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Democracy Dies in Darkness

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LORENZO TUGNOLI/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Druze men in traditional clothing walk through a town square in Rima, Syria, days after an Israeli military spokesperson's visit.

Syria's minorities fear bid for unity

A wall of fear is rising around this scenic town in the foothills of Mount Hermon.

Arnah's many Druze residents say they are wary of straying beyond its borders because of violence or discrimination targeting their religious minority in parts of Syria. The townspeople are just as reluctant to let some outsiders in: The closest government troops remain at a checkpoint in the next town.

In Arnah and other areas home to religious and ethnic minorities, Syria's Sunni Islamist-led government is increasingly seen as a threat. The alienation represents a perilous turn for the country's leaders, who took power late last year after ousting the dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad and pledged to unify the country.

Instead, Syria is showing cracks.

In the mountainous Druze redoubts in Syria's south and west, along the Mediterranean coast where the Alawite religious minority is concentrated and in the Kurdish

Staggering violence in certain regions is fueling demands for autonomy, posing a challenge to President Sharaa's plans for a strong centralized state

BY KAREEM FAHIM AND ZAKARIA ZAKARIA IN ARNAH, SYRIA

regions of the northeast, there have been calls for autonomy, decentralization or simply to be left alone. Residents who say they still cherish their Syrian identity fret about their future in the country. Some community leaders are seizing on current fears to press loudly for longtime dreams of independence.

For months after Assad's dramatic fall, "there was a lot of hope in the new Syria," said Nabih Kaboul, a Druze resident of Arnah. "Unfortunately, this period is worse than the one we were in."

The disaffection poses a dire challenge to President Ahmed al-Sharaa's drive to consolidate his young government's authority and his plans for national recovery after the long civil war.

Sharaa has advocated for a centralized state led by Damascus, similar in structure to the one before Syria was fractured by its long civil war. His vision, which he says

SEE SYRIA ON A12

Trump's threat of troops looms over big cities

WHITE HOUSE FIXES ON CHICAGO, BALTIMORE

Illinois leaders decry Pentagon military plans

BY PRAVEENA SOMASUNDARAM AND MARIANA ALFARO

City and state leaders pilloried the Trump administration for planning to home in on Chicago — the third most populous city in the United States — as the next target for a military deployment in the name of addressing crime, immigration and homelessness, calling the idea unlawful and unnecessary.

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker (D) said the state was not experiencing any emergency that would warrant a National Guard presence like that which the Pentagon has been considering. Instead, Pritzker said, President Donald Trump was "attempting to manufacture a crisis."

Trump has portrayed Chicago as crime-ridden for years and suggested in recent days that it would be the National Guard's next step. On Saturday, The Washington Post first reported that the Pentagon has been considering options to deploy the National Guard in Chicago as early as September; the use of thousands of active-duty troops in Chicago also has been discussed but is considered less likely at this time. If the mission is approved, Chicago would become the third U.S. city to face a recent deployment, coming on the heels of crackdowns in Los Angeles and D.C.

Chicago, a city of roughly 2.7 million, has seen a decrease in violent crime since a covid pandemic.

SEE CHICAGO ON A5

Moore, president clash; D.C. troops carry weapons

BY DANIEL WU

President Donald Trump threatened to send troops to Baltimore as he and Maryland Gov. Wes Moore (D) traded blows on social media over the president's characterization of crime in the city and his deployment of the National Guard in Washington — who are carrying weapons as of Sunday night.

Trump said Baltimore is "out of control" and "crime ridden" in a Sunday Truth Social post in response to an invitation by Moore to join city officials to walk the streets

and discuss public safety in September. Moore responded by touting progress in reducing crime in Baltimore, which is experiencing its lowest homicide rate in 50 years.

The two leaders have dueled over Maryland's largest city in recent days as Trump's intervention in D.C. escalates and he threatens to pursue similar crackdowns by deploying the National Guard in other cities. The Pentagon is planning a potential military deployment.

SEE BALTIMORE ON A5

Big-city mayor: Trump's focus on urban cleanup fulfills a dream. **A4**

Home rule: Proposed bill would extend D.C. police takeover. **A4**

S. Korea sees shipbuilding as key to talks with Trump

Seoul leans into industry as leverage for leaders' White House summit

BY MICHELLE YE HEE LEE

ULSAN, SOUTH KOREA — When South Korean President Lee Jae Myung meets with President Donald Trump for the first time on Monday, he will arrive at the White House with a gift that's sure to please Trump: South Korea's shipbuilding prowess.

