

## What's News

## Business &amp; Finance

A winter surge in Covid-19 cases driven by Omicron is prompting economists to downgrade U.S. and global growth expectations in the early part of 2022 as businesses struggle with absenteeism and consumers stay home to avoid getting sick. **A1**

◆ Investors are defying a share-price slump for newly public companies to make hundreds of billions of dollars available to startups. **A1**

◆ Walmart has become the latest Western company to face anger in China over its handling of business involving Xinjiang. **A1**

◆ The S&P 500 notched its 69th record close of 2021, rising 1.4%. The Nasdaq also advanced 1.4%, while the Dow gained 1%. **B1**

◆ Flight cancellations in the U.S. continued Monday amid inclement weather and Covid-19-driven airline staff shortages. **B1**

◆ Activist investor Starboard has a sizable stake in GoDaddy and plans to push the domain registrar to boost its performance. **B1**

◆ Didi's shares fell to another low after a "lockup" period expired following its June IPO, even as the company sought to prevent employees from selling their stock. **B3**

◆ S&P Global and IHS Markit said they reached deals to sell two subsidiaries, part of an effort to appease regulators ahead of the financial-data firms' planned merger. **B3**

◆ Evergrande said construction work has resumed at more than 90% of its stalled residential projects. **B9**

## World-Wide

◆ U.S. officials cut the number of days that they recommend some people isolate after being infected with Covid-19 to five days from 10, reflecting recent research, new pandemic-management ideas and stress on some industries as the Omicron variant has sickened workers. **A3**

◆ Iraq's top court endorsed the results of the country's parliamentary election, in a setback for a powerful pro-Iran faction that paves the way for the formation of a new government. **A6**

◆ A power struggle erupted between Somalia's president and prime minister, a confrontation that threatens to undermine the country's fight against Islamist extremists. **A6**

◆ Negotiators from Iran and five world powers resumed talks on restoring the 2015 nuclear deal, with Iran insisting the U.S. and its allies promise to allow it to export its crude oil. **A9**

◆ Snow pummeled the Pacific Northwest, California and other parts of the West Coast, leading to flight cancellations, road closures and avalanche warnings in the region. **A3**

◆ India's government said it would bar donations from foreign contributors to a Christian missionary group founded by the late Mother Teresa. **A8**

◆ Died: Wayne Thiebaud, 101, celebrated artist. **A2** ... Edward O. Wilson, 92, pioneering Harvard biologist. **A2** ... Jean-Marc Vallée, 58, film and television director. **A9**

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## Political Turmoil Escalates Tensions in Volatile Somalia



**ON GUARD:** Troops took to the streets in the Somali capital of Mogadishu as a power struggle erupted in the country on Monday. President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed said he was stripping Prime Minister Mohamed Hussein Roble of his powers for suspected corruption while Mr. Roble announced he would assume the president's duties. **A6**

## Startups Attract Piles of Cash Despite Shaky Market Record

By AMRITH RAMKUMAR AND ELIOT BROWN

Investors are defying a share-price slump for newly public companies to make hundreds of billions of dollars available to startups, a cash pile that promises to inject a torrent of money into early-stage enterprises in 2022 and beyond.

Special-purpose acquisition companies, which take startups public through mergers, raised about \$12 billion in each of October and November, roughly doubling their clip from each of the previous three months, Dealogic data

show. So far in December, three SPACs a day are being created. While that is below the first quarter's record pace, it brings the total amount held by the hundreds of SPACs seeking private companies to take public in the next two years to about \$160 billion.

The cash committed to venture-capital firms and private-equity firms focused on rapidly growing companies but not yet spent also is ballooning. So-called dry powder hit about \$440 billion for venture capitalists and about \$310 billion for growth-focused PE firms earlier this month, ac-

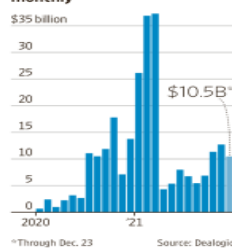
cording to Preqin.

Despite billions of dollars in lost market value for publicly listed startups, the cash hoards represent buoyant demand from investors during a period with interest rates near zero and stock indexes at or near records. The large amounts show how SPACs and private markets have been more resilient than many analysts expected, particularly with regulators ratcheting up scrutiny of such "blank check" companies.

Many analysts expect interest rates to climb in the years ahead, potentially making

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Amount raised by SPACs, monthly



## INSIDE



**PERSONAL JOURNAL**  
WSJ columnists weigh in on the technologies that could change your life in 2022. **A11**



**JASON GAY**  
With the playoffs approaching, a look at the NFL's good, bad and mushy teams. **A14**

## Covid Shots Cause Botox Wrinkles

Cosmetic work and boosters need two-week gap

By ALINA DEZIK

Amanda Madison wanted to look fresh in time for her 50th birthday this winter. The Covid-19 vaccine booster threw a wrinkle into her plan.

She had time to add more volume to her lips and cheeks before her birthday bash, but needed to wait two weeks before and a further two weeks after getting her Covid booster shot before adding additional treatments to achieve "a fresh new start" for the New Year.

Spas and dermatology practices dealing with the holiday injections rush have an unexpected challenge this year: helping patients navigate

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## Walmart Draws Anger In China Over Xinjiang

By LIZA LIN

Walmart Inc., the world's largest retailer, became the latest Western company to face scrutiny over its handling of business involving Xinjiang, following the passage of a U.S. law that virtually bans all imports from the northwestern Chinese region over forced-labor and human-rights concerns.

The Bentonville, Ark.-based retailer attracted anger on Chinese social media beginning last week after internet users shared comments that purported to show that Walmart had stopped stocking products from Xinjiang in its China-based Walmart and Sam's Club stores. Some said they had canceled their Sam's Club memberships, while social-media accounts run by Communist Party-backed entities weighed in to criticize the company.

The northwestern Chinese region of Xinjiang, home to millions of mostly Muslim minor-

ties, has become a geopolitical flashpoint and an ethical dilemma for U.S. multinationals doing business in China. The Biden administration has accused the Chinese government of engaging in genocide against religious minorities in the region.

Last week, President Biden signed the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act into law, following its near-unanimous passage in Congress. The law bans all imports to the U.S. from the region unless companies can certify that such products are free from forced labor. China has rejected allegations of genocide and forced labor, describing its policies in the region as aimed at preventing terrorism and protecting national security.

Last week, U.S. semiconductor giant Intel Corp. issued an apology to Chinese consumers, partners and the public following an outcry on Chinese social media against the Santa

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## Economic Forecasts Slide as Omicron Takes Toll

CDC shortens isolation guidelines as surging Covid-19 strain poses threat to businesses

By HARRIET TORRY AND DAVID HARRISON

A winter surge in Covid-19 cases driven by the Omicron variant is prompting economists to downgrade U.S. and global growth expectations in the early part of 2022 as businesses struggle with absenteeism and consumers stay home to avoid getting sick.

