

Lawmakers move to investigate Jack Smith

Push by Trump’s allies in House sets up first test of his vow for retribution

BY ISAAC ARNSDORF, PERRY STEIN, JOSH DAWSEY AND SPENCER S. HSU

Even as Jack Smith moved to wind down his federal election interference case against Donald Trump on Friday, House Republicans took an initial step toward investigating the special counsel, setting up an early test of how the president-elect’s calls for retribution will play out.

House Judiciary Chairman Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) and Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-Georgia), chairman of a House Administration subcommittee on oversight, asked Smith’s office to preserve all records of the historic classified document and election interference probes, a routine first step in congressional inquiries, law enforcement investigations and litigation. Elon Musk, the X owner who spent more than \$100 million boosting Trump’s campaign, responded to the House Republicans’ letter by posting, “Jack Smith’s abuse of the justice system cannot go unpunished.”

Trump vowed repeatedly on the campaign trail to stop Smith’s prosecutions and use a return to power to turn federal law enforcement against President Joe Biden and other critics, Democrats and former advisers. He argued without evidence that the federal indictments he faced were politically motivated. In the final weeks of the campaign, Trump said he would quickly remove Smith and suggested deporting him.

“He should be thrown out of the

SEE SMITH ON A4



EVA MARIE UZCATEGUI/GETTY IMAGES

The Coast Guard patrols Friday near Mar-a-Lago, Donald Trump’s Florida estate. His campaign was briefed this summer on what officials believed was an active Iranian plot to assassinate him, adding to worry about his safety.

Musk, at Trump’s side, joins him on Zelensky call

BY JOHN HUDSON AND SIOBHÁN O’GRADY

Elon Musk joined a Wednesday call between President-elect Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, said four people familiar with the matter, in the latest sign that the tech billionaire intends to intertwine himself with Trump’s governing apparatus.

The call began with a conversation between Trump and Zelensky, who remarked how the

Billionaire’s involvement is latest sign he’ll have big role in administration

call was possible because of Musk’s Starlink internet service, which connected the two leaders while Zelensky was on a train to Budapest, said two of the people familiar with their conversation. Trump said Starlink had provided

ed internet access to recent hurricane victims in the United States, noted that Musk was with him, and then put him on the call.

“It was very pleasant,” said a Ukrainian official, who like others spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the private conversation.

Zelensky “thanked” Musk for the Starlink terminals Ukraine relies on for much of its military communications amid Russia’s ongoing invasion of the country,

the official added.

Trump’s campaign did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Friday.

Axios first reported Musk’s involvement in the call.

Ukrainian officials came away from the call feeling that Musk, one of Trump’s largest donors, would join additional calls between the president-elect and world leaders as U.S. allies and adversaries scramble to prepare for a change of leadership in

SEE MUSK ON A9

Sentenced: Jan. 6 rioter gets eight years but could be pardoned. B1

TikTok: Why Harris’s viral videos did not translate to a win. C1

Russia’s N. Korean allies loom large for Ukraine

Ahead of widespread combat, this nascent foe has already infiltrated the psyche of Kyiv’s fighters

BY SIOBHÁN O’GRADY AND SERHII KOROLCHUK IN SUMY, UKRAINE

Ukrainian troops fighting inside Russia are bracing for clashes with North Korean forces as officials in Kyiv warn that combat with Russia’s new allies has already begun, marking a dangerous new phase of the war as Donald Trump’s election adds to further uncertainty over Ukraine’s future.

Ukrainian forces are already struggling inside Russia’s Kursk region, where they seized hundreds of square miles in a surprise August offensive but have since lost nearly half that territory. U.S. intelligence agencies have reported that there are now at least 10,000 North Korean troops in the Kursk region, probably to buoy the Russian attempt to retake the final Ukrainian foothold that has irritated Russian President Vladimir Putin even as he tries to brush it off as insignificant.

Yuriy Fedorenko, commander of the Achilles battalion in Ukraine’s 92nd Brigade, based in Ukraine’s northeastern Kharkiv region, said he has reviewed intelligence — including intercepted communications — confirming that North Korean troops are not only in Kursk but also in Russia’s neighboring Belgorod region.

For nearly three years, Russia has staged attacks on Ukraine

from Belgorod, including one surprise offensive in the spring aimed at encircling the city of Kharkiv. Ukraine sent troops across the border into the Belgorod region in August, but they failed to take land as they did in Kursk.

Fedorenko said he believes the North Korean troops in Belgorod will be used to reinforce Russia’s second lines of defense, freeing up Russian soldiers to press forward for new assaults on northeastern Ukraine, in what he described as “a massive threat.”

“Having the North Koreans here is a bold political signal to the rest of the world. And if the world can swallow this presence right now, it will be very hard to go back to the situation where we had leverage to win this war on Ukrainian terms,” Fedorenko said. “Currently we are falling into a situation where we will end this war on Russia’s terms, and it may even result in the dissolution of the Ukrainian state.”

