

# The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

RE V1 V2 V3 V4

Mostly sunny 83/67 • Tomorrow: Partly sunny 87/68 B16 Democracy Dies in Darkness SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2026 • \$4

## Bloodshed roars back in Ukraine and Russia

After brief respite, dozens are killed in Kyiv strike, suggesting no end in sight

BY MARY ILYUSHINA AND ANASTACIA GALOUCHKA

Days after Russian President Vladimir Putin said cryptically that he believed the war in Ukraine was “coming to a close,” bloodshed and tumult unfolded in each country, suggesting there is no end in sight.

A limited truce that appeared to halt large-scale aerial attacks — but failed to stop ground fighting — expired on Tuesday.

In the early hours of Thursday, Kyiv was struck by what officials in the Ukrainian capital said was one of the largest combined drone and missile attacks since Russia’s full-scale invasion began in February 2022, killing at least 24 people.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko, called the attack the “largest enemy attack on the capital” and declared May 15 a day of mourning.

“Russia has used more than 1,560 drones against our cities and communities,” Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky posted on social media. “These are definitely not the actions of those who believe the war is coming to an end.”

By Friday morning, officials said that at least three of the dead in Kyiv were children. In the Kharkiv region, officials reported that 39 people were injured as a result of strikes, including nine children.

Ukraine hit back Friday, striking an oil refinery and an apartment complex in Ryazan, a Russian city.

SEE UKRAINE ON A10

## China summit achieves Xi’s goal: Equal footing



MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/AP

President Donald Trump walks with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Thursday in Beijing. “I call it the G-2,” Trump said of their meetings.

### PEER DYNAMIC LONG SOUGHT BY BEIJING

Trump bristles at notion that U.S. is in decline

BY ISAAC ARNSDORF, MICHAEL BIRNBAUM AND MICHELLE YE HEE LEE

BEIJING — President Donald Trump embraced a name for this week’s summit with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, riffing on the Group of Seven meeting of the world’s largest economies.

“It’s the two great countries. I call it the G-2. This is the G-2,” he said in an interview with Fox News’s Sean Hannity that aired Friday and was taped after Thursday’s bilateral meeting with Xi. “I think it’ll go down as a very important moment in history.”

Though Trump was the one who said it, the image of two superpowers on similar footing was exactly what Xi aimed to achieve with the visit, analysts said. Over two days of meetings here, the carefully choreographed pageantry and the reciprocal gestures of friendship and respect between the world’s two most powerful men displayed a geopolitical dynamic that the Chinese have long craved and Americans had resisted.

“Xi has done something Chinese leaders have been working toward for decades — bringing an American president to Beijing as an undisputed peer,” said Julian Gewirtz, who served as China director on the National Security Council under President Joe Biden. “Xi used the opulent optics of the visit to make clear to the world that China and the United States are the two dominant, equally matched superpowers. There is no going back.”

Trump on Friday scoffed at the suggestion that the U.S. was an empire in decline — appearing to be reacting to something Xi had said, perhaps his reference on Thursday to the “Thucydides trap.”

SEE CHINA ON A10

## DOJ to charge parents of curfew scofflaws in D.C.

BY PERRY STEIN, JENNY GATHRIGHT AND MEAGAN FLYNN

The Justice Department will prosecute the parents of teenagers who break curfew as part of a crackdown on crime in the nation’s capital ahead of celebrations this summer for America’s 250th birthday, the top federal prosecutor in D.C. announced Friday.

### ‘Teen takeovers’ causing mayhem ahead of 250th anniversary events

At a news conference at Justice Department headquarters, Jeanine Pirro, the U.S. attorney in D.C., decried “teen takeovers” — a trend in which crowds of dozens

or hundreds of young people meet in buzzy nightlife areas and sometimes cause mayhem. She said these takeovers have terrorized local businesses in neighborhoods such as Navy Yard and NoMa and cost taxpayers money.

The federal crackdown comes as the Trump administration has repeatedly intervened in D.C.’s public safety system — and as D.C.’s local elected officials have repeatedly clashed over how to

respond to that pressure.

The latest of those tussles has been over a youth curfew policy that the mayor has pushed as a solution to the takeovers. The curfew, in effect for much of the past year, allowed the police chief to declare special 8 p.m. “curfew zones” in areas where large groups of youth gather. But after expiring in April, the policy has hit roadblocks in the D.C. Council.

SEE CRIME ON A6

## EEOC aims to end data collection on sex, race

A proposed departure from practice that began in 1960s civil rights era

BY MERYL KORNFELD

The top federal agency for promoting diversity across society is proposing pulling back on its primary initiative to collect demographic data, one that it has conducted for decades.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is considering no longer collecting demographic information including race, sex and national origin from major American companies, departing from a practice that began during the civil rights era of the 1960s and was critical to the agency’s efforts to root out workplace discrimination. The EEOC also wants to ax data reporting rules for apprenticeship programs, unions, state and local governments, and schools, as well as reporting requirements in other civil rights laws that protect workers, including those who are pregnant or have disabilities.

