

What's News

Business & Finance

Lithium prices are rising at their fastest pace in years, spurring a race to secure supplies and fueling worries about long-term shortages of a vital ingredient in rechargeable batteries that power everything from electric vehicles to smartphones. **A1**

◆ **Meta Platforms** is confronting more calls from shareholders to address harm on its platforms and overall governance. **B1**

◆ **U.S. stocks** fell as investors awaited this week's Fed meeting. The S&P 500 and Dow both shed 0.9%, while the Nasdaq lost 1.4%. **B10**

◆ **Shares of GameStop** and **AMC Entertainment** slid 14% and 15%, respectively, dealing a blow to investors in the so-called meme stocks. **B1**

◆ **A French appeals court** ordered UBS to pay around \$2 billion for helping wealthy clients in France evade taxes, reducing an earlier penalty. **B1**

◆ **Pfizer** agreed to acquire **Arena Pharmaceuticals** for \$6.7 billion to bolster its pipeline of medicines for inflammatory bowel diseases. **B1**

◆ **Harley-Davidson's** electric-motorcycle division will become a separate publicly traded company via a blank-check merger. **B1**

◆ **Vox Media** is in advanced talks to merge with group Nine, a deal that would unite two of the biggest players in digital media. **B3**

◆ **SenseTime** said it would postpone its Hong Kong IPO, days after the Chinese AI company was added to a U.S. investment blacklist. **B3**

World-Wide

◆ **Some of the largest U.S. hospital systems** have dropped Covid-19 vaccine requirements for staff after a federal judge temporarily halted a Biden administration mandate that healthcare workers get the shots. **A1**

◆ **The U.K.** reported its first death of a patient with **Omicron**, the prime minister said, as the country faces what he called a tidal wave of cases of the new variant. **A8**

◆ **Chinese authorities** in the city of **Tianjin** said they detected the mainland's first **Omicron** case, a finding that will further test the country's containment protocols. **A8**

◆ **The House panel** probing the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol voted to recommend holding former White House chief of staff **Meadows** in criminal contempt of Congress. **A4**

◆ **USA Gymnastics**, the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee and their insurers agreed to fund a \$380 million settlement with victims of **Nassar**. **A1**

◆ **The Boy Scouts of America** reached an \$800 million settlement with **Chubb's Century Indemnity** over childhood sexual abuse within the youth group. **A6**

◆ **The Pentagon** said that no one in the U.S. military will face criminal charges in connection with an airstrike in **Kabul** that killed 10 civilians in the last days of the U.S. war in **Afghanistan**. **A5**

◆ **Israel's prime minister** met with the U.A.E.'s de facto leader, the latest in a flurry of diplomacy reshaping the geopolitics of the **Middle East**. **A9**

CONTENTS Opinion... A17-19
Arts in Review... A15
Business News... B3
Crossword... A15
Equities... B7
Health on Street... B11
Markets... B10
World News... A9-11

© 2021 Dow Jones & Company, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Rescue Efforts Continue After Deadly Weekend Tornadoes



RUIN: A searcher navigated above the wreckage of a Mayfield, Ky., candle factory Monday, continuing a hunt for the missing after the facility was hit Friday night. At least 68 people have been confirmed dead in the storms that tore through six states. **A3**

Labor Crunch Spurs Hospitals To Drop Vaccine Requirements

By **ROBBIE WHELAN**
AND **MELANIE EVANS**

Some of the largest U.S. hospital systems have dropped Covid-19 vaccine requirements for staff after a federal judge temporarily halted a Biden administration mandate that healthcare workers get the shots.

Hospital operators including **HCA Healthcare Inc.** and **Tenet Healthcare Corp.** as well

as nonprofits **AdventHealth** and the **Cleveland Clinic** are dropping the mandates. Labor costs in the industry have soared and hospitals struggled to retain enough nurses, technicians and even janitors to handle higher hospitalizations in recent months as the **Delta** variant raged.

Vaccine mandates have been a factor constraining the supply of healthcare workers, according to hospital executives,

public-health authorities and nursing groups.

AdventHealth and **Tenet** said they wouldn't require employees to be vaccinated after the court decision. Workers in states that mandate vaccination must comply with local laws, **HCA** and **Tenet** said.

On Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court turned down emergency requests by **New York** healthcare workers for a religious exemption from state

vaccine requirements. As with emergency actions, the majority didn't explain its thinking.

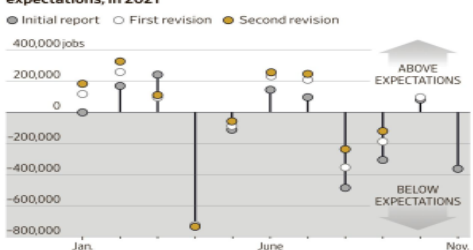
Many hospitals struggled to find workers, including nurses, before the pandemic. The shortages were compounded by burnout among many medical workers. *Please turn to page A8*

◆ **U.K. reports its first death** tied to **Omicron**. **A8**
◆ **Variant's arrival tests China's** containment strategy. **A8**

Jobs Data Get Harder to Predict

Economists during the pandemic have had trouble predicting the monthly U.S. job report's headline number, while the government itself has made big revisions to initial estimates. **A2**

Monthly change in payrolls, difference from economists' expectations, in 2021



Note: Payrolls are seasonally adjusted. Sources: Labor Department (reported); Wall Street Journal Weekly Economists Survey (expectations)

Money-Losing Virgin Atlantic Aims for a Pandemic Reboot

The airline cut its workforce, retired old planes and added more cargo

By **BENJAMIN KATZ**

LONDON—For most of the travel industry, the pandemic has been an existential challenge. For **Virgin Atlantic Airways**, it was an opportunity.

Shai Weiss, who took over as chief executive in early 2019, cut costs and laid off nearly half the staff. He ditched **Virgin's** cumbersome fleet of 747s and hit up investors for emergency cash. The perennially money-losing company launched new passenger routes across the **Caribbean** and **Asia**, and made cargo a central part of the business.

Although the **Omicron** variant has added some new headwinds, **Virgin** is ramping up its schedule again. In November, the U.S. reopened its borders to noncitizens from **Eur-**

ope and elsewhere, reviving the airline's core U.S.-U.K. route. Aircraft that had been parked in Spain are back at **Heathrow Airport**. Pilots and cabin crew have brushed up on training. New menus include smoked duck and fennel salad and roasted trout.

"Everyone was given the pandemic, this devastating thing on lives and livelihoods," **Mr. Weiss** said. "The question is, what did you do in response? And we radically transformed **Virgin**."

It's too early to know how quickly airlines including **Virgin** will recover from Covid-19 disruptions—a continuing challenge, with **Omicron** travel restrictions being just the latest. But if **Mr. Weiss's** strategy for **Virgin Atlantic** brings it to profitability, he would

Please turn to page A12

Fishing Hat Hooks Unlikely Fans

People who never picked up a pole covet **Bass Pro** cap

By **JACOB GALLAGHER**

Jesse Alvarado doesn't fish or hunt, and he wouldn't describe himself as an outdoorsy person. But on many mornings, **Mr. Alvarado**, 25, a restaurant worker in **Los Angeles**, plops a **Bass Pro Shops** trucker hat on his head.

