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News

Business & Finance

The average rate for a 30-year fixed mortgage topped 4% for the first time since May 2019, Freddie Mac said. A1

◆ **Many U.S. homeowners earned more last year from home appreciation than they did from their jobs. A2**

◆ **Apparel retailers and department stores are meeting pockets of price resistance, a sign that consumers are curtailing spending. A1**

◆ **The S&P 500 and Dow both gained 1.2%, while the Nasdaq climbed 1.3%. Oil prices jumped. B10**

◆ **The Bank of England raised its key interest rate for the third time in as many policy meetings. A13**

◆ **FedEx's revenue rose 10% in the fiscal third quarter as higher shipping rates made up for shipping fewer packages overall. B1**

◆ **Amazon closed its \$6.5 billion acquisition of the MGM movie and television studio, even as the FTC continues to examine the deal. B1**

◆ **Barry Diller's Nevada gambling license has been delayed amid probes into the MGM Resorts stakeholder's share purchases of Activision. B3**

◆ **GameStop posted a loss for the holiday quarter despite a rise in sales, surprising analysts who were expecting it to turn a profit. B1**

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◆ **Biden and Chinese leader Xi plan to confer as the U.S. works to deter China from deeper involvement with Russia during the invasion of Ukraine. A6**

◆ **Russia made good on payments to foreign bondholders, according to investors and traders, averting default on its foreign debt. A7**

◆ **Moderna asked the Food and Drug Administration to authorize a second booster dose of its Covid-19 vaccine for adults in the U.S. A3**

◆ **A tangle of encouraging trends in the U.S. and concerning signs abroad are raising questions about the pandemic's trajectory. A3**

◆ **Jeff Zients, the leader of the White House's Covid-19 response, will leave the job and be succeeded by public-health expert Ashish Jha. A3**

◆ **Xi vowed to reduce the impact of Covid control measures on China's economy and people's lives. A11**

◆ **Argentina's Senate approved a government deal to refinance \$44 billion in debt with the International Monetary Fund. A13**

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In Mariupol, Ukraine, people on Thursday walked past a residential building that was bombed by Russia. A local official said 80% to 90% of the city has been destroyed.

Oil Market's Big Winners:
'Little Guys' Eager to Drill

Autry Stephens races to produce more with big players on sidelines

By GREGORY ZUCKERMAN

In the spring of 2020, oil prices were crashing and Autry Stephens was in trouble. When prices stabilized a few months later, his Midland, Texas, oil company decided to take a gamble and expand drilling. His timing was perfect.

With oil prices today gyrating around \$100 a barrel, Mr. Stephens's company, Endeavor Energy Resources, and a few other privately held U.S. drillers, have emerged as pivotal players in the global energy market. The war in Ukraine and sanctions against Russia have hit supplies, and these smaller operators are among the few racing to produce more crude.

That is making them a lot of money. Mr. Stephens, who turned 84 last week, may be the biggest winner. Under financial pressure in early 2020, he now has become one of the wealthiest people in the American energy sector, with a net worth of more than \$10 billion, according to people close to him and market valuations of assets controlled by his company, of which he is the sole owner.

Mr. Stephens is a reserved oilman who often eats a cheese quesadilla with fries for lunch and is usually in the office seven days a week. He said he has never before seen a market with surging prices yet so little competition. "This is almost too good to be

Please turn to page A10

Queen Mary
Makes Waves
For Tiny CopyModel of ocean
liner goes back
to home port

By BECKY YERAK

When the South Street Seaport Museum sent its roughly 20-foot model of the Queen Mary to the namesake ocean liner, it expected smooth sailing.

The lower Manhattan nonprofit in 2015 rented out the little mahogany and mother-of-pearl vessel, which it considers a "Mona Lisa" in its collection, to the big Queen Mary in Long Beach, Calif.

But during the more than six years aboard the big ship, the little model suffered damage. Moths grazed on decorative green wool felt at the bottom of its case. Excessive humidity contributed to cracking and flaking of paint near mini-lifeboats. Light exposure led to the fading of a flag on the model. The rental fees,

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Average rate on a 30-year
fixed mortgage, weekly

Source: Freddie Mac

Mortgage Rates Rise Above 4%
For First Time Since May 2019

By ORELA MCCAFFREY

The era of ultralow mortgage rates is over.

The average rate for a 30-year fixed mortgage topped 4% for the first time since May 2019, Freddie Mac said Thursday. At the beginning of the year, the average rate on the U.S.'s most popular home loan was 3.22%. It hit a record low of 2.65% in January 2021 and spent more than half the year

under 3%.

Home-lending costs had been rising ahead of the Federal Reserve's decision Wednesday to raise rates for the first time since 2018. And while the Fed's quarter-point move didn't affect Freddie Mac's weekly average of 4.16%, recorded before the central bank's announcement, it is likely to send rates even higher. Mortgage rates are closely tied to the yield on the

10-year U.S. Treasury, which tends to rise in tandem with the Fed's benchmark rate.

