

Attack kills dozens of Russian soldiers

Moscow confirms strike, possibly one of deadliest on its forces in Ukraine

BY FRANCESCA EBEL

Dozens of Russian soldiers were killed in a massive missile strike early on New Year's Day in Ukraine's Donetsk region, Moscow said, marking what could be one of the deadliest attacks on Russian forces since the start of the invasion.

Without claiming responsibility for the attack, Kyiv's military command said that at least 400 soldiers were killed in the strike in Makiivka, a city in eastern Ukraine under Russian occupation, and that at least 300 soldiers were injured.

Russia's Defense Ministry put the death toll at 603. The Washington Post could not independently confirm an accurate toll.

In a statement posted to Telegram, the Department of Strategic Communications of the Armed Forces of Ukraine provided little detail, suggesting sarcastically that the incident was the result of "the careless handling of heating devices, neglect of security measures and smoking."

Moscow authorities, program Kremlin war bloggers and Telegram channels acknowledged the attack but provided inconclusive and contradictory death tolls.

Russia's Defense Ministry blamed Kyiv for the strike and said that four long-range missiles had been fired from Ukraine's High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), two of which were shot down.

Daniil Bezsonov, a senior Moscow-backed official for the region, wrote on Telegram that just after midnight on New Year's Day, a Ukrainian missile had struck a

SEE UKRAINE ON A13

In the center of Catholicism, a farewell to a pope



BEH CURTIS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Crowds line up at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City on Monday to pay final respects to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI as his body lies in state ahead of his funeral Thursday. The pope retired in 2013 and had lived in seclusion until his death Saturday. Authorities expect 60,000 to attend the funeral. **Story A15**

Struggle to land bid for speaker

MCCARTHY WORKS TO SECURE VOTES

About 15 in GOP have put outcome in doubt

BY MARIANNA SOTOMAYOR

House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy and his allies have spent the holiday weekend working the phones and meeting with members, trying to salvage his career goal of becoming speaker on Tuesday as Republicans continue to argue over whether he deserves the top spot.

While an overwhelming majority of Republicans want to elect McCarthy (Calif.) as speaker, roughly 15 have put the outcome in serious doubt. McCarthy can afford to lose only four Republicans in Tuesday's floor vote, and the razor-thin margin has emboldened staunch conservatives within the House Freedom Caucus, who have made specific demands in exchange for their votes.

If McCarthy fails to win the gavel on the first ballot Tuesday, it would be a historic loss: No leader vying for speaker has lost a first-round vote in a century.

Two trains are going 100 miles per hour and everyone is wondering: Which one will survive? One senior GOP aide said in trying to capture the mood within the conference.

Five Republicans have remained firm in their opposition to McCarthy, or are leaning toward no, since the midterms. They include Rep. Andy Biggs (Ariz.), who lost to McCarthy in a

SEE MCCARTHY ON A7

Leading locally: How Rep. Hoyer's clout benefited Maryland. **B1**

Hogan, Youngkin match on ambitions, little else

BY LAURA VOZZELLA AND ERIN COX

Larry Hogan and Glenn Youngkin are governors of neighboring states, two pro-business Republicans eyeing the White House. The similarities end there.

Hogan, the governor of Maryland, is famously blunt. Youngkin, the governor of Virginia, routinely evasive. The Marylander is an experienced hand at politics and government, the Virginian a proud outsider. Physically, they are Mut and Jeff.

As potential 2024 primary ri-

Both GOP governors eye White House, but their paths would diverge

Perhaps the starkest contrast lies with their perceived odds in the 2024 Republican presidential race. While neither registers in national polls, Youngkin has been widely touted as a leading GOP contender from the moment in 2021 that he flipped blue-trending Virginia red. Hogan, who leaves office this month after two terms and boasts one of the highest popularity ratings of any of the nation's governors, rarely gets a mention.

