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Democracy Dies in Darkness

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 • \$3

Feds seek additional charge for suspect

Prosecutors say he wrote that he had attempted to assassinate Trump

BY LORI ROZSA, MARK BERMAN, PERRY STEIN AND DEVLIN BARRETT

WEST PALM BEACH, FLA. — A federal prosecutor said Monday that the government will seek to have the armed man accused of bringing a rifle to Donald Trump's golf course charged with attempting to assassinate the former president, a charge that could carry a penalty of up to life in prison.

Assistant U.S. attorney Mark Dispoto said Ryan Routh had been in Florida for at least a month before a Secret Service agent spotted him at Trump's golf club in West Palm Beach. The prosecutor said Routh hid in waiting in what he likened to a "sniper's nest." And the suspect wrote a note stating, "This was an assassination attempt," according to a court filing.

"He was there for one reason and one reason only," Dispoto said. "He was there to kill the former president of the United States."

Routh is being held on federal gun charges. Magistrate Judge Ryon M. McCabe said Monday that he would remain detained, rejecting an attempt by Routh's defense to have him released on bond. Charging Routh with attempting to kill Trump initially was complicated by the fact that he did not fire a shot. But the evidence submitted by prosecutors Monday makes a

SEE SUSPECT ON A9

ELECTION 2024

Trump loses one potential victory aid

Neb. lawmaker won't support winner-take-all method for electoral vote

BY PATRICK SVITEK AND PATRICK MARLEY

A key Republican state lawmaker in Nebraska said Monday that he does not support changing how the state awards its electoral votes before the November election, foiling for now a last-ditch push by former president Donald Trump and his allies that could have reshaped the outcome of the presidential race.

"I respect the desire of some of my colleagues to have this discussion, and I have taken time to listen carefully to Nebraskans and national leaders on both sides of the issue," state Sen. Mike McDonnell said in a statement. "After deep consideration, it is clear to me that right now, 43 days from Election Day, is not the moment to make this change."

McDonnell's statement caps a months-long battle over the way

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County clerk race: Voting tensions boil over in Michigan. A8

IN THE NEWS

Commanders shine on 'MNF' Rookie Jayden Daniels dazzles, leading Washington to a 38-33 upset of the Bengals on the road. D1

Tax bill Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, the Democratic nominee in Maryland's U.S. Senate race, will pay back taxes after improperly claiming credits. B1

THE NATION The House aimed to avert a government shut-down, defying far-right demands. A3 The gunman in a shooting at a Colorado grocery store was found guilty of 10 counts of murder. A4

THE WORLD Mexico's outgoing president is leaving a legacy that is at odds with his promises. A15 The German far right suffered a narrow election loss to Chancellor Olaf Scholz's party. A16

THE ECONOMY California's attorney general accused Exxon-Mobil of misleading the public about the effectiveness of plastic recycling. A18 LinkedIn is using information in users' accounts to train its AI models, but you can opt out. A18

THE REGION A report meant to remind people of the Potomac's importance said its ruin would cost the region \$15 billion in the first month. B1 A study suggests ospreys' decline in the Chesapeake Bay is linked to the harvesting of menhaden. B1

STYLE National Symphony Orchestra musicians, whose negotiations to address pay disparity have stalled, voted to authorize a strike. C1 HEALTH & SCIENCE Embracing their inner child can help adults feel joy and attain a healthy emotional balance. E1

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HUSSEIN MALLA/AP

Smoke billows over southern Lebanon after Israeli strikes Monday. Israel said it struck 1,300 targets in Lebanon, carrying out what an Israeli military spokesman called "extensive, precise strikes."



AMR ABDALLAH DALSH/REUTERS

People drive north from the southern city of Sidon. Many people were stuck in traffic for hours while fleeing from southern Lebanon after the Israeli army issued an evacuation warning.



HEIDI LEVINE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

People take shelter as an air raid siren sounds in Haifa, Israel. Thousands of Israelis under fire have left their homes in the north, and officials have vowed they will make it safe for their return.

Israel pounds Lebanon as conflict widens

ROADS JAMMED WITH FLEEING CIVILIANS

Hundreds reported killed in deadliest day since Oct. 7

This article is by Suzan Haidamous, Susannah George, Kareem Fahim, Mohamad El Chamaa and Rachel Chason

BEIRUT — Israel pummeled Lebanon with airstrikes Monday that killed 492 people and left more than 1,600 injured, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry, marking the deadliest day for Lebanon since Israel and the militant group Hezbollah ramped up their exchange of fire nearly a year ago.