The mesh-backed cap flashes the name and open-mouthed fish logo of the 49-year-old outdoor retailer, which is best known for selling reels and duck decoys. To **Mr. Alvarado**, it's just a good looking hat. "It's a simple design, like, you can throw it on with anything," he said.

For a variety of reasons, *Please turn to page A12*

Gymnastics Victims Settle for \$380 Million

By **LOUISE RADNOFSKY**
AND **JONATHAN RANGLES**

USA Gymnastics, the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee and their insurers agreed to fund a \$380 million settlement with victims of longtime national team physician **Larry Nassar**, drawing to a close a five-year legal battle that has upended American Olympic sports governance.

The sum is among the largest ever recorded for victims of sex abuse and includes hundreds of athletes who were assaulted over three decades.

The decision by the final holdout insurer, **TIG Insurance Co.**, to pay a substantial share of the settlement was confirmed Monday in a hearing in bankruptcy court in **Indianapolis**. The settlement also includes a direct contribution from the **USOPC** of around \$34 million and a \$6 million loan from the **USOPC** to **USA Gymnastics** to contribute, as well.

Judge **Robyn Moberly** said she would approve the settlement, adding that it was part of a reorganization plan that had been accepted by the survivors and other creditors of **USA Gymnastics**.

The settlement will include claims from Olympic gold medalists such as **Simone Biles**, **Aly Raisman** and **McKayla Maroney**, who were treated by **Nassar** during his time as the U.S. women's squad doctor. It also includes gymnasts competing for local clubs who sought treatment from **Nassar** on the strength of his reputation, and a handful of victims of abusive coaches who had been pursuing claims against the sport's governing bodies.

It also contains non-monetary provisions, including requirements for self-identified survivors of abuse in gymnastics to have official roles in **USA Gymnastics**.

"Money really can't compensate," *Please turn to page A4*

DELL Technologies



It's your data. Control it across your clouds.

Work with the #1 leader in enterprise storage* for a true multi-cloud strategy.

Find out more at DellTechnologies.com/Multi-Cloud-Services

* #1 claims based on IDC Quarterly Enterprise Storage Systems Tracker, 2021 Q2 — ranking by vendor revenue

Soul searching

The apps cashing in on mental health issues — ELAINE MOORE, PAGE 17

Race and finance

Segregation is still a problem at American lenders — FT SERIES, PAGE 15



Sinn Féin's gains

Ireland's unaffordable housing sees voters turn left — JUDE WEBBER, PAGE 2

Queue bridge
UK races for
booster jabs

People join long queues across Westminster bridge in London to receive booster jabs at St Thomas' hospital yesterday after Boris Johnson, UK prime minister, urged the public to get another vaccine shot as the Omicron variant of coronavirus continues to spread.

England's vaccine booking website was overwhelmed while people were also unable to order Covid-19 tests online after the National Health Service said the platform was suspended due to "exceptionally high demand".

As the UK recorded its first death from Omicron, health leaders expressed doubt about meeting Johnson's target to administer 1m booster shots a day.

Premier under pressure page 2
FT View page 16



Charlie Stacey/FT

European gas prices soar as Berlin casts doubt over Russian pipeline

• EU law compliance questioned • Ukraine tension 'a factor' • Futures rates jump 11%

GUY CHAZAN — BERLIN
TOM WILSON — LONDON
MAX SEDDON — MOSCOW

European gas futures soared 11 per cent yesterday after Germany's new foreign minister said Russia's Nord Stream 2 pipeline could not be permitted in its current form because it did not comply with EU law.

The situation on the Ukrainian border, where Russia has amassed an estimated 100,000 troops, was "also a factor", Annalena Baerbock said. "The last government discussed with the Americans that if there are further escalations this pipeline can't come on line."

Nord Stream 2 was top of the list when US officials considered potential western sanctions against Russia last week.

Baerbock said the three parties that

make up the new German government — her Green party, along with the Social Democrats and Free Democrats — had agreed that all energy projects must be in accordance with EU energy legislation. "And that means that, as things stand at the moment, this pipeline can't be approved," she said.

Baerbock's comments suggest that Germany's position on Nord Stream 2 could harden now that the Greens, who have opposed the project, are in charge of the foreign ministry. However, the Social Democrats, the party of Chancellor Olaf Scholz, have in the past supported the pipeline.

Nord Stream 2, which is complete but has not been permitted to operate, will double the capacity of undersea routes from Russia to Europe. Critics say it will

increase EU dependence on Russian energy exports and allow the Kremlin to put pressure on Ukraine, which would be denied lucrative gas transit fees.

European natural gas futures rose to their highest since early October. The European benchmark for January delivery jumped as much as 11 per cent to a high of €117.25 per megawatt hour.

Cold weather and weak flows from Russia are hurting gas stocks. Across Europe, storage facilities were just 62.8 per cent full, more than 10 per cent below seasonal norms. If the drawdowns continue at current rates, levels will reach critical levels by March/April.

Nord Stream 2 can only go into operation once it has been approved by German regulators and Brussels.

Regulators suspended the certifica-



New German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock said: 'As things stand at the moment, this pipeline can't be approved'

tion process last month, citing non-compliance with the EU's gas directive. This has strict rules that say companies producing, transporting and distributing gas in the EU must be separate.

Nord Stream 2 will seek to comply with the law by setting up a subsidiary in Germany that will operate the pipeline running across German territory.

Nord Stream 2 AG, the operator of the pipeline, and Gazprom, which supplies the gas, both declined to comment.

When asked for a response to Baerbock's comments, the Kremlin said the pipeline company was "working with the regulator and fulfilling all demands. We just need to be a bit more patient."

Additional reporting by Neil Hume in London and Nastassia Astrasheuskaya in Moscow



Fed policymakers set for swifter action on inflation

Federal Reserve policymakers convene today as consumer prices are rising at the fastest annual pace in 40 years. Economists are already expecting the central bank to double the pace of reducing its pandemic-era support, setting the stage for interest rate rises. Now the word 'transitory' could be dropped from its inflation analysis. At the same time, many flag the enduring Covid risk and advise the Fed to not stray too far from its patient approach.

Forced hand — PAGE 3

Air freight costs surge as Christmas and Omicron add to global supply chain woes

PHILIP GEORGIADIS — LONDON

The cost of flying cargo around the world has nearly doubled in the past three months as companies rush to meet surging demand in the run-up to Christmas.

Prices on routes from China to the US reached \$14 per kilogramme for the first time last week, up from \$8 at the end of August and above the previous record of \$12 when the pandemic first hit supply chains in 2020.

