

ELECTION 2024

Democrats seek to use Ala. ruling as leverage

Party hopes issue of reproductive rights will boost turnout

BY AMY B WANG, MARIANA ALFARO AND AZI PAYBARAH

In the days since the Alabama state Supreme Court ruled that frozen embryos are people, Democrats have begun to seize on the decision, casting it as further evidence of a Republican-led assault on reproductive rights, an issue they have reason to believe already plays to their advantage.

The Alabama decision, which threatens the practice of in vitro fertilization, comes nearly two years after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, prompting several states to enact restrictions on abortion and catapulting the issue of reproductive rights to the forefront of subsequent elections.

Democrats, including those in the White House, argue that the Alabama decision is a harbinger of further restrictions if Republicans make gains in Congress and expand their hold on statehouses nationwide. The Democrats hope the issue can boost turnout in an election year in which polling suggests a lack of enthusiasm for the incumbent president.

In its ruling last week, the Alabama high court held that someone can be held liable for destroying frozen embryos, a common outcome in IVF procedures, which have been used in

SEE IVF ON A4

Navalny's mother is allowed to view body

Biden meets widow and daughter as Russia cites 'natural causes' in death

BY ROBYN DIXON

RIGA, LATVIA — President Biden met Alexei Navalny's widow and daughter, Yulia and Daria Navalnaya, in San Francisco on Thursday and expressed his condolences, after the Russian opposition leader's team said that the official death certificate recorded his death in prison as being due to "natural causes."

Navalny's family and his team say he was murdered and that authorities have refused to release his body so as to cover up any evidence.

Biden has said that Russian President Vladimir Putin is "responsible for Navalny's death," and he told Yulia and Daria Navalnaya that he would announce major new sanctions on Friday to hold Russia accountable. The White House released a photograph of the president embracing Navalny's widow.

Earlier on Thursday, Navalny's mother, Lyudmila Navalnaya, alleged that Russian authorities had tried to "blackmail" her into holding a secret burial for her son, after they finally allowed her

SEE NAVALNY ON A11



Deadly strike on Ukrainian village opens a divide

Relatives and friends who once shared lives suspect each other of Russian sympathies

BY SIOBHÁN O'GRADY AND SERHII KOROLCHUK IN HROZA, UKRAINE



ALICE MARTINS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

A banner at the bus stop outside this grieving village in northeast Ukraine delivers a verdict — and a warning to would-be Russian informants. ¶ "KILLERS HAVE A NAME," it reads. "KILLED 59 FELLOW VILLAGERS FOR RUSSIAN MONEY." ¶ Photos show a victim's limp, dirt-caked hands next to a portrait of former local police officer Volodymyr Mamon, the word "traitor" stamped in bright red letters across his face. ¶ Ukraine's security services have accused Mamon and his younger brother, Dmytro, who both fled to Russia in 2022, of coordinating a Russian missile strike last October on a cafe hosting a funeral reception in Hroza, their hometown, killing 59 — about one-fifth of the population. ¶ Last week, Ukrainian authorities also charged the younger Mamon brother with treason for voluntarily working for Russian forces when they occupied Hroza and the surrounding area. ¶ Two years into Russia's

SEE UKRAINE ON A18

TOP: Valentina Kozyr lost her husband, daughter and 8-year-old grandson in the strike. ABOVE: Hroza's cemetery was expanded to bury the 59 victims. Ukrainian officials have accused two brothers from the village of coordinating the missile strike.

Increasing scrutiny of deaths linked to kratom

Advocates insist the herbal product's risks are exaggerated

BY DAVID OVALLE

Keifer Geers was born with a hole in his diaphragm that led to painful surgeries in adulthood. Despite physical challenges that included deafness, Geers graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in biomedical engineering. He hoped to one day create medical devices for disabled children and wounded veterans.

On a spring day as Geers walked with his mother through an airport in Midland, Tex., he stumbled, then collapsed into a seizure, his face contorted in shock. Geers, 33, was pronounced dead at a hospital. His mother later found inside his suitcase several packages of powder kratom, an herbal product he consumed to manage

SEE KRATOM ON A8



NITASHIA JOHNSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

An autopsy found that Keifer Geers, 33, died from the toxic effects of kratom, an herbal product.

Leak exposes Chinese hacking

EXPANSIVE PLOY TO GAIN FOREIGN DATA

Trove shows how Beijing fomented cyber intrusions

This article is by Christian Shepherd, Cate Cadell, Ellen Nakashima, Joseph Menn and Aaron Schaffer

A trove of leaked documents from a Chinese state-linked hacking group shows that Beijing's intelligence and military groups are attempting large-scale, systematic cyber intrusions against foreign governments, companies and infrastructure — with hackers of one company claiming to be able to target users of Microsoft, Apple and Google.

The cache — containing more than 570 files, images and chat logs — offers an unprecedented look inside the operations of one of the firms that Chinese government agencies hire for on-demand, mass data-collecting operations.

The files — posted to GitHub last week and deemed credible by cybersecurity experts, although the source remains unknown — detail contracts to extract foreign data over eight years and describe targets within at least 20 foreign governments and territories, including India, Hong Kong, Thailand, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Taiwan and Malaysia. Indian publication BNN earlier reported on the documents.

SEE CHINA ON A10

U.S. makes 'nail-biter' return to the moon

Tense landing, nation's first in half-century, seen as commercial space feat

BY CHRISTIAN DAVENPORT

For the first time since the last of the Apollo missions in 1972, an American spacecraft reached the surface of the moon Thursday, a significant step toward NASA's plan to eventually return astronauts to Earth's closest celestial neighbor.

After a tense several minutes in which ground controllers were unsure about the health of the spacecraft, designed and operated by Houston-based Intuitive Machines, company officials declared it had landed successfully and was communicating with Earth. About two hours after the landing, the company confirmed "after troubleshooting communications" that the spacecraft was indeed standing upright, a momentous feat for the growing commercial space industry.

"What we can confirm, without a doubt, is our equipment is on the surface of the moon," Tim Crain, Intuitive Machines's chief technology officer, said shortly after the landing. "And we are transmitting. So congratulations."

SEE MOON LANDING ON A6

IN THE NEWS

A cosmic mystery Astronomers think they may have determined what was left behind by a supernova spotted in 1987. A7

U.S. isolated at G-20 summit At a meeting of top diplomats, Secretary of State Antony Blinken fended off demands for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza. A14

THE NATION AT&T suffered a cell network outage, affecting more than 1.7 million customers. A2 President Biden's support for Israel elicits an "uncommitted" push in Michigan's primary. A4

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THE ECONOMY Some of the world's biggest firms are coming up with features for your next smartphone. Are they worth it? A13 Life insurance plans offered only to the wealthiest clients amount to a \$40 billion "tax dodge," a Senate report said. A14

THE REGION U Street residents are divided over a proposal to change the zoning of a development to allow for high-rise construction. B1 A grant funding private home monitoring for Maryland defendants awaiting trial abruptly ran out of money. B1

STYLE At a comedy fundraiser for Robert F. Kennedy Jr., most of the jobs were directed at President Biden. C1

WEEKEND As the chill of February sets in, we find places around the District where you can stay warm and toasty.

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