

Justices to hear case on homeless camps

High court will decide whether officials can remove people with nowhere else to sleep.

By DAVID G. SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court agreed Friday to decide whether homeless people have a constitutional right to camp on public property when they have no other place to sleep.

Acting on appeals from city officials in California and the West, the court will review decisions of the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, which held it was cruel and unusual punishment for cities to deny homeless people a place to sleep.

As a result of the 9th Circuit rulings, public officials in California and the eight other Western states under its jurisdiction face greater scrutiny and legal challenges when they move to clear encampments or relocate homeless people.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom and city attorneys from Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego and Phoenix were among two dozen government and business groups that urged the high court to restore their authority over sidewalks and parks, or at least to clarify the law.

City attorneys said it remains unclear whether encampments may be removed from sidewalks or parks if the people living on the street refuse an offer to move into temporary shelter. They blame the 9th Circuit rulings — in cases from Boise, Idaho, and Grants Pass, Ore. — for the worsening homelessness crisis in West Coast states. California alone is “home to half of the nation’s unsheltered population,” they said in their appeal in Grants Pass vs. Johnson.

The court said it would hear arguments in the case in April and issue a ruling by the end of June.

Newsom welcomed the court’s decision to hear the case.

“California has invested billions to address homelessness,” he said. [See **Encampments**, A7]



SKIERS climb to the top of a mountain at Palisades Tahoe, a California ski resort near Lake Tahoe. After closing down every lift and trail after a deadly avalanche, the resort reopened many runs on Thursday.

MARK SPONSLER Associated Press

Minutes from death: ‘I just felt the snow hit me’

The first sign of trouble came in the form of a spray of snow, rolling down from above where Jason Parker had come to a stop near the top of one of California’s steepest and most famed ski runs: the face beneath Palisades Tahoe’s KT-22.

He didn’t think much of it. “OK,” he remembers thinking. “Maybe there is a skier above me who just triggered a little bit of snow.”

Parker didn’t hear a roar or a crack. The wind was blowing, and all his ears picked up was a howl, blowing across the ice face and whipping gusts of fresh powder toward the base of the mountain far, far below.

This was pretty standard, and he prepared to continue down the mountain.

Jason Parker says he was surprised at how calm he felt being buried in an avalanche at Palisades Tahoe

By SUMMER LIN AND JESSICA GARRISON

Recognizing the risk

Another storm is on the way. Here’s what to expect and how to stay safe when heading out to ski.

CALIFORNIA, B1

“I didn’t hear it,” he said of what happened next. “I just felt the snow hit me ... flipped me onto my back.”

From a safer position several yards away, his fiancée heard him say: “Oh, s—.”

Parker doesn’t really remember that. He was “in a river, flowing down.” Except it wasn’t a river. It was an avalanche, one that was in the process of claiming the life of one man, Kenneth Kidd, 66, a skier who split his time between Marin County and Truckee.

And now Parker was caught up in it as well. He felt his body accelerating. He felt snow massing above him.

He screamed “Watch me! Watch me!”

[See **Buried**, A10]

Are SoCal ports ready for cargo surge?

Local freight business could see a boost from Suez, Panama upheaval

By RONALD D. WHITE

The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, the nation’s largest cargo complex, are bracing for a business surge created by problems elsewhere: the Suez Canal in Egypt — a sudden hot spot in a potentially widening

Mideast conflict — and the Panama Canal, plagued by prolonged drought.

The canals are two of the world’s most important trade gateways.

When the interconnected global supply chain gets tangled, the knots cause costly delays as retailers and manufacturers look for alternate

routes to get their freight to consumers and factories.

The Suez and Panama canals also are options when shippers fear relying solely on Los Angeles and Long Beach, which weathered a series of pandemic-related backlogs and other problems starting in March 2020.

But with labor peace re-

turned to the Southern California docks — longshore workers ratified a new contract last year after months of disruptions — lost business has returned, port officials say, and there’s plenty of capacity for more.

Also past are the COVID-19 days, when U.S. consumers’ demand for goods

[See **Ports**, A7]

Disinformation clouds election in Taiwan

Voting in presidential race takes place amid political polarization, mistrust exacerbated by sensational claims.

By STEPHANIE YANG

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Jackie Chiang remembers when her father-in-law was gentle and kind, taking his grandkids to school and peeling cooked shrimp for her at the dinner table.

These days, he stews silently in front of the television, convinced by the political commentators he watches that if Taiwan’s ruling party wins another presidential term, the consequence will be war — and that the U.S. won’t lift a finger to stop it.

“You’re going to die, your kids are going to die, my kids



“CONSPIRACY THEORIES, rumors, news leaks ... will bring you lots of traffic,” says Lee Yi-hsiu, who rejects those tactics in his moderate YouTube commentary.

AN RONG XU For The Times

are going to die, we’re all going to die. Why do you want to do that?” Chiang, who lives in the northwestern Taiwanese city of Taoyuan, quoted her father-in-law and other relatives as saying.

The fear that the Democratic Progressive Party, or DPP, along with the U.S., is propelling this self-ruled island closer to combat was a common refrain ahead of Taiwan’s presidential election Saturday. It’s also one of the narratives that mainland China propagated in recent months through state media, fake internet accounts and Taiwanese commentators, in a widespread and increasingly sophisticated disinformation campaign, independent researchers say.

On the messaging app Line, widely used in Taiwan, Chiang’s group chats have been overrun with such claims.

[See **Taiwan**, A4]

Help sought in border blockade

Justice Department asks Supreme Court to intervene so agents in Texas can patrol a key area.

NATION, A6

Newsom targets property crimes

Governor says he can relate to businesses angered by thefts, but won’t dismantle Prop. 47.

CALIFORNIA, B1

How to thrive in creator economy

A \$250-billion ecosystem built on influencer culture has grown up and may boost earning potential.

BUSINESS, A8

Weather
Periods of sun.
L.A. Basin: 64/46. **B8**

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