There have been similar rises from Hong Kong to Europe and the US, and on routes between Frankfurt and North America, according to data from the Baltic Exchange Airfreight index and TAC Freight, cargo data providers.

"Everyone knows if they want something on to the shelves before Christmas they have to use air freight," said Yngve

Ruud, head of global air freight at Kuehne+Nagel, one of the world's largest freight groups.

Companies have been moving fashion products and consumer electronics by air, as well as components including car parts and semiconductors.

There has also been a rush to order Covid-19 tests and personal protective equipment to Europe to deal with the new Omicron coronavirus variant, according to industry executives.

Supply chains have always been busiest over the Christmas season. But the industry is under more pressure than usual, with higher air traffic levels following chaos in the shipping industry, where there is a shortage of containers and bottlenecks at ports.

Half of air cargo would also normally be carried in passenger jets, but many have been grounded during the

pandemic. Omicron has also disrupted passenger traffic.

Some passenger airlines have switched to flying cargo, while dedicated air freight companies such as FedEx and DHL have picked up some slack. Yet the industry is still 15 per cent down on 2019 capacity, according to Marco Bloemen, cargo advisory lead at Seabury Consulting.

The shortfall comes as demand has risen 6 per cent over the same time, leading to a nearly 20 percentage point gap between supply and demand, he said.

With supply chains under stress, the impact will be felt by consumers, according to Bharat Ahir, chief executive of supply chain consultancy 28one.

"There are two clear impacts — availability will be lower, and what you have got is going to be more expensive," he warned.

Subscribe In print and online

www.ft.com/subscribe
Tel: 1 800 628 8088
For the latest news go to
www.ft.com

© THE FINANCIAL TIMES LTD 2021
No: 40,890 ★

Printed in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Dublin, Frankfurt, Milan, Madrid, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore, Seoul, Dubai



World Markets									
STOCK MARKETS					CURRENCIES				
	Dec 13	prev	%chg		Dec 13	prev	Dec 13	prev	%chg
S&P 500	4677.83	4712.02	-0.73	\$ per €	1.128	1.131	€ per \$	0.756	0.756
Nasdaq Composite	15436.28	15630.80	-1.24	\$ per £	1.323	1.323	£ per \$	1.173	1.170
Dow Jones Ind	35667.15	35870.99	-0.84	€ per ¥	0.052	0.055	¥ per €	128.061	128.222
FTSE100	1837.20	1845.29	-0.44	¥ per \$	113.575	113.425	£ index	81.043	81.001
Euro Stoxx 50	4181.69	4189.16	-0.42	¥ per €	156.253	156.049	SFR per €	1.221	1.219
FTSE MIB	7231.44	7291.78	-0.83	SFR per €	1.041	1.042			
FTSE All-Share	4109.33	4146.90	-0.91	€ per \$	0.987	0.985			
CAC 40	6942.91	6991.68	-0.70						
Xetra Dax	15621.72	15623.31	-0.01						
Nikkei	28940.49	28437.77	0.71						
Hang Seng	23954.58	23965.72	-0.17						
MSCI World \$	3188.26	3172.49	0.50	Oil WTI \$	71.80	71.87	0.18		
MSCI EM \$	1238.54	1247.71	-0.74	Oil Brent \$	75.01	75.15	-0.19		
MSCI ACWI \$	746.26	743.61	0.36	Gold \$	1779.75	1778.15	0.20		
INTEREST RATES					COMMODITIES				
	price	yield	chg						
US Gov 10 yr	147.71	1.42	-0.04	Fed Funds Eff	0.08	0.08	0.00		
UK Gov 10 yr		0.82	-0.04	US 3m Bill	0.06	0.06	0.00		
Ger Gov 10 yr		-0.38	-0.04	Euro Liber 3m	-0.61	-0.61	0.00		
Jpn Gov 10 yr	112.81	0.05	-0.01	UK 3m	0.08	0.09	-0.01		
US Gov 30 yr	121.80	1.81	-0.05						
Ger Gov 30 yr	104.71	-0.71	-0.01						

You have people for the job — they're just doing the wrong job.

Turn mundane tasks over to software robots.



UiPath Reboot™ Work.

Don't be a robot. Visit uipath.com

©2021 UiPath

A Nikkei Company



Destruction from a tornado in Dawson Springs, Ky. "It's almost crushing how it feels," Gov. Andy Beshear said of storms that killed at least 74 people on Friday night.

YouTube Influencers Are Tools In Beijing's Propaganda Blitz

This article is by Paul Mozur, Raymond Zhong and Aaron Krollik.

Millions have watched Lee and Oli Barrett's YouTube dispatches from China. The father and son duo visit hotels in exotic locales, tour out-of-the-way villages, sample delicacies in bustling markets and undergo traditional ear cleanings.

"We are on the outskirts of Shanghai today at the most incredible hotel we've ever stayed at," Oli says in one video, just before a drone camera filming them soars to reveal a luxury complex inside a massive former quarry.

The Barretts are part of a crop of new social media personalities who paint cheery portraits of life as foreigners in China — and also hit back at criticisms of Beijing's

authoritarian governance, its policies toward ethnic minorities and its handling of the coronavirus.

The videos have a casual, homespun feel. But on the other side of the camera often stands a large apparatus of government organizers, state-controlled news media and other official amplifiers — all part of the Chinese government's widening attempts to spread pro-Beijing messages around the planet.

State-run news outlets and local governments have organized and funded pro-Beijing influencers' travel, according to government documents and the creators themselves. They have paid or offered to pay the creators. They have generated lucrative traffic for the

Continued on Page A8

Heroic Stories From Rubble Of the Storms

This article is by Edgar Sandoval, Tariro Mzezewa and Christine Hauser.

MAYFIELD, Ky. — Robert Daniel, a veteran corrections officer at the county jail, was keeping a watchful eye on seven inmates assigned to work at a Kentucky candle factory when the sirens went off, warning of an oncoming tornado.

Mr. Daniel moved quickly to direct the inmates in his care, along with other workers, to a room with a heavy door designated as a "safety area." Then he went back to look for others who might need help.

"The tornado hit. They turned around and he was gone," said Pete Jackson, chief deputy at the Graves County Jail. Long after the storm had passed, he said, Mr. Daniel's body was found under the shattered building. The workers he had ushered to safety survived. "He put his life in danger to help others. There is no other way to put it," Mr. Jackson said on Monday, as the authorities across six states began to identify dozens of people killed over the weekend in the powerful tornadoes that leveled the candle factory and destroyed neighborhoods as far away as Arkansas and Illinois.

At least 74 people were confirmed dead in Kentucky alone, the youngest 5 months old, the oldest 86 years. So severe were the injuries and so remote some of the areas damaged that officials in Kentucky have not been able to identify 18 of those who died.

Continued on Page A11

Exhausted World Wonders: Will the Covid Era Ever End?

By ROGER COHEN

PARIS — A recent cartoon in the French daily Le Monde featured a bedraggled man arriving at a doctor's office for a Covid-19 vaccine. "I am here for the fifth shot because of the third wave," he says. "Or vice versa."

