

The Washington Post

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Partly sunny, breezy 59/44 • Tomorrow: Mostly sunny 63/44 B6 Democracy Dies in Darkness WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2024 • \$3

'Climate of chaos' at psychiatric facility

BY KATIE METTLER

Tension had been building inside Maryland's maximum-security psychiatric hospital when the news began to circulate among employees: Scott Moran, their CEO, had been banished from the facility. Moran's boss at Clifton T. Perkins Hospital Center, which houses people diagnosed with serious mental illnesses who have been accused of violence, had applied for a restraining order against the doctor in February, accusing him of sending "racially suggestive messages" and making violent

ESCALATING PROBLEMS AT MD. HOSPITAL

For years, officials failed to address staff complaints

threats. The doctor was suspended and later fired. Since then, a Washington Post investigation into Moran's tenure found that the allegations outlined in the restraining order petition were not isolated, but a culmination of years of well-documented but unaddressed complaints about hospital mismanagement and safety that had

prompted staff departures and, at times, left employees and patients vulnerable. The Post found that state officials had been warned many times about conditions at Perkins during the administrations of then-Gov. Larry Hogan (R), who is now running for U.S. Senate, and Gov. Wes Moore (D), widely seen as a political rising star. Complaints began soon after Mo-

ran's hiring in 2019, and alarm over dangerous conditions at the facility escalated during his tenure, crescendoing in several violent episodes last year including an out-of-control brawl, a patient rape and a patient death — incidents that have not been reported publicly until now. Interviews with more than two dozen people with knowledge of the problems at Perkins, many of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation from state officials or Moran, along with hundreds of pages of letters, emails, police documents and court records obtained by

The Post, revealed the following: •The death of the woman, 40-year-old Martina Morgan, sparked a six-month police investigation, in which detectives told prosecutors they suspected potential criminal medical neglect at Perkins. Police alleged in documents that Perkins's leadership had failed to comply with a request to preserve surveillance footage from before and after Morgan's death, so its automated system permanently deleted critical evidence. The Howard County State's Attorney's Office declined to file charges.

SEE PERKINS ON A10

U.S. sets Gaza aid deadline for Israel

Biden officials provide 1-month window, signal risk of military cuts

BY MISSY RYAN, JOHN HUDSON, MICHAEL BIRNBAUM AND KAREN DEYOUNG

The Biden administration intensified pressure on Israel this week to improve dire conditions for civilians in the Gaza Strip, as top officials warned they would resort to punitive measures, potentially including a suspension of military aid, if humanitarian aid flows are not increased within a month.

In an Oct. 13 letter to senior Israeli officials, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken demanded urgent steps to ensure noncombatants have access to food and other necessities, blaming actions by the Israeli government and lawlessness in Gaza for a recent deterioration of conditions there.

Absent a change, they cautioned, the administration would be obliged to take steps laid out in laws and policies linking the facilitation of humanitarian aid during wartime and the compliance with laws of war, including the protection of civilians, to the provision of U.S. arms and military assistance. The letter, which became public Tuesday, gives the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu one month to comply, which would delay any action until after the U.S. presidential election.

While the letter from Austin and Blinken, addressed to Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Minister for Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer, does not explicitly reference a possible suspension of arms transfers, it represents an implicit warning that the United States could curtail or halt those shipments if Israel does not ensure that desperate Gazans can access food, medicine and other necessities.

Their missive underscores the extreme friction surrounding America's ties with the Jewish state, a relationship characterized by close coordination amid the Israeli military's ongoing war against Hamas, the Iranian-backed militant group whose fighters attacked the country on Oct. 7, 2023, but also intense strains over Israel's conduct of that fight.

It comes, too, at a moment of heightened fear in Washington

SEE ISRAEL ON A17

Eastern Lebanon: Israeli airstrikes have reached the Bekaa Valley. **A16**

ELECTION 2024

In a Mich. city, Black men tepid on Harris

Some Pontiac residents say the candidate's vision doesn't include them

BY MICHAEL BRICE-SADDLER

PONTIAC, MICH. — This city's main drag has not seen true bustle for decades, with dozens of vacant storefronts scattered among active businesses. But that has not stopped Bryan Killian-Bey from daydreaming about the red brick corner property on North Saginaw Street.

"I have my goals," he said, peering inside a building that he has already explored transforming into a Black-owned restaurant and lounge. "We don't have enough places for us."

It has been a good year for Killian-Bey, 60, who in August took on a lead violence-prevention role for the city that nearly doubled his pay. But he sours when discussing the presidential election.

Talking to The Washington Post nearly a year ago, he said Black men were being overlooked by both parties. And the ascent of Vice President Kamala Harris, who is Black and Indian American, has not changed his mind.

In December, when President Joe Biden was the presumed Democratic nominee and The Post interviewed Killian-Bey and other Black men in the Detroit area, polls showed waning enthusiasm among Black voters for Biden and the Democrats. After Harris was nominated, a late August Washington Post-Ipsos poll found a significant jump in the number of

SEE HARRIS ON A6



Bryan Killian-Bey, 60, who voted for President Joe Biden in 2020 and says he would never back Donald Trump, is not sure whether he will vote this time.

