

Netanyahu refuses to change his Gaza tack

Critics in Israel say he is prioritizing political survival despite pressure from all sides

BY SHIRA RUBIN AND LOVEDAY MORRIS

TEL AVIV — With Israel’s war against Hamas now in its eighth month, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces a rising crescendo of criticism at home and abroad over his management of the conflict — threatening his leadership and his country’s place on the world stage.

The prosecutor for the International Criminal Court announced Monday that he would seek arrest warrants for Netanyahu and his defense minister on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza. Within the prime minister’s own cabinet, key ministers say he is threatening the military’s tactical achievements, and they have set a deadline for him to map out a postwar plan. On the streets, protesters accuse him of prioritizing his political survival over the return of Israel’s hostages.

Netanyahu has assumed a familiar political posture, lashing out at critics near and far while giving no public indication that the pressure will make him change course. He has refused to budge from his original war goal of “total victory” over Hamas — which his own generals and his allies in Washington say is no longer achievable — and has dismissed urgent calls to formulate a day-after strategy. While his defiance may earn him a short-term burst of support from his most loyal followers, analysts and former officials say, his political position is becoming increasingly untenable.

In an interview Tuesday with ABC’s “Good Morning America,” Netanyahu

SEE ISRAEL ON A16

The Critique: Seeking arrest warrants, the ICC questions a democracy’s morality. **A2**

ISIS allies embrace AI to spread propaganda

BY PRANSHU VERMA

Four days after the Islamic State attacked a Russian concert venue in March, a video started circulating on a private platform affiliated with the terrorist group. The 92-second broadcast showed a news anchor in a helmet and fatigues saying the attack was not a terrorist operation, but part of “the normal context of the raging war between the Islamic State and countries fighting Islam.”

The “anchor” was fake, an artificial intelligence-generated clone created by Islamic State supporters as part of a new AI-generated media program called News Harvest, according to videos and chat messages shared with The Washington Post by SITE Intelligence Group, which tracks terrorist and extremist movements online.

Since March, the program has offered near-weekly video dispatches about Islamic State operations around the globe. Made to resemble an Al Jazeera news broadcast, the program — which has not been previously reported on — marks the emergence of AI as a powerful propaganda tool as Islamic State affiliates gain steam and rebuild the group’s media operations, said Rita Katz, co-founder of

SEE PROPAGANDA ON A17

North African nations are capturing sub-Saharan migrants as they try to cross the Mediterranean and dumping them in the desert



FRANÇOIS

Europe finances aggressive pushback operations that transport tens of thousands each year to remote regions, investigation shows



OBTAINED BY THE WASHINGTON POST

TOP: Migrants are intercepted by the Tunisian National Guard, in an image from video. **ABOVE:** Migrants take shelter in the shade after being dumped by Tunisian authorities.

Abandoned in Sahara, with E.U. complicity

This article is by Anthony Faiola, Imogen Piper, Joyce Sohyun Lee, Klaas van Dijken, Maud Jullien and May Bulman

“There is Algeria, follow the light,” the Tunisian official barked at the Black migrants. “If you’re seen here, you’ll be shot.”

François, a 38-year-old Cameroonian, obeyed, jumping off the bed of a pickup truck near the desolate Algerian frontier. A day earlier, the rickety boat attempting to carry him and other hopeful sub-Saharan Africans to Europe — including his wife and 6-year-old stepson — had been interdicted by the Tun-

sian coast guard in the cobalt blue waters off the coast. Still wet and cold, the group of 30 migrants, including two pregnant women, now walked toward their punishment: the desert.

Their ordeal — an odyssey of at least 345 miles from sea to sand, recounted by François and verified by matching GPS tracking on his phone with images and videos he captured during nine days of wandering — illustrates one example of the draconian practices being deployed in at least three North African nations to dissuade sub-Saharan migrants from

SEE MIGRANTS ON A14

She backed Israel. Her son led a protest.

A family divide over war in Gaza leads to soul-searching and a questioning of convictions

BY CASEY PARKS

One Tuesday night last fall, Emily Strong’s teenage son called and said he planned to be arrested the next day.

Emily’s head spun. Eric had never been in trouble. He was the oldest of her three children, a gentle boy with deep empathy for others. He’d gone on mission trips with their church, and he’d earned straight A’s his first semester at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

“Back up,” Emily told him. “What’s going on?”

Eric told his mother he had rallied in support of Palestinians a week earlier, and now, he and several hundred other students planned to stage a sit-in at the university. He’d followed the conflict since he was in high school, and he’d watched online in recent years as some Palestinians lived in Gaza as refugees with limited food or work.

