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DAVID SWANSON AFP/Getty Images

POST FIRE GROWS

Firefighters responded to the Post fire in the Hungry Valley State Vehicular Recreation Area in Lebec, Calif., on Sunday. It grew to 12,265 acres by late Sunday morning as high winds, low humidity and terrain hampered firefighting efforts. CALIFORNIA, BI

'Panic buttons to nowhere' on L.A. buses

Drivers fear safety efforts in Dash fleet not enough protection from violent riders.

By Salvador

Panic buttons in some Los Angeles shuttle buses connect to no one, plexiglass shields around drivers were not intended to stop physical attacks, and union officials representing drivers say other safety measures touted to protect drivers are just not cutting it.

"There has to be more," said Lourdes Garcia, secretary-treasurer and principal officer of Teamsters Local 572, the union representing the city's Dash shuttle drivers. "It's the time to just be honest about what's going

A series of attacks has raised concerns about the safety of bus drivers, prompting the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority to declare an emergency over the attacks.

During a June 5 L.A. City Transportation Committee meeting, L.A. Department of Transportation officials touted panic buttons on Dash buses, plexiglass surrounding drivers, training, video cameras and radios as measures to

keep drivers safe. But drivers and union officials say many of the safety features fall flat. The panic buttons that drivers can press, for example, don't connect to a dispatch center or any emergency service. Instead, the button plays a recording directing passengers or others to call 911.

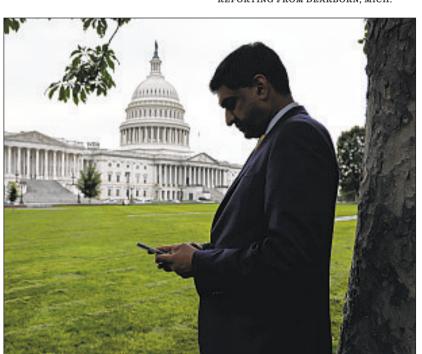
"You might as well just be honking your horn," Garcia said. "You have to rely on someone, a Good Samaritan, to hear it or, if you're on the freeway, someone may not hear it.

[See Buses, A5]

On TV and TikTok, Khanna touts Biden — and himself

Silicon Valley Democrat has sought to build a reputation as a crossover artist in the party. He has his own ambitions too.

> By Noah Bierman and Benjamin Oreskes REPORTING FROM DEARBORN, MICH.



THE OFFICE OF four-term Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Fremont) estimated that he went on television 142 times in 2023, nearly three times a week.

Rep. Ro Khanna, one of President Biden's most visible supporters, came to Michigan recently to accept a "courage in public service" award from an Arab American group that opposes American support for Israel in Gaza — and detests

The tension of the California congressman's dual roles — as a presidential surrogate and one of many Democrats building his own base for a post-Biden era was evident before dinner was served. James P. Allen, chairman of the Arab American Civil Rights League, was blunt as he introduced Khanna to local Democratic power brokers over

'We are going to work night and day to defeat Biden," Allen

Democrats need a dose of "Trump chemotherapy," Allen added, likening Trump to a toxin that would purge Biden, the cancer, from the Democratic Party.

Khanna pushed back awk-[See Khanna, A10]

LEGAL WEED, **BROKEN PROMISES**

Cannabis farms use Chinese poisons

Some growers tap into an outlaw market of banned and smuggled chemicals, putting public health at risk.

By PAIGE ST. JOHN

In coordinated raids in September, multiple California agencies stormed a network of illegal cannabisgrowing warehouses across Oakland while state cannabis regulators singled out a salmon-colored warehouse complex surrounded by 7,000-volt security fencing.

The warehouse building home to two licensed cannabis operations "highly likely" the conduit that illegal growers used to ship their product into the legal market, a state agent told a judge. Inside the rooms, inspectors found 43,000 plants growing beneath high-intensity lights. None had the tracking tags required to be placed on legal plants.

But the surprise was what was found in the men's

Beside Hot Shot insect foggers and jugs of familiar chemicals were bags labeled in Chinese. Inside each were cellophane packets of wood shavings soaked in unknown pesticides.

The same kinds of packets had been found earlier last year on illegal farms in Siskiyou County, where lab tests had revealed a cocktail of dangerous insecticides and fungicides that when burned would emit a cloud of pest- and mold-killing smoke. Among the unusual substances was isoprocarb. which is not permitted in the United States; profenofos, organophosphate so harmful its use here was discontinued in 2016; and fenpropathrin, an acutely toxic insecticide that is fatal if in-

Additional tests would show the warehouse plants were tainted with some of

the same pesticides. Contraband Chinese pesticides present a new challenge for California cannabis regulators as they struggle to keep harmful chemicals out of licensed products. Some of the poisons are so unfamiliar that few chemical analysis labs in the state would be equipped to test for them if California required it.

A Los Angeles Times investigation based on confidential state records, public [See Cannabis, A5]

Shades of Watergate in Trump vs. U.S.

The Supreme Court is again asked to decide whether a president is above the law.

By DAVID G. SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — Fifty years ago this month, the U.S. Supreme Court was considering a landmark case that would have profound implications for America's democracy.

The question before justices in the Watergate tapes

dispute was whether the president was above the law, shielded from prosecutors and a judge who were investigating a crime.

The court's answer was clear, unflinching and unani-

The Constitution has no "absolute, unqualified presidential privilege of immunity," the court said in July 1974 in United States vs. Nixon. The president's claim of executive privilege for his White House tapes, justices said, "cannot prevail over the fundamental demands of ... the [See High court, A6]

Israel to pause daytime fighting

Military says it will allow backlogged aid to move through Rafah, but plan falls far short

of cease-fire. world, A3 Dodgers pitcher, shortstop hurt

Yoshinobu Yamamoto has a strained rotator cuff, and Mookie Betts nurses a broken bone in his left hand. **SPORTS, D1**

Weather

Some sun. L.A. Basin: 77/61. **B6**

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RAISING CASH, CRITICISM

Activists rally near downtown's Peacock Theater during President Biden's Saturday fundraiser, where he netted record \$30 million. CALIFORNIA, B1



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