Radio interview: Harris works to boost turnout of key voting bloc. **A8**



A residence under construction in July in Cape Coral, Fla., a canal-filled city vulnerable to sea-level rise and storm surge.

THOMAS SIMONETTI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

CLIMATE COACH

Eroding the housing market

Climate change may be re-pricing Americans' biggest assets, swaths of real estate data show

This article is by Michael J. Coren. Data analysis and graphics by Naema Ahmed and Kevin Crowe.

CAPE CORAL, FLA. — In 2017, Angela and Donald Brudos moved to a modest, ranch-style house where the Caloosahatchee River empties into the vast calm of the Gulf of Mexico. Despite Florida's reputation for extreme weather, it held out the promise of an affordable paradise where they could retire.

"We felt safe," said Angela, "because neighbors told us it had never flooded." But even as the Brudoses' home remained perfectly dry, climate change was beginning to reshape the housing market

here — and in vulnerable places throughout America. By the time they settled in their new home, research suggests, flood risks were already making people less willing to pay top dollar for houses in waterfront neighborhoods such as theirs, eroding prices even as values marched upward in lower-risk neighborhoods.

As buyers and sellers wake up to risks on a hotter planet, Cape Coral might be a preview of what millions of homeowners throughout the country could face: a slow and almost imperceptible re-pricing of many people's biggest asset.

For the Brudoses, the risk became apparent only when Hurricane Ian crashed ashore in 2022, leaving their living room

buried under mud and debris.

When I stepped onto their front lawn this July, nearly two years after the storm, they were still living in a trailer in their driveway. Escalating expenses and insurance delays had left them drowning in debt. To qualify for flood zone insurance, they took out a \$210,000 loan to elevate their home.

"The only choice we had was to go severely in debt and raise the house, and hope by being elevated, you can recoup the money," Donald Brudos said. "We're

SEE HOUSING ON A12

SBA disaster loans: Funds exhausted after back-to-back hurricanes, Biden says. **A2**

Trump's freewheeling final stretch

Candidate indulges in dark threats, insults and some dancing

BY MARIANNE LEVINE, MAEVE RESTON AND MERYL KORNFELD

Donald Trump went online after midnight Tuesday to brag about acing cognitive exams he never released and his cholesterol, then misleadingly called Vice President Kamala Harris's allergies a "dangerous situation." By midday he was meandering

through an interview in which he would not directly say whether he would allow a peaceful transfer of power after the election and later complained about Fox News having a Harris aide on air. He had spent the previous evening hosting an unusual town hall ("It was amazing!") that started with long-winded answers to friendly questions and ended with him swaying and bopping to music for 39 minutes.

With three weeks left until Election Day, Trump is running an unorthodox, freewheeling campaign, directing threats and insults at a wide mix of people and institutions, pushing his travels deeper into Democratic states

where nonpartisan analysts do not regard him as competitive, and wielding darkening rhetoric about undocumented immigrants and personal attacks against Harris at campaign events where he often veers off-script and has mixed up words.

In recent days, the Republican presidential nominee held a rally in safely Democratic California, where he suggested that a heckler would later "get the hell knocked out of her"; he spoke at an event in Colorado, promoting falsehoods about Venezuelan gangs

SEE TRUMP ON A9

Policy: See where Trump and Harris stand on education. **A4**



A teleprompter at Donald Trump's town hall Monday in Oaks, Pa., where he stopped taking questions and danced for 39 minutes.

JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

IN THE NEWS

Secret munitions Sudan's civil war is being fueled by arms supplied by nations including Iran and the United Arab Emirates, a Post examination found. **A14**

Pandamania Two new bears arrived at D.C.'s National Zoo from China and will make their public debut in January, officials said. **B1**

THE NATION In the debate over education, Donald Trump has been contradictory and Kamala Harris light on details. **A3** Harris's campaign rejected claims of plagiarism in a 2009 book. **A8**

THE WORLD Researchers in Jordan located a hidden tomb in the hand-carved sandstone city of Petra. **A15** Norway's sovereign wealth fund may hold lessons for a potential U.S. version. **A18**

THE ECONOMY Learn how to stop companies such as PayPal and LinkedIn from using your data in new ways. **A19** A producer of precooked meat is recalling nearly 10 million pounds of products that may be contaminated with listeria. **A20**

THE REGION Body-cam footage showed a Fairfax County officer fatally shooting a woman who appeared to slash the officer's face while wielding a knife. **B1** A 15-year-old charged in a D.C. man's killing testified that she and the other girls involved were "bored." **B1**

STYLE For Democrats in Omaha, a blue dot in a red state symbolizes resistance, relevance and representation. **C1**

FOOD Pamela Anderson's debut cookbook pays tribute to the women who opened the world to her through cooking. **E1**

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