The new threat comes amid a period of great uncertainty for Ukraine and the vital military support it receives from the United States, with Donald Trump’s

SEE UKRAINE ON A9

Russian barrage: Cities across Ukraine pummeled in onslaught. A8



VLN NIEUWS/EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK

Amsterdam police form a cordon around a bus after a soccer match between Ajax and Maccabi Tel Aviv.

Dutch soccer mob attacks Israeli fans

BY LOVEDAY MORRIS, JINTAK HAN AND ALON ROM

Mobs of assailants, including men on scooters, chased Israeli soccer fans through the streets of Amsterdam after a match in the capital’s main stadium, Dutch authorities said Friday, beating them in attacks that Mayor Femke Halsema described as a “black night” for the city.

The violence, which Dutch and

Tensions boil over into ‘black night’ in streets of Amsterdam, mayor says

Israeli officials condemned as antisemitic, sent five people to the hospital, police said. Authorities arrested dozens more, they added, and 10 suspects remained in custody late Friday.

The unrest followed Thursday’s Europa League game between Maccabi Tel Aviv and the Dutch club, Ajax, at the Johan Cruyff Arena in the capital’s southeast. But tensions had already flared the night before the match, police said, after Maccabi fans vandalized a taxi and set fire to a Palestinian flag.

Videos posted online showed groups of Israeli fans chanting anti-Arab slogans as they made

SEE AMSTERDAM ON A10

Plot tied to Iran targeted Trump

U.S. CHARGES 3 MEN IN WIDER OPERATION

Afghan national allegedly tasked with assassination

BY SHAYNA JACOBS AND JOSH DAWSEY

NEW YORK — Three men have been charged in connection with an alleged Iranian plot to kill people in the United States that included an apparent effort to assassinate Donald Trump while he campaigned for a second term in office, according to a criminal complaint unsealed Friday in the Southern District of New York.

The complaint is based on a sworn account by an FBI agent that includes details from what are described as voluntary phone interviews with Farhad Shakeri, an Afghan national and alleged operative for the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

While the most concrete aspects of the plot involved efforts to stalk and kill an Iranian dissident and target others, Shakeri — who is one of the three men charged — also allegedly told investigators he was assigned in September to try to find a way to surveil and kill Trump.

On Oct. 7, the anniversary of the Hamas massacre of Israelis last year in southern Israel, Shakeri was given a deadline to devise an assassination plan, the filing says. He told investigators that his Revolutionary Guard contacts paused the effort to try to kill Trump when Shakeri failed to come up with a solid plan of action. Shakeri said his handlers believed Trump

SEE IRAN ON A2

In reversal of trend, voters this time say no to drugs

State-level results point to concerns that policies have drifted too far left

BY DAVID OVALLE

In three red states, voters opted not to legalize recreational marijuana.

In blue Massachusetts, residents rejected a plan making therapeutic use of psychedelics plants legal.

And in liberal California, voters embraced stiffer penalties for certain drug crimes.

The state ballot decisions Tuesday signal voter concerns that drug policies across the United States have drifted too far to the left, according to some policy experts and political analysts. Each ballot question featured nuances specific to their states.

But amid political rhetoric tying Democratic policies to supposed spikes in crime and rampant drug use in liberal communities, the votes came as part of a rightward shift by an electorate that returned Donald Trump to the White House in resounding fashion.

“Whether it is fair or not,

SEE DRUGS ON A4

IN THE NEWS

Wall Street’s vote of confidence Donald Trump’s election victory gave rise to the stock market’s best week in a year, with major indexes all rising more than 4 percent. A4

‘I’m positive’ Yves Kaduli, who emigrated from Congo, advocated for refugees before himself. Then he told his powerful story. B1

THE NATION A judge ruled that 9/11 plea deals can proceed despite having been tossed by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. A3
The White House is racing to Trump-proof its climate policies. A5

THE WORLD Australia is extolling its American ties amid fears that Donald Trump could disrupt a defense partnership it has forged with the United States and Britain. A10

THE ECONOMY Artificial intelligence didn’t sway the election, experts said, but it did erode voters’ faith in reality. A11
Elon Musk’s vision of a future with self-driving cars could get a significant boost from the election of Donald Trump. A12

THE REGION Twelve students charged with a hate crime beat a man over his sexual orientation, police say. B1
Angela Alsobrooks’s rise to the U.S. Senate has prompted a competitive race to fill her post as Prince George’s County executive. B1

STYLE The president-elect was able to sidestep traditional media and find a microphone with podcasters. C1
SPORTS The Orioles have made the playoffs the past two seasons but have yet to win a game. They’re rethinking everything. D1

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