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Democracy Dies in Darkness

TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2024 • \$3

Biden to clear way for legal residency

Plans to waive penalties for undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens

BY MARIA SACCHETTI

President Biden on Tuesday will clear the way for hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants married to U.S. citizens to apply for legal residency in one of the most expansive immigration programs of his presidency, according to two federal officials with knowledge of the plans, administration officials said.

The policy shift is a bold move for the Democratic president months before the November elections, and a rebuke to congressional Republicans who have ignored his calls to expand border security and to create a path to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the United States, many for decades.

Biden will unveil the policies at a celebration at the White House to mark the 12-year anniversary of another executive action taken to aid immigrants when he was vice president. On June 15, 2012, President Barack Obama said he would allow undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as children to apply for work permits, a program that transformed hundreds of thousands of lives.

The White House had no immediate comment on Tuesday's announcement.

Marrying an American citizen is typically a fast track to U.S. citizenship, but immigrants who cross the border illegally are sub-

SEE SPOUSES ON A6

Rate hikes just a part of plunging inflation

Events out of Fed's control have been vital to slowing price increases

BY DAVID J. LYNCH

Since beginning its war against inflation two years ago, the Federal Reserve has hiked interest rates 11 times, raising borrowing costs at the fastest pace in 40 years.

But an economy warped by the pandemic has not responded in the usual ways. Employers kept hiring at a robust pace, confounding predictions that the jobless rate would soar. Consumers did not step up their savings to capitalize on higher rates, and sales of big-ticket items like automobiles stayed strong.

Yet inflation fell anyway, as snarled supply chains healed and more workers joined the labor force, developments that the Fed did not control. Consumer prices are now rising at an annual rate of 3.3 percent, down from a mid-2022 peak of more than 9 percent.

The central bank's campaign against the runaway prices that pose perhaps the greatest threat to President Biden's reelection

SEE INFLATION ON A14



OKSANA PARAFENIUK FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Ukraine enlists a Russian tactic: Freeing criminals to fight

BY SIOBHÁN O'GRADY, SERHII KOROLCHUK AND ANASTACIA GALOUCHKA IN KYIV

To fill a critical shortage of infantry on the front line, Ukraine has embraced one of Russia's most cynical tactics: releasing convicted — even violent — felons who agree to fight in high-risk assault brigades.

More than 2,750 men have been released from Ukrainian prisons since the parliament adopted a law in May authorizing certain convicts to enlist, including those jailed for dealing drugs, stealing phones and committing armed assaults and murders, among other serious crimes.

Now — seeking revenge against Russia, or in pursuit of personal redemption and freedom — they are trading their prison jumpsuits for Ukrainian army uniforms and deploying to the front lines.

Senya Shcherbyna, 24, who is serving six years for dealing drugs, is waiting to be interviewed by military recruiters and hopes to deploy as soon as possible. "I think I can redeem myself," Shcherbyna said in an interview, "and seem more useful to my

society than if I'm just sitting here."

Fellow prisoner Serhii Lytvynenko, who has served 11 years of a 14-year sentence for deadly assault, said he was still deliberating. "I'm not sure they're really going to treat us as normal fighters," he said. "We don't know right now if they're going to take you and just throw you in like meat."

Recruiting criminals — a common practice in Russia, where tens of thousands were freed to fight in Ukraine — is the latest sign of Kyiv's struggle to replenish its forces, which are depleted and exhausted after more than two years of virtually nonstop fighting.

Although the Ukrainian parliament approved a new mobilization law aimed at widening the draft pool, the legislation has yet to yield enough new troops. In the meantime, the Ukrainian general staff is trying to find able-bodied fighters where-

SEE PRISONERS ON A10

Key talks?: Putin heads to Pyongyang. A11

Beaten by police, and skeptical of reform

Throughout Jaleel Stallings's ordeal, hope collided with reality. It still does.

BY JAMILES LARTEY

MINNEAPOLIS — In his mug shot, Jaleel Stallings is smiling.