His bewilderment as France suffers its fifth wave of the pandemic, with cases of the Delta variant rising sharply along with Omicron anxiety, captured a mood of exhaustion and simmering anger across the world two years after the deadly virus began to spread in China.

Uncertainty bedevils plans. Panic spreads in an instant even if, as with the Omicron variant, the extent of the threat is not yet known. Vaccines look like deliverance until they seem a little less than that. National responses di-

verge with no discernible logic. Anxiety and depression spread. So do loneliness and screen fatigue. The feeling grows that the Covid era will go on for years, like plagues of old.

That's the case in Europe, where Denmark and Norway warned Monday of a sharp increase in Omicron cases. [Page A6.]

Even in China, with no reported Covid deaths since January, some confess weariness with the measures that have kept them safe when so many others perished. "I'm so tired of all these routines," Chen Jun, 29, a tech company worker in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, said the other day. He was forced to take three Covid-19 tests in June fol-

Continued on Page A6



ISRAELI GOVERNMENT/VIA REUTERS

Signal of a Realigning Middle East

The leader of Israel met with an Emirati prince Monday. Page A7.



ERIC GAILLARD/REUTERS

A patient in Marseille, France, amid a fifth wave of Covid.

Meadows Faces Contempt of Congress Charge

By LUKE BROADWATER and ALAN FEUER

WASHINGTON — Mark Meadows, the last White House chief of staff for President Donald J. Trump, played a far more substantial role in plans to try to overturn the 2020 election than was previously known, and he was involved in failed efforts to get Mr. Trump to order the mob invading the

Aide Had Outsize Role in Plotting for Trump

Capitol on Jan. 6 to stand down, investigators for the House committee scrutinizing the attack have learned.

From a trove of about 9,000 documents that Mr. Meadows turned

over before halting his cooperation with the inquiry, a clearer picture has emerged about the extent of his involvement in Mr. Trump's attempts to use the government to invalidate the election results.

The committee voted 9 to 0 on Monday evening to recommend that Mr. Meadows be charged with criminal contempt of Congress for defying its subpoena. Be-

Continued on Page A15

No Penalty Over U.S. Strike That Killed Civilians

By ERIC SCHMITT

WASHINGTON — None of the military personnel involved in a botched drone strike in Kabul, Afghanistan, that killed 10 civilians will face any kind of punishment, the Pentagon said on Monday.

The Pentagon acknowledged in September that the last U.S. drone strike before American troops withdrew from Afghanistan the

'Misconduct' Not Seen in Kabul Air Attack

previous month was a tragic mistake that killed the civilians, including seven children, after initially saying it had been necessary to prevent an Islamic State attack on troops. A subsequent

high-level investigation into the episode found no violations of law but stopped short of fully exonerating those involved, saying such decisions should be left up to commanders.

Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III, who had left the final word on any administrative action, such as reprimands or demotions, to two senior commanders,

Continued on Page A7



INTERNATIONAL A4-9

The Politics of Eggs in India

Food-cart rules spurred by the country's rising Hindu nationalist movement have drawn a backlash. PAGE A4

Quest for Nuclear Submarines

A new reactor in South Korea could allow the country to eventually develop the craft, defying a U.S. treaty. PAGE A9

NATIONAL A10-17

Federal Hearing for Chauvin

Derek Chauvin, who in April was found guilty of murdering George Floyd, intends to plead guilty to charges he also deprived him of his civil rights. PAGE A17

New York Mask Rule Revived

Residents of the state will have to wear a mask indoors at places where proof of vaccination is not required. PAGE A13

OBITUARIES B10-11

Pioneer of Home Gaming

Masayuki Uemura, 78, developed the Nintendo console in the 1980s, forever changing an industry. PAGE B11



BUSINESS B1-6

The Soaring Cost of Living

With Europe experiencing record inflation, workers and labor unions are fighting to keep wages on pace. PAGE B1

Lies in Your Inbox

Email is a great tool for politicians, but too often it's used to spread disinformation where few will notice. PAGE B1

SPORTS B7-9, 12

Settlement for Nassar Victims

Over 500 survivors agreed to \$380 million in compensation from U.S.A. Gymnastics and the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee. PAGE B8

SCIENCE TIMES D1-8

Caught in a Pandemic Panic

The Omicron variant turned the reporter Stephanie Nolen's trip home from South Africa into a nightmare of conflicting public health orders. PAGE D4

OPINION A18-19

Tanya Gold

PAGE A19



ARTS C1-6

An Inclusive Golden Globes

This year's list of nominees is more diverse than usual. Above, Will Smith, Demi Singleton and Sanjaya Smith in the film "King Richard." PAGE C1



Storms should end state's shocking fire season

Much-needed rainfall still isn't likely to make up the drought deficit, experts say.

BY ALEX WIGLESWORTH

The storms pounding California this week are expected to bring an end to a wildfire season that shocked fire crews with its unprecedented, climate-change-driven behavior.

For the first time ever, wildfires burned from one side of the Sierra Nevada to the other, destroying multiple towns including the Gold Rush-era community of Greenville and the mountain hamlet of Grizzly Flats.

Yet even despite that destruction, this fire season is poised to end with just three deaths — a circumstance that authorities attribute partly to the public's willingness to heed precautionary evacuation orders and heightened awareness of the threat of wildfire.

Fires hit some regions of the state much harder than others. Although the Sierra was walloped, the Bay Area and Southern California saw a relatively tame year with few significant blazes.

"There were some large fires in the southern Sierra, but largely, coastal Southern California came through relatively unscathed," said Nick Nauslar, predictive services meteorologist at the National Interagency Coordination Center.

The agency is forecasting that the southern portion of the state will see a reduced risk of large fires over the next couple of weeks due to below-normal temperatures and precipitation that's near normal or a little above, which work together to hydrate vegetation. That comes after a series of October storms did the same for the rest of the state.

An upper-level ridge over the western United States that brought warm and dry conditions through November is also shifting to an upper-level trough, which brings cooler, wetter conditions, Nauslar said.

"The cooler the temperature, the better," [See Rainfall, A12]



PEOPLE WALK through a flooded homeless encampment in Santa Cruz. The weather shift will enable the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to adjust preparedness levels, an agency official says.

PANDEMIC PORTRAITS: THE LATINO EXPERIENCE

As younger people die of COVID, the loss may be felt for generations

BY ALEJANDRA REYES-VELARDE

Every morning, Sergio Ayala combed his daughters' hair into twin braids, dropped them off at school and headed to work.

He loved his job as a field supervisor at his brother-in-law's pest control company. But he wanted to own a business and was studying to become a barber. He hoped to start a college savings fund for his three girls and toddler son.

In January, that dream was cut short. His family believes he contracted the coronavirus while practicing his barbering skills in people's homes.

Ayala died from COVID-19 at age 37. His partner, Lizeth Sanchez, worries she won't be able to fill his shoes.