The EEOC notified the White House on Thursday of its proposal, which will be published publicly.

SEE EEOC ON A5



JULIA DEMAREE NIKHINSON/AP

### A prelude to Preakness

Horses work out at sunrise Friday ahead of the Black-Eyed Susan race at Laurel Park in Laurel, Maryland, which also will host today’s Preakness Stakes, the second leg of the Triple Crown. **Sports coverage, B7**

## California probes Steyer’s payments to influencers

Gubernatorial candidate’s campaign is seeking to frame Democratic financier as a likable billionaire

BY DREW HARWELL

The billionaire Tom Steyer seemed to have piqued the curiosity of online influencer Jason Chu.

In a February video shared with his combined 130,000 followers across Instagram and TikTok, Chu ran through the California gubernatorial candidate’s hedge-fund career to assess if he was a “guy that woke up to the damage his company helped cause, and is now spending his money undoing it.”

What Chu didn’t say, however, was that he was paid \$2,000 for “online communications” by a media contractor on behalf of Steyer’s campaign, state election finance records show. Chu, who predominantly posts videos

about Asian culture and history, did not respond to requests for comment. The video has been watched more than 10,000 times.

The video is part of a month-long social media blitz pushed by Steyer’s campaign as it tries to frame the 68-year-old Democratic financier as a likable billionaire best skilled to win the state’s most powerful role.

Amid a competitive race, Steyer’s campaign has paid thousands of dollars to individual influencers who have championed his progressive policies and financial bona fides, campaign finance records show.

The move has prompted a state investigation into “potential violations of the advertisement disclaimer provisions of the Political

SEE STEYER ON A16

## Emerging wildfire threat puts U.S. South at risk of dire future

BY BRADY DENNIS AND BEN NOLL

Thomas Barrett has already seen more wildfires across Georgia this spring than he cares to recall.

Two massive blazes in the southern part of the state were finally under control several weeks after they began, but not

until they had devoured more than 50,000 acres and destroyed more than 100 homes. Then there were the thousands of other conflagrations the state’s firefighters have had to confront this season — 4,813 as of Thursday, not that Barrett was counting.

“That’s almost 2,000 wildfires above our annual average,” said Barrett, forest protection chief for

the Georgia Forestry Commission. “And still a month and a half to go in fire season.”

Georgia is hardly alone. South Carolina already has eclipsed its recent annual average number of fires. Multiple states have put in place statewide burn bans during parts of this spring. Even as Barrett spoke, more than a dozen fires were raging to the south in

Florida, including one that had scorched more than 11,000 acres along the Everglades and led local officials to issue air quality warnings.

The near-constant recent wildfires have underscored that while massive and destructive blazes in the West tend to capture attention, the Southeast is among the nation’s most active wildfire hot

spots. It’s a reality likely to intensify as the changing climate leads to more extreme heat and longer-lasting droughts — conditions that have fueled the current fire season and hindered preventive measures meant to manage forests and lessen the likelihood of intense fires.

The region spanning Texas to

SEE FIRES ON A16

### IN THE NEWS

**Louisiana primary** Sen. Bill Cassidy, who broke with fellow Republicans and voted to convict Trump at his 2021 impeachment trial, fights to hold his seat in Saturday voting. **A3**

**Best graduation speeches** Every spring, commencement speakers offer their wisdom. We pulled out some of the greatest advice. **A5**

**THE NATION**  
**The CDC** tightened home monitoring guidance for high-risk hantavirus contacts. **A2**  
**The president** was months late disclosing tens of millions of dollars in stock trading. **A4**

**THE WORLD**  
**The U.S.** sank nearly \$1 billion on a mission that left Haiti worse off. Now it’s trying again. **A7**  
**DOJ officials** are likely to drop fraud charges against Indian billionaire Gautam Adani. **A8**

**THE ECONOMY**  
**Byron Allen** has lofty ambitions for BuzzFeed, with dreams to build a streaming juggernaut. **A4**  
**Jerome H. Powell** stepped down as Fed chair after steering the central bank through covid, inflation and an assault on the agency’s independence. **A11**

**STYLE**  
**60 years since** the Beach Boys masterpiece “Pet Sounds,” we’ve had dozens of reissues. Did we finally get it right? **B1**  
**A halftime show** is coming to the World Cup final, soccer’s top event, broadcast live and featuring Shakira, Madonna and BTS. **B1**

**THE REGION**  
**DOJ prosecutors** will seek the death penalty for the man charged with killing two last year at the Capital Jewish Museum in D.C. **B12**  
**Immigration** policies in Fairfax County came under attack in a hearing targeting the Democratic prosecutor. **B12**

**BUSINESS NEWS**.....A11  
**COMICS**.....B4  
**OBITUARIES**.....B14  
**OPINION PAGES**.....A14  
**TELEVISION**.....B6  
**WORLD NEWS**.....A7

CONTENT © 2026  
The Washington Post  
Year 149, No. 54583

