



**NIR BLATMAN** organizes a shipment of remains at the National Center of Forensic Medicine in Tel Aviv. The remains came from towns and kibbutzim in Israel that were attacked by Hamas militants on Oct. 7.

COLUMN ONE

# At lab, a quest to reassemble the remains of Oct. 7 victims

Experts working to identify mangled bodies in Israel try to understand causes of death and the underlying cruelty.

BY JEFFREY FLEISHMAN  
REPORTING FROM TEL AVIV

A bone. A tooth. A sliver of skull. They came in bags, endless bags, mixed with ash, coins, bullets and shrapnel. Like imperfect tapestries, some held the remains of different people. The bags were numbered, cataloged and scanned. DNA was extracted. The science was precise, but it was hard to know what happened, how a person was killed.

[See Lab, A4]



**A FORENSIC** specialist examines a piece of clothing attached to a foot recovered from an Israeli community near the Gaza border.

Photographs by MARCUS YAM Los Angeles Times

## State was long aware of factors that led to fire under freeway

Caltrans routinely inspected the site. The company that rented the land says it's being scapegoated.

BY RACHEL URANGA,  
MATT HAMILTON  
AND RUBEN VIVES

The state was long aware of conditions under Interstate 10 where a massive fire Saturday severely damaged the freeway south of downtown Los Angeles — with Caltrans inspectors on site as recently as Oct. 6, according to state officials, tenants and a lawyer for the company leasing the land.

The fire was fueled by wood pallets stored under the freeway and is being investigated as an arson.

The plot of land was leased by the California Department of Transportation to a private company that subleased it to small blue-collar businesses at much higher rents.

For years, a pallet distributor, a recycler, a mechanic shop and a garment factory supplier operated between the freeway pillars on East 14th Street a block east of South Alameda Street. Along the perimeter, homeless people camped and lighted fires to keep warm.

The conditions did not raise any apparent alarm bells among state officials who regularly inspected the site. Google Earth photos from January 2023 and March 2022 show dozens of columns of pallets stacked two stories high, amid piles of tires, wood boxes, cardboard and old vehicles, all visible from four streets and

### Interstate 10 to reopen by Tuesday

In surprise statement, governor says five lanes in both directions will be passable. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

a freeway offramp. “Caltrans staff inspect all airspace lease sites at least annually to check for potential safety hazards and lease violations,” said Eric Menjivar, a spokesperson for Caltrans District 7, which main-

[See Caltrans, A9]

## DEPAPE FOUND GUILTY IN PELOSI ATTACK

The verdict is called a warning to those who would hurt lawmakers for doing their job.

BY HANNAH WILEY

**SAN FRANCISCO** — David DePape was found guilty in a San Francisco federal court on Thursday of attempting to kidnap former U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and assaulting her husband with a hammer after he broke into the couple's home last year.

The jury of 10 men and two women spent a day deliberating the two federal charges before reaching their verdict, concluding a high-profile and, at times, bizarre trial that lasted only four days.

DePape sat quietly beside his attorneys as the verdict was read and did not outwardly react to the decision.

“Speaker Pelosi and her family are deeply grateful for the outpouring of prayers and warm wishes for Mr. Pelosi from so many across the country during this difficult time,” a spokesperson wrote in a statement in response to the verdict. “The Pelosi family is very proud of their Pop, who demonstrated extraordinary composure and courage on the night of the attack a year ago and in the courtroom this week. Thankfully, Mr. Pelosi continues to make progress in his recovery.”

The case consumed the nation for more than a year, with former President Trump and conservative commentators using the attack to rile up their far-right base and swipe at the Democratic congresswoman, raising broader concerns over political violence and the safety of public officials and their families.

The jurors reached their decision even with the defense's claims that DePape, 43, was motivated not by violence but by a network of political conspiracy theories he harbored against Democrats and other public figures and elected officials.

[See DePape, A7]

## Professor is held in death of protester

Moorpark instructor arrested after a Jewish man was fatally hurt in an altercation at a Thousand Oaks rally.

BY RICHARD WINTON,  
NOAH GOLDBERG,  
GRACE TOOHEY  
AND TERRY CASTLEMAN

A Moorpark College professor has been arrested on suspicion of involuntary manslaughter in the death of a Jewish protester who suffered head injuries during clashes between pro-Palestinian and pro-Israel demonstrators earlier this month in Thousand Oaks.

Loay Abdelfattah Alnaji, 50, of Moorpark was arrested early Thursday at his Moorpark home in the death of Paul Kessler, the Ventura County Sheriff's Department announced in a news release. Alnaji is being held in lieu of \$1 million bail.

Ventura County Dist. Atty. Erik Nasarenko announced late Thursday that his office planned to file two felony charges — involuntary manslaughter and

[See Arrest, A9]

## A lesson from Latinos in Florida

They've shown Democrats can't rely on their votes, even in California

BY SEEMA MEHTA  
AND FAITH E. PINHO

**HIALEAH, Fla.** — Alejandro Rodriguez, a Nicaraguan supporter of former President Trump, wanted to make clear that he opposes open borders.

“The way I see it, if I have my door open, anybody can come in and out. Same thing with the borders,” Rodriguez said as he sold hats reading “Latina for Trump” outside a political rally in this 96% Latino south Florida city last week.

Rodriguez, who is not a U.S. citizen, cannot vote in next year's election.

But his support for the front-runner in polls for the Republican presidential nomination highlights a challenge for President Biden and other Democrats: They can't take anyone's support for granted. That includes Latinos, not just in Florida, but everywhere —

[See Latinos, A7]



RICARDO ARDUENGO AFP/Getty Images

**TRUMP** supporters rally last week in Hialeah, Fla., which is 96% Latino. A Miami Freedom Project official says everyone must be treated as a swing voter.

### Ethics panel calls out Rep. Santos

House committee says it has amassed “overwhelming evidence” of lawbreaking by the Republican. **NATION, A6**

### UCLA's 25-year run of bad luck

Are Bruins suffering from “Curse of Cade,” caused when quarterback rubbed it in against USC? **SPORTS, B10**

### The unpaid work of climate experts

Scientists often are educating the public on their own time. It's “not sustainable,” one writes. **BUSINESS, A8**

**Weather**  
More clouds.  
L.A. Basin: 72/60. **B6**



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