Several economists have recently cut forecasts for the U.S. following early signs that a sharp rise in cases has already disrupted parts of the economy. Airlines canceled thousands of flights over the Christmas holiday weekend and into Monday, in part due to Covid-19-driven staff shortages.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reduced on Monday the amount of recommended time that infected people who are asymptomatic should isolate to five days from 10 as more research is done and thinking evolves on how best to manage the pandemic.

In Europe, leaders reviewed whether to put in place new limits on activity as New Year celebrations approach. The U.K. government decided against tightened restrictions after reviewing hospitalization data, but Health Minister Sajid Javid said people should leave

Please turn to page A2

- ◆ CDC reduces isolation recommendation for some... **A3**
- ◆ Airlines wrestle with more canceled flights... **B1**
- ◆ S&P 500 closes at record amid "Santa rally".... **B1**

## Inside Disney's Handling of Assault Allegations at ABC

Lawsuit claims executives knew of misconduct at 'Good Morning America'

By JOE FLINT

When writer Jay Carson was doing research in the fall of 2017 to develop "The Morning Show," an Apple TV+ drama about a scandal at a morning newscast, he spoke to ABC News producer Kirstyn Crawford. Mr. Carson wanted to know about the prevalence of sexual harassment in the TV news business, as it was in the plot of the show. In the course of those conversations, Ms. Crawford told him she had been sexually assaulted two years earlier by her

boss, Michael Corn, the top producer of ABC's biggest revenue earner, "Good Morning America," people familiar with the discussion said.

Mr. Carson passed that information to his friend, "Good Morning America" anchor George Stephanopoulos, the people said. Mr. Stephanopoulos told people he then informed key company executives.

What happened next is the subject of a legal battle that has raised questions about how ABC and parent Walt Disney Co. handle sexual-as-

Please turn to page A10

DELL Technologies

More thankful than ever.

This year, we all proved how unstoppable we can be. Thank you for inspiring us every day.

Happy holidays.







## Miles of Destruction and Death

Super Typhoon Rai left a path of devastation in the Philippines, and with evacuation centers filled, officials warned that residents were going hungry. Page A8.

## Clean-Energy Gold Rush Alarms Tribes in U.S.

By JACK HEALY  
and MIKE BAKER

YELLOW PINE, Idaho — Net in hand, Louis Reuben waded into the frigid waters where his ancestors once fished, long before Idaho's rivers were dammed and contaminated, before the Nez Perce were driven off their land when white miners struck gold.

"They used to say you could walk across the river on the backs of salmon," he said one rainy autumn morning as he tallied and measured the depleted stocks of young Chinook salmon that hatch in these mountain creeks. "Now, it's totally different. It's devastat-

### RACE TO THE FUTURE The Environmental Toll

ing, if you think about it."

President Biden came into office vowing to safeguard Native American resources like these and uphold the rights of tribes that have endured generations of land theft and broken treaties. But in the rolling headwaters of central Idaho, where mining interests have long overrun tribal rights, the administration's promise is colliding with one of its other priorities: starting a revolution in renewable energy to confront climate change.

Deep in the Salmon River Mountains, an Idaho mining company, Perpetua Resources, is proposing a vast open-pit gold mine that would also produce 115 million pounds of antimony — an element that may be critical to manufacturing the high-capacity liquid-metal batteries of the future.

As it seeks the Biden administration's approval for its mining plans on federal lands, Perpetua is waging an aggressive campaign to cast itself as an ally in a new clean-energy economy. It says its Stibnite Gold Project would be the only American mine to produce antimony, which now largely

Continued on Page A12



The Nez Perce fisheries agency tracking how many salmon return to Lapwai Creek in Idaho.

## Brake Lights, Big City: Traffic Is Worse Than Ever

This article is by Winnie Hu, Patrick McGeehan and Nate Schweber. From gridlock on Fifth Avenue to backups at the Holland Tunnel, traffic has come roaring back in New York City after largely disappearing at the height of the coronavirus pandemic.

But even as cars have returned, a pandemic that has transformed countless work routines and shopping habits is now upending long-

### Covid Fears Cram Cars on New York Streets

established traffic patterns, shifting the congestion that has paralyzed Manhattan for years to the city's other boroughs.

Some neighborhoods are being choked by more vehicles than they have ever seen before, with

traffic snarls fueled by a plunge in transit use and car pooling, soaring car ownership and a surge in delivery trucks trying to keep up with an e-commerce boom.

The skyrocketing traffic is not just maddening to drivers; it has made the city's streets deadlier for pedestrians and cyclists — traffic fatalities have risen to their highest level in nearly a decade — and contributed to higher levels of

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## With Regional Rivals in Decline, Saudis Angle for Cultural Cachet

By VIVIAN YEE and BEN HUBBARD

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia — A pregnant Saudi woman, far from home, finds herself stalked by inner and outer demons. A wannabe Saudi vlogger and his friends, menaced by the internet's insatiable appetite for content and more mysterious dangers, try to escape a dark forest. At a wedding, the mother of the bride panics when her daughter disappears with all of their guests waiting downstairs.

These were just a few of the 27 Saudi-made films premiering this month at a film festival in Jeddah, part of the conservative kingdom's huge effort to transform itself from a cultural backwater into a cinematic powerhouse in the Middle East.

The Saudi push reflects pro-

found shifts in the creative industries across the Arab world. Over the past century, while the name Saudi Arabia conjured little more than oil, desert and Islam, Cairo, Beirut, Damascus and Baghdad stood out as the Arab cultural beacons where blockbuster movies were made, chart-topping songs were recorded and books that got intellectuals talking hit the shelves.

But over the past decade, those legacies have been battered by conflicts, financial meltdowns and state failures. Years of war have damaged Syria's television studios and Baghdad's publishers. An economic collapse has left Lebanon's art-house cinemas struggling to keep the lights on.

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EDWARD O. WILSON, 1929-2021

## Inspecting Ants, He Altered Views of the World

By CARL ZIMMER

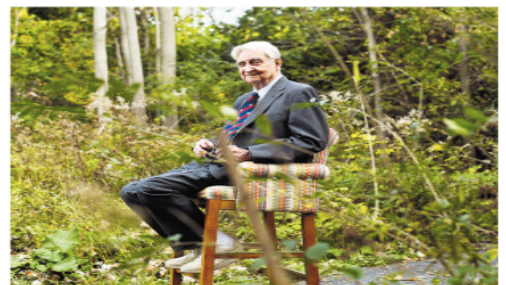
Edward O. Wilson, a biologist and author who conducted pioneering work on biodiversity, insects and human nature — and won two Pulitzer Prizes along the way — died on Sunday in Burlington, Mass. He was 92.

His death was announced on Monday by the E.O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation.

When Dr. Wilson began his career in evolutionary biology in the 1950s, the study of animals and plants seemed to many scientists like a quaint, obsolete hobby. Molecular biologists were getting their first glimpses of DNA, proteins and other invisible foundations of life. Dr. Wilson made it his life's work to put evolution on an equal footing.

