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The Washington Post

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ELECTION 2024

Biden and Trump to face off in 2 debates

CNN and ABC will host, bypassing group that traditionally plans events

BY MICHAEL SCHERER AND JOSH DAWSEY

President Biden and former president Donald Trump agreed Wednesday to a June 27 debate on CNN and a Sept. 10 debate broadcast by ABC News, bypassing the decades-old tradition of three fall meetings organized by the bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates.

The decisions by the major-party candidates to take control of the once independent debate planning process upended the timeline that has defined presidential contests for decades, adding unpredictability to an already close race. The two debates will happen much earlier than normal, which could decrease their impact on the election or awaken voters who have not yet tuned in.

Both candidates would be taking a chance by debating. If he stumbles or appears forgetful, Biden, 81, risks confirming some Americans' suspicions that he is too old for the job. And Trump, just four years younger, has also faced doubts about his age. A face-to-face meeting could also remind Americans of Trump's volatility and would give Biden the chance to describe the election as a choice between the two men, rather than a referendum on his record.

"Because of these questions
SEE **DEBATES** ON A7

New terrain for Hogan, with national implications

BY PAUL SCHWARTZMAN AND ERIN COX

Republican Larry Hogan proved he can win statewide in deep-blue Maryland, but he has never faced a campaign like the one he is about to undertake.

The former governor has not had to run with Donald Trump atop the ballot or with control of the U.S. Senate on the line. Nor has Hogan had to run against a Democrat who has a chance to make history — a Black woman backed by a nationwide coalition eager to defeat him.

As he seeks to become Maryland's next senator against the Democratic nominee, Prince George's County Executive Angela D. Alsobrooks, Hogan also faces a far different electorate and political climate than when he won his first gubernatorial race a decade ago.

After eight years in Annapolis,
SEE **MARYLAND** ON A16

Maryland 2nd District: Olszewski and Klack to vie for House seat. **B2**

In Gaza, no endgame in sight



AFP/GETTY IMAGES

A Palestinian woman walks away from a dismantled camp in Rafah on Wednesday. Tens of thousands of civilians have evacuated as Israel ramps up military operations. Meanwhile, militants are regrouping in northern areas previously cleared, highlighting how far Israel remains from its chief goal of eliminating Hamas. **Story, A12**

Months after Maui fires, health problems persist

BY BRIANNA SACKS

LAHAINA, HAWAII — Every morning before she drives to see her students at Lahainaluna High School, Kailini Ross smears a thick lotion across her skin, so the soot that has gotten into her lungs, and remains in the air, does not "fill her pores."

She then slowly climbs the three flights of stairs between her classrooms, budgeting enough time to sit at the top and rest her

Study details respiratory and mental health issues, lack of access to care

wheezing lungs.

She's "all scraped up" inside, she said.

Ross is far from alone. In west Maui, thousands of people are living in the burn zones — in or near

homes that absorbed heavy amounts of toxic smoke from the most deadly wildfire in U.S. history. Many residents say their health is compromised or declining because of exposure to ash, debris and smoke, according to a health report released Wednesday and first reported by The Washington Post.

Conducted by University of Hawaii researchers and grass-roots organizations, the Maui Wildfire Exposure Study surveyed and test-

ed 679 people, most of whom lived in Lahaina at the time of the blaze, as well as others from the Upcountry area, where another fire burned. While it was not a randomly controlled trial, researchers found that "exposure to smoke, ash, and debris is strongly associated with worse physical health outcomes and reported symptoms."

About 74 percent of these residents had elevated blood pressure
SEE **MAUI** ON A9

A risky surgery changed Biden's outlook on life

Experience with a potentially fatal aneurysm decades ago helps explain his motivations today

BY MICHAEL KRANISH

Joe Biden awoke suddenly in his hotel room, curled up on the floor and fully clothed, and felt an electric surge inside his head, "a rip of pain like I never felt before," as he later recalled. It was 4:10 a.m. on a winter day in 1988.

The debilitating headaches had been happening for nearly a year, interrupting his first presidential campaign as the 45-year-old Biden popped up to 10 Tylenols a day. He had been diagnosed with a pinched nerve and for a time wore a cervical collar. Now, as he lay on the floor of his hotel room in Rochester, N.Y., the pain was even worse. His legs felt dead, and he struggled to turn his head.

Instead of heading to an emergency room, Biden flew home with an aide to Wilmington, Del., where he tried to get some sleep. Awakened hours later by even greater pain, he rushed to St. Francis Hospital. It wasn't a pinched nerve. Doctors found blood in his spinal fluid, and then
SEE **BIDEN** ON A6



ADELE STARR/AP

Sen. Joe Biden, wearing a University of Delaware baseball cap, leaves Walter Reed Army Medical Center in March 1988 after a surgery related to his brain aneurysms. With him is his son Hunter.

Justices clear path for voting map in La.

MAJORITY-BLACK DISTRICT PRESERVED

Civil and voting rights advocates praise ruling

BY PATRICK MARLEY, JUSTIN JOUVENAL AND ANN E. MARIMOW

The Supreme Court restored a congressional voting map in Louisiana on Wednesday that includes an additional majority-Black district, handing a victory to Black voters and Democrats less than six months before the November election.

The order was in response to emergency appeals filed after a federal three-judge panel in Louisiana threw out the recently redrawn map last month, ruling it was an unconstitutional racial gerrymander.

That decision left the state without a congressional voting map heading into a 2024 contest that will determine which party controls the narrowly divided House. The Supreme Court's move removes the cloud of uncertainty that was lingering over the election, with statewide Republican leaders saying they welcomed the clarity.

The ruling was also celebrated by civil and voting rights advocates. "It's the right outcome for Black voters in the state of Louisiana," said Stuart Naifeh, an attorney with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund who represents Black voters in the state.
SEE **COURT** ON A8

Gulf states rise to titans of tech as China fades

BY ELIZABETH DWOSKIN, ELLEN NAKASHIMA, NITASHA TIKU AND CAT ZAKRZEWSKI

Two years ago, Andrew Feldman couldn't find Abu Dhabi on a map. But like many Silicon Valley leaders, the artificial-intelligence entrepreneur has been wooed by the promise of Middle Eastern partnership and money.

On trips to the glittering capital of the United Arab Emirates, he's toured a government-built synagogue and a local outpost of the Louvre. The city is so teeming with the tech sector that he ran into fellow California start-up founders in the lobby of the Four Seasons Hotel. Meanwhile, millions from the oil-rich UAE are allowing Feldman's Cerebras to build advanced supercomputer data centers in Stockton, Calif., Dallas and on the outskirts of the Emirati desert city.

He's among a generation of tech founders and investors quietly pilgrimaging to the sovereign
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The Washington Post / Year 147, No. 53853



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