Mortgages are the first place people are feeling the effects of the Fed's decision to start raising rates to curb inflation, but they won't be the last. Banks borrow from each other at the Fed's benchmark

◆ **Rise in home values last year surpassed median pay..... A2**

Shoppers Push Back on Price Hikes

By SUZANNE KAPNER

Apparel retailers and department stores are bumping up against pockets of price resistance, a sign that consumers are curtailing spending as inflation remains at the highest level in four decades.

Macy's Inc. tried to raise prices on some mattresses and sofas by \$100, but shoppers pushed back, Chief Executive Jeff Gennette said. Clothing brand Bella Dahl raised prices

on its T-shirts by about \$20, then sales fell and the company rolled back the price increase. "There was a revolt," said Steven Millman, its chief brand officer. "If we go any higher, we'll do half the sales."

With inflation at a 40-year high, companies across the spectrum have been charging more to offset rising costs with little resistance from consumers. That trend is starting to change, especially on lower-priced apparel and furniture,

according to industry executives, analysts and consumers. Retail sales slowed in February compared with January, according to the Commerce Department. Compared with February 2021, sales are up 177%, but a large chunk is due to rising prices. In some categories, such as gasoline and food, all the gains were driven by inflation, according to research firm GlobalData. In apparel, there is "some trading

◆ **Rise in home values last year surpassed median pay..... A2**

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Ukrainians Sift
Shelter Debris
For SurvivorsTheater in besieged
city was bombed by
Russians intentionally,
Zelensky chargesBy ISABEL COLES
AND BRETT FORRESTER

LVIV, Ukraine—Rescuers dug through the debris of a bombed theater in Mariupol where hundreds of Ukrainian civilians had sought shelter as Russian forces continued to shell the southern port city and other urban areas across the country.

The entrance to a bomb shelter under the theater in Mariupol was blocked when the building partially collapsed from a Russian airstrike late Wednesday, said Pavlo Kyrylenko, head of the regional

military administration in the eastern region of Donetsk. Former governor Sergiy Taruta said on Thursday the shelter had remained intact and there were survivors.

President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine accused Russia of deliberately attacking the theater in a speech, adding that the death toll is still unknown. Russia's Defense Ministry denied its forces conducted an airstrike on the theater.

Mr. Zelensky also spoke to Germany's parliament Thursday, his latest in a string of appeals to Western governments for more support, as European countries weighed sending more military equipment to Kyiv.

In Washington, the House passed legislation to end normal trade ties with Russia

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Russia's Revamped
Military StumblesBy THOMAS GROVE
AND STEPHEN FIDLER

For over a decade, Russia spent hundreds of billions of dollars restructuring its military into a smaller, better equipped and more-professional force that could face off against the West.

Three weeks into Russia's invasion of Ukraine, its first big test, the armed forces have floundered. Western estimates, while highly uncertain, suggest as many as 7,000 Russian soldiers may have been killed.

The dead included four Russian generals—one-fifth of the number estimated to be in Ukraine—along with other senior commanders, according to a Western official and Ukrainian military reports. The generals were close to the front lines, some Western officials said, a sign that lower ranks in forward units were likely unable to make decisions or fearful of advancing.

Russia's failings appear to trace to factors ranging from the Kremlin's wrong assumptions about Ukrainian resistance to the use of poorly motivated conscript soldiers. They suggest that Russia and the West overestimated Moscow's overhauls of its armed forces, which some military analysts say appear to have been undermined by graft and misreporting.

The military's previous outings in staged maneuvers and smaller operations in Syria didn't prepare it for a multi-pronged attack into a country with a military fiercely defended

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The Ukraine Crisis

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◆ **Invasion weakens OECD's growth forecast..... A7**

◆ **Rural Russians support Kremlin, blame West..... A9**

INSIDE



MANSION

Deluxe bathrooms go bold with colors and fixtures that make a statement. M1

CHRIS SORRENTI FOR WSJ

Ukraine invasion



How Russia's onslaught united a divided country
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The Americans signing up to fight in a foreign conflict
PATTI WALDMEIR, PAGE 16

Wiki's battleground between Russian and Ukrainian editors
JOHN THORNHILL, PAGE 17

Zelensky scolds Berlin for placing trade ties above Europe's security

◆ Nord Stream 2 singled out ◆ Financing of Putin's war cited ◆ Biden to hold talks with Xi

GUY CHAZAN — LUVV
ERIKA SOLOMON — BERLIN

Volodymyr Zelensky has launched an scorching attack on Germany over its policy towards Ukraine, accusing its leaders of placing good economic relations with President Vladimir Putin of Russia over the security of Europe.

"We've seen how many ties your companies have with Russia," he said in an address to the Bundestag, "with a country that just uses you and other countries to finance its war."

