

NFL PREVIEW

Commanders have new faces in key places **SPECIAL SECTION**



TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHS

Top images from our 25th annual contest **SPECIAL SECTION**



POST OPINIONS: THE CANARY

Michael Lewis on the essential public servant **SPECIAL SECTION**



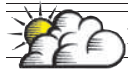
LOCAL LIVING

The color issue: Hues you can use at home **EXPANDED SECTION**

# The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

SU V1 V2 V3 V4



Partly sunny 79/64 • Tomorrow: Partly sunny 79/67 **B6**

*Democracy Dies in Darkness*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 • **\$5**

**ELECTION 2024**

## 2 Russians accused of propaganda scheme

DOJ says pair funneled money for firm to make videos for social media

BY DAVID NAKAMURA, CATHERINE BELTON AND WILL SOMMER

The Justice Department on Wednesday charged two Russian media executives in an alleged scheme that authorities say illegally funneled millions of dollars to a Tennessee-based company to create and publish propaganda videos that racked up millions of views on U.S. social media.

The 32-page federal indictment accuses Kostiantyn Kalashnikov and Elena Afanasyeva, employees of RT, a Russian-state news site formerly known as Russia Today, of conducting a money-laundering operation that spent nearly \$10 million on efforts to covertly influence public opinion and sow social divisions, including placing blame on Ukraine regarding the war with Russia.

Authorities said the U.S. company, which was not identified by name in the indictment, created and posted 2,000 English-language videos on social media sites, including TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and X, that echoed Russian state propaganda and garnered 16 million views on YouTube alone.

Kalashnikov and Afanasyeva, Russian citizens who remain at large, were charged with conspiracy to violate the Foreign Agents Registration Act, which

SEE RUSSIANS ON A4

## 4 killed in shooting at Ga. high school



ELIJAH NOUVELEGE/REUTERS

Two women cry while attending a vigil at Jug Tavern Park following a shooting at Apalachee High School in Winder, Ga., on Wednesday.

### STUDENT, 14, FACES MURDER CHARGES

‘Pure evil’: Another U.S. campus forever scarred

BY HOLLY BAILEY, EMILY WAX-THIBODEAUX, LAURA MECKLER AND REIS THEBAULT

WINDER, GA. — Four people were killed and nine others injured when a 14-year-old student opened fire on Wednesday morning at a high school in this small city outside of Atlanta, authorities said.

The death toll included two students, who were also 14, and two teachers, according to police. Officers arrested the lone suspect after a brief confrontation and said he would be charged as an adult with murder. Law enforcement previously had interviewed the suspect after receiving anonymous reports last year about online posts threatening violence at an unnamed school, the area’s local FBI office said. They did not have enough evidence to take further action.

The violence tore through Apalachee High School during the second month of classes, as

SEE SHOOTING ON A10

## Zelensky’s cabinet gets a major shake-up at a critical moment

BY SIOBHÁN O’GRADY AND SERHII KOROLCHUK

KYIV — Ukraine is undergoing its largest government shake-up since Russia invaded the country in 2022, as the war reaches a critical juncture and President Volodymyr Zelensky prepares to visit the United States to unveil a “victory plan” on how Kyiv hopes to win.

The visit later this month comes as Ukraine is preparing for various scenarios ahead of a U.S. presidential election in November that could affect the future of a key partnership that has, until now, ensured Ukraine’s defense. It also coincides with renewed pleas from Kyiv for Western allies — including Washington — to lift restrictions on using certain weapons for long-range strikes

inside of Russia in hopes of curbing its devastating missile strikes across the country.

During a news briefing Wednesday, Zelensky praised the team that has led his government throughout the war but said, “Today, we need new energy, and these steps are related to strengthening our state in various directions.”

One person close to Zelensky,

who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive political decisions, said the president “understood there was a disconnect between certain portions of the government and the people, and he wants to address that.”

“Zelensky does believe everybody has to perform at 200 percent during this war,” the person added.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba — who has served in the role since 2020 and traveled the world pleading for more Western air defenses and weapons — submitted his resignation Wednesday morning, hours after several other ministers did the

SEE UKRAINE ON A22

**Back to school:** Students head underground in Kharkiv. **A15**

## Biden is set to thwart sale of U.S. Steel to Japanese rival

BY DAVID J. LYNCH AND JEFF STEIN

President Joe Biden is preparing to announce that he will formally block Nippon Steel’s proposed \$14.9 billion acquisition of U.S. Steel, according to three people with knowledge of the matter, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe a decision not yet made public.

