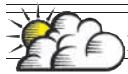


The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

SU V1 V2 V3 V4



Partly sunny 60/41 • Tomorrow: Becoming cloudy 63/52 C8

Democracy Dies in Darkness

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2024 • \$5

In Trump's orbit, new camps vie for power

Name-calling, shouting matches as team of rivals sets into familiar pattern

BY ASHLEY PARKER, JOSH DAWSEY AND MICHAEL SCHERER

Donald Trump's attorney and adviser Boris Epshteyn arrived recently for a meeting about Cabinet picks in the Tea Room at Mar-a-Lago only to find his way blocked.

Transition co-chair Howard Lutnick, CEO of Cantor Fitzgerald, told Epshteyn in front of others that this was not a meeting for him. "We're not talking legal nominees today," Lutnick said, according to one person familiar with the exchange.

Epshteyn refused to budge. Using his forearm, he pushed Lutnick out of the way, according to two people familiar with the incident, which Lutnick later recounted to others. "I'm coming in," Epshteyn retorted, according to one of the people.

A third person described the incident more as Epshteyn simply brushing past Lutnick on his way into the meeting, and someone close to both men said the two "have been working closely together in assisting President Trump in putting together the greatest administration in American history." Epshteyn and Lutnick both declined to comment.

SEE TRUMP ON A13

FDA: Pick Marty Makary denounced agencies' pandemic response. **A5**

CDC: Dave Weldon, a critic of the agency, is tapped to lead it. **A5**

A nation's seeming pivot away from the E.U. and back to Moscow could offer a warning for Ukraine and other former Soviet states



INES VERHEYLEWEGHEN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Georgia, fearing war, appears ready for Russia's embrace

BY MARY ILYUSHINA IN TBILISI, GEORGIA

After contentious parliamentary elections, Georgia — a small nation once part of the Soviet Union — finds itself sliding back into Russia's orbit following decades of seeking greater integration with the West.

The ruling Georgian Dream party, adopting a pro-Russian stance, declared victory in October's elections after winning 54 percent of the vote and running a campaign with a stark warning: Align with the West and suffer Ukraine's fate.

The opposition has rejected the elections as stolen, but the ruling party does appear to have successfully capitalized on a fragmented

Protesters gather Nov. 10 in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi, to dispute the elections won by the Georgian Dream party, which warned about war with Russia.

SEE HEGSETH ON A6

opposition and Georgians' fear of war, aided by Russian disinformation and a patchy record from the West when it comes to supporting nations seeking to leave Russia's sphere of influence.

If the ruling party succeeds in consolidating its win, an outcome that grows more likely by the day, Georgia's pivot away from seeking to become part of the European Union will serve as a cautionary tale for Ukraine and other former Soviet states hoping to move closer to the West even as Russian President Vladimir Putin seeks to restore the former Soviet Union's regional hegemony.

SEE GEORGIA ON A19

Climate summit ends in discord

DELEGATES ATTACK DEAL AS INADEQUATE

More spending sought, but enforcement absent

BY CHICO HARLAN AND MAXINE JOSELOW

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN — Negotiators from nearly 200 countries agreed early Sunday in a non-binding commitment that wealthy nations would aim to provide at least \$300 billion annually by 2035 to help poorer nations suffering the most from climate change.

But many delegates from developing countries blasted the agreement minutes after it was adopted, capping an acrimonious U.N. Climate Change Conference, known this year as COP29.

The deal requires no specific pledges from any countries and falls short of the \$1.3 trillion poorer nations say they will need every year a decade from now.

While it triples rich nations' current commitment to help vulnerable ones cope with mounting climate disasters, the new vow comes after more than a decade in which they struggled to meet that \$100 billion pledge.

After spending two weeks inside a labyrinthine, windowless soccer stadium, sleep-deprived diplomats agreed to the finance deal at 2:40 a.m. Sunday — with many feeling outrage rather than relief and labeling the sum insufficient.

SEE CLIMATE ON A16

War-crimes case rocked Hegseth's Iraq unit

BY DAN LAMOTHE

Military personnel manning a U.S. Army command outpost in Iraq found the radio report suspicious. During an operation to hunt suspected al-Qaeda militants, American soldiers involved notified their commanders that they had just killed three detainees who, they said, had broken free of their restraints and attacked them.