"You can see a Youngkin lane, Trump-acquiescent but not as Trumpy as [Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis]," said Bill Kristol, a longtime conservative commentator and Trump critic who lives in Northern Virginia. Though he admires Hogan, Kristol sees no similar path for him.

"One is going with the flow, one's trying to swim against the flow," said Amy Walter, publisher and editor in chief of the nonpartisan Cook Political Report. With Amy Walter, "The challenge for Hogan has always been: Is there room for a non-Trump candidate? Absolutely. For a never-Trump candidate? No."

SEE REPUBLICANS ON A4

2 moms, and misinformation, led schools to ban a book

How false claims about pedophilia in 'Lawn Boy' fueled parents' anger

BY HANNAH NATANSON

Brandi Burkman arrived at the Texas school board meeting with a printed speech, a plastic-sheeted library book and a swelling sense of fury.

The 43-year-old mother of three approached the lectern at the Sept. 9, 2021, meeting of the Leander Independent School District board with her 16-year-old son in tow. As Burkman began to speak, the teen hoisted white posters scrawled with sentences in black

marker. They were taken from the book he'd discovered a week earlier in his AP English classroom and brought home for supplemental reading: "Lawn Boy," a novel by Jonathan Evison.

Burkman's three-minute speech recounted passages that describe a sexual encounter between two 10-year-old boys. Quoting Pages 19, 91, 174 and 230, she told the roomful of adults how the boys meet in the bushes after a church youth group gathering, touch each other's penis and progress to oral sex.

"What sort of diversity are you intending to teach my child with material like this?" Burkman asked, her voice shaking, her son expressionless. "Who normalizes sex acts between fourth-graders?"

SEE BOOK ON A20

Black leaders' warnings of a killer went unheeded

A Kansas City community sought help when women vanished. Police didn't act until one escaped.

BY ANNIE GOWEN

KANSAS CITY, MO. — The minister on the TikTok video was visibly upset, warning that a "serial killer" was targeting young women in a drug-ridden industrial area in Kansas City where residents believe a number of women have disappeared in recent months.

"We got three young ladies that are missing, ain't nobody saying a word," Tony Caldwell said on the video with emotion. "What is the problem? Why can't we get some cooperation? Where are our community leaders? Where's our activists? Where's our public officials? Where's our police department. C'mon now!"

Caldwell's stark warning about the dangers along Prospect



ARIN YOON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Minister Tony Caldwell's viral video about a "serial killer" inspired other warnings. The Kansas City, Mo., police rebuffed the rumors.

Avenue — posted by the Kansas City Defender, a news site covering the Black community — quickly went viral in late September, garnering nearly 700,000 hits and inspiring the spread of further warnings on Facebook. Then the Kansas City Police Department moved swiftly to rebut the rumors, calling the allegations "completely unfounded."

The tragedy that came to light two weeks later has rolled the metro area and widened the gulf of distrust between the Black community, which has long felt ignored and dismissed by law enforcement, and the Kansas City Police Department, which has been scrutinized for recent killings of unarmed Black men, racist treatment of Black officers

SEE MISSING WOMEN ON A6

IN THE NEWS

Bills player in critical condition Buffalo safety Damar Hamlin was taken from the field in an ambulance after collapsing following a tackle. Players cleared the field in Cincinnati, and the game was suspended. **D1**

A boost in pay New city-funded bonuses are part of a plan to try to lift D.C.'s poorly paid child-care workers, who say the money can't come soon enough. **B1**

THE NATION
In Louisiana — a state with one of the highest incarceration rates in the country — a debate over forced prison labor remains unsettled. **A3**
When the 118th Congress is sworn in, the House will include a record 47 Latino legislators, many of them young and liberal. **A9**

THE WORLD
Thousands of fans gathered in Santos, Brazil, where Pelé spent much of his career, to pay final respects to the king of soccer. **A12**
Tensions between China and India in the Himalayas have ensured the cashmere trade, with herders losing valuable pastures. **A16**

