

The Washington Post

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RE V1 V2 V3 V4



Very windy, cold 23/12 • Tomorrow: Cold 27/15 **B18**

Democracy Dies in Darkness

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2026 • \$4

Beijing accused of a covert detonation

U.S. says nuclear tests justify ‘parallel steps’ as arms-control pacts lapse

BY CATE CADELL

The United States’ top nuclear arms official on Friday accused China of carrying out an undisclosed nuclear detonation in 2020, arguing that recent secretive underground tests by China and Russia have given Washington reason to conduct “parallel steps” as a decades-long moratorium on nuclear testing among major powers is unraveling.

Thomas DiNanno, the under-secretary of state for arms control, told the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on Friday that Beijing is preparing tests “with designated yields in the hundreds of tons” and has interfered with international seismic monitoring systems to mask prior detonations.

“Today, I can reveal that the U.S. government is aware that China has conducted nuclear explosive tests ... China carried out one such yield-producing test on June 22, 2020,” DiNanno said, adding that Russia is assisting Beijing in developing the weapons-grade fissile material needed to fuel its nuclear arsenal.

DiNanno’s remarks offered fresh context to President Donald Trump’s announcement a day earlier that he would not seek to renew the New START accord, the last major nuclear arms control agreement between Washington

SEE CHINA ON A12

Bipartisan fury follows Trump clip of Obamas

President posts, deletes video depicting former first couple as apes

BY MAEGAN VAZQUEZ

A video on President Donald Trump’s Truth Social profile that included a short clip depicting former president Barack Obama and former first lady Michelle Obama as apes has been deleted from his account — hours after the White House defended the president for sharing it.

The clip shared on the president’s account, which has more than 11 million online followers, was posted Thursday night. The moment featuring the Obamas came at the end of a minute-long video promoting conspiracy theories about the tabulation of the 2020 presidential election results. The segment showed the Obamas’ faces superimposed onto the bodies of apes as “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” played in the background.

The post was swiftly condemned Friday morning by Republicans in Congress, including Sen. Tim Scott (South Carolina), the sole Black Republican member of the Senate. Scott, who chairs the National Republican Senatorial Committee, called on the president to remove the post and said he was “praying” the

SEE OBAMAS ON A2

Let the Games begin



MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS

The Olympic rings are illuminated by fireworks Friday during a star-studded Opening Ceremonies for the 2026 Winter Olympics at Milan’s San Siro Stadium, one of four locations hosting simultaneous events. **Story, A18**

People seeking to sue ICE face an uphill battle

BY AMY BRITTAIN, ROBERT KLEMKO AND MARIA SACCHETTI

An undocumented immigrant is seeking \$1 million in damages after he says he was riding his bike in Melrose Park, Illinois, when a U.S. Border Patrol agent suddenly tackled him, placed him in a chokehold and punched his head.

A Chicago resident says that federal agents caused \$30,000 worth of property damage when they broke a lock on his wrought-

Scores of claims expected amid administration’s immigration crackdown

iron gate and scaled a wooden fence to chase after construction workers repairing his Victorian-era home.

A Columbia University student and activist who spent 104 days in a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention

center is demanding \$20 million over what he says was a false arrest.

All three should expect a long and difficult fight under the current legal landscape, lawyers warn.

These and scores of other claims expected to arise out of the Trump administration’s crackdown on illegal immigration are winding through a bureaucratic process mandated under the Federal Tort Claims Act. It is the primary legal recourse for people seeking compensation

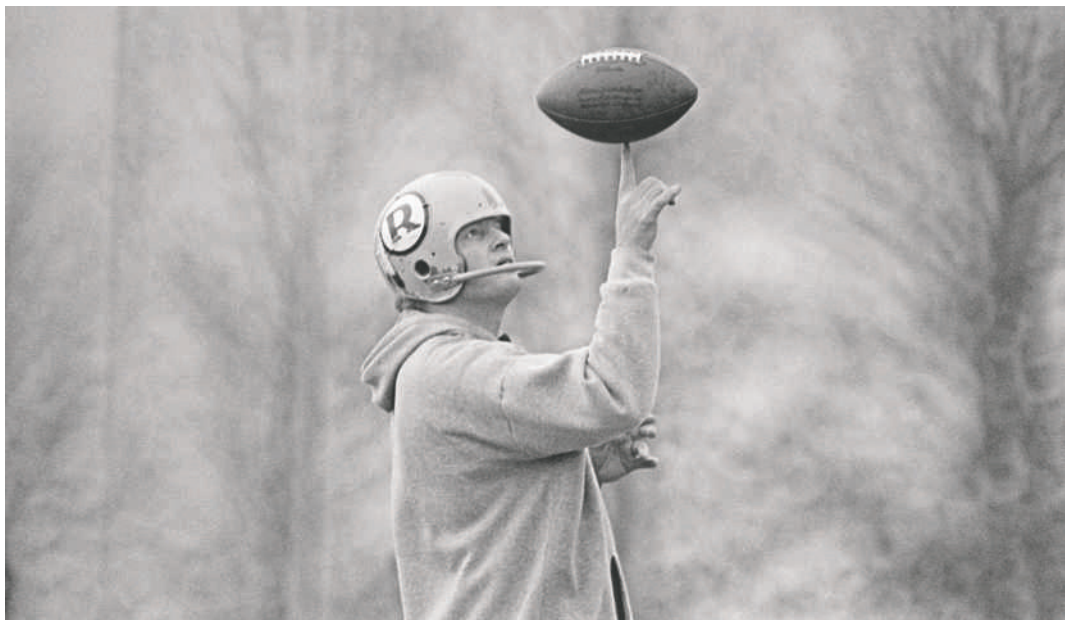
for property damage, injuries and even deaths allegedly caused by federal agencies and their employees.