"How could our seemingly old-fashioned subjects achieve new intellectual rigor and originality compared to molecular biology?" he recalled in 2009. He answered his own question by pioneering new fields of research.

As an expert on insects, Dr. Wilson studied the evolution of behavior, exploring how natural se-



Edward O. Wilson, a pioneer of evolutionary biology, in October.

lection and other forces could produce something as extraordinarily complex as an ant colony. He then championed this kind of research as a way of making sense of all behavior — including our own.

As part of his campaign, Dr. Wilson wrote a string of books that influenced his fellow scientists while also gaining a broad public audience. "On Human Nature" won the Pulitzer Prize for general

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NATIONAL A10-15

### 'I Look Like the Strategy'

Winsome Sears, above, Virginia's next lieutenant governor, wants Black voters to rethink the G.O.P. PAGE A10

### Chaos in Los Angeles Shooting

Videos show a man attacking shoppers before the police opened fire, killing him and a girl in a dressing room. PAGE A15

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

### Space Alliance Is Imperiled

An antisatellite test and mounting tensions over Ukraine are jeopardizing the longstanding amity between NASA and the Russian space agency. PAGE A9

BUSINESS B1-5

### The Year in Good Tech

Some companies helped improve housing, the criminal justice system and even social media. The Shift. PAGE B1

### Pipeline Remains Uncertain

Tensions with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia are keeping a gas pipeline to Germany out of reach. PAGE B1



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### No Spacecraft Needed

Earthbound scientists have been using a variety of techniques to simulate the conditions of other worlds. PAGE D1

### How to Catch a Polar Bear

Researchers at the Norwegian Polar Institute have their hands full when examining animals in the wild. PAGE D8

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### Playing Lucille Ball

For the new movie "Being the Ricardos," Nicole Kidman went on a journey of discovery. One of the lessons she learned: "Funny's hard." PAGE C1

OBITUARIES A16-17, 20

### Lawyer Who Won Roe v. Wade

Sarah Weddington had little experience when, at 26, she began arguments in one of the most consequential cases in American history. She was 76. PAGE A20

OPINION A18-19

Meg Jacobs

PAGE A18



SPORTS B6-9

### A New Tetris Generation

In winning the world championship two years in a row, Michael Artziga, 14, represents a youth movement in a classic video game. PAGE B6



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**ACTIVIST** Felicia Rangel-Samponaro with migrants seeking medical attention in Reynosa, Mexico. She founded the nonprofit Sidewalk School to provide education and other services to migrants. Photographs by GINA PERAZZI Los Angeles Times

## COLUMN ONE

### Border activist's racial reckoning

Felicia Rangel-Samponaro, with her Black and Mexican lineage, faces a unique set of challenges

BY MOLLY HENNESSY-FISKE  
REPORTING FROM REYNOSA, MEXICO

So much of her is hyphenated, not just her name: Felicia Rangel-Samponaro. With caramel skin and curly brown hair that's often tied back, she can pass as Latina. But she identifies as Black.

On the Texas-Mexico border, she's emerged as a vigorous defender of immigrants, and that work often forces her to reckon with how race and ethnicity — real and perceived — shape lives on the border, including her own.

"There's a lot of oppression, discrimination and racism that goes on, on both sides of the border," she said.

Rangel-Samponaro's background has allowed the 45-year-old American to win [See Activist, A4]



**MIGRANTS** Melanie Melkel of Haiti, left, Velquis Rodriguez of Honduras and Vilser Chilel of Guatemala attend an English class.

## Hospital cases jump as virus surges

As Omicron spreads, California sees most admissions in months.

BY LUKE MONEY  
AND RONG-GONG LIN II

The number of COVID-19 patients hospitalized in California over the weekend reached levels not seen in months as the rapid spread

of the Omicron variant caused major airline interruptions and sent throngs of people to testing sites.

Officials said they expect Omicron's spread to worsen in the coming weeks, with President Biden promising the federal government would do all it could to assist states facing surges in coronavirus cases. Biden acknowledged those who faced long waits for tests over the holiday and said his admin-

### Rules on isolation, quarantine eased

U.S. health officials offer new guidelines for the general public. **NATION, A6**

istration was seeking to alleviate the issue.

"Seeing how tough it was for folks to get a test this weekend, we have more work to do, and we're

doing it," Biden said.

There were 4,001 coronavirus-positive patients hospitalized Sunday — California's highest single-day total since Oct. 9 and a nearly 14% increase from last week.

Some areas are contending with even sharper rises. Los Angeles County has seen a 30% bump in COVID-19 hospitalizations since last week. In Orange [See Surge, A6]

## Body-cam video shows chaos in Burlington store

LAPD officer is seen opening fire over bloodied victim in shooting that killed teenager and suspect.

BY KEVIN RECTOR,  
CONNOR SHEETS,  
ROBERT J. LOPEZ  
AND JORGE POBLETE

Video from the Los Angeles police shooting that killed an assault suspect and a 14-year-old bystander at a Burlington store on Thursday shows an officer opening fire over a bloodied victim on the floor as the suspect was moving away from them at the opposite end of a shopping aisle.

The shooting — three rifle rounds in a matter of seconds — occurred after the suspect had beaten the woman with a bike lock, the video showed, and after the officer had rushed past some of his colleagues who were urging him to slow down.

"She's bleeding! She's bleeding!" the officer screamed as the victim crawled out of an aisle of home goods.

"Hold up! Hold up!" screamed another officer, just before the shots rang out.

Daniel Elena-Lopez, 24, crumpled to the ground, where he would later be pronounced dead. Almost immediately, another woman's screams can be heard coming from an adjacent changing area where 14-year-old Valentina Orellana-Peralta had been trying on dresses with her mother.

Valentina had also been struck by one of the officer's rounds, after it bounced off the ground and went through a wall separating the changing area from the shopping floor, police said.

The department had not released the name of the officer who fired as of Monday. The video — a combination of 911 calls, store surveillance footage and officers' body-camera video — was released by the LAPD on Monday as part of an effort to be transparent about the tragic case, which sparked outrage and condemnation over some of the officers' tactics.

It provides the clearest picture to date of a shooting that has attracted international attention, including in Valentina's native Chile, where an aunt said the family is devastated.

Carolina Peralta said Valentina had been a shy girl in Chile, but that everything was turning out well for her

in the U.S., where she had reconnected with family, including her beloved older sister, and was becoming "more outgoing."

"Valentina died in the arms of her mother, inside the dressing room," her aunt said. "My sister does not understand how this tragedy could have happened just when they had managed to reunite the family."

The shooting has renewed questions about police tactics in confronting armed individuals in the community.

Some say police must be [See Shooting, A7]

## ANALYSIS

### 'Active shooter' strategy under scrutiny

Police are trained to stop attackers before all else, including helping victims. The tactic has drawbacks.

BY CONNOR SHEETS,  
ROBERT J. LOPEZ  
AND KEVIN RECTOR

The frantic 911 calls started coming in late Thursday morning from a Burlington clothing store in North Hollywood. Multiple callers said a man was threatening people inside the shop, either with a bicycle lock or a gun. At least one caller reported that shots had been fired.

