



Mainly cloudy 73/65 • Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy 70/65 B6

Democracy Dies in Darkness

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 • \$3

# Taliban laws start restricting men, too

Some Afghans express regret over allowing severe rules for women

BY RICK NOACK

As the Taliban starts enforcing draconian new rules for women in Afghanistan, it has also begun to target a group that didn't see tight restrictions on them coming: Afghan men.

Women have faced an onslaught of increasingly severe limits on their personal freedom and rules about their dress since the Taliban seized power three years ago. But men in urban areas could, for the most part, carry on freely.

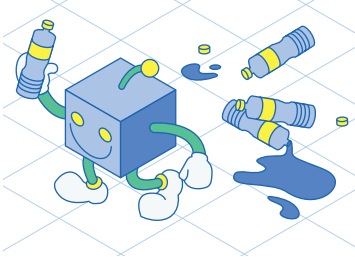
The past four weeks, however, have brought significant changes for them, too. New laws promulgated in late August mandate that men wear a fist-long beard, bar them from imitating non-Muslims in appearance or behavior, widely interpreted as a prohibition against jeans, and ban haircuts that are against Islamic law, which essentially means short or Western styles. Men are now also prohibited from looking at women other than their wives or relatives.

As a result, more are growing beards, carrying prayer rugs and leaving their jeans at home.

These first serious restrictions SEE AFGHANISTAN ON A10

## The hidden costs

We quantify the environmental toll of AI chatbots. A7



SHELLY TAN/THE WASHINGTON POST



# Tehran-allied groups review devices after pager attack

BY CLAIRE PARKER, MUSTAFA SALIM AND HAZEM BALOUSHA

CAIRO — Iranian-backed militants across the Middle East have ordered sweeping inspections of electronic devices, as they rethink how to protect their communications following the devastating attack that caused pagers and walkie-talkies used by their ally, Hezbollah, to explode.

In Iraq and the West Bank, senior militants allied with Iran said they are examining equipment and issuing new rules on the use of personal devices by fighters. Analysts say that other groups' systems are more secure but that they will probably seek to better protect their supply chains as they take stock of the fallout.

"Extreme precautions will be taken, and we will keep devices away from us," said a senior commander in the Jenin Battalion, a coalition of West Bank fighters led by Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

The commander, who spoke on the condition of anonymity out of concern for his security, said his operatives already avoided cellphones and had recently ditched handheld radios they suspected Israel of hacking.

Israeli authorities rarely discuss operations in other countries and have declined to comment on whether Israel was responsible for the attack on devices in Lebanon. But U.S. officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive subject, acknowledged that Israel was behind the operation and said it informed Washington afterward through intelligence channels.

The attack was unlike any other in size and scope, turning everyday devices into weapons of war. It SEE IRAN ON A10



PHOTOS BY HEIDI LEVINE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**FROM TOP:** Moti Fitch, 75, outside his damaged home in Moreshet in northern Israel following a rocket barrage fired from Lebanon that heavily damaged homes and cars on Sunday. Damaged homes from a rocket attack in Kiryat Bialik, seen Sunday. Hezbollah began launching attacks against Israel on Oct. 8 in solidarity with Hamas; violence along the border has displaced tens of thousands of people on both sides since then.

**Al Jazeera:** Israeli forces shut down news outlet's West Bank bureau. A9

**Coal mine blast:** An explosion in Iran killed at least 51 people. A10

## ELECTION 2024

# For some, cost of child care governs voting choice

Nevada is among the worst states for struggling parents. Their frustration might show up at the ballot.

BY ABHA BHATTARAI

RENO, NEV. — Kayla and Ryan Frost were desperate. Every local day care was full. Nannies were booked. Neither could quit their job. So they patched together a solution: paying their dog sitter to watch their 3-month-old daughter.

But the dog sitter, who was great with their German shepherd mix, wasn't the right fit for their infant. And because of her \$25 hourly rate, the Frosts could afford care for only a couple of days a week.

"A few weeks in, we realized, 'This is not working. We need more help than this,'" said Kayla Frost, 35. "We limped along for half a year. We stopped working as much. We were exhausted. It really took a toll."

The shortage of child care is a national problem, but in Nevada, it's approaching a crisis. The state ranks among the worst in the country with almost three-quarters of young children lacking access to licensed care, according to the governor's office. The shortfall spans every county in this swing state and is driving up day-care costs when parents are SEE CHILD CARE ON A5



EMILY NAJERA FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**Ryan and Kayla Frost at their home in Washoe Valley, Nev., on Thursday. The couple struggled to find affordable day care for their children. The couple are planning to vote for Donald Trump.**

# Trump's agenda on LGBTQ issues alarms rights groups

BY HANNAH KNOWLES

Penny Nance slid a form across the table to Donald Trump at his golf club in Bedminster, N.J. Her Christian nonprofit, Concerned Women for America, wanted Trump to pledge in writing that a person's "gender identity" doesn't "overrule their sex," and that if he becomes president again, "all federal agencies will be directed to uphold this fact in every policy and program at home and abroad."

Such a promise would have wide-ranging implications, the form emphasized, affecting schools, prisons, shelters, health-care providers, the military and more. But it was an easy sell, Nance recalled of her June 2023 conversation, and Trump soon signed the pledge. On the trail a few days later, Trump marveled aloud at the crowd's standing ovation for his promise to crack down on "transgender insanity."

"It's amazing how strongly people feel about that. You see,

I'm talking about cutting taxes, people go like that," he said, mimicking a polite, reserved clap. "I talk about transgender, everyone goes crazy," he added. "Who would have thought?"

The former president, who has shifted his position over the years on LGBTQ issues, is planning to lead the GOP charge on gender identity if he returns to the White House, according to his campaign and interviews with allies, testing the legal limits of federal action as the Supreme Court also takes up the issue. He says he wants to kick providers out of Medicare and Medicaid for offering gender transition care to minors, such as hormone therapy and surgery; pull federal funding from schools if officials suggest a child "could be trapped in the wrong body"; and purge anything in the federal government deemed to promote transgender identity. The moves would go against the advice of leading medical groups.

SEE TRUMP ON A4

## A new look for comics pages

The Style section's daily comics pages are now in color — and larger. (The lineup is the same.)



## IN THE NEWS

**Fallout in N.C.** Mark Robinson's porn-site scandal amid his run for governor is greeted with shrugs at a Donald Trump rally. A3

**Corporate donations** As the industry fights a ban on menthol cigarettes, Big Tobacco is putting its money behind Trump. A6

**THE NATION** What's ahead for Trump's criminal cases. A2  
**Americans** increasingly soured on the Secret Service after the July shooting at a Trump rally, a poll finds. A4

**THE WORLD** In Russia, Vladimir Putin is searching for new ways to enforce his red lines. A8  
**A socialist** was elected the next Sri Lankan president, a new era for the nation. A13

**THE ECONOMY** If you're thinking about upgrading your iPhone, here's the best time to get the biggest deals on the newest model. A11  
**A Pennsylvania** health system will pay \$65 million after hackers leaked nude photos of its patients. A11

**THE REGION** Montgomery County Public Schools revised guidance over how to handle hateful acts involving students. B1  
**What to know** about the Nov. 5 election in Virginia. B1  
**The race** to replace Rep. Abigail Spanberger in Va. is heating up. B1

**STYLE** Ellie, the sashaying, hoops-wearing elephant mascot of the WNBA's New York Liberty, is redefining the role. C1  
**In a partisan** town, a politics-themed bar on U Street aims to be right down the middle. C1  
**A sibling** seeks advice about a sister's care. C2

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