First, individuals must fill out a form and submit it for review by the agency that they say caused the harm. Agencies such as ICE and Customs and Border Protection have six months to deny a claim, offer a settlement or not respond at all. Only then can people sue in court under the Federal Tort Claims Act.

But these cases are different

SEE ICE ON A4

SONNY JURGENSEN 1934-2026



CHICK HARRITY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quarterback Sonny Jurgensen in 1971. After his playing career, he became a broadcaster.

With perfect passes, quarterback brought joy to Washington fans

BY LEONARD SHAPIRO

Sonny Jurgensen, a golden-armed Hall of Fame quarterback in Washington who became a longtime radio and television broadcaster for his former team after retiring from pro football in 1974, died Feb. 6 in Naples, Florida. He was 91.

His family announced the death in a statement shared by the Washington Commanders, and it did not cite a cause.

Mr. Jurgensen, one of the most popular athletes in Washington sports history, was simply

sublime with a football in his right hand, even if he never started a league championship or Super Bowl game over his 18-year National Football League career.

He was considered one of the finest pure passers in the annals of the game and brought great joy to his legions of fans when he starred for the Washington franchise, then called the Redskins, in the 1960s and ’70s. He came to the team in 1964 in a controversial trade with the Philadelphia Eagles and immediately began lighting up

SEE JURGENSEN ON A8

Top Russian general shot as ceasefire dialogue stalls

Kremlin blames Kyiv for assassination attempt, despite lack of evidence

BY DAVID L. STERN, GREG MILLER, NATALIA ABBAKUMOVA AND KOSTIANTYN KHUDOV

KYIV — A senior Russian general, who is deputy head of the GRU, the country’s main foreign military intelligence agency, was shot and severely wounded in an assassination attempt Friday at his home in Moscow, Russian law enforcement authorities said.

“An unidentified individual fired several shots” at Lt. Gen. Vladimir Alekseyev, the deputy intelligence chief, inside a residential building in northwest Moscow, investigators said. Alekseyev was being treated at a hospital, investigators said, but they did give details of his condition.

The Kremlin immediately blamed Ukraine, which has assassinated several senior Russian military officials since Russia’s full-scale invasion in 2022. Russian authorities, however, did not provide evidence and some Russian commentators

speculated that Alekseyev had enemies in Russia.

The attack occurred the day after Russian, Ukrainian and U.S. officials concluded two days of talks in Abu Dhabi aimed at halting Russia’s war — with little or no progress.

At the end of the meetings, Washington and Moscow said that they were reestablishing military contact, which had been suspended because of the war. But there was no breakthrough, as Russia continues to demand that Ukraine surrender territory in exchange for a ceasefire.

Moscow’s delegation in Abu Dhabi consisted of military and intelligence officials and was led by Alekseyev’s superior, Adm. Igor Kostyukov, the head of the GRU.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility in the attack on Alekseyev, but Russia quickly pointed at Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and accused Kyiv of seeking to disrupt the talks in Abu Dhabi.

“The attack against Lieutenant General Alekseyev confirmed the Zelensky regime’s intention to disrupt the negotiations,” Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said.

Though Ukraine’s security services have waged a multiyear

SEE UKRAINE ON A11

IN THE NEWS

Ring that bell The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed above 50,000 for the first time, surging more than 1,200 for the day. **A14**

DHS funding divide Many Republicans see Democratic demands designed to constrain immigration agents as excessive, but some say there is room to negotiate. **A3**

THE NATION An alleged participant in the 2012 Benghazi attack is brought to the U.S. to face charges. **A3**
NewsGuard, which rates news sites, is suing the FTC over alleged censorship. **A4**

THE WORLD Havana faces rising pressure as the U.S. provides millions more in humanitarian aid. **A2**
China’s young people are turning to AI pets and eschewing marriage and children. **A10**

THE ECONOMY As Anthropic and OpenAI compete for users for their rival chatbots, the fight is spilling into Super Bowl ads. **A7**
Jeffrey Epstein’s network included Russian tech investors who had drawn scrutiny from U.S. officials, documents show. **A14**

STYLE The National Symphony Orchestra gives a focused performance amid Kennedy Center uncertainty. **B1**

SPORTS Mike Vrabel’s hands-on coaching sparked a Patriots turnaround, lifting a flailing team to the Super Bowl. **B7**

THE REGION All but one Virginia House district could go blue in the Democrats’ redistricting plan, which is being decried by Republicans. **B13**
Even though it’s freezing in the D.C. area, lingering trash still attracts rats. What to know about the rodents. **B13**

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