In a dramatic escalation, Israel said it struck 1,300 targets in Lebanon, carrying out what an Israeli military spokesman called "extensive, precise strikes." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who on Sunday vowed that Israel's military would take "whatever action is necessary" to eliminate the threat across Israel's northern border with Lebanon, said Monday that Israel does not "wait for the threat — we take action before it."

Lebanese residents described continuous bombing that targeted homes, cars and roads in the country's south and east. Lebanon's Health Ministry did not dis-

tinguish between civilians and combatants in its count of the dead and injured, but the ministry said Monday evening that 35 children, 58 women and two medics were among the dead.

Israel has increasingly turned its attention in recent days from its military campaign against Hamas in the Gaza Strip to the conflict with Hezbollah, which has been launching near-daily rocket strikes into northern Israel. Hezbollah says it has been carrying out the attacks in solidarity with the Palestinians of Gaza and will not stop until there is a ceasefire there. Tens of thousands of Israelis under fire have left their homes in the north of the country, and Israeli officials have vowed they will make it safe for those residents to return.

The Israeli airstrikes were preceded last week by a wave of attacks against the military group, including the detonation of explosives in pagers and handheld radios that

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Biden at U.N.: Hostilities in Middle East loom over president's visit. A4

Support builds for war among Israelis in north

Evacuees say Hezbollah fight would give best chance to return home

BY MIRIAM BERGER AND HEIDI LEVINE

SHLOMI, ISRAEL — Frustrated by 11 months of rocket exchanges and failed cease-fire talks, many of the Israelis who were evacuated from communities on the border with Lebanon — and some who defied orders and stayed — say they back another war with Hezbollah, even as some concede that an all-out fight might not guarantee a safe return home.

"I think the Israeli army until now has been too patient," Shelly Liss Barkan, 60, told The Washington Post on Saturday. The schoolteacher is one of the 300 or so residents of Shlomi, a small town near the border with Lebanon, who have refused to leave, she said. "I've lost my patience. Anyone who is a terrorist should be just murdered. It's enough.

How can we live like this?" As the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah escalates, displaced Israelis are at the center of the military's rhetoric. The government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week added the safe return of northern evacuees as a declared aim of the war, alongside dismantling Hamas in Gaza and bringing home the Israeli hostages who are held there. Netanyahu told White House envoy Amos Hochstein last week that Israel would do "whatever is necessary" to achieve the goal.

Israel pummeled Lebanon on Monday with airstrikes that killed 492 people and wounded more than 1,600, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry, the deadliest day for Lebanon in the past year of Israel-Hezbollah hostilities. The ministry did not distinguish between combatants and civilians. Israel said that it had warned civilians to leave and that it had struck 1,300 Hezbollah targets in Lebanon.

Liss Barkan welcomed the attack. "May Lebanon be burned to the ground," she said late Monday.

SEE ISRAEL ON A17

THE DROWNING SOUTH

Beyond the sea wall's protection

The rising ocean is eating away Galveston, but that hasn't kept developers from planning condos past one of the Texas island's key fortifications

BY CHRIS MOONEY, JOHN MUYSKENS AND BRADY DENNIS IN GALVESTON, TEX.

This roughly 30-mile-long barrier island, an hour's drive from Houston, is a powerful testament to humans staring down nature and refusing to yield.

Devastated by an extreme hurricane in 1900, Galvestonians

built a 17-foot-high sea wall and pumped in millions of cubic yards of sand to lift neighborhoods.

"Galveston has literally raised herself above sea level and today proudly surveys the results of her achievements," a 1930 Galveston Daily News article noted.

Today, the island is booming. Galveston's population has grown, home sale prices have more than doubled since 2011,

and developers see more potential — even beyond the island's existing fortifications.

The sea wall protects only about a third of the island. Where it ends, two luxury condominium projects have been proposed along one of the fastest-eroding stretches of beach.

At the same time, here as across much of the South, the

SEE GALVESTON ON A12



RICKY CARIOTI/THE WASHINGTON POST

A great blue heron stands on a beach on Texas's Galveston Island, where humans have held their ground for more than a century.