Detainee murders after Defense pick left shaped his views, soldiers say

The soldiers had been in combat for months in Samarra, a city about 80 miles northwest of Baghdad, where a vicious insurgency had taken hold. The detain-

ees' deaths on May 9, 2006, triggered an extensive U.S. military investigation, leading to court-martial, two murder convictions, and a career-ending letter of reprimand for Col. Michael Steele, the troops' brigade commander. In the end, those found guilty acknowledged under oath that

SEE HEGSETH ON A6

Sexual misconduct: Allegations surround top Trump selections. **A3**

AG pick has long come to Trump's defense

BY MARK BERMAN AND DAVID NAKAMURA

Again and again, when Donald Trump has faced scandal and scrutiny, Pam Bondi was there to defend him.

Bondi said the Justice Department's special counsel investigation into whether Trump associates coordinated with Russian interference in the 2016 election needed to be dissolved. She de-

Bondi has parried blame aimed at president-elect over scandals since '16

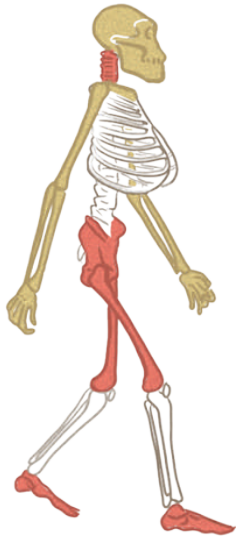
clared that the 45th president's first impeachment in 2019 was a "sham." And when Trump was indicted four times after leaving office, Bondi was blunt about who

deserved legal scrutiny — and it wasn't the former president.

"The prosecutors will be prosecuted, the bad ones," Bondi declared on Fox News in 2023, soon after Trump's fourth set of criminal charges. "The investigators will be investigated."

Bondi, a former Florida state attorney general, is drawing new-found attention since President-elect Trump announced his plans

SEE BONDI ON A13



Meet Lucy, key to our view of human origins

The famous fossil unearthed 50 years ago has similarities to both apes and humans. **Page A8**

GRAPHIC BY WILLIAM NEFF AND MANUEL CANALES/THE WASHINGTON POST

Athlete's gender led to secret votes, forfeits

College volleyball player alleged to be transgender

BY JESSE DOUGHERTY

On the last day of September, in a meeting with athletic department officials, each member of the University of Wyoming women's volleyball team was handed a small piece of paper. On it, the athletes were told to write yes or no, casting a vote on a basic question that had turned complicated.

Should we play? They were scheduled to face San José State, a conference opponent. Wyoming had even beaten the Spartans twice the previous season. But now two other teams had forfeited against San José State because it allegedly has a transgender player.

The San José State player is in her fourth college season and has appeared in every match the team has played this year. The Washington Post is not naming the player because she has not spoken publicly about her identity and the school has not commented on it. But in September, San José State captain Brooke Slusser said in a lawsuit that she has a transgender teammate, sparking a firestorm in the Mountain West Conference.

With the season winding down, five teams, including four in the Mountain West, have forfeited matches against San José State. This month, Slusser and nine more players in the

SEE VOLLEYBALL ON A12

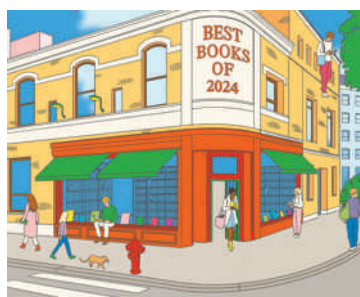


EAKIN HOWARD/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The San José State team is the focal point of a season-long issue that has turned legal and political.

METRO
D.C. jail inmates face off with Virginia students in a debate — and win.

SPORTS
Ohio State powers past Indiana, handing the Hoosiers their first loss.



BOOK WORLD
Our editors select their favorite books of a diverse, complex year.

BUSINESS
This NASA veteran gets the ordeal of colleagues who are stuck in space.



ARTS & STYLE
Stylish, talented Cynthia Erivo rides "Wicked" role to Hollywood stardom.

TRAVEL
Film festival in Spain gives travelers a chance to enjoy scenes, scenery.

COMICS.....INSERT
OBITUARIES.....C4
OPINION PAGES.....A20
WORLD NEWS.....A17

CONTENT © 2024
The Washington Post / Year 147, No. 54045