"I think, oh, God, what if I can't afford to give them the education their dad wanted for them?" Sanchez said. "What if I can't afford education for one of them? It scares me."

In California, younger Latinos are dying of COVID-19 at much higher rates than their white and Asian counterparts. Younger Black people also are dying at high rates, but the disparity is starkest for Latinos.



KEVIN AND NIDIA Campos look at a shoe that belonged to her brother Sergio Ayala, who died of COVID-19.

As more people get vaccinated, pandemic restrictions lift and the economy rebounds, the families of the young Latinos who died will feel the loss for decades to come — not just the grief but the long-term financial hardships.

It will be harder for their children to get an education and achieve upward mobility, potentially widening the class divide in the coming decades.

In California, Latinos ages 20 to 54 have died from COVID-19 at a rate more than eight times higher than that of white people in the same age group, according to a study by USC's Department of Preventive Medicine.

Many, like Ayala, died before vaccines were widely available.

"Latinos are getting hit from all angles," said Christina Ramirez, professor of biostatistics at UCLA. "This is going to be felt for generations to come."

Ayala was raised by a single mother, a Salvadoran immigrant, in a small apartment in North Hollywood.

With his earnings from PestCal Exterminators, he saved enough to buy a place in Panorama City. It was a townhouse with high ceilings — something he had always wanted — and big enough for his [See Latinos, A7]

This three-part series examines how the pandemic has affected Latinos from all walks of life. Read the other stories at latimes.com. Leer en español en latimes.com.

MASK MANDATE IS BACK ACROSS STATE

As coronavirus cases rise, California will require face coverings indoors until Jan. 15.

BY RONG-GONG LIN II

SAN FRANCISCO — Faced with rising coronavirus cases and growing concerns about the Omicron variant, California is ordering a statewide mask mandate for indoor public spaces to go into effect on Wednesday.

The move comes as coronavirus case rates in California have risen by almost 50% in the last 2½ weeks, and COVID-19 hospitalizations are up by nearly 15%. County health officials across the state say they suspect they may be seeing the start of a winter jump in coronavirus cases.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ranks California as having a high level of transmission of the coronavirus, the worst tier in the federal agency's four-tier scale.

"This is a critical time where we have a tool that we know has worked and can work," Dr. Mark Ghaly, California's health and human services secretary, said Monday. "We are proactively putting this tool of universal indoor masking in public settings in place to ensure we get through a time of joy and hope — without a darker cloud of concern and despair."

The order will affect roughly half the state's population, including San Diego and Orange counties, the Inland Empire, large swaths of the Central Valley and rural Northern California. The statewide indoor mask mandate order will last a month, expiring on Jan. 15.

A number of California counties — including Los Angeles, Ventura and Sacramento — and most of the San Francisco Bay Area already have their own indoor mask mandates that were implemented in the summer [See Masks, A7]

BORN INTO DANGER

Outrage doesn't stop the rapes

A girl's horrific murder brought vows of change, but Indonesia has only become more perilous

By David Pierson and Gemma Holliani Cahya
REPORTING FROM BENGKULU, INDONESIA

She keeps a pile of her daughter's belongings in a corner of her bedroom: report cards, notebooks wrapped with pages torn from old calendars, a favorite Hello Kitty dress.

More than five years after her child was gang raped and murdered in one of the most gruesome cases of sexual violence in Indonesia, the mother tries to tame her grief by pretending Yuyun is still near.

She Photoshops her into family portraits taken long after her death. She dresses her new toddler in her slain daughter's hand-me-downs. Sometimes, she even makes the mistake of calling the little one Yuyun.

"I want her to know I still think of her," said the mother, Yana, a 38-year-old farmworker who must live in hiding because of threats made against her by relatives of the attackers. "My heart is broken. She was not only my daughter, she was my friend."

Yuyun was a day away from turning 14 when she was assaulted on her walk home from school. Her body was discovered two days later at the bottom of a cliff, covered by leaves, her hands bound behind her back. A post-mortem found she had died of multiple [See Indonesia, A4]



THREE years ago, this 18-year-old was molested by her village administrator.

Golden Globe nominations greeted by resounding silence

With group that gives out the awards under a cloud, the unveiling lacks its usual hoopla.

By Josh Rottenberg

In a normal year, the announcement of the Golden Globe nominations traditionally marks the moment that awards season kicks into high gear.

Stars would be up at the crack of dawn, hoping to hear their names read. Publicists and studios would be preparing a flurry of press releases to tout the nominees and coordinating reaction interviews for the contenders to share how "honored" they are. Awards prognosticators would be watching carefully for hints of which way the Oscar winds might be blowing.

Suffice to say, this is not a normal year.

Monday morning's announcement of the 79th Golden Globe nominations came as the organization that hands out the awards, the Hollywood Foreign

Press Assn., remains under a cloud. The usual glitzy, star-studded telecast presenting the awards has been scrapped for 2022 after a Times investigation in February that revealed the association had no Black members and detailed allegations [See Golden Globes, A12]

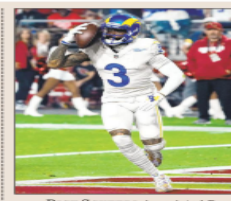
A lackluster awards season

As Hollywood's awards season sputters, the Golden Globes provide no boost. CALENDAR, E1

No discipline for airstrike deaths

Pentagon says it will not sanction any U.S. troops involved in the August killing of 10 Afghan civilians, including kids, who were mistaken for combatants. NATION, A5

Weather
Rain, heavy at times.
L.A. Basin: 55/39, B6



RICK SCUTERI Associated Press
RAMS' Odell Beckham Jr. exults in the end zone.

Victims of U.S. gymnastics abuse reach settlement

Hundreds of athletes agree to a \$380-million deal that includes audit of practices, leadership changes. NATION, A6

Short-handed Rams hold on

Down four starters, L.A. withstands a late Arizona drive to beat the first-place Cardinals, 30-23. SPORTS, B10

BUSINESS INSIDE: A PUC proposal would take a hammer to rooftop solar, critics say. A8

deportes

Rodolfo D'Onofrio

"Hoy soy el tipo más feliz de la Tierra"

En la despedida como presidente de River, hace un balance de su gestión y habla de los desafíos pendientes.



LOS ARGENTINOS QUE HACEN ARTE CON METEORITOS

—cultura

Con herramientas modernas y la mirada de la ciencia, Guillermo Faivovich y Nicolás Goldberg crean pinturas, videos y esculturas a partir de las rocas caídas del cielo. **Página 25**

TV 2021: LO BUENO, LO MALO Y LO QUE VALE LA PENAL RECORDAR

—espectáculos

En un clima de recambio generacional, nuevas figuras empiezan a desplazar a los históricos; *Master Chef* se consolidó como el formato de éxito y cayó *ShowMatch*.