Los Angeles police were dispatched, and by noon a small group of officers with guns drawn filed up the double escalator to the second floor, where they encountered and quickly shot 24-year-old Daniel Elena-Lopez, as depicted in body-camera footage released by the LAPD on Monday.

An officer's bullet killed Valentina Orellana-Peralta, a 14-year-old trying on clothes in a dressing room nearby. A relative said she died in her mother's arms at the store. The officer opened fire as Elena-Lopez appeared to be moving away from a bloodied woman he attacked. It is unclear whether the officers knew the suspect didn't have a gun.

[See Tactics, A7]

## In Bakersfield, a campaign for the Kern to flow again

The oft-diverted river has long been a dry bed in the city's downtown

BY IAN JAMES

**BAKERSFIELD** — The Kern River cascades from the Sierra Nevada in a steep-sided canyon, coursing through granite boulders, and flows to the northeast side of Bakersfield. There, beside cottonwoods and willows, the last of the river collects in a pool where dragonflies hover and reeds sway in the breeze.

Then the river dies, disappearing into the sand. Decades ago, the Kern flowed all the way through Bakersfield. But so much water has been appropriated and diverted in canals to farmland that the river has vanished in the city, leaving miles of dry riverbed.

Now, a group of residents is campaigning to bring back a flowing river in Bakersfield. They say restoring



**DELIA "DEE" DOMINGUEZ**, 70, is a leader of the Yowlumne Yokuts tribe, and her ancestors lived along the Kern River and its tributaries centuries ago.

continual flows would nourish a green corridor in the heart of the city, enabling people to wade, kayak and picnic on the banks. They've spoken at meetings of the state water board, collected photos of the water-filled Kern years ago, and organized a march along the riverbed, trudging nine miles on dry sand to drive home their message that water belongs in the river.

"I want this river back. I want this city to be healthy again," said Manuel Rodriguez, a 29-year-old activist, as he stood looking across the riverbed. "It's sad to think that we're allowing our natural resources to be taken away to that degree where it's killing the environment, it's killing the natural process of our land, the water."

Rodriguez, a video game [See Kern, A12]

### Wintry weather not letting up throughout state

Two storms will hit Southern California this week, while some areas up north could experience heavy snow. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

**'Ant man' who linked behavior to genetics dies**  
Edward O. Wilson, 92, had a vision of human nature and warned against loss of ecosystems. **CALIFORNIA, B4**

**Weather**  
Partly sunny, cool. L.A. Basin: 53/42. **B6**

Printed with soy inks on partially recycled paper.





# The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.



Cloudy, shower 59/47 • Tomorrow: Rain 54/49 B8

Democracy Dies in Darkness

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2021 • B2

## Committee on Jan. 6 is taking a public turn

House panel plans hearings, report in 2022 to air story of Capitol riot

BY JACQUELINE ALEMANY AND TOM HAMBERGER

The House committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol plans to begin holding public hearings in the new year to tell the story of the insurrection from start to finish while crafting an ample interim report on its findings by summer, as it shifts into a more public phase of its work.

The panel will continue to collect information and seek testimony from willing witnesses and those who have been reluctant — a group that now includes Republican members of Congress. It is examining whether to recommend that the Justice Department pursue charges against anyone, including former president Donald Trump, and whether legislative proposals are needed to help prevent valid election results from being overturned in the future.

"We have to address it — our families, our districts and our country demand that we get as much of the causal effects of what occurred and come up with some recommendations for the House so that it won't ever happen again," committee Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-Miss.) said in a recent interview.

The committee has taken in a massive amount of data — interviewing more than 300 witnesses, announcing more than 50 subpoenas, obtaining more than 35,000 pages of records and receiving hundreds of telephone leads through the Jan. 6 tip line, according to aides familiar with the matter who, like others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe details of the panel's work.

The panel has made splashy headlines with its aggressive legal posture toward former White House aides Stephen K. Bannon and Mark Meadows and the post-

SEE COMMITTEE ON A6



PHOTOS BY VALERIE PLESCH FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

## After a narrow escape, starting over

Siblings wounded in Kabul navigate a new life in Va. while mourning what they left behind

BY ANTONIO OLIVO

Mina Stanekzai, 8, strapped on a princess backpack, slipped on her pink shoes that light up when she walks, and — her leg still injured from a suicide bombing — bounced out of her aunt's Northern Virginia apartment for her first day of school in America.

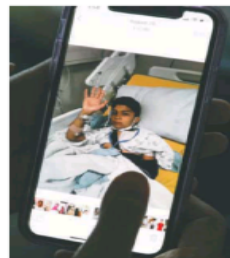
"How are you?" she said with a heavy Dari accent, practicing some English that might impress her teachers while her aunt, Ferishta Stanekzai, drove to her new school.

"I am fine," Mina answered herself. It was a simple American pleasantry for a girl whose life was anything but. Mina is one of the hundreds of Afghans who have settled into the Washington region as part of an airlift out of Afghanistan that launched the greatest influx of refugees the United States has seen since the end of the Vietnam War.

Almost all have been classified as "humanitarian parolees," entitling them to some federal aid with no path for U.S. citizenship and no guarantee for long-term support in one of the most expensive housing markets in the country.

But Gress's action wasn't just about his family. He also believed he should do more to support his wife and other women who don't think the government should decide what they do with their bodies. "I've seen the miracle of life," he said. "But I've also seen kids who are born into poverty and misery and don't have a fair shot."

SEE VASECTOMIES ON A7



TOP: Ferishta Stanekzai helps her niece, Mina, 8, get ready for her first day of school this past fall in Northern Virginia. ABOVE: Mina and her brother, Faisal, 13, seen in a hospital in Germany, were both wounded in the Kabul airport bombing.

And they carry tales of trauma that, refugee groups say, will take years to unravel: the chaotic scenes outside the Kabul airport where many were beaten by Taliban fighters while trying to get to a plane, the danger hounding family members still in Afghanistan, the uncertainty of what the future holds in a new country they may resent over how it left their own.

Mina came to the United States with shrapnel in her body, a broken thigh bone and a deep longing for her mother. The last time she saw her was right before the bombing at the Kabul airport, as the family was trying to get through the military barricade.

But all of that was far away that morning as she FaceTimed with her father, Wali Stanekzai, who remained in hiding from the Taliban — stymied in his effort to join Mina and her brother Faisal, 13, in Alexandria.

"You want me to speak English?" Mina asked her father. "Okay. Hi. How are you? I am good."

A day of chaos

Late August found Ferishta in a panic. As the Taliban steadily marched toward Kabul, she feared for the safety of her brother Wali and his

SEE SIBLINGS ON A8

## Omicron exacts a toll on hospitals

WORKERS GIRD FOR CRUSH OF PATIENTS

Areas including NYC have highest case counts yet

BY DAN DIAMOND, TIM CRAIG AND SEAN SULLIVAN

U.S. hospitals continue to reel from surging volumes of coronavirus patients as the omicron variant drives a record-breaking flurry of infections in some regions — with medical workers bracing for more misery in the weeks ahead.

