



Ruling may seed new crisis in Israel

Top court strikes key part of Netanyahu’s plan to overhaul judiciary

BY MIRIAM BERGER AND RUBY MELLEN

JERUSALEM — Israel’s high court on Monday struck down Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s polarizing law that sought to limit the court’s power over government decisions, putting the country on the brink of a constitutional crisis just three months after Israel united behind the war effort in Gaza.

Netanyahu’s plans to overhaul the judiciary sparked nearly a year of widespread social unrest before the Israel-Gaza war. The unprecedented standoff drew international condemnation and extraordinary opposition from military and senior security officials.

Monday’s ruling comes at a sensitive moment for Netanyahu, who remains embroiled in a corruption trial and is facing calls for his resignation over his government’s failure to thwart the Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel by Hamas, as well as its handling of the hostage crisis. The militant group killed about 1,200 Israelis and took about 240 hostage, according to Israeli officials.

Netanyahu’s Likud party was swift to condemn the court’s decision, calling it “in opposition to the nation’s desire for unity, especially in a time of war.” Israeli Justice Minister Yariv Levin, a key force behind the law, said the ruling threatened the unity needed “so our troops can succeed at the front.” He pledged to pass the entire overhaul package after the war ends.

Opponents of the overhaul welcomed the ruling but refrained from public celebrations.

“Today the Supreme Court faithfully fulfilled its role in protecting the citizens of Israel,” opposition leader Yair Lapid said on X, formerly Twitter.

The news came a day after

SEE ISRAEL ON A11

Tactical switch: Some Israeli troops will withdraw from Gaza. **A11**



JYM WILSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

‘Where did you sleep last night?’

SPRINGFIELD, MO. — It was the last question Mandie Hicks threw to every newcomer pushing through the door at the Connecting Grounds’ outreach center. Six words that cut everything down to the basic problem.

“Where did you sleep last night?” Hicks, 41, asked a young man standing before her at the check-in desk.

It was a Saturday morning in November. The center had been open only 45 minutes. Already the storefront space was jammed to fire-marshall capacity with unsheltered people needing help with social service programs, medical attention, free snacks, housing voucher applications, socks or hand warmers, or just a few minutes out of the cold. Every half-hour the city bus groaned to a stop across the street. More men and women stepped off towing backpacks, grocery bags or yapping dogs before lining up at the center’s door.

“Didn’t,” the young man told Hicks. “I just walked around all night.”

“Sorry to hear that,” Hicks said, her tone friendly.

She could always spot the newcomers

‘Housing first’ advocates prioritize shelter. The right says that’s not working.

BY KYLE SWENSON

Pluto Crain, 21, left, and Ambrose Weber, 20, huddle together for warmth along with their dog Ryliee, waiting for Revive 66 Campground to open for the night in Springfield, Mo. A state law criminalized using state land for “unauthorized sleeping, camping, or long-term shelters.”

before they said a word. They all had a familiar look, unsure and nervous — a little lost. “If you want to take a seat in these chairs and wait for these guys to call your name,” she said, gesturing to two volunteers. “They will help you any way they can.”

More often the faces coming through the door, Hicks thought, were not only new to the Connecting Grounds but also newly homeless. Last winter, if a hundred people stopped in on any given day, three might be homeless for the first time. Already today, she had checked in four new names. Nearly everyone — whether they were people Hicks knew from her own years on the streets, or whether today was their first day without shelter — had the same problem: There was nowhere to go.

A year-old Missouri law made it a crime “to use State-owned lands for unauthorized sleeping, camping, or long-term shelters,” while threatening to defund municipalities that failed to enforce it. It also limited the use of government funds to build permanent supportive housing. The legislation — written by the

SEE MISSOURI ON A6

In Kharkiv, medics await a new year of war

An ambulance crew braced for the worst heading into 2024 after Russian shelling had hit their city

BY LIZZIE JOHNSON AND KAMILA HRABCHUK

KHARKIV, UKRAINE — At a medic base an hour’s drive from the Russian border, Iryna Peshykova waited for the new year to arrive — and with it, more explosions, more carnage.