LA NACION

MARTES 14 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2021 | LANACION.COM.AR

Hotesur: el fiscal criticó a los jueces que sobreseyeron a Cristina y pidió seguir el juicio

CORRUPCIÓN. Velasco los acusó de "devastar" años de la investigación por lavado

Hernán Cappiello
LA NACION

Con durísimas críticas a los jueces que sobreseyeron a la vicepresidenta Cristina Kirchner y a sus hijos por lavado de dinero, el fiscal Diego Velasco apeló esa decisión y pidió que sea revisada por la Cá-

mara de Casación. En su planteo, el fiscal destacó la "gravedad institucional" de la resolución, que "con un simple análisis dogmático", sin valorar pruebas, "devastó" años de investigación, sin posibilidad de debatir en juicio frente a la sociedad "el posible lavado de dinero llevado adelante por quienes ocuparon la

primera magistratura de la Argentina durante más de 12 años".

Velasco, en 249 páginas, descalificó la decisión de los jueces Adrián Grünberg y Daniel Obligado, del Tribunal Oral Federal N° 5, por arbitraria, ilegítima, nula, motivada en razones aparentes, alzándose contra sus superiores

de la Cámara de Casación y la Corte Suprema de Justicia de la Nación.

Además, el fiscal señaló que se trata de una "apreciación personal" de los jueces y que el fallo "ha convertido el proceso en una ficción de juicio oral". **Continúa en la página 11**

La oposición intentará cambiar el presupuesto de Guzmán

DEBATE. Sus diputados criticaron las cifras del ministro; darán *quorum*

El ministro de Economía, Martín Guzmán, dedicó largas horas ayer a defender en la Cámara de Diputados el presupuesto para el año próximo, pero la oposición se retiró disconforme por la falta de precisiones y ante el reconocimiento de que las previsiones quedaron desactualizadas por la aceleración de la inflación.

Por esa razón, aunque anticipó que no obstruirá el debate del proyecto en el recinto, Juntos por el Cambio buscará incluir modificaciones en la letra chica del articulado, cuando el jueves se debate en el recinto de la Cámara de Diputados. **Página 6**

El sorteo de la Champions que avergonzó a Europa

deportes— Errores en la distribución de las bolillas en los copones, durante el sorteo para octavos de final de la Champions, hundieron a la UEFA en el escándalo. Se repitió la ceremonia, y entre los cruces apareció el duelo del PSG de Messi contra Real Madrid. **Página 5**



Protagonistas de un instante que la UEFA no olvidará: el dirigente Heselschwerdt y, atrás, el exfutbolista ruso Andréi Arshavin **GETTY IMAGES**

Malestar y quejas en los pasos con Uruguay

NERVIOS. Hubo demoras y largas filas de autos para cruzar a la Argentina.

Página 22

Avenida del Libertador. Nuevo diseño para mejorar la convivencia, con eje en los ciclistas

La Avenida del Libertador, una de las más emblemáticas de la ciudad, empieza hoy a sufrir una transformación que demandará once meses de obras en toda su extensión, desde la avenida General Paz hasta Retiro.

Con el objetivo de mejorar la convivencia entre transeúntes, ciclistas, colectivos y vehículos particulares, sumará ciclovías en toda la traza, carriles preferenciales para colectivos, dársenas de ascenso y descenso de pasajeros, mientras

las veredas serán para el disfrute peatonal y la expansión comercial. El proyecto, denominado Calle Compartida Libertador, incluirá también nuevos árboles y espacios verdes, con una inversión total de 1195 millones de pesos. **Página 24**

La carne tuvo la mayor suba del año en noviembre

CONSUMO. La carne vacuna tuvo un aumento de precios promedio de 10,8% en noviembre, la mayor suba del año, según informó el Instituto de Promoción de la Carne Vacuna Argentina (Ipcva). En este contexto, el Gobierno cerró ayer un acuerdo con la industria frigorífica para ofrecer antes de Navidad y Año Nuevo 20.000 toneladas de cinco cortes a precios reducidos. **Página 15**

La inflación superará el 50%, cerca de la de Macri en 2019

Francisco Jueguen. **Página 16**

Rusia amenaza a Europa con misiles

Página 3



Elenco do filme 'Turma da Mônica - Lições' Serendipity Inc./Divulgação

Mundo A12
Elon Musk é eleito
Pessoa do Ano
pela revista Time

Esporte B7
Com Libertadores,
Fortaleza projeta alta
de 30% nas receitas

Ilustrada C1
'Turma da Mônica -
Lições' estreia com
crianças já crescidas

Ilustrada C3
Globo de Ouro
divulga indicados
sob risco de boicote

PEC dos Precatórios teve voto irregular, sugere lista

Pelo menos um deputado usou voto remoto sem atender a critério estipulado

Ao menos 1 dos 4 deputados que, segundo lista obtida pela Folha, votaram de forma remota para aprovar a PEC dos Precatórios não estava em missão oficial, o que infringe a regra estipulada pelo presidente da Câmara, Arthur Lira (PP-AL), relatam Camila Mattoso e Ranier Bragion. A proposta passou com margem de 4 votos.

Sem a manobra de Lira, a emenda só chegaria ao mínimo de votos necessários com o "sim" do próprio presidente da Casa — dos 8 deputados listados como tendo votado de forma remota, metade se posicionou contra e metade, a favor. Apenas parlamentares em missão oficial tinham permissão para votar a distância.

No entanto, em 3 de novembro, quando a proposta foi a plenário, o deputado Zé da Silva (SD-MG) estava reunido com o governador Romeu Zema. Ele só entraria em missão dias depois, como admitiu à Folha. A Folha teve acesso à lista depois de Lira recusar solicitações da reportagem ao longo de seis semanas.

Um dos pedidos foi feito pela Lei de Acesso à Informação, e sua recusa desrespeita a norma. A Câmara só enviou os nomes requisitados no fim da noite de ontem. Com a emenda, o governo adia o pagamento de dívidas e cria espaço no Orçamento para o programa social que será sua vitrine da campanha em 2022. Mercado A14



Moradores circulam por casa destruída no bairro Várzea Alegre, em Itamaraju (BA); águas do rio Jucuruçu começam a baixar Eduardo Anizelli/Folhapress

Mercado estima taxa de juros a 11,5% em 2022

Mercado A15

Passaporte da vacina começa a ser cobrado pela Anvisa

A Anvisa (Agência Nacional de Vigilância Sanitária) informou ontem que passou a exigir o certificado de vacinação de quem entra no Brasil por aeroportos ou pela fronteira terrestre, seguindo decisão liminar do ministro Luís Roberto Barroso, do Supremo Tribunal Federal. A Advocacia-Geral da União recorreu ao STF e pediu a revogação da determinação. Saúde B6

Reino Unido confirma 1ª morte pela ômicron

Mundo A11

Michael França
Vidas Secas antes mesmo de nascer

Sem políticas públicas eficazes, a maior incidência de choques climáticos terá efeitos na perpetuação da pobreza. Mercado A20

Águas cedem, e famílias tentam reconstruir suas casas na Bahia

As chuvas intensas que atingiram o sul da Bahia devem arrefecer nesta semana, e famílias começam a voltar para reconstruir suas casas.