The New York City health department reported that the seven-day average of confirmed and probable coronavirus cases there has climbed to 17,334 a day, the highest recorded levels of the pandemic, and a roughly tenfold increase from a month ago.

"The numbers look huge. But my guess is the true number is much, much higher," said Craig Spencer, director of global health in emergency medicine at New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center. "It's definitely missing a lot of people who are testing positive on rapid tests" and failing to report their results.

Louisiana officials reported that the state's covid-19 hospitalizations have doubled to about 450 patients since last week, with unvaccinated patients accounting for 80 percent of hospitalizations.

In Florida, Miami's Jackson

SEE OMICRON ON A4

CDC shortens isolation time

Recommendation is now five days for asymptomatic Americans. A6

Vaccine trial in Israel

A test group of health-care workers is receiving fourth doses. A13

Record-setting holiday

D.C. region set new caseload highs over the Christmas weekend. B1

## Across the U.S., vasectomies have become an 'act of love'

With abortion rights at risk, men try to take larger role in family planning

BY EMILY WAX-THIBODEAUX

After Andy and Erin Gress had their fourth child, Andy decided it was time for him to "step up" and help with the family planning. So he did something that the mere thought of makes some men cringe: He got a vasectomy. It was early one morning last winter — a brief moment of peace, before juggling getting the kids ready for online school and work Zoom calls. He happened to see a local news story about discounts being offered during "World Vasectomy Day." He made

an appointment that day. His wife had taken birth control pills, but she struggled with the side effects. She had worked as a night nurse through four pregnancies, and the couple had children ranging in age from 2 to 11.

"The procedure was a total relief, almost like the covid shot — like I'm safe now," said Gress, who works in higher education. "I wanted to man up."

But Gress's action wasn't just about his family. He also believed he should do more to support his wife and other women who don't think the government should decide what they do with their bodies. "I've seen the miracle of life," he said. "But I've also seen kids who are born into poverty and misery and don't have a fair shot."

SEE VASECTOMIES ON A7

## Pregnancy apps are now vaccine battlegrounds

What to Expect, a popular source for new parents, takes steps to weed out misinformation

BY ASHLEY FETTERS MALOY AND WILL OREMUS



Mashaya Engel and daughter Ava at their home in Reliance, S.D., on Dec. 12. Engel said an app she used during pregnancy included posts from others who expressed coronavirus vaccine skepticism.

For generations of parents, Heidi Murkoff's 1984 pregnancy guide "What to Expect When You're Expecting" has been a trusted companion, offering calm, scientifically informed advice for a nerve-racking nine months.

These days, of course, there's an app for that: What to Expect's "Pregnancy & Baby Tracker," which offers personalized articles, videos, graphics of the baby's development, and other features based on due date.

But parents who have used What to Expect's app say they also are offered something they weren't expecting: a "community" section rife with scare stories,

conspiracy theories and outright falsehoods about the safety of vaccines, posted by other users and surfaced by the app's search functions and email notifications.

Mashaya Engel, 26, who gave birth to her daughter in August, said she encountered multiple posts expressing skepticism about the safety of getting vaccinated against the coronavirus during pregnancy. "I searched in the group discussions for vaccines, and it popped up — some moms having discussions about not vaccinating your children, or getting delayed vaccines," Engel said. Other users noted a similar phenomenon: "Most antivax and microchip conspiracy comments I've ever seen," one tweeted in May.

SEE APPS ON A16

## IN THE NEWS



KHNS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Killings in Myanmar** The United Nations called for a probe after reports of a massacre by military forces on Christmas Eve. A12

**THE NATION** Wintry weather and an omicron-driven surge triggered airline staffing shortages and another 1,100 domestic flight cancellations. A3

**THE WORLD** As book sales fall off, a Belgian "village du livre" that once had over two dozen bookshops works to rewrite its future. A10

**Poland's president** vetoed a media law that was widely viewed as targeting a U.S.-owned

news outlet and that its critics claimed was detrimental to a free press. A11

**Somalia's president** suspended the powers of the nation's prime minister, his main rival, escalating a standoff that risks further destabilizing the country. A12

**THE ECONOMY** The SEC has earmarked Arc Capital, a virtually unknown advisory firm partnered with Trump Media and

Technology Group, for investigations. A14

**THE REGION** Drivers from Maryland and Virginia often ignore D.C.'s photo tickets, and they had 1.9 million outstanding citations as of the end of May. B1

**After almost 60 years** without a serious repair job, the George Washington Parkway will undergo a \$161 million renovation. B1

**A second time capsule** has been found in Richmond under the city's Robert E. Lee

monument site. B1

**A Virginia Tech** project has found forgotten Army surveys that reveal lingo from World War II and harsh views on race, gender and combat. B1

**OBITUARIES** Edward O. Wilson, a Harvard naturalist often cited as an heir to Charles Darwin, was 92. B6

**Canadian director** Jean-Marc Vallée, 58, brought his naturalistic style to films such as "Dallas Buyers Club" and "Wild." C1

## INSIDE



**STYLE** A singular vision Wayne Thiebaud's artistic eye was so much keener than pop art confessions. C1

**HEALTH & SCIENCE** The section will return next week.

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LOTTERIES.....B3  
OBITUARIES.....B6  
TELEVISION.....C8  
WORLD NEWS.....A10

CARRIER 0325  
The Washington Post / Total 145, No. 25





## deportes

¿Se retira Federer?  
El tenis ya empieza a elaborar su despedida

A los 40 años, el suizo está a punto de terminar una carrera que marcará la historia del deporte.



## UN MUSEO A CIELO ABIERTO EN UN PAISAJE CAMPESTRE

—cultura

Abrió la primera etapa del nuevo Museo Campo Cañuelas; se exhiben esculturas y arte moderno, entre ciervos y pavos reales. Página 24

## CALLE CORRIENTES, CON UNA NUTRIDA OFERTA DE VERANO

—espectáculos

La cartelera teatral de Buenos Aires incluye una propuesta renovada, con varios estrenos y reposiciones que convocan a grandes figuras.

