

Drone that killed three likely went undetected

Military assessment finds base in Jordan had no system to shoot it down

BY ALEX HORTON, ELLEN NAKASHIMA AND SAMUEL OAKFORD

U.S. forces probably did not detect the approach of the Iranian-made drone that killed three American soldiers last week at a remote base in Jordan, and there was no air defense system on site capable of shooting it down, the military's initial assessment of the attack has found.

The early findings, which have not been previously reported, indicate that the drone may have been missed "due to its low flight path," a U.S. defense official with direct knowledge of the assessment told The Washington Post. Additionally, this person said, the base, known as Tower 22, was not outfitted with weapons that can "kill" aerial threats like drones, and instead relied on electronic warfare systems designed to disable them or disrupt their path to a target.

A common strategy among drone operators and other pilots seeking to minimize or evade radar detection is to fly low to the ground. Another U.S. official affirmed the military's belief that the drone flew too low to be detected. Both officials, like some others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive and ongoing investigation. Defense officials have stressed that assessments can change as inves-

SEE DRONE ON A10

Hamas: Militants give promising reply to proposed hostage deal. **A10**

Appeals court rules against Trump claim of immunity

BY RACHEL WEINER

A federal appeals court has unanimously ruled that Donald Trump can be put on trial for trying to stay in power after losing the 2020 election, rejecting Trump's sweeping claim of presidential immunity as dangerous and unsupported by the Constitution.

At public arguments in January, the three judges expressed concern over the most extreme implications of Trump's view, with one suggesting it would allow a future president to order the assassination of a political rival. But in their opinion Tuesday, they said it is Trump's own alleged crimes — "an unprecedented assault on the structure of our government" — that threaten democracy if left beyond the reach of criminal prosecution.

"We cannot accept former President Trump's claim that a President has unbounded authority to commit crimes that would neutralize the most fundamental check on executive power — the recognition and implementation of election results," the judges wrote. "Nor can we sanction his apparent contention that the Executive has carte blanche to violate the rights of individual citizens to vote and to have their votes count."

The ruling is one of several

SEE IMMUNITY ON A7



MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

Rain won't solve Calif.'s water woes

State's attempts to replenish its storage systems are no match for deluge

BY SCOTT DANCE AND SARAH KAPLAN

John Kennedy watched in frustration Tuesday as floodwaters pulsed through the Santa Ana River, past systems the Orange County, Calif., water manager uses to capture precious water and send it underground. For a second consecutive winter, rain is not just falling on once-parched California — it's inundating the Golden State in record-setting volume, faster than it can be saved.

Parts of normally sunny Los Angeles saw a foot of rain in recent days, sending mud and debris flowing through neighborhoods. Weeks earlier, more than a month's worth of rain swamped San Diego in a day. The disasters came within a year of atmospheric rivers that left Califor-

SEE CALIFORNIA ON A6



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

TOP: The Los Angeles River is swollen by storm runoff during an atmospheric river storm on Monday. **ABOVE:** A first responder and a resident evacuate from a neighborhood after a mudslide in Los Angeles. Record-setting precipitation events have made it more difficult for people and ecosystems to capture the rainfall as a buffer against drought.

Category 6: Scientists propose a new label for storms as warming intensifies hurricanes. **A12**

Mich. school shooter's mother found guilty of involuntary manslaughter

BY KIM BELLWARE

PONTIAC, MICH. — Jennifer Crumbley, the 45-year-old mother of the Oxford High School shooter, was convicted of involuntary manslaughter by an Oakland County jury Tuesday, after an emotional two-week trial that examined a parent's culpability for their child's deadly actions.

The jury of six men and six women deliberated for about 11 hours before finding Crumbley guilty of four counts of involuntary manslaughter in the deaths of Hana St. Juliana, 14; Tate Myre, 16; Madisyn Baldwin, 17; and Justin Shilling, 17.

The Crumbleys bought their son a gun four days before the shooting as an early Christmas gift, a fact that propelled their prosecutions as the first parents of a mass shooter to face such serious charges in connection to their child's crime. Crumbley's husband, James, 47, faces identical charges and is scheduled to go to trial in March.

The Crumbleys' then-15-year-old son brought a gun to Oxford



BILL PUGLIANO/GETTY IMAGES

Jennifer Crumbley, mother of Oxford High School killer Ethan Crumbley, in court before the jury's decision was announced.

High School on Nov. 30, 2021, and killed four students, while wounding seven other people. Ethan Crumbley was charged as an adult and pleaded guilty to two dozen charges, including a rare charge of terrorism. He was sentenced in December to life without parole.

The cases against Jennifer and James Crumbley are at the forefront of prosecutions against the parents of juvenile shooters, a strategy some prosecutors embrace as they and the public reassess who can be held accountable for a child's violent

SEE CRUMBLEY ON A5

Special counsel's documents report will fault Biden, aides

BY DEVLIN BARRETT AND PERRY STEIN

The Justice Department is preparing to release a special counsel report in coming days that is critical of President Biden and his aides for mishandling classified documents in Biden's private home and former office, but prosecutors do not plan to pursue criminal charges in the case.

The long-awaited decision by special counsel Robert K. Hur will probably roil the presidential contest as Republicans seek to paint Biden as a criminal — and as Donald Trump, the president's likely GOP rival for the White House, faces trial for allegedly keeping boxes of classified papers at his Florida home and obstructing officials' attempts to retrieve them.

While the facts of the Biden case appear to have major differences from the Trump case, Hur's conclusions are likely to face intense scrutiny from Republicans in Congress.

Officials have been planning to release the report as early as this week, though prosecutors could

decide to push it back, according to people familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe still-secret plans for the release. A spokesman for Hur declined to comment.

In recent weeks, the report has been reviewed by intelligence officials to navigate how much to reveal about the classified materials found in 2022 at Biden's Wilmington, Del., home and his former office, given that the report must be sent to Congress and released to the public. The documents in question dated to Biden's time as vice president during the Obama administration.

Attorney General Merrick Garland appointed Hur in January 2023 after aides to Biden found the sensitive government materials. The discovery came as a separate special counsel was investigating Trump's alleged mishandling of classified documents — an investigation that led to 40 federal criminal charges against Trump, including willful retention of national defense secrets and obstruction of justice.

SEE BIDEN ON A2

IN THE NEWS

737 Max 9 A panel that blew off an Alaska Airlines plane midflight appears to have been installed at a Boeing factory without bolts needed to keep it attached, a report said. **A17**

Marilyn Mosby trial Baltimore's former top prosecutor was convicted of one count of mortgage fraud and acquitted of another. **B1**

THE NATION Advocates of reparations face a "hope gap" among Black voters. **A3** **New Hampshire** announced an investigation of AI-generated calls impersonating President Biden. **A4**

THE WORLD King Charles III's views on cancer care have not always aligned with those of experts. **A8** **Senegal delayed** its elections until Dec. 15 amid concerns about the state of democracy. **A14**

THE ECONOMY Now years in, the battle over returning to offices is as bitter as ever, and some companies' hard-line stances are backfiring. **A15** **Bluesky**, a decentralized alternative to X, opened to the public after a year as an invite-only social network. **A17**

THE REGION The D.C. Council advanced a massive public safety bill after hours of debate. **B1** **D.C. lawmakers** voted to appoint a man previously convicted of murder to the city commission that drafts and modifies criminal sentencing guidelines. **B1**

STYLE Taylor Swift is threatening legal action against Jack Sweeney, a college student who runs a social media account tracking her jet. **C1** **FOOD** How to raise your ham game with jamón, the champagne of pork products. **E1**

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The Washington Post
Year 147, No. 53754

