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Democracy Dies in Darkness

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Illicit use of Starlink aids Russia in Ukraine

Black-market internet terminals help Moscow make gains on battlefield

BY ALEX HORTON,
SERHII KOROLCHUK
AND EVA DOU

DONETSK REGION, UKRAINE — Russian forces have become deadlier and more agile with the help of illicit Starlink terminals, allowing them to use satellite internet to enhance coordination during assaults, fly more drone sorties and batter Ukrainian troops with accurate artillery fire despite U.S. efforts to stop the flow of technology.

The terminals, which give commanders live battlefield views with drones and secure communication between soldiers, are subject to prohibitions that outlaw many U.S. electronics from reaching Moscow. Yet there is a burgeoning black market of Starlinks bringing the terminals to Russians on the front, and their proliferation has been an important factor in Russia's recent gains during its offensive, Ukrainian soldiers said.

Tens of thousands of Starlink dishes form the backbone of Ukraine's military network, fueling devices vital to fighting a digital war — one of the few advantages Kyiv has against Moscow's bigger, if less modernized, force. Six Ukrainian soldiers and officers from different units across the Donetsk region told The Washington Post that Russia has closed the

SEE UKRAINE ON A14

On the mend: Ukraine's wounded work to get back in the fight. **A20**

NASA hopes icy Europa has potential to sustain life

BY JOEL ACHENBACH,
WILLIAM NEFF
AND LESLIE SHAPIRO

Europa, one of the four large moons of Jupiter first seen by Galileo 414 years ago, may have a deep, salty, global ocean hidden beneath a thick crust of ice. Where there is water, there might be life. In an ambitious \$5 billion mission decades in the making, NASA is poised to send a jumbo robotic probe called the Europa Clipper to see if the icy moon has the key characteristics of a habitable world.

"This is a huge deal," said Robert Pappalardo, the project scientist for the Europa Clipper at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif.

NASA officials had hoped to launch the spacecraft Thursday on a SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket from Florida's Kennedy Space

SEE EUROPA ON A18



NASA

Europa seen during a flyby by NASA's Juno spacecraft.

"Yes, I did wrong. And things were done to me that I felt were wrong. But all you have is what's in front of you."



CAROLINE GUTMAN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

After five decades locked up, he offers a ride to a new life

As he waited outside the razor wire next to the prison gate, John "Freddie" Nole struggled for the right words to say to the man who would soon be walking out.

It had been five years since Nole came out those same prison doors. He remembered the gleaming plans he had back then. He'd rent a place of his own. Reconnect with family. Revel in the pride that comes with a paycheck and a purpose.

It all seemed naive now, looking back. "I didn't have a clue," said Nole, 72, shaking his head.

He kept a stack of rejection letters on his kitchen table from all the jobs he'd tried to get in

Freddie Nole picks up inmates from prison. He knows the struggles that await them.

BY WILLIAM WAN
IN NORRISTOWN, PA

Many inmates end up back behind bars. Freddie Nole says he's trying to change that, one car ride at a time.

recent months and failed. Bathroom cleaner and janitor at Walmart. Late-night cook at Arby's. Dishwasher at LongHorn Steakhouse. Shelf stocker at Target.

Managers unfailingly loved his attitude. Then — as always — came the background check and email. "Unfortunately, we have decided to move forward with other candidates ..."

At a loss for a purpose, two years ago, he started picking up other prisoners on the day they were released. He put out the word to friends on the inside. He persuaded guards to put up notices in prisons across Pennsylvania.

SEE PRISON ON A12

ELECTION 2024

Five stormy years in Montreal that shaped Harris

In little-known chapter of her life, she was in Quebec as it was being torn apart in separatist movement

BY MICHAEL KRANISH

MONTREAL — Kamala Harris was just starting her freshman year at a high school in Quebec when, as one of her classmates recalled, "all hell broke loose."

After years of deepening conflict over the French-speaking majority's treatment, a political party advocating political separation from Canada had recently taken power. Tens of thousands of English-speaking families fled as stringent new language restrictions took effect.

In the fall of 1978, everything boiled over inside Westmount High School on the outskirts of downtown Montreal. As students clashed over the political turmoil, the once primarily White and wealthy school was changing dramatically amid an influx of Black, lower-income students, including those driven to enroll when their own English-language schools

SEE HARRIS ON A4

Campaigns diverge: Trump staff is triumphal. Harris HQ is somber. **A9**



WESTMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL

Kamala Harris, third from the left, from the 1981 yearbook from Westmount High School in Montreal.

Hamas trove reveals schemes

SEIZED FILES DETAIL 9/11-LIKE AMBITIONS

Many appeals to Iran in its goal to destroy Israel

BY JOBY WARRICK,
SOUAD MEKHENNET
AND LOVEDAY MORRIS

Years before the Oct. 7, 2023, attack, Hamas's leaders plotted a far deadlier wave of terrorist assaults against Israel — potentially including a Sept. 11-style toppling of a Tel Aviv skyscraper — while they pressed Iran to assist in helping achieve their vision of annihilating the Jewish state, according to documents seized by Israeli forces in Gaza.

Electronic records and papers that Israeli officials say were recovered from Hamas command centers show advanced planning for attacks using trains, boats and even horse-drawn chariots — though several plans were ill-formed and highly impractical, terrorism experts said. The plans anticipate drawing in allied militant groups for a combined assault against Israel from the north, south and east.

The trove of documents includes an annotated, illustrated presentation detailing possible options for an assault as well as letters from Hamas to Iran's top leaders in 2021 requesting hundreds of millions of dollars in

SEE HAMAS ON A16

West Bank: The unsolved killings of two Palestinian Americans. **A23**

Residents ask if battered Fla. isle is a paradise lost

BY MOLLY HENNESSY-FISKE

CASEY KEY, FLA. — Trudging back to his flooded home for the second time in as many weeks, dragging a rolling trash can loaded with a generator and other supplies through sand-mired streets, Jason Bain surveyed the remains of his family's coastal oasis.

Doors and roofs had been ripped off homes and the quaint blue-and-white Gulf Surf Motor Inn, which like other buildings on the key was now buried in sand, its "No Vacancy" sign rendered obsolete. Back-to-back hurricanes had ripped the door, roof and wall off a neighbor's house, filling it with sand and tossing their sedan against the garage door.

Dozens of piles of soggy furniture and other debris, coated in sand this past week by Hurricane Milton, marked the homes that had flooded last month during Hurricane Helene. Most of those were older, single-story homes on the gulf side, but there was debris outside the Spanish-tiled villas on the other side of the road, too. Earth movers struggled to reconstruct a temporary road installed after Helene.

Massive pines, palms and other tropical trees that made up the key's lush canopy had toppled in

SEE CASEY KEY ON A8

'No words': Devastated retirement community picks up the pieces. **A11**

METRO

The Justice Department sues Virginia over its push to purge voter rolls.

ARTS & STYLE

Maria Bakalova of "Borat" fame is ferocious in role as Ivana Trump.



BOOK WORLD

"The Black Utopians" is an extraordinary work of history and memoir.

BUSINESS

Under a Texas sun, agrivoltaics offer farmers a new way to make cash.



DINING GUIDE

Post critic Tom Sietsema picks the D.C. area's 40 best restaurants.

TRAVEL

Las Vegas implodes decades-old Tropicana hotel for new ballpark.

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