The ambulance out back was already running, ready to go as the clock ticked closer to midnight, bringing her country into a third year of war with no end in sight. It was New Year’s Eve and Peshykova, 40, knew that — when the shelling began again — she’d be among the first to bear witness to the fallout.

She’d seen Russia bombard Ukraine — firing more than 150 missiles and drones on Friday in one of the largest attacks since invading in February 2022. At least 30 people were killed, and more than 160 were injured. Then, on Saturday, Ukraine shelled the border city of Belgorod in what Russia called a “terrorist attack.” At least 24 people were killed, said Vyacheslav Gladkov, the governor of the Belgorod region.

SEE UKRAINE ON A4



WOJCIECH GRZEDZINSKI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

A damaged ambulance at a medic base in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on Sunday. Russian bombardment of the city injured two dozen people and hit a hotel, kindergarten and apartment buildings.

ELECTION 2024

In Haley’s home state, GOP wrestles over race

Some S.C. Republicans blame party for lack of appeal to Black voters

BY MERYL KORNFIELD

CHARLESTON, S.C. — In the scarlet-lit back room of Zen Asian Fusion Restaurant, seven Republican men from the Deep South sat around the dinner table, fuming. The topic of discussion: GOP presidential hopeful Nikki Haley’s recent omission of slavery when she was asked to explain the cause of the Civil War.

But the men weren’t angry at Haley, who, a day after her remarks, had scrambled to acknowledge that the conflict was about slavery. She only slipped up once, one said. It was a trick question, opined another. She knows slavery caused the Civil War, argued a third.

The group — made up of three

Black men and four White men who have been involved in Republican politics here in the state where Haley rose to political prominence — were frustrated with their party, feeling that it has struggled to offer an appealing message on race and effectively counter Democrats on the issue. Over plates of fried rice and Mongolian beef, they brainstormed how to improve the GOP’s pitch to minority voters, who have in many ways recoiled from polarizing and at times inaccurate comments on race and history that former president Donald Trump, Haley and other prominent Republicans have made in recent years.

“Unfortunately, we do not act proactively,” said Joe Mulé, the former communications chair of the Charleston County Republican Party. Mulé, who has also worked in journalism, said he felt Democrats have concentrated on the nation’s past wrongs, while Republicans wanted to move

SEE HALEY ON A5

IN THE NEWS

Quake in Japan A 7.6-magnitude temblor buried at least six people alive, triggered evacuation warnings and put the nation on a tsunami alert. **A2**

Arena plans A fierce debate is emerging in civic-minded Alexandria over the proposal to move the Wizards and Capitals to Virginia. **B1**

THE NATION

A guide to what’s known about long covid, which still confounds doctors and patients. **A2**
A Mississippi town is struggling to recover months after a tornado demolished it. **A3**

THE WORLD

A teenager from Burkina Faso saw her dance at a local concert go viral, making her a global celebrity and an example of joy in her war-torn country in West Africa. **A10**

THE ECONOMY

The Help Desk’s Heather Kelly explains what to do and what to avoid after falling victim to a scam online. **A18**
Director Christopher Nolan didn’t expect to get caught up in the debate over AI when he set out to make “Oppenheimer.” **A18**

THE REGION

A donated plot of 85 acres just outside Leesburg will become Northern Virginia’s newest public park. **B1**
A Maryland oral surgeon is set to be sentenced Wednesday after being convicted of depraved-heart murder in his girlfriend’s death. **B1**

STYLE

Steamboat Willie, the original depiction of Mickey Mouse, steers its way into the public domain. **C1**

SPORTS

Michigan surged past Alabama in overtime at the Rose Bowl to reach the College Football Playoff title game. **D1**

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