Lee, who was elected in June, will arrive for his summit with Trump at a rocky moment in the relationship between the two security allies, thanks to a transactional U.S. president who gauges allies by their trade deficit.

South Korea's is large — \$66 billion last year, according to the office of the U.S. Trade Representative — but shipbuilding has emerged as a crucial opportunity for cooperation.

Trump has made revitalizing U.S. shipbuilding a priority to try to close the gap with a dominant

SEE KOREA ON A10

Former child refugee navigates deportation push

Pope Leo's first U.S. bishop provides visible support for migrants

BY MICHELLE BOORSTEIN

SAN DIEGO — When Bishop Michael Pham walks the halls of immigration court, he sees migrants facing the most intense U.S. deportation campaign in decades, and glimpses moments of his own life.

Pham says he remembers being 8 years old on a packed cargo boat floating off the coast of Vietnam for days without food or water, eventually realizing the bodies across the deck weren't asleep. And at 14, arriving in America without his parents. He recalls his eight siblings, a few years later, in a tiny, overloaded house in East San Diego, scurrying to hide when the landlord appeared.

That boy is now the new leader of a 1.5-million-member diocese, a diverse region filled with migrants from around the world, major military installations and a 140-mile border with Mexico. He is the first U.S. bishop named by the first U.S. pope — Pope Leo — who, mirroring his predecessor, Pope Francis, has named migration first among the key challenges facing the world.



SANDY HUFFAKER/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Bishop Michael Pham enters the federal courthouse in San Diego to watch migrant hearings on Aug. 4.

And so Pham, the first Vietnamese American to lead a U.S. diocese, headed one recent morning to the fourth floor of a federal courthouse where he planned to watch immigration hearings. He wore his clerical garb and a huge silver cross necklace, serving as a silent reminder of human dignity that

he hoped would be comforting to migrants and thought-provoking to masked agents, government lawyers, judges and, eventually, the world.

"The more we speak out, the more people will understand what we're facing," Pham said as he entered the building.

What it means to bring the

teachings of Jesus to an American immigration court isn't clear.

The Catholic Church — like many religious institutions — has lost influence over the past few decades. Its congregations are divided on the issue of immigration, and even how involved

SEE BISHOP ON A8

Grant freeze at Harvard puts research in jeopardy

The university stands at a crossroads as it tries to mitigate the damage

BY SUSAN SVRLUGA

BOSTON — A lab at Harvard Medical School recently discovered something that could change the way cancer, neurodevelopmental disorders and other diseases are understood, treated and prevented.

But the federal grants that funded that work were abruptly terminated this spring, as the Trump administration froze more than \$2 billion in research funding to Harvard in its fight to force the university to yield to its demands for change.

All the federal money for the research is gone — just because the lab, headed by Karen Adelmann, a professor of biological chemistry and molecular pharmacology, is at Harvard — the

SEE HARVARD ON A6

Fear for the future: Trump grant cuts have some young students questioning their career path. **A5**

IN THE NEWS

Teacher turnover A conservative county's efforts to attract and retain educators were dealt a blow with the loss of a grant-funded initiative that it says didn't involve DEI. **A7**

Ukraine war Vice President JD Vance said he still believes the Trump administration can broker peace between Kyiv and Moscow. **A2**

THE NATION The president's new chief design officer says he wants to make government websites more beautiful. **A2**
High school football stadiums are getting swankier. **A13**

THE WORLD In Pakistan, a boom in solar energy usage has led to higher power bills for the poor. **A9**
Faced with prison crowding, Britain is looking to alternatives such as pub bans. **A11**

THE ECONOMY Postal operators around the world have announced they will suspend certain deliveries to the U.S. **A16**

STYLE Teenagers are the intended audience for "The Summer I Turned Pretty." Why are adults hooked, too? **B1**

SPORTS Sam Horn is battling to start at QB for Missouri. He also just signed with the Dodgers. **C1**

THE REGION Maryland officials failed to address major violations that put vulnerable people at risk inside adult day cares, a federal audit found. **C7**

The first day of school will look different for some D.C. students amid Trump's crackdown. **C7**

HEALTH & SCIENCE A meteorologist who has dedicated his life to finding order in a chaotic climate used the "butterfly effect" to predict seasonal outcomes. **E1**

BUSINESS NEWS.....A16
COMICS.....B4
OBITUARIES.....C11
OPINION PAGES.....A14
TELEVISION.....B6
WORLD NEWS.....A9

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