



**FIREFIGHTERS** work Jan. 8, 2025, to save an Altadena house amid the Eaton fire. It left thousands homeless.

## U.S., Iran talk while rattling sabers

Trump says Tehran has 10 to 15 days to make nuclear deal, or 'bad things happen.'

BY JON GAMBRELL

DUBAI — Iran held annual military drills with Russia on Thursday as a second American aircraft carrier drew closer to the Middle East, with both the United States and Iran signaling they are prepared for war if talks on Tehran's nuclear program fizzle out.

President Trump said he believes 10 to 15 days is "enough time" for Iran to reach a deal. But the talks have been deadlocked for years, and Iran has refused to discuss wider U.S. and Israeli demands that it scale back its missile program and sever ties to armed groups. Indirect talks held in recent weeks made little visible progress, and one or both sides could be buying time for final war preparations.

Iran's theocracy is more vulnerable than ever after 12 days of Israeli and U.S. strikes on its nuclear sites and military last year, as well as mass protests in January that were violently suppressed. But it is still capable of striking Israel and U.S. bases in the region and has warned that any attack would trigger a regional war.

Iran this week launched a drill that involved live fire in the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow opening of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of the world's traded oil passes.

Tensions are also rising inside Iran as mourners hold ceremonies honoring slain protesters 40 days after their killing by security forces. Some gatherings have seen antigovernment chants de-

[See Iran, A4]

## The pleasures and perils of a glide into untracked snow

A backcountry guide says storm skiing isn't as shocking as it might sound to a layperson

BY JACK DOLAN

For anyone who has stood freezing in an endless lift line at a ski resort, or flinched as some out-of-control "rad Brad" whooshed by like a Red Bull-and-vodka-fueled missile, the allure of backcountry skiing needs no explanation.

Out there, far from the madding crowd, it can be just you and your friends, gliding through acres of untracked powder, surrounded by silent, untamed wilderness.

Undoubtedly, that was part of the draw for the 15 people — four professional guides and their 11 clients — who went for a Presidents Day weekend adventure in the remote slopes north of Lake Tahoe, only to become victims of the deadliest avalanche in modern California history.

After two days in the backcountry, they were struggling home through a blizzard on Tuesday morning when an avalanche that authorities said was the size of a football field swooped down and killed eight of them. Another is still missing and presumed dead.

As soon as the skiers were reported missing, and before the enormousness of

their loss was confirmed, rescuers, other professional ski guides and endless social media commenters started asking why they had ventured out when they knew a huge storm was on the way.

There are indications it was not the first time the guide service, Blackbird Mountain Guides, chose to take clients out in a storm.

An undated five-star review on their website for the trip to the Frog Lake Huts — where the avalanche victims stayed — reads: "Despite the tough weather and significant avalanche conditions, they kept the tour safe, fun and exhilarating. I now believe storm skiing may be the best way to go!"

The company has not responded to an email requesting comment.

Dave Miller, owner of International Alpine Guides in June Lake, which also guides backcountry skiing trips to the Frog Lake Huts, said storm skiing isn't as shocking as it might sound to a layperson.

It's something "backcountry skiers do all the time, just like resort skiers do," he

[See Snow, A8]

### COLUMN ONE

## A grueling homecoming to Gaza

Delays, checkpoints and seizures mark family's journey from Egypt

BY NABIH BULOS  
REPORTING FROM  
KHAN YUNIS, GAZA STRIP



**PALESTINIANS** who returned to Gaza through the Rafah crossing arrive at a hospital in Khan Yunis.

**I**t had been 647 days since Amani Imran left her home, and she had felt every single one of them.

So when the call came at 10 p.m. telling her she was finally leaving Egypt and returning to Gaza the next day, she didn't think about the house that was destroyed in Israel's onslaught on the enclave, or worry about the lack of food, water or electricity, or fear the Israeli bombardment that remains a daily threat despite the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

Instead, Imran, 57, told her husband, 63-year-old Adel, and her youngest daughter, Duaa, 16, to get ready.

[See Gaza, A4]

## Feds allege bias against white pupils in LAUSD

Justice Department wants to join a lawsuit challenging efforts to help students of color.

BY HOWARD BLUME

The U.S. Department of Justice is seeking to join a federal lawsuit accusing the Los Angeles school district of discriminating against white students.

