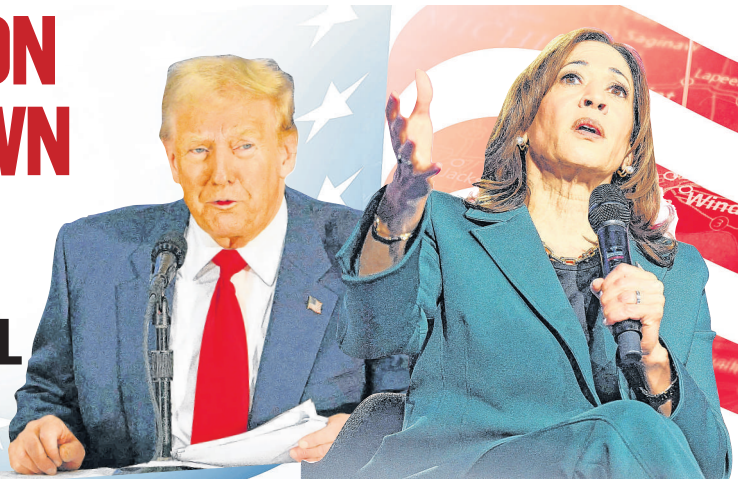


US ELECTION COUNTDOWN

**KEITH DUGGAN
IN MICHIGAN**
**STEVEN CARROLL
IN GEORGIA**

World News



“ The Dublin taskforce’s true purpose is to allow the Government say it has tackled a problem that exists primarily in its own head

John McManus
Business



**YOUR MONEY
WHY SINGLE
PEOPLE HAVE
TO PAY
MORE TAX**

Joanne Hunt
Business

Kinahan leader ‘gave names’ to UK police over guns



Mark Paul

at the Old Bailey

Criminal’s legal team argued that the Irishman had ‘put himself at risk ... as an informant’

Thomas ‘Bomber’ Kavanagh, the Irishman who led the Kinahan cartel’s British operation, gave a list of names to the UK’s National Crime Agency (NCA) of Irish criminal and paramilitary figures that he suggested may have owned guns his gang had secretly planted for him in Co Down, his barrister said.

Kavanagh (57) and fellow cartel member Liam Byrne (43) were sentenced to six years and five years in prison respectively at the Old Bailey yesterday over a ruse involving the guns.

They had arranged for the weapons to be planted in a Newry field. Kavanagh then tipped off the NCA about the cache, in the hope that appearing co-operative would get him a lighter sentence in a separate drugs case.

At their Old Bailey sentence hearing yesterday, Kavanagh remained impassive on video link from Belmarsh prison as he was given six years on top of a 21-year sentence he was already serving for drugs. Byrne, meanwhile, smiled and joked with prison guards after he was given five years; with time already served, he is likely to be eligible for release by Christmas next year.

Emotion

It was the first time over the two-day sentence hearing that Byrne had showed emotion. On Monday, when he and the other defendants had appeared at the Old Bailey in person, Byrne had only dipped his head momentarily when his barrister told the court his father had died while he was in custody.

Kavanagh, Byrne and Liverpool man Shaun Kent (38) pleaded guilty in September to

charges relating to the weapons plot. But in legal argument in a London courtroom heard in the absence of a jury, which can only be reported now the case is finished, Kavanagh’s legal team told a judge he had “put himself at risk ... as an informant” to the police in relation to the guns, which were found in 2021.

During legal argument last month, Kavanagh’s barristers tried to prevent bits of evidence from being put before a jury; the three men had not yet pleaded guilty at that stage and a trial was imminent.

Kavanagh’s lawyer complained he should have been cautioned in advance of one particular police interview in 2021, during which he suggested names in relation to the weapons cache that his gang had assembled for the ruse.

‘Clammed up’

His barrister Tim Owen KC argued that, unknown to Kavanagh, the police already considered him a suspect over the guns ruse at the time. He said they did not tell him this, but should have.

“If they had cautioned him, he would probably have clammed up,” Mr Owen told Judge Philip Katz in the Old Bailey. Instead, he said, Kavanagh gave the police a list of names: “All the names that he gave were of people who were involved in serious criminal activity.”

Mr Owen said that if all the evidence gleaned from this interview was allowed at trial, Kavanagh might be forced in open court to go into the entire background of the interview, including the fact that he had given names to police.

“He was never intending to go into a witness box. He is not going to do so now because of the consequences for him and his family,” said Mr Owen. He added that “defending himself [in court] against that background” gave Kavanagh a “dangerous dilemma”.

In the end, the judge rejected Kavanagh’s legal arguments and did not restrict the interview evidence. Days later, Kavanagh and the others pleaded guilty.