THE ECONOMY
Caroline Ellison worked with San Bankman-Fried to build a cryptocurrency empire but now may plead against him after pleading guilty to fraud. **A17**
New requirements for crypto traders would eliminate loopholes that many have used to evade taxes on gains. **A17**

THE REGION
After-school programs in D.C. are frustrated that local education officials passed applications for a federal grant program. **B1**
Muriel E. Bowser (D) took the oath of office, becoming the second person in history to serve three terms as mayor of the nation's capital. **B1**

HEALTH & SCIENCE
No gym needed Short on time or space? This simple body-weight workout might be the perfect fit for you. **E1**

STYLE
Closetful of chaos In 2022, much of America caught its first glimpse of Gen Z's novel fashion preferences. **C1**

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NEW MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Before you find your new office, find yourself in the A section.

Welcome to Washington, newcomers to Congress.

Mark Alford	MO-04	Wesley Hunt	TX-38
Becca Balint	VT-AL	Glenn Ivey	MD-04
Aaron Bean	FL-04	Jeff Jackson	NC-14
Josh Brecheen	OK-02	Jonathan Jackson	IL-01
Katie Britt	AL-SEN	John James	MI-10
Ted Budd	NC-SEN	Sydney Kamlager	CA-37
Nikki Budzinski	IL-13	Tom Kean Jr.	NJ-07
Eric Burlison	MO-07	Jen Kiggans	VA-02
Yadira Caraveo	CO-08	Kevin Kiley	CA-03
Mike Carey	OH-15	Nick LaLota	NY-01
Greg Casar	TX-35	Greg Landsman	OH-01
Lori Chavez-DeRemer	OR-05	Nick Langworthy	NY-23
Juan Ciscomani	AZ-06	Mike Lawler	NY-17
Mike Collins	GA-10	Summer Lee	PA-12
Eli Crane	AZ-02	Laurel Lee	FL-15
Jasmine Crockett	TX-30	Anna Paulina Luna	FL-13
Anthony D'Esposito	NY-04	Morgan Luttrell	TX-08
Don Davis	NC-01	Seth Magaziner	RI-02
Monica De La Cruz	TX-15	Rich McCormick	GA-06
Chris Deluzio	PA-17	Morgan McGarvey	KY-03
John Duarte	CA-13	Rob Menendez	NJ-08
Chuck Edwards	NC-11	Max Miller	OH-07
Mike Ezell	MS-04	Cory Mills	FL-07
John Fetterman	PA-SEN	Marcus Molinaro	NY-19
Brad Finstad	MN-01	Nathaniel Moran	TX-01
Valerie Foushee	NC-04	Jared Moskowitz	FL-23
Maxwell Frost	FL-10	Kevin Mullin	CA-15
Russell Fry	SC-07	Markwayne Mullin	OK-SEN
Robert Garcia	CA-42	Wiley Nickel	NC-13
Marie Gluesenkamp Perez	WA-03	Zach Nunn	IA-03
Dan Goldman	NY-10	Andy Ogles	TN-05
Harriet Hageman	WY-AL	Mary Peltola	AK-AL
Erin Houchin	IN-09	Brittany Pettersen	CO-07
Val Hoyle	OR-04	Della Ramirez	IL-03

Pat Ryan	NY-18	Shri Thanedar	MI-13
Andrea Salinas	OR-06	Jill Tokuda	HI-02
George Santos	NY-03	Derrick Van Orden	WI-03
Eric Schmitt	MO-SEN	JD Vance	OH-SEN
Hillary Scholten	MI-03	Gabe Vasquez	NM-02
Keith Self	TX-03	Peter Welch	VT-SEN
Eric Sorensen	IL-17	Brandon Williams	NY-22
Dale Strong	AL-05	Rudy Yakym	IN-02
Emilia Sykes	OH-13	Ryan Zinke	MT-01

Here's your Post welcome kit.

First day of term checklist:

- Find your name
- Get your 202 briefing
- Get to work



Get our morning 202 briefing and insider tips for your new life on — and off — the Hill.