## LA NACION

MARTES 28 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2021 | LANACION.COM.AR

## Frenética negociación para habilitar las reelecciones de intendentes bonaerenses

**DEBATE.** Sectores del oficialismo y de la oposición quieren eliminar el límite de dos mandatos

La Legislatura bonaerense debatirá hoy si elimina el límite de dos mandatos consecutivos que rige para intendentes, legisladores, concejales y consejeros escolares de la provincia de Buenos Aires. Los jefes comunales presionan desde hace tiempo para derribar la barrera que les impide volver a presentar-

se a elecciones por la continuidad en sus cargos. Anoche se extendían las negociaciones entre sectores del Frente de Todos y de Juntos que propician modificaciones de la ley. La Cámara de Diputados y el Senado de la provincia sesionarán desde el mediodía con una agenda múltiple, en la que las reeleccio-

nes son el tema más espinoso. Las chances están abiertas para una modificación de la norma, aunque la forma que tendrá ese cambio es una incógnita. La discusión por las reelecciones divide al oficialismo y a la oposición. Las diferencias quedarían expuestas en las votaciones de hoy. Página 10

## LAS PROPUESTAS

- Tomar 2019 como primer mandato
- Tomar 2023 como primer mandato
- Derogar la prohibición

## Más de 7100 hectáreas de bosques arrasados

**sociedad**—SAN CARLOS DE BARILOCHE.— A 65 km de esta ciudad, cerca de los lagos Martín y Steffen, desde hace 20 días un incendio arrasa con 3000 hectáreas de bosques. A este foco se sumaron uno en Neuquén y otro en Chubut, que consumieron 4100 hectáreas. Página 25



Desde el lago Steffen, en Río Negro, se observan los incendios que ya destruyeron 3000 hectáreas de bosques en esa zona. MARCELO MARTÍNEZ

## El país ya atraviesa la tercera ola de la pandemia, pero con muy baja mortalidad

**CORONAVIRUS.** Las cifras marcan un nuevo pico de casos; la vacunación atenúa el impacto

¿La Argentina atraviesa la tercera ola de la pandemia? Según los especialistas y las autoridades consultadas por LA NACION, la respuesta es sí. Hasta el momento, sin embar-

go, el aumento de los contagios no tuvo repercusión en la ocupación de camas de terapia intensiva, y los índices de mortalidad son muy bajos. Las variantes delta y ómicron

son altamente contagiosas, pero el 71,2% de la población tiene el esquema completo de vacunación y el 10,1%, la dosis de refuerzo. Eso atenúa el impacto. Página 21

## Apuran la aprobación del autotest de Covid hogareño

Falta el aval de la Anmat; esperan que en enero esté disponible

Página 22

## Se firmó el pacto fiscal con críticas de Fernández a Larreta

**IMPUESTOS.** El Presidente presentó el consenso como una señal al FMI

El presidente Alberto Fernández presentó la firma del nuevo Consenso Fiscal con 22 gobernadores como una señal al Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI). Tras el fracaso del presupuesto, el Gobierno escenificó un amplio acuerdo político, uno de los requisitos del organismo multilateral de crédito.

Horacio Rodríguez Larreta se negó a firmar el acuerdo, que habilita la suba de impuestos, con el argumento de que el gobierno de la ciudad presentó un reclamo ante la Corte por la quita en la coparticipación. "Lamento que se haya quedado sin firmar; cuando se llevaba los puntos de coparticipación lo hacía sin consensos", dijo Fernández. Página 8

## Suben 26% los ingresos tope en el monotributo

**ACTUALIZACIÓN.** A partir de enero, los montos de facturación máxima para estar en el monotributo y en cada una de las categorías subirán 26% respecto de los ahora vigentes. En el caso de las categorías más altas, eso implica un aumento anual de 32,05% (en comercio) y de 39,18% (en servicios), muy por debajo de la inflación de 2021. También suben los aportes a pagar. Página 16

## El Gobierno amenaza a las prepagas con sanciones

**COPAGOS.** Busca forzarlas a aumentar a los prestadores y evitar adicionales. Página 17



**VACINAÇÃO CONTRA A COVID-19 INFANTIL**

**SÃO PAULO**

|            |            |            |
|------------|------------|------------|
| NOME       | 1ª DOSE    | 2ª DOSE    |
| UNIDADE    | UNIDADE    | UNIDADE    |
| CNBS       | CNBS       | CNBS       |
| DATA       | DATA       | DATA       |
| LOTE       | LOTE       | LOTE       |
| FABRICANTE | FABRICANTE | FABRICANTE |
| VACINADOR  | VACINADOR  | VACINADOR  |
| REG. PROF. | REG. PROF. | REG. PROF. |

#VacinaJá

COMPROVANTE DE VACINAÇÃO

VACIVIDA

Reprodução do cartão de vacinação contra a Covid para crianças que começou a ser impresso em São Paulo Divulgação

## Governo prevê vacinação de crianças em janeiro

Ministério da Saúde defende imunização contra a Covid para faixa de 5 a 11 anos

O Ministério da Saúde divulgou nota nesta segunda-feira (27) na qual afirma que a imunização de crianças de 5 a 11 anos de idade contra a Covid-19 deve começar em janeiro. No texto, a pasta diz ser favorável à vacinação desse público.

"No dia 5, após ouvir a sociedade, a pasta formalizará sua decisão e, mantida a recomendação, a imunização desta faixa etária deve iniciar ainda em janeiro", diz o ministério, que prevê a chegada das doses do Brasil no próximo dia 10.

A manifestação ocorre um dia depois de a secretária extraordinária de enfrentamento à Covid-19, Rosana Leite de Melo, afirmar em nota técnica enviada ao Supremo Tribunal Federal que o fármaco desenvolvido para crianças é seguro.

A posição contrária questionamentos sobre a vacina feitos pelo ministro Marcelo Queiroga e pelo presidente Jair Bolsonaro (PL), que afirmou, também ontem, que sua filha, Laura, de 11 anos, não será imunizada contra a Covid-19. Saúde B1



Caixão com vítima das consequências das tempestades é levado em barco numa estrada inundada no sul da Bahia Camila Souza/Divulgação/Folhapress

## Chega a 20 o total de mortos em chuvas na Bahia

Atingido por tempestades, estado já tem 72 municípios em emergência, 58 deles considerados em situação de crise. Em Ilhéus, um dos mais atingidos, caixões são transportados em barcos. O governo federal repassou R\$ 20 milhões para ajudar as cidades destruídas. Cotidiano B2

+ La Niña e alta da temperatura no oceano causam temporais B2

+ Ano-Novo deve ter chuva e temperatura amena no estado de SP B3

## João P. Coutinho Bolsonaro fez da política um tumor

Pressinto que houve duas pandemias, não apenas uma, para os brasileiros: a do vírus e a do governo. Isso me permitiu cartografar, só pelas suas vozes, um envelhecimento brutal, duas vezes mais rápido que o meu. Ilustrada B11

## Morre aos 85 Jonathan Spence, autoridade em estudos da China

Tesouro quer lançar novo título, voltado para a aposentadoria A17

Veja como mudam em 2022 regras para se aposentar pelo INSS A16

## Lira fixa base bolsonarista, mas trava em reformas

Em seu primeiro ano como presidente da Câmara, Arthur Lira (PP-AL) destruiu projetos importantes para o governo, do qual é o principal aliado. No entanto reformas estruturantes, como a tributária, bem como uma "pauta da vingança" contra a Lava Jato não avançaram. Poder A4 e A5

## EDITORIAIS A2 O pior corporativismo

Sobre relações de Bolsonaro com policiais e Forças. Cenas violadas A respeito de adulteração de locais de homicídios.