➔ **Page 3: Kinahan gang leader Byrne sentenced to five years for firearms offences; Byrne has time to retake his place in crime world**



■ Chief Superintendent Alan McGovern speaking to the media outside Dundalk Garda Station yesterday where he gave an update into the search for missing local boy Kyran Durnin. PHOTOGRAPH: CATE MCCURRY/PA WIRE

Concern about boy passed on, says Tusla

Search of missing boy’s former Drogheda home expected to last for several days

CONOR LALLY

Child and family agency Tusla said it alerted the Garda “to a significant concern” last August about Kyran Durnin (8) who was missing and now presumed dead.

The child, and his mother, were then reported missing, although the investigation into what happened to Kyran has been upgraded to a murder investigation and his mother has been located in the UK.

“We have also commenced an internal review, to look at our engagements and interactions with Kyran and his family,” said Tusla.

Though Tusla had dealings with the family, Kyran was not in State care and sources said it was not suspected he was being abused.

Excavated

A search at the former Durnin family home on Emer Terrace, Dundalk, Co Louth, began on Monday and was expected to continue for several days. Garda sources said the garden to the rear of the property was being excavated, in what is now a search for the remains of Kyran.

The house was the Durnin home until last May and since then renovation work and a deep clean have been carried out to prepare it for new tenants.

That work may frustrate the search for forensic evidence in-

side the property. Gardaí stressed the current tenants had no connection to Kyran or anyone in the Durnin family.

Gardaí are investigating if Kyran was killed violently. However, sources said the murder investigation team at Dundalk Garda station had not fully ruled out the possibility he died in another way, with a plan then put in place to conceal his death and his remains.

The child was in national school in Dundalk until about the end of the academic year in mid-2022.

Though he and his mother were reported missing at the end of August, the Garda investigation has found no evidence he was alive then. They suspect he may have died in 2022, when aged six.

Minister for Children Roderic O’Gorman has taken the unusual step of requesting Tusla to send its files on Kyran to a specialist panel that looks into the death of any child with links to State care.

Such a review is not usually undertaken until after a Garda inquiry is completed.

Tusla has confirmed a “notification has been sent” to that National Review Panel which is responsible for independently reviewing cases of “serious incidents involving children in care or known to Tusla”.

➔ **Gardaí search missing boy’s former home: page 3**

Dozens without school places left to home tuition scheme

CARLO O’BRIEN

Dozens of pupils who have been unable to find places in mainstream schools since last September are being taught at home, new figures show.

In some parts of the country, especially the Dublin commuter belt, some families have struggled to find school places for their children, with pressure most acute at second level.

Department of Education data show 44 pupils without school places are being taught at home under a home tuition scheme aimed at providing a compensatory education service.

Under the scheme, families receive a grant to employ a qualified tutor to provide up to nine hours of home tuition per week.

In addition, department figures released to The Irish Times show a total of 425 chil-

dren who were unable to access preschool services are also in receipt of tuition hours, as are a further 20 school-aged children with additional needs waiting on special classes or special school placement.

For the coming school year, parents of children in areas of high enrolment pressure are being advised by education authorities to apply to multiple secondary schools due to the volume of oversubscribed places in areas of high enrolment pressure.

Almost half of all secondary schools across the State are set to be oversubscribed in the coming school year, with the highest concentration in areas where there has been rapid population growth such as parts of Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow, Galway and Cork. Authorities insist all children who need a school place will get one.

Minister for Education Nor-

ma Foley had aimed to trial a common applications system – where parents would fill out a single form stating their school preference – to alleviate anxieties for parents. This, however, has not progressed in time for the coming school year.

In the west Dublin area, a high enrolment pressure zone, Fine Gael Senator Emer Currie said the enrolment system was “torturous”. “They’re asking parents to swamp multiple schools with applications, and that leads to one thing – more oversubscription, more bulging waiting lists, and more worry and panic for parents who won’t believe there’s a school place at the end of a 300-student waiting list,” she said.

Too many students, she said, were securing places at the last moment, when they may have already bought uniforms and iPads for another school.

Weather

A good deal of cloud today with hazy sunny spells and mainly dry. Breezier as day progresses with highs of 12-15 degrees.

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Home News

Health: About 3,000 people are dying of sepsis every year, according to the lead author of a new guide for GPs on the disease: page 5

Courts: A blood test showing Eirgrid CEO Mark Foley over the legal limit was ruled ‘not admissible’ in a drink driving case: page 4

World News



Middle East: the US has urged Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu to ‘capitalise’ on the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar to secure a ceasefire in Gaza: page 7

Business + Commercial Property

Exchequer finances: Ireland will effectively avoid any financial scrutiny under incoming EU fiscal rules, says the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council: page 12

Germany: business leaders have blamed chancellor Olaf Scholz for an extended recession: page 13

Sports Wednesday

Golf: The Cabinet has agreed to support a bid by Portmarnock Golf Club to host The Open and the AIG Women’s Open at the north Dublin links: page 18

Rugby: Johnny Sexton has been approached to join the Ireland backroom team for upcoming matches: page 21

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