Em Itamaraju, moradores reviram pertences na lama e contabilizam prejuízos. Ao menos dez pessoas morreram no estado. Cotidiano B1

Por 2022, Planalto já estuda renegociar dívidas do Fies

O governo planeja editar uma MP para reduzir parte das dívidas dos inscritos no Fies, com descontos que podem chegar até 92%.

O plano de Jair Bolsonaro (PL) é responder a Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT), que defendeu anistia aos estudantes em débito. Poder A5

Migração opõe candidatos em eleição no Chile

A questão migratória tem dividido o Chile, que no domingo escolhe seu próximo presidente. Líder nas pesquisas, o esquerdista Gabriel Boric defende acolhimento aos imigrantes. O ultradireitista José Antonio Kast quer deportar os irregulares. Mundo A13

Polícia apura curso da GCM de Osasco por maus-tratos

Cotidiano B2



Mathilde Missionheiro/Folhapress

PROIBIDO PARA MENINAS MENORES DE 16, CASAMENTO PRECOCE É NATURALIZADO

Milena, 20, que se casou aos 14 com um homem oito anos mais velho e largou os estudos, em Belém (PA); Brasil é o quinto país no mundo no ranking absoluto desse tipo de união, embora ainda exista uma grande subnotificação Cotidiano B4 e B5

A pandemia em 13.dez

Dados das 20h

POPULAÇÃO VACINADA

No Brasil

Ao menos uma dose (dose única ou 1ª dose) **77,2%**

1ª ciclo vacinal completo (dose única ou 2ª dose) **65,4%**

Dose de reforço **9,8%**

ESTÁGIO DA DOENÇA

Óbitos

Média móvel **170** Em 24 h **39**

Variação em relação a 14 dias

EDITORIAIS A2

Passaporte forçado

Acerca de decisão do STF e tensões com Bolsonaro.

Bilhões eleitorais

Sobre pressão por mais recursos para as campanhas.

ATMOSFERA

São Paulo hoje

27° **20°**

0h 6h 12h 18h 24h



Economía crece más de lo esperado en un contexto de alza de precios

Aumento del PIB será del 5% y la inflación cerrará en 7,1%

BCP y Hacienda dieron su balance de los últimos 12 meses y presentaron las perspectivas para el 2022. Algunos números son auspiciosos, aunque el déficit fiscal es importante.

PÁGINA 16

**Complicidad de sistemas de control
Arregui critica uso de
Fiscalía como agencia
de cobros de RGD**

PÁGINAS 7 y 42

**Se argumentó el mal tiempo
Bolsonaro planta a
Abdo y tarifa de Itaipú
queda en suspenso**

PÁGINA 14

**Brigadas visitan casa por casa
Campaña intensiva de
vacunación para evitar
más luto en el Este**

PÁGINA 2



Edición 45. El premio a la creatividad de la mejor publicidad gráfica en Última Hora fue otorgado a la Agencia Cielito. En la foto, los ganadores con la estatua.

PÁGINAS 12 y 13

CON ESTA EDICIÓN

REVISTA RINOS INAMITI
N.º 3 + STICKERS



COMPRA OPCIONAL 1

LOS RINOS MAS
PONDROSOS DE MARZO 56

Libro C. 50.000

COMPRA OPCIONAL 2

REVISTA UNIVERSAL
LIBRO 8

C. 30.000

**Lentitud para actualización de seguridad
Urge renovar, pero Interior
se enreda en licitaciones**

PÁGINA 44

**Gobernador se defendió de intervención
Caso Hugo Javier: Excusas
y dudas en comparecencia**

PÁGINA 6

UNA INDESTRUCTIBLE
SIEMPRE DESPIERTA TU LADO
INDESTRUCTIBLE



REPORTAGE
À CUBA, DES ÉTALS VIDES
ET UN DÉLIRE
BUREAUCRATIQUE **PAGE 18**

AUTOMOBILE
« LE FIGARO » A FAIT 700 KM
EN VOITURE ÉLECTRIQUE, UN VRAI
PARCOURS DU COMBATTANT **PAGES 32 ET 33**



LE FIGARO ÉTUDIANT
Notre palmarès
des écoles d'ingénieurs
CAHIER SPÉCIAL



PRÉSIDENTIELLE
Macron s'invite
sur TFI mercredi
et installe le match
avec Pécresse **PAGE 4**

ITALIE
Le Quirinal réveille
les ambitions
de Berlusconi **PAGE 6**

JUSTICE
Claude Guéant,
ex-ministre de
l'Intérieur, incarcéré
à la Santé **PAGE 11**

COVID-19
Royaume-Uni : une
digue vaccinale face
au « raz de marée
Omicron » **PAGE 15**

IMMOBILIER
Risque de surchauffe
dans les villes
moyennes **PAGE 24**

CHAMPS LIBRES
• La France
est-elle
condamnée
au chômage
de masse ?
• Les tribunes
d'Olivier Piton
et de Jean-
Louis Thiériot
• La chronique
de Renaud
Girard
• L'analyse de
Dinah Cohen
et John Timsit
PAGES 19 À 21

**FIGARO OUI
FIGARO NON**

**Réponses à la question
de lundi :**
Nouvelle-Calédonie :
êtes-vous satisfait
du résultat du référendum
sur l'indépendance ?

OUI 81% NON 19%
TOTAL DE VOTANTS : 139 080

**Votez aujourd'hui
sur lefigaro.fr**
« Quoi qu'il en coûte » :
le gouvernement
a-t-il trop dépensé pour
soutenir l'économie
pendant la crise sanitaire ?

ELIANA APONTE/AP; TIBO

Dettes et déficit s'invitent dans la bataille présidentielle

L'Assemblée votera mercredi le dernier budget du quinquennat, en déficit de 153 milliards d'euros. Le redressement des finances publiques sera au cœur des débats pour 2022.

Emmanuel Macron ne manquera pas, lors de son intervention mercredi à la télévision, de mettre en avant le retour d'une forte croissance économique en France,

ainsi qu'une nette diminution du chômage. Cette amélioration doit beaucoup à une explosion de la dépense publique pour soutenir les entreprises durant la crise

provoquée par la pandémie de Covid-19. Elle a pour conséquence une dégradation inédite des comptes nationaux, que traduit le dernier budget du quinquennat.

D'autant que le gouvernement a par ailleurs multiplié les nouvelles dépenses pour préserver le pouvoir d'achat des Français face à la flambée des prix de l'énergie. La

droite dénonce un budget électoraliste et annonce une « opération vérité » sur le « quoi qu'il en coûte » si Valérie Pécresse est élue à l'Élysée en 2022.