The stunning move to kill a deal

featuring a corporation from Japan, a close U.S. ally, comes as Vice President Kamala Harris battles former president Donald Trump for support from union members across the industrial Midwest.

The acquisition has been under investigation by the interagency Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) for potential national security implications. A White House official

SEE STEEL ON A9

## In Project 2025, Democrats found a potent line of attack

BY ASHLEY PARKER AND MAEVE RESTON

No one expected the 922-page policy document to go viral.

The conservative Heritage Foundation quietly began working on Project 2025 in 2022, pulling together a wish list of far-right policy proposals the group hoped former president Donald Trump would enact if he won back the White House. The

report was published with little notice in 2023.

Then, in March, the Biden-Harris campaign began attacking the conservative initiative through a coordinated push on social media timed to President Joe Biden’s State of the Union address, warning the public that Project 2025 was a blueprint for the extreme and dangerous agenda a second Trump term would

SEE PROJECT 2025 ON A8

## How a plan to help the planet went off the rails



SAMANTHA REINDERS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Lucinda Gueterro’s stove from C-Quest was damaged by rain, so she now cooks outside with the same methods as before.

C-Quest Capital claimed cleaner cookstoves would improve lives. But it couldn’t deliver on its promise.

BY CHICO HARLAN

SANSÃO MUTHEMBA, MOZAMBIQUE — The simple stoves were being shipped out across Africa by the millions, and few people here saw the downside. The stoves were free. They were pitched as an upgrade to the charcoal grill and wood campfire cooking methods in the area. And they promised solutions to the massive problems of deforestation and smoke pollution.

But as the stoves were handed out in this part of Mozambique in 2021, Victoria Jose Arriscado said she was struck by how cheap they looked — just a few metal parts atop clay bricks and mud.

When she used it, her home filled with smoke, and her eyes teared up.

“This is clearly not the best they could do,” Arriscado, 43, remembered thinking.

Arriscado and others had received the stoves as part of a program run by D.C.-based C-Quest Capital, a producer of carbon credits — specialized investments that some of the world’s largest companies buy to

offset their planet-warming emissions. The company distributes stoves that it says are more efficient than traditional campfires, reducing the amount of wood burned and protecting users’ lungs. The company calculates the reduction in emissions, turns that into a commodity, and sells it to companies, which then claim their operations are contributing less to climate change.

But C-Quest’s program in Mozambique — marketed as a climate solution that also produces a better life for impoverished Africans — failed to deliver on either pledge, according to an investigation by The Washington Post.

The inquiry shows how, in this area of Mozambique, the pressure to produce carbon credits at a low cost led the company to cut corners in a way that ultimately backfired on the people it was trying to help.

Most directly, C-Quest failed to take steps to ensure that its clay and metal cookstoves were being widely used and working properly, critical to ensuring that the project was reducing greenhouse

SEE STOVES ON A12

### IN THE NEWS

**Confusion in Gaza talks** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel has said one thing about the Philadelphia Corridor and his negotiators another, sources say. **A16**

**‘Remorseful’** A man who made harassing calls to members of Congress and threatened to kill an aide was sentenced to 13 months. **B1**

**THE NATION** **Titanic divers** located a long-sought statue and signs of accelerated decay this summer. **A2** **Boeing’s Starliner** spacecraft will begin its uncrewed journey back to Earth on Friday. **A5**

**THE WORLD** **All 72 deaths** in 2017’s Grenfell Tower fire in London were preventable, a report said. **A16** **U.S. leaders** warn that Mexico’s judicial reform could undermine its young democracy. **A16**

**THE ECONOMY** **Spyware vendors** that sold to repressive governments are thwarting restrictions by changing names and locations. **A17** **Engaging in** small talk at work can be beneficial to your career and well-being. Experts share tips on how to master it. **A18**

**THE REGION** **The Justice Department** dropped its case against a Maryland lawyer accused of conspiring to control millions in Somali funds. **B1** **A former Maryland schools chief** used an encrypted messaging app to discuss work, an investigation found. **B1**

**STYLE** **Brooke Shields** wants to use her fame to benefit others as president of the Actors’ Equity Association. **C1**

**SPORTS** **Lamar Jackson** and the Ravens open the NFL season tonight with a trip to defending champion Kansas City. **D1**

**BUSINESS NEWS**.....**A17**  
**COMICS**.....**C6**  
**OBITUARIES**.....**B4**  
**OPINION PAGES**.....**A19**  
**TELEVISION**.....**C3**  
**WORLD NEWS**.....**A15**

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