

'RAPE CLUB' WOMEN'S PRISON TO CLOSE

Federal officials announce decision on facility in state where employees were charged or convicted.

BY RICHARD WINTON AND KERI BLAKINGER

A women's prison in California so plagued by sexual abuse that it was known among inmates and workers as the "rape club" will be closed, the head of the Federal Bureau of Prisons announced Monday.

Bureau of Prisons Director Colette Peters said that the agency is closing the Federal Correctional Institution in Dublin, where more than a half-dozen correctional officers and the former warden have either been charged or convicted of sexually abusing the female inmates.

Peters stated that the bureau had "taken unprecedented steps and provided a tremendous amount of resources to address culture, recruitment and retention, aging infrastructure — and most critical — employee misconduct."

"Despite these steps and resources, we have determined that FCI Dublin is not meeting expected standards and that the best course of action is to close the facility. This decision is being made after ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of those unprecedented steps and additional resources."

She said "planning for deactivation is currently ongoing" for the prison that houses 605 inmates. The facility east of Oakland is one of a handful of federal women's prisons in the Western states.

"It is a remarkable admission," said attorney Michael Bien, whose law firm represents inmates in a class-action lawsuit over conditions at the prison. Prison authorities are "say- [See Prison, A9]"



JABIN BOTSFORD Pool Photo

TRUMP CRIMINAL TRIAL GETS UNDERWAY

Donald Trump's historic hush-money trial began Monday at Manhattan Criminal Court, marked by the challenge of jury selection. A guide to the unprecedented legal questions that are now in play. **NATION, A5**

L.A. is flush with water, but another drought will come

Ethos of conservation must be maintained, DWP officials say



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

STORMWATER ponds on Owens Lake. The recent rain and snowpack have filled the Department of Water and Power's reservoirs in the area.

BY HAYLEY SMITH

California's second wet winter in a row has left L.A.'s water supplies in good shape, and the city has used its reprieve from drought to make progress on water-saving infrastructure projects. But the inevitable return to dry conditions could once again put the city's residents in a precarious position.

After the state's final snow survey of the season, officials with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power announced that Eastern Sierra snowpack is measuring 103% of normal, "providing ample supplies through the city's most cost-efficient water supply from the Los Angeles Aqueduct."

The aqueduct — two pipelines that deliver water from the Mono Basin and Owens Valley hundreds of miles away — is the backbone of L.A.'s water system. The recent rain and snowpack have filled the DWP's reservoirs in the region and will allow the aqueduct to meet about 70% of the city's water de- [See Water, A9]

Obesity drugs out of reach for many

Cost of Ozempic and other weight-loss medicines has made health disparities worse, experts say.

BY KAREN KAPLAN

The American Heart Assn. calls them "game changers."

Oprah Winfrey says they're "a gift." Science magazine anointed them the "2023 Breakthrough of the Year."

Americans are most familiar with their brand names: Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro, Zepbound. They are the medications that have revolutionized weight loss and raised the possibility of reversing the country's obesity crisis.

Obesity — like so many diseases — disproportionately affects people in racial and ethnic groups that have been marginalized by the U.S. healthcare system. A class of drugs that succeeds where so many others have failed would seem to be a powerful tool for closing the gap.

Instead, doctors who treat obesity, and the serious health risks that come with it, fear the medications are making this health disparity worse.

"These patients have a higher burden of disease, and they're less likely to get the medicine that can save their lives," said Dr. Lauren Eberly, a cardiologist and health services researcher at the University of Pennsylvania. "I feel like if a group of patients has a disproportionate burden, they should have increased access to these medicines."

Why don't they? Experts say there are a multitude of reasons, but the primary one is cost.

Ozempic, which is approved by the Food and Drug Administration to help [See Weight, A12]

ANALYSIS

Pressing Israel to see victory in its clash with Iran

World leaders hope Netanyahu can 'take the win' and avert a wider Mideast war.

BY TRACY WILKINSON AND NABIH BULOS

WASHINGTON — In a bid to avert wider war in the Middle East, the United States and other world leaders are urging Israel to see victory in its unprecedented military face-off with Iran over the weekend.

It's unclear whether Israel will follow that script, but Iran appears to be doing so, with its government claiming success.

After years of proxy battle, Iran for the first time launched an attack from its territory into Israel, sending waves of land-attack cruise

missiles, more than 100 ballistic missiles and a battery of "killer drones."

Israel, in turn, mounted a formidable defense and emerged almost unscathed, intercepting or shooting down nearly all of the munitions with its air defense system and help from U.S. and British warplanes, as well as assistance from Jordan. Saudi Arabia is believed to have let Israel's allies use its airspace.

The Biden administration praised Israel's "spectacular defeat" of the Iranian assault.

"This was an incredible success, really proving Israel's military superiority and, just as critically, their diplomatic superiority — that they have friends in the region, that they have around the world that are willing to help them," said [See Attack, A4]

Where did the millions go in HOA fight?

Battle to reclaim board at Santa Monica co-op uncovered alleged fraud

BY JAMES QUEALLY AND ANDREW KHOURI

"You — you asked me to open a company, and I said 'yes?' ... I have no clue what you're talking about, Omar."

The man on the phone with Omar Spahi in March 2020 was in a panic. His best friend, Omar, had called to warn that he might start receiving phone calls from lawyers about a construction company named Progressive.

Apparently, the company was in the man's name. But he had never heard of it.

"You guys were doing



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

RESIDENTS at Ocean Towers co-op in Santa Monica have waged a years-long battle with HOA leaders.

construction and just, like, overcharging or something?" the man asked Omar, according to a transcript of the call contained in court records related to a civil lawsuit.

"Yeah, pretty much, was my understanding," Omar replied. "This is all, like, what my dad is telling me."

The 25-minute conversation was a decade in the making — and had multimillion-dollar implications. For years, residents of the massive Ocean Towers luxury co-op complex in Santa Monica had worried that Omar's father, John, was abusing the power he held as [See Towers, A6]

Tesla to lay off 10% of workforce

Chief Executive Elon Musk cites job overlap and the need to reduce costs as electric car sales slow. **BUSINESS, A8**

'Rust' armorer gets maximum

Hannah Gutierrez was sentenced to 18 months in prison for role in accidental shooting death on film set. **BUSINESS, A8**

Lakers focused on task at hand

After dominating the Pelicans on Sunday, the team expects a tougher rematch and refuses to look ahead. **SPORTS, B10**

Weather
Sunny.
L.A. Basin: 77/54. **B6**

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