## União recua e retira autorizações de garimpo no AM

O ministro do Gabinete de Segurança Institucional, Augusto Heleno, cassou licenças que dera ao garimpo em São Gabriel da Cachoeira, região das mais preservadas da Amazônia. O Ministério Público Federal no AM abriu procedimento para investigar as autorizações. Ambiente B4

## Produtos mudam para driblar caos tributário

Diferentes alíquotas aplicadas a bens de consumo semelhantes fazem com que empresas alterem nome e características de seus produtos. Mercado A13



## Cotidiano B3

Policiais viram influenciadoras e exibem armas e farda nas redes

## Ilustrada B6 e B7

Apego à pauta de costumes e ação nas redes firmam Mario Frias na Cultura

## Esporte B5

Cristiano Ronaldo, Lewandowski e Salah ainda lutam por vaga na Copa

## ANÁLISE

Marcelo Leite Terra perde E.O. Wilson, seu maior naturalista Ambiente B4

**JHSF**  
apresenta

**BOA VISTA VILLAGE**

Golf Residences  
com vista  
para o campo  
de golfe de  
18 buracos por  
Rees Jones.

Veja nas páginas A10 e A11.





Informe a nivel mundial señala que el Covid se volverá un mal endémico

## Ómicron: Confirman 3 casos y hay otros 46 bajo sospecha

Se dan los primeros enfermos en el país con la variante más virulenta del virus. Salud indica que la vacunación es vital para cortar la propagación masiva que pueda generarse.

PÁGINAS 2, 3 y 37

Alianza de sectores públicos y privados  
**Quieren dar más poder a las entidades que atacan al contrabando**

PÁGINA 12

Exigen eficiencia a la Fuerza Aérea  
**Caída de helicóptero: Familia de víctima pide una investigación seria**

PÁGINA 5

Más privilegios para estatales  
**Agricultura da aumento a sus funcionarios en plena crisis sanitaria**

PÁGINA 15



**¡Cuidado! Desde hoy el calor será más insoportable**

**Precaución.** Se pronostican temperaturas de hasta 40 grados al despedir el año, por lo cual recomiendan hidratarse suficientemente y no exponerse al sol.

PÁGINA 19

**RGD tenía 20 cheques de Schwartzman, el testigo falso asesinado por sicarios**

PÁGINA 42



**Nadia Ferreira es Hija Dilecta de Asunción**

PÁGINA 25





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## LE FIGARO

« Sans la liberté de blâmer, il n'est point d'éloge flatteur » Beaumarchais



**MONTAGNE**  
MÉRIBEL, TOUT UN ART  
DE VIVRE AU CŒUR  
DES 3 VALLÉES **PAGES 24 ET 25**

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est possible »  
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**FIGARO OUI  
FIGARO NON**

**Réponses à la question  
de lundi:**  
Covid-19: faut-il instaurer  
un couvre-feu  
avant le Nouvel An ?

**OUI 43% NON 57%**  
**TOTAL DE VOTANTS: 287 986**

**Votez aujourd'hui  
sur lefigaro.fr**

Covid-19: êtes-vous  
favorable au retour  
du port du masque  
obligatoire dans  
les centres-villes ?

SYLVAIN ARNOZ/OT MÉRIBEL -  
DONOVAN VAN STADEN/  
STOCKADORE.COM

# Le gouvernement ajuste sa réponse à la vague Omicron

Retour du télétravail et du port du masque à l'extérieur, limitation des rassemblements, accélération de la vaccination... Jean Castex estime les nouvelles mesures « proportionnées ».

Faire face à la vague Omicron sans paralyser le pays. Alors que la flambée de l'épidémie se poursuit et que la barre symbolique des 100 000 cas quotidiens a été franchie, Emmanuel Macron a réuni lundi un Conseil de défense sanitaire pour décider de

nouvelles mesures. Le chef de l'État a fait le choix d'écarter les options les plus drastiques, comme un couvre-feu le soir du Nouvel An ou le report de la rentrée scolaire. Mais plusieurs restrictions vont faire leur retour, comme le télétravail obliga-

toire trois à quatre jours par semaine, le port du masque à l'extérieur dans les centres-villes sur décision des préfets ou des jauges plus strictes pour les grands rassemblements. Surtout, l'exécutif mise plus que jamais sur la vaccination et cherche enco-

re à convaincre les réticents. Outre l'entrée en vigueur du passe vaccinal, prévue mi-janvier, le gouvernement a décidé de rabaisser le délai de rappel à trois mois et s'apprête à réduire la durée d'isolement pour les cas contacts vaccinés.

→ **OMICRON DEVRAIT ÊTRE MAJORITAIRE DÈS CETTE SEMAINE ET L'HÔPITAL CRAINT LA DEFERLANCE EN JANVIER**  
→ **AIR FRANCE, LA SNCF ET LA RATP PRÊTES FACE AU VARIANT**  
→ **LA RENTRÉE SCOLAIRE AURA BIEN LIEU LE 3 JANVIER**  
**PAGES 2 À 4**



**2022, année de tous les dangers dans le monde**

Plusieurs crises géopolitiques majeures menacent l'équilibre international: l'acquisition de l'arme atomique par l'Iran, une agression russe de l'Ukraine ou chinoise de Taïwan mettraient les Occidentaux au pied du mur. **PAGES 6, 7 ET L'ÉDITORIAL**

**ÉDITORIAL** par Philippe Gélie [pgelie@lefigaro.fr](mailto:pgelie@lefigaro.fr)

## L'horizon du désordre

**N**ul ne prend plaisir à jouer les oiseaux de mauvais augure au lendemain de Noël. Pourtant, au moment où les regards se tournent vers 2022, force est de constater un alignement inquiétant de périls. S'ils devaient s'agréger, le monde pourrait traverser une de ces tempêtes majeures qui ponctuent les siècles. Non que la planète fut jamais pacifiée - elle est saignée en permanence d'une cinquantaine de conflits. Le fait nouveau, c'est un jeu de forces globales qui porte la menace d'un grand basculement. La première puissance économique et militaire, jusque-là « gendarme du monde » pour le meilleur ou pour le pire, a entamé depuis une décennie un mouvement de repli qui arrive à son moment de vérité. Chacun peut mesurer le manque d'entrain de l'Amérique à protéger ses alliés et à tenir tête à ses ennemis - la preuve par l'Afghanistan. Ce qui a pour effet d'aiguiser des appétits concurrents: la Russie en Ukraine, la Chine à Taïwan, l'Iran dans ses installations nucléaires souterraines voient de concert s'ouvrir une opportunité de tester la résolution du vieux Joe Biden. Ils pourraient même se donner le mot...