Not his usual wide, easy grin. The situation was far too serious for that: The 27-year-old truck driver faced attempted-murder charges and possibly decades behind bars. And the broken eye socket, where Minneapolis police officers had kneed and punched him over and over, made it painful to move his face.

Nevertheless, Stallings smiled. For one thing, he was alive. He was a Black man who had shot at the police, and he was still breathing to plead his case. In Minneapolis, just a few days after the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, this felt to him like a minor miracle. Stallings was also smiling because he believed that once all the facts were out, he'd be released and this would feel like a bad dream. Surely the justice system, flawed as it is, would see that this was all just a misunderstanding.

Instead, officers wrote reports that differed substantially from

SEE POLICE ON A18



JAMILES LARTEY/MARSHALL PROJECT

Jaleel Stallings visits George Floyd Square in Minneapolis in October. Later that morning, the former police officer who had pleaded guilty to assaulting Stallings would be sentenced.

Israel's leader ends war cabinet

NETANYAHU TO HOLD 'SMALLER FORUMS'

Far-right ministers would remain sidelined

BY SHIRA RUBIN, KYLE MELNICK AND MIRIAM BERGER

TEL AVIV — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced Monday that he had dissolved his government's war cabinet — the emergency panel convened to manage the war in Gaza — a week after two of its centrist members resigned in protest.

Netanyahu is expected to hold "smaller forums for sensitive matters" that will exclude the far-right ministers of his governing coalition, just as the war cabinet did, according to Israeli officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media. The exclusion of his extremist coalition members from the war cabinet was a way for Netanyahu to gain public support for the war effort.

Over the past nearly nine months of combat in Gaza, Netanyahu has rebuffed several attempts by the extremist members of his coalition, including National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, to join the discussions, according to Israeli media reports.

The "smaller forums" are expected to be held in the coming days. SEE ISRAEL ON A12

A call for warnings on social media apps

Surgeon general wants sites to alert users to mental harms for kids

BY CRISTIANO LIMA-STRONG AND AARON GREGG

U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy called Monday for placing tobacco-style warning labels on social media to alert users that the platforms can harm children's mental health, escalating his warnings about the effects of online services such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

Writing in a New York Times opinion essay, Murthy urged Congress to enact legislation requiring that social media platforms include a surgeon general's warning to "regularly remind parents and adolescents that social media has not been proved safe."

He cited evidence that adolescents who spend significant time on social media are at greater risk of experiencing anxiety and depression and that many young people say the platforms have worsened their body image. Murthy said warning labels, like those on cigarettes, could help. SEE SOCIAL MEDIA ON A14

IN THE NEWS

A test for Biden The president met with NATO's secretary general ahead of a potentially rocky summit in D.C. in July. A9

Maryland pardons Gov. Wes Moore is portraying his sweeping act of clemency for 175,000 low-level marijuana convictions as a step to right an imbalance of justice. B1

THE NATION A federal probe found that two universities failed to protect Jewish and Muslim students. A2

Red-state Democrats are pulling back from an electric vehicles push ahead of tight races. A4

THE WORLD Paris tested its Olympics readiness with an Opening Ceremonies rehearsal on the Seine. A8

An oil spill that followed a ship crash blackened the waters of Singapore's beaches. A11

THE ECONOMY The Biden administration plans to close a loophole that allows businesses to manipulate the value of assets to lower their taxes. A6

Companies are increasingly monitoring what employees do on their work-issued and personal devices. A13

THE REGION Get up to speed on some of the most important congressional and local races in today's elections in Virginia. B1

Montgomery County's school board selected Thomas Taylor, the head of a Virginia district, to be its new superintendent. B1

SPORTS At the U.S. Open, the first played in a state with legal sports betting, the sound of gamblers heckling golfers was a common one. D1

HEALTH & SCIENCE How do you make changes stick? We follow up with readers on 2024 resolutions. E1

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