→ COMMENT LA FRANCE ESPÈRE CONVAINCRE LES EUROPÉENS DE MODIFIER LES RÈGLES DU PACTE DE STABILITÉ ET DE CROISSANCE → LA DROITE CRITIQUE LE « BUDGET DE CAMPAGNE ÉLECTORALE » DE L'EXÉCUTIF → DETTE : « LA DIVERGENCE EXISTAIT AVANT LA PANDÉMIE, MAIS LE COVID L'A ACCENTUÉE » **PAGES 26, 27 ET L'EDITORIAL**

Paris 2024 prépare une cérémonie grandiose sur la Seine pour l'ouverture des JO



Grande première dans l'histoire des Jeux olympiques : les organisateurs de Paris 2024 proposeront une cérémonie d'ouverture qui aura pour cadre la Ville Lumière, son fleuve et le Trocadéro. 600 000 spectateurs sont attendus. **PAGE 16**

Helena Dalli, cette commissaire européenne qui suscite la polémique

Depuis la révélation de son guide sur la communication inclusive, la commissaire européenne à l'Égalité se fait discrète. Mais ses propositions - ne pas souhaiter « Joyeux Noël », éviter les prénoms Marie ou Jean - n'ont pas fini de diviser les députés européens. Réunis en assemblée plénière, ils souhaitaient l'entendre à ce sujet. Ursula von der Leyen, la présidente de la Commission européenne, n'a pas accédé à leur demande. **PAGES 2 ET 3**

ÉDITORIAL par Gaëtan de Capèle gdecapelle@lefigaro.fr

La cote d'alerte

Les campagnes présidentielles donnent rarement lieu à des débordements de rigueur budgétaire. On y promet au contraire monts et merveilles à des électeurs soucieux de leur pouvoir d'achat et demandeurs de services publics. Peu importe que l'État n'ait plus un euro en poche ; une foire aux milliards commence, sans que jamais personne n'indique où les trouver. Il va pourtant bien falloir s'astreindre à cet exercice élémentaire. Non par fétichisme comptable, mais parce que nous n'avons plus le choix. Le dernier budget du quinquennat - un déficit de plus de 150 milliards d'euros - décrit l'ampleur de la tâche. Jamais dans l'histoire on n'a assisté à pareille débauche d'argent public. Bien sûr, les circonstances justifient en partie que le gouvernement ait « cramé la caisse » : sans le soutien de l'État, des millions d'entreprises auraient sombré et des millions de chômeurs pointeraient à Pôle emploi. On n'en dira pas autant de l'extension sans fin du « quoi qu'il en coûte », camouflage commode pour distribuer des chèques à tout le monde au prétexte que les prix montent. Un détail pourrait utile-

ment nourrir la réflexion des candidats à l'élection présidentielle : alors que la cote d'alerte sur l'état de nos finances publiques est largement atteinte, l'opinion gronde toujours autant et personne ne trouve le pays mieux administré. La situation de l'hôpital le montre cruellement : la dépense pour la dépense, sans recherche d'efficacité,

sans exigence de performance, ne résout rien. Coupable de laxisme depuis trop longtemps - droite et gauche confondues -, la France s'est elle-même reléguée en queue de peloton parmi les puissances économiques. Assommée de dettes et d'impôts, elle ne dispose plus d'autre marge de manœuvre que trouver d'urgence des économies dans l'océan de ses dépenses publiques. Sans doute cela ne soulèvera-t-il pas l'enthousiasme des foules. Mais c'est le prix à payer si l'on prétend restaurer notre souveraineté financière. ■



dinh van
PARIS



'Sometimes I feel like a scientist in a lab'
Jesse Armstrong
on Succession

→ G2



Christmas nightmares and how to avoid them

→ G2

Tuesday
14 December 2021
£2.50
From £1.75 for subscribers

The Guardian

For 200 years

News provider of the year

NHS put on crisis footing as Omicron variant surges



Hospitals told to free up beds amid claim of up to 200,000 daily infections

Rowena Mason
Denis Campbell
Andrew Gregory

The NHS was put on to a crisis footing last night as hospitals in England were told to discharge as many patients as possible while estimated daily Omicron cases hit 200,000 and the first death of a person with the variant in the UK was revealed.

Amid a scramble for tests and booster jabs, the country's doctors called for further restrictions to be imposed to stem the rise in cases and Downing Street did not rule out fresh measures. In a letter to hospitals, NHS

England chiefs said patients who could be discharged to care homes, hospices, their own homes or hotels before Christmas to free up beds, should be.

The letter from NHS England chief executive, Amanda Pritchard, and medical director, Prof Stephen Powis, said the service was facing a level 4 "national incident". Hotels are already being turned into temporary care facilities staffed with workers flown in from Spain and Greece to relieve pressure on NHS beds.

Hospitals and GPs have also been told to scale back normal services and limit care to those needing urgent attention so NHS staff can be freed up to deliver boosters. Hospitals will undertake fewer non-urgent operations but "highest clinical priority patients", including people with cancer, will be given priority.

They have also been told to take

▲ Plenty of time to read a few chapters in the queue for a booster jab in central London yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: BEN CAWTHRA/LNP

ambulance-borne patients into A&E more quickly so paramedics can get back on the road to answer more 999 calls, speed up efforts to bring in nurses from overseas to help tackle the NHS's lack of staff and send as

many patients as possible for surgery at private hospitals.

A campaign to give boosters to more than 1m people a day got under way, prompting the NHS website to crash and people to queue in the street for up to five hours.

But the British Medical Association (BMA) said the vaccination campaign would not be enough to stop the spread of Omicron, with one in four still not eligible for a booster. They called for a return to face masks in pubs and restaurants, 2-metre social distancing indoors, limits on public gatherings, legal requirements for ventilation in schools and other settings, more rapid testing and advice to wear medical-grade FFP2 masks.

No 10 insisted that the booster campaign was its priority, with a senior government source describing the main strategy as "keep on jabbing". Boris Johnson

'The government's response is missing the wider measures required to control Omicron's spread'

Dr Chaand Nagpaul
BMA council chair

Alarm at overhaul of human rights law

Haroon Siddique
Rajeev Syal

Dominic Raab is to outline a sweeping overhaul of human rights law that he claims will counter "wokery and political correctness" and expedite the deportation of foreign criminals.

The highly controversial changes - which will create a new "bill of rights" - will introduce a permission stage to "deter spurious human rights claims" and change the balance between freedom of expression and privacy.

But lawyers described the proposed changes to the Human Rights Act as dangerous and fuelled by political rhetoric rather than necessity. They pointed out that the government has signalled its intentions before the independent review of the Human Rights Act, which is due to be published later today.

The Ministry of Justice said the intended reforms would allow judges to override rulings from the European court of human rights, rather than following them "blindly".

It claimed that as many as seven out of 10 successful human rights challenges are brought by foreign national offenders who cite a right to family life

15 →

Harry Dunn Sacoolas to face UK court

US citizen, Anne Sacoolas, accused of killing Harry Dunn by dangerous driving will undergo a criminal trial

News Page 19 →



9 770261 307125 50