Ces puissances dressées contre le système international poursuivent des objectifs qui ne peuvent être atteints pacifiquement. Vladimir Poutine n'obtiendra pas la soumission volontaire de Kiev, ni Xi Jinping celle de Taïpei. Le premier est engagé dans une stratégie de déstabilisation asymétrique partout où les Occidentaux lâchent prise, en Syrie, en Libye, au Mali et même au cœur des démocraties gagnées par la désinformation. Le second accomplit un vaste plan de conquête économique et de compétition politique visant à asseoir sa prééminence. Après avoir tant déploré l'interventionnisme américain, les Européens ne devraient pas tarder à le regretter. Car nous sommes tragiquement préparés au mouvement de balancier qui s'amorce: incapables de riposter ou seulement de préserver nos intérêts dans le nouveau rapport de forces. Face à un horizon de crises, l'Europe sans protecteur doit-elle vraiment se résigner à un Iran nucléaire, une Russie menaçante et une Chine dominante ? ■

## Les ventes de livres battent tous les records en France

L'appétit des Français pour la lecture, constaté lors du premier confinement en 2020, se confirme. Cette année, les ventes des éditeurs ont fait un bond spectaculaire de 19 % par rapport à 2019, dernier exercice avant l'apparition du Covid. Les librairies indépendantes ont particulièrement profité de ce dynamisme du marché, qui doit beaucoup à l'engouement des clients pour la bande dessinée, notamment les mangas. **PAGE 20**



LE CHAMPAGNE À L'ÉTAT PUR  
L'ABUS D'ALCOOL EST DANGEREUX POUR LA SANTÉ. À CONSOMMER AVEC MODÉRATION.



# The person who got me through 2021

Cultural heroes  
who made a  
difficult year a  
little bit better  
G2 special  
issue



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## England goes it alone – PM rejects extra Covid curbs before new year

Decision described as  
'greatest divergence'  
from scientific advice

Jessica Elgot  
Nicola Davis

Boris Johnson will not introduce new Covid curbs in England before 2022, giving mass events the go-ahead and leaving nightclubs open for new year, in contrast with all other UK nations.

Scientists criticised the decision – which came as England recorded its highest number of Covid infections – saying it was the moment of “the greatest divergence between scientific advice and legislation” seen since the start of the pandemic.

The announcement came after Johnson was told by advisers that significant NHS pressures were coming from staff absence, rather than overcrowded intensive care units. One model predicts up to 40% staff absence because of sickness in London, where Covid rates are highest.

Ministers are expected to continue to focus efforts on vaccination with sources saying the majority of those behind the rise in hospital admissions are those who are unvaccinated.

The decision not to introduce curbs makes England an outlier in the UK, after Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland put limits on social gatherings and mass events.

Johnson's cabinet had pushed back against new measures before Christmas, as cases of the Omicron variant of coronavirus started to rise. Three cabinet ministers who spoke

**“Take a lateral flow test ... celebrate outdoors if you can”**

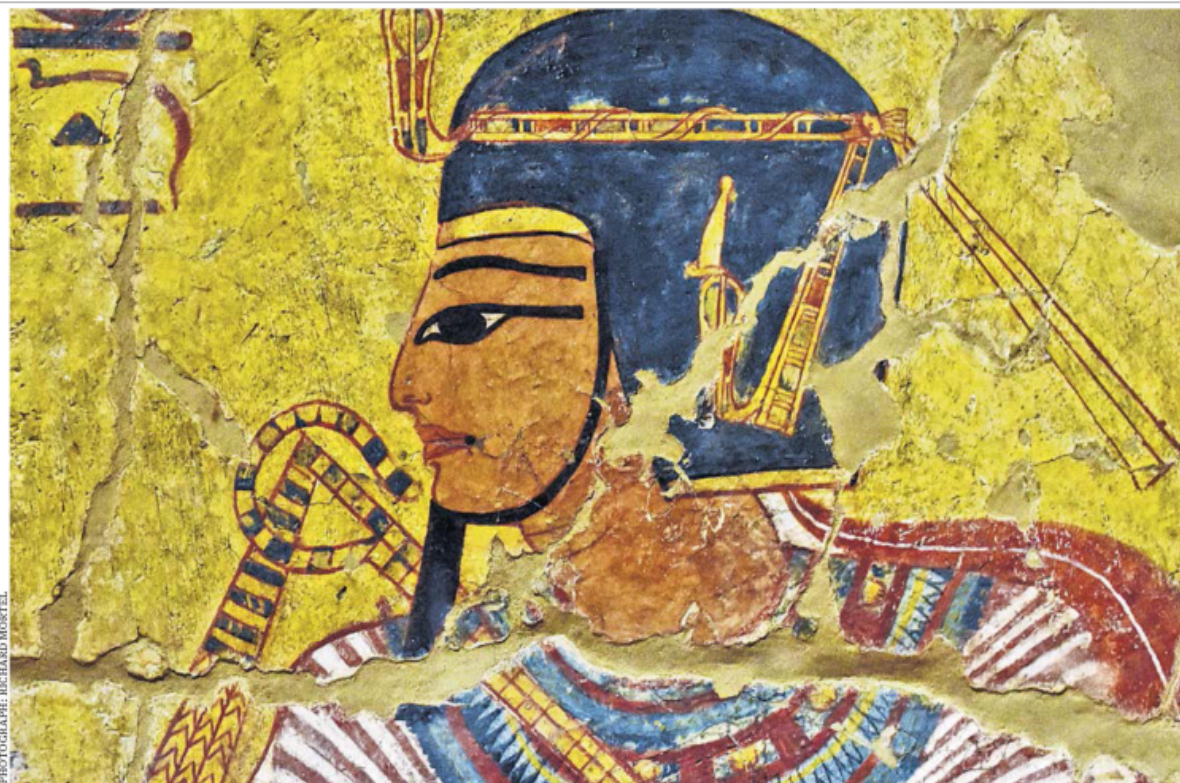
Sajid Javid  
Health secretary

to the Guardian yesterday said they remained deeply sceptical that any further measures were necessary.

The health secretary, Sajid Javid, said people should take steps

themselves to protect others. “We won’t be taking any further measures. Of course people should remain cautious as we approach new year celebrations and take a lateral flow test if that makes sense, celebrate outdoors if you can, have some ventilation indoors if you can,” he said.

The call for caution was reiterated by the prime minister in a series of tweets last night. “We will continue to monitor the data carefully, but there will be no new restrictions introduced in England before the new year,” he said. “However, I



## Secrets of the pharaoh are revealed after 3,500 years

The intact mummy of Amenhotep I, ruler of Egypt more than three millennia ago, has been unwrapped digitally, with a scan revealing amulets, a golden girdle and remarkably good teeth. **News Page 11** →

## Obesity plan 'not enough' to beat junk food culture

Exclusive  
Andrew Gregory  
Health editor

Ministers have been warned that their efforts to tackle Britain's obesity crisis are likely to fail because the public are constantly “bombarded” by unhealthy food options.

The government plans to introduce a 9pm watershed on TV and a ban on paid-for advertising online for unhealthy food and drink, plus restrictions on unhealthy food and drink promotions.

However, a damning 28-page report, commissioned by the government's own obesity research unit and seen by the Guardian, warns that these efforts will fail unless much wider action is taken to transform the entire food environment.

Britain has one of the

