

‘No war and no peace’ in Lebanon village

Hezbollah and Israel clashes put Rmeish on the front line of a fight few of its Christian residents see as theirs.

By NABIH BULOS

RMEISH, Lebanon — From her balcony on the edge of this Lebanese border village, Greta Nakhleh-Allam, 33, can see Israel in almost every direction.

And every morning, as the shelling between the Israeli army and Hezbollah militants starts anew, she wonders whether the clashes will end or turn into an all-consuming conflagration.

“I’m tired of this war, tired of the life we’re living,” said Nakhleh-Allam, watching her 11-year-old son Jacob chase the family dog, Bella.

“We thought it would last a week. Then we thought a month. Christmas passed. New Year passed. Easter passed. And we’re still waiting for the fighting to end. And now they say it will get bigger.”

That question — will the fighting end or escalate? — is being asked across Lebanon these days, but perhaps nowhere with more urgency than Rmeish. This village of about 11,000 people, the largest of the dozen Christian areas scattered across the Hezbollah-dominated south, finds itself on the front line of a fight that few here see as theirs.

“It’s not our cause. It’s not our business to do this for [Hamas leader Yahya] Sinwar,” said Said Allam, a 42-year-old onetime soldier and now supermarket owner. Sinwar is believed to be the mastermind behind the Oct. 7 attacks in southern Israel, which killed about 1,200 people and sparked a ferocious counter-offensive in Gaza that health authorities there say has claimed more than 39,000 lives.

The day after the Israel-Hamas war erupted, Hezbollah — a Shiite Islamist paramilitary group and political party that is part of an [See Lebanon, A4]



IN RMEISH, southern Lebanon, daily fire between Hezbollah and Israel has left villagers wondering whether the fighting will end or escalate. Above, Father Jawhar Tannous prays in the Church of Transfiguration.

Attorney alleges ‘El Mayo’ was kidnapped by ‘El Chapo’s’ son

Drug kingpin’s lawyer says his client was not duped but instead was forced onto a plane.

By KEEGAN HAMILTON

The lawyer representing captured drug kingpin Ismael “El Mayo” Zambada rebutted claims that his client had been tricked into board-

ing an aircraft bound for the United States to be arrested Thursday, alleging that he had instead been “forcibly kidnapped” by a son of the infamous Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán.

Zambada, 76, was taken into custody after he arrived at a small airport near El Paso, along with Joaquín Guzmán López, a 38-year-old son of El Chapo, the Sinaloa cartel’s co-founder alongside Zambada.

The attorney, Frank Perez, rejected reports that Zambada — who has pleaded not guilty to an array of drug trafficking, gun and money laundering charges — had surrendered or been duped onto the plane.

“My client neither surrendered nor negotiated any terms with the U.S. government. Joaquín Guzmán López forcibly kidnapped my client,” Perez said in a

statement first reported by The Times.

“He was ambushed, thrown to the ground, and handcuffed by six men in military uniforms and Joaquín. His legs were tied, and a black bag was placed over his head. He was then thrown into the back of a pickup truck and taken to a landing strip. There, he was forced onto a plane, his legs tied to the seat by Joaquín, [See ‘El Mayo,’ A5]

Project 2025 calls for breakup of NOAA

Conservatives say it promotes climate change alarm. Experts defend it.

By HAYLEY SMITH

Among its many sweeping calls for change in American government, a conservative platform document known as Project 2025 urges the demolition of some of the nation’s most dependable resources for tracking weather, combating climate

change and protecting the public from environmental hazards.

“Break up NOAA,” the document says, referring to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and its six main offices, including the 154-year-old National Weather Service.

“Together, these form a colossal operation that has

become one of the main drivers of the climate change alarm industry and, as such, is harmful to future U.S. prosperity,” the document says.

The call to dismantle a vital federal department has raised the hackles of experts who say NOAA provides not only important free data, such as weather forecasts

and satellite observations, but also lifesaving information about hurricanes, heat waves, atmospheric rivers and other extreme events — many of which have been shown, through myriad studies, to be worsening due to global warming.

“The National Weather Service, and NOAA more [See NOAA, A8]

COLUMN ONE

Strike up the band — ‘soul of Inglewood’ — again

The pandemic sunk a marching unit that had dominated competitions for decades. Here’s how school officials and a new leader brought it back.

By MELISSA GOMEZ

The 12 students lined up on the track, their caps and gowns signaling their status as graduating seniors. The commencement ceremony honoring the class of 2024 was over, but the show had just begun.

In their final breakdown performance of the school year, the Inglewood High School marching band launched a send-off for the departing seniors, swaying to the beat they had marched to all year long.

The crowd that filled the bleachers — parents and cousins, siblings and neighbors — knew what was to come; they’d probably witnessed the performance many times. But still, it was a spectacle they didn’t want to miss.

“Do it, baby!” one woman cheered, and the seniors took their cue, marching past their [See Inglewood, A12]



INGLEWOOD HIGH senior and drum major Itevia “Ivy” Jack leads the band in a performance of its famous breakdown at the high school’s graduation ceremony in June.

Black women not all in on Harris

While VP’s ascent to top candidate inspires many activists, some blue-collar workers express reservations.

By JENNY JARVIE

ATLANTA — Black women have long been celebrated as the Democratic Party’s most loyal and steadfast voting bloc. Even so, their votes can’t be taken for granted, and if you want to understand the opportunities and challenges Kamala Harris faces in her run for the White House, consider two Black women: Robyn Donaldson and Shaquita Jones.

Donaldson embodies the energy and hope many Black women felt when President Biden announced he would not seek reelection and endorsed Harris to lead the Democratic ticket. When she heard the news, she screamed and ran around her mom’s house in Chicago.

A stream of Black women — including California Rep. Maxine Waters and Beyoncé’s mom — rushed to endorse Harris. “Ahahahahaha lets gooooo,” rapper Cardi B posted on X.

But some, like Jones, are less certain. “I don’t know much about her,” said Jones, a 35-year-old manager of a Krispy Kreme in Atlanta’s historically Black West End neighborhood. “I’ll have to do research.”

Donaldson, a grassroots organizer who has spent two decades mobilizing volunteers to get out the vote for Democrats, has no such qualms.

Though she had still planned to vote for Biden and had campaigned for him in 2020, the 40-something trauma-informed yoga teacher felt let down, she said, after he failed to deliver on voting rights. This year she decided she would vote early by mail and then not do “a darn thing.”

But when Biden endorsed Harris on July 21, she [See Harris, A7]

Venezuelans vote on future

The presidential contest held Sunday will have a ripple effect throughout the Americas. **WORLD, A3**

Breaking an R-rated record

Marvel’s “Deadpool & Wolverine” notches the biggest opening ever for a “restricted” movie. **CALIFORNIA, B4**

Gymnast Biles shows true grit

Despite left leg injury, she is able to advance to four of five individual finals and lead U.S. to top score. **SPORTS, D1**

Weather

Turning sunny. L.A. Basin: 82/60. **B6**

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