At issue is a long-running

effort to help disadvantaged students of color in Los Angeles by providing somewhat smaller classes to the vast majority of schools — leaving out campuses with larger numbers of white students.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in January by 1776 Project Foundation, targets a decades-old effort to combat the harms of segregation without requiring families to attend integrated schools.

The nation's second-largest school district is acting il-

legally under both the California and the federal Constitution, the suit alleges.

The Justice Department agrees and wants to participate in the litigation because "the United States Attorney General has reviewed this action and determined it is a case of general public importance," according to the court petition filed Wednesday.

"This case will provide relief to the Plaintiff's members but will also relieve the entire LAUSD student

population of the 'injury' of 'being forced to compete in a race-based system that may prejudice the(m).'"

Assistant Atty. Gen. Harmeet K. Dhillon of the department's Civil Rights Division was among several Trump administration officials who commented in a news release.

"Los Angeles County students should never be classified or treated differently because of their race. Yet this school district is doing ex-

[See LAUSD, A8]

## D.A. assesses criminal charges against Edison in Eaton blaze

Company, which says old transmission line may have sparked fire, says it's cooperating.

BY MELODY PETERSEN

The Los Angeles County district attorney is investigating whether Southern California Edison should be criminally prosecuted for its actions in last year's devastating Eaton wildfire, which killed 19 people and left thousands of families homeless, the company said.

Pedro Pizarro, chief executive of Edison International, told Wall Street analysts during an afternoon conference call Wednesday that the company was cooperating with the district attorney's office. He said he didn't know the magnitude of the investigation.

The company said in its annual 10-K report, which was released that day, that it "could be subject to material fines, penalties, or restitution" if the investigation "determined that it failed to comply with applicable laws

and regulations."

"SCE is not aware of any basis for felony liability with regards to the Eaton Fire," the report said. "Any fines and penalties incurred in connection with the Eaton Fire will not be recoverable from insurance, from the Wildfire Fund, or through electric rates."

The district attorney's office declined to comment.

The investigation into the fire, which destroyed a wide swath of Altadena, has not yet been released. Pizarro has said that a leading theory of the fire's cause is that a century-old transmission line in Eaton Canyon, which had not carried power for 50 years, somehow re-energized and sparked the fire.

Edison executives have said they didn't remove the line because they believed it would be used in the future.

Company executives

knew idle transmission lines could spark wildfires. In 2019, investigators traced the Kincade fire in Sonoma County, which destroyed 374 homes and other structures, to a transmission line owned by [See Edison, A12]

## Palisades fire reports list nearly \$1 billion in infrastructure needs

BY NOAH HAGGERTY,  
NOAH GOLDBERG  
AND IAN JAMES

A long-awaited set of reports on how to build a fire-resilient Pacific Palisades, commissioned by Los Angeles city officials for \$5 million, found that much of the hilly enclave remains out of compliance with standards for

evacuating during a disaster.

The reports, by the city and the global infrastructure firm AECOM, also recommended that the city complete significant brush clearance work, bolster its water system and move electrical wires underground.

All of the recommendations are frequent asks from Palisades residents. Many have already been discussed

at length by independent experts. They will inform the city's Long-Term Recovery Plan for rebuilding infrastructure and improving wildfire resilience after the Palisades fire killed 12 people and destroyed thousands of homes in January 2025.

The reports outlined nearly a billion dollars in infrastructure projects through 2033, including more than \$650 million for electrical undergrounding and \$150 million for water system repairs.

"Full recovery is a long-term, multi-year effort that requires sustained coordination — and it must continue to be community-led,"

Mayor Karen Bass wrote in a Tuesday newsletter to Palisades residents that in-

[See Palisades, A7]



**A GOLDEN SMILE**

Alysa Liu of the U.S. bites on her gold medal in women's figure skating after delivering a scintillating free program full of joy. **SPORTS**, D1

### Former Prince Andrew arrested

Extraordinary move against British king's brother is related to his trade envoy role and Epstein ties. **WORLD**, A2

### Weather

Cool and partly sunny. L.A. Basin: 61/43. **B5**

### Markets

..... **A12**

### Opinion Voices

..... **A13**

### Pressure mounts on Wasserman

More politicians call on the chair of the LA28 Olympic committee to resign. **CALIFORNIA**, B1

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