“I’m furious,” Eric said. “I can’t stand what’s going on, and I feel a need to

do this.”

Emily told herself not to freak out. She had followed the conflict, too — albeit the way many upper-middle-class suburban moms with three children, a job and ailing parents do. She skimmed the news. But she came away from those reports with a different reaction than her son. She’d been horrified when Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, and she’d felt proud of President Biden’s promise to protect the Jewish

SEE FAMILY ON A10

Trump defense rests in N.Y.

LIKELY GOP NOMINEE DECLINES TO TESTIFY

Jurors will deliberate after closing arguments next week

BY SHAYNA JACOBS, DEVLIN BARRETT, TOM JACKMAN AND MARK BERMAN

NEW YORK — Donald Trump’s defense team rested its case Tuesday without calling him to the stand, wrapping up testimony in the trial and setting the stage for closing arguments next week in a historic case that could impact the upcoming presidential election.

A jury of 12 New Yorkers will soon be given the momentous task of issuing judgment in the first criminal trial of a former U.S. president — one who is also the presumptive 2024 Republican nominee and has denounced the proceedings in regular diatribes outside the courtroom.

Jurors, their identities shielded from the public, have spent the last five weeks hearing testimony in the case, in which Trump is charged with falsifying business records to cover up a hush money payment before the 2016 presidential election to the adult-film actress Stormy Daniels, who had alleged a sexual encounter with him.

They learned about tabloid “catch and kill” tactics for buying stories and not publishing them, and how Trump’s campaign panicked when the “Access Hollywood” recording, in which he bragged about grabbing women’s genitals, was publicized weeks before the 2016 election. And they listened to darker testimony, too, including Daniels’s depiction of what

SEE TRUMP ON A4

‘Locked & loaded’: Trump falsely claims Biden authorized FBI to “take me out.” **A4**

Giuliani and others plead not guilty in Arizona case

BY YVONNE WINGETT SANCHEZ

PHOENIX — One by one, 11 Republicans who allegedly tried to deliver Arizona’s presidential electoral votes to Donald Trump after his 2020 defeat appeared in a downtown courthouse Tuesday and pleaded not guilty to the same nine criminal counts, which include conspiracy, fraud and forgery.

The day kicked off with Kelli Ward, the former state party chairwoman, and ended with Rudy Giuliani, a former attorney for Trump who appeared virtually after being served his summons following his birthday party Friday night. Prosecutors said he had deliberately dodged service for three weeks. In between the two were local activists and Christina Bobb, an attorney who helped Trump in 2020 who is now a senior counsel to the Republican National Committee’s election integrity team.

One defendant pleaded not guilty last week, and six others are expected to appear in court in the coming weeks.

The arraignments brought together a cast of characters whom state prosecutors have accused of playing key roles in trying

SEE ARIZONA ON A8

Who’s charged: Mark Meadows is among the 18 election-interference defendants. **A8**

IN THE NEWS

A shift in Nevada After years of Democratic dominance, the Silver State could be slipping from President Biden’s grasp. **A6**

Metro shortcomings The transit agency deployed rail cars that failed operations tests and neglected to follow occupational safety guidelines, according to an audit. **B1**

THE NATION Democrats called for Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr.’s recusal from cases related to Jan. 6. **A2** **U.S. officials** will overhaul how complaints about denied emergency care are handled. **A7**

THE WORLD The United States is leaning on Kenya as its influence wanes elsewhere in Africa. **A12** **A self-styled prince** who is accused of plotting a coup went on trial in Germany. **A17**

THE ECONOMY Scarlett Johansson threatened legal action against OpenAI over a tool that the actress said copied her voice. **A18** **More of us** are maxing out our credit cards. Columnist Michelle Singletary has some ideas to help borrowers pay off their debts. **A19**

THE REGION The District’s attorney general introduced a bill aimed at improving the city’s Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services. **B1** **A 16-year-old** shot near the U Street nightlife corridor Saturday has died, the year’s seventh youth casualty in D.C. **B1**

STYLE At the Cannes Film Festival, singer Yseult is the red carpet darling, and Donald Trump gets a dramatized depiction on-screen. **C1**

FOOD Fu Pei-mei, a household name in Taiwan, taught a generation how to cook Chinese food. **E1**

BUSINESS NEWS.....A18
COMICS.....C6
OBITUARIES.....B4
OPINION PAGES.....A21
TELEVISION.....C3
WORLD NEWS.....A12

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The Washington Post
Year 147, No. 53859

0 170628 211001 3