friend in Asia. Other women told The New York Times that they had asked friends or family in Thailand and the Philippines to mail them. Kim Austin, a 33-year-old consultant living in Provo, Utah, said that she wore the new garments under a sleeveless dress to church, and that women in her congregation asked how they could get them. “Utah women will stop at nothing,” she said. Alyssa and McKenna Banks, sisters who run master classes for styling modest outfits (advertised as

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Rulings on Tariffs Clash,
Clouding Trade Outlook

Trump’s Tough Import Taxes Win Reprieve,
but Their Future Is Uncertain

By TONY ROMM and ANA SWANSON
WASHINGTON — A head-spinning series of court rulings over President Trump’s signature tariffs left Washington, Wall Street and much of the world trying to discern the future of U.S. trade policy on Thursday, including whether import taxes would fall meaningfully or if the administration would get the legal green light to upend the global trading system. Less than 24 hours after the U.S. Court of International Trade blocked steep tariffs that Mr. Trump had imposed on trading partners using emergency powers, a separate court temporarily paused that decision, sowing even more chaos on a day filled with economic uncertainty. The extent to which the legal wrangling may ultimately lower tariffs hinges on the next steps from the Trump administration and a series of judges who will further parse the president’s exact powers. Those decisions carry great consequences for the entire global economy, not to mention U.S. consumers and businesses, who could face higher prices if Mr. Trump is allowed to proceed with his aggressive tariff strategy. At the heart of the fight is the president’s use of a decades-old economic emergency law to impose some of his most eye-water-

ing duties, including the minimum 10 percent levy he has placed on nearly every U.S. trading partner. On Wednesday, a panel of judges on the nation’s leading trade court found Mr. Trump had misapplied the law, ruling that Congress did not grant him “unbounded authority” to wage a global trade war. The decision would have forced the Trump administration to unwind many of the president’s steep tariffs over the next 10 days, but the government quickly petitioned a federal appeals court to intervene. It asked a panel of judges to hold that order at bay while it weighed the administration’s fuller arguments that its tariffs were lawful. The appeals court ultimately issued a temporary administrative pause Thursday afternoon that allowed the government to keep its tariffs in place. The move bought time for judges to begin evaluating the legal core of the president’s arguments in a struggle that is expected to reach the Supreme Court. The legal setbacks still did not deter the White House, where top aides signaled the president would not abandon his campaign to use tariffs as a political cudgel. Throughout the day, the administration hinted about other powers

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NEWS ANALYSIS

The Perils of Trump’s Push
To Sever Ties With China

By EDWARD WONG
WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has threatened to revoke the visas of many of the 277,000 or so Chinese students in the United States and to subject future applicants from China, including Hong Kong, to extra scrutiny. Cargo ships laden with goods from China stopped coming into American ports this spring as President Trump escalated his trade war against Beijing. And the Trump administration is suspending sales of some critical U.S. technologies to China, including those related to jet engines, semiconductors and certain chemicals and machinery. [Page B1.] Taken together, the actions by the Trump administration amount to an aggressive campaign to “decouple” the United States from China, as it seeks to break the close commercial ties between the world’s two largest economies and toss away what had been the anchor of the relations between the nations for decades. Aggressive decoupling would bolster American security, from the perspective of Mr. Trump and his aides. And it would also accel-

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More on the White House

DUPED? Praising and excusing Russia’s leader has not achieved results. News Analysis. PAGE A6
PARDONS The president wiped convictions or cut sentences for two dozen people. PAGE A14
HARVARD A judge ruled the president could not block the enrollment of foreign students. PAGE A11
VACCINE The U.S. has canceled a \$600 million deal with Moderna to develop a bird flu shot. PAGE A16



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER GREGORY-RIVERA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Met Marvels in a New Setting

The museum’s Michael C. Rockefeller Wing is reopening with a lineup of historic art stars. From left, a Book of the Gospels, an Incan tunic and a terra-cotta figure from what is now Mali. Page C1.



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More Chaos at Gaza Aid Site
The United Nations says food distributed by an Israeli-backed system is “less than a drop in the ocean.” PAGE A5

Ex-Convict on Ballot in Mexico
A handful of people accused of serious crimes and cartel ties are candidates in the first-ever judicial elections. PAGE A4

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Dressing Like Russian Troops
In the U.S., the re-enactment of battles has long been a niche hobby, but events that echo an ongoing war are a relatively recent phenomenon. PAGE A9

Brutal End for a Man’s Dreams
An ebullient trans man who longed for love and fame flew to New York to be with a woman he fell for online. He was tortured and killed. PAGE A18

Combs Said to Abuse Assistant
A former aide testified to being subjected to sleep deprivation, violence and sexual assault by her boss. PAGE A22

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A Soul-Obsessed Journey
In “The Phoenician Scheme,” Wes Anderson sends a shady tycoon on a family road trip in a search for grace. Alissa Wilkinson has the review. PAGE C1

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Pioneering Kenyan Author
Ngugi wa Thiong’o explored colonialism’s iniquities in his writing, composing the first modern novel in the Gikuyu language. He was 87. PAGE B11

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Having conquered its home market, the manufacturer, Toto, is now selling bidets in the United States. Its president says not even tariffs will halt its advance. PAGE B1
The Times Signs an A.I. Deal
The company has agreed to license its content to Amazon for use in its artificial intelligence platforms. PAGE B1

SPORTS B6-9
The Last of His Kind?
Because of changes in the way major league teams are using their closers, Kenley Jansen of the Los Angeles Angels may become the final pitcher to amass 500 saves. PAGE B6
Oklahoma City’s Prodigies
The Thunder’s young players validated their 68-win regular season by reaching the N.B.A. finals, showing preternatural poise. PAGE B7