Ukraine's president delivered the critique as Russia's invasion entered its fourth week, with no let-up in the bombardment of his country's population centres.

Ukraine has mounted a fierce resistance, repelling Moscow's forces in some parts of the country. More than 7,000 Russian soldiers have died in Ukraine, with between 14,000 and 21,000 injured, according to US officials.

Russia said on March 2 it had sustained 498 casualties and has not provided figures since. Casualty numbers could not be independently verified.

Echoing recent speeches to the US Congress and the UK House of Commons, Zelensky pleaded for more military support, including a no-fly zone that the west has rejected because of fears it would start a world war.

But Zelensky also scolded Germany's long-held faith in economic engagement with Moscow, singling out the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, the recently suspended project designed to bring Russian gas directly to Europe under the Baltic Sea.

Zelensky's address was made as civilians emerged from the wreckage of a theatre in Mariupol that was bombed by Russian planes, prompting further outrage from the west.

Early indications were that most of those in the building had emerged from the attack unscathed.

"After a terrible night of uncertainty... finally good news from Mariupol!" said Serhiy Taruta, a local MP.

Joe Biden, US president, will hold a



Volodymyr Zelensky consoles a Kyiv hospital patient injured while fleeing the town of Vorzel, near the capital, after his capital.

phone call with President Xi Jinping of China today to discuss the war in Ukraine, among other issues.

The call between the two leaders is part of "efforts to maintain open lines of communication" between the two countries, the White House said.

The call comes after Jake Sullivan, US national security adviser, met Yang Jiechi, China's top foreign policy adviser, in Rome this week. Sullivan made clear before his trip that China would face consequences if it undermined western pressure on Putin and his regime.

Biden this week described Putin as a war criminal for the first time in comments the Kremlin denounced as "unforgivable".

With Russia's economy reeling from sanctions, Putin has lashed out at what he called western attempts to exploit a treacherous "fifth column" in Russia

and called on the country to "purify itself" of "traitors" and "scum".

The Russian president has insisted his campaign in Ukraine is going to plan but his ground forces have in recent days failed to marshal the military power needed to make decisive territorial

gains, particularly in the north. "The Russian invasion of Ukraine has largely stalled on all fronts," the UK Ministry of Defence said in an update yesterday morning, adding that Putin's military "continue to suffer heavy losses".

As Russia continued to resort to aerial bombardments of civilian areas, at least one person has died in the capital Kyiv when a residential building was struck by a downed Russian missile, according to emergency services.

Russia's shelling has set the backdrop to negotiations with a political settlement to end the war. Zelensky reiterated yesterday that Ukraine could accept international security guarantees that stopped short of its longstanding aim to join Nato.

Additional reporting by Max Sclodan in Riga and Demetri Sevastopulo in Washington

Briefing

China yields on foreign auditors' access
Beijing is preparing to shift its stance on disclosure of audit information in an effort to resolve an impasse threatening more than \$2tn of shares in US-listed Chinese companies. Plans could result in some groups being able to provide audit information to US accounting regulators. — PAGE 7

Mixed welcome for Fed's rate schedule
Economists have welcomed Jay Powell's unveiling of the first of a series of expected rises but warn that the tightening potentially needed might cause more economic pain than the Fed wants to admit. — PAGE 5

Getir overtakes food app establishment
The rapid grocery service has raised \$800m in new funds at a valuation of \$11.8bn, pushing the Istanbul-based start-up ahead of Deliveroo and Just Eat Takeaway.com. — PAGE 10

Protests force Sri Lanka U-turn on IMF
Gotabaya Rajapaksa's government has begun talks with the fund on a debt relief package after protests over a deepening crisis forced a reversal. It had long insisted that help was not needed. — PAGE 6

AstraZeneca cools on US jobs market
The British drugmaker has said it would consider not submitting its Covid-19 vaccine for approval in the US if it finds it is "banging its head against a brick wall indefinitely" with regulators. — PAGE 7

Spotify draws up plans to join NFT craze
Job ads for recruits with expertise in "Web3", a tech buzzword for blockchain networks, have fuelled excitement in crypto and music businesses over the scope of NFTs to boost artist earnings. — PAGE 10

Cineworld denies wrongdoing over rival
Chief executive Mooky Gredlinger has said the group did "nothing wrong" in quitting its 2019 deal for Cineworld and that it should not be liable for more than \$900m in related damages. — PAGE 8

Datawatch



Corporate China wary of reassurance from Beijing

China Inc was not entirely convinced by Wednesday's pledge from President Xi Jinping's top economic adviser that Beijing would support China's rattled economy. Though the rare intervention stemmed a market rout, insiders have warned that Liu He's comments might not mean an end to unpredictable policymaking. Companies, particularly in the tech sector that has suffered most from Beijing's crackdowns, now wait for actions to follow the promises.

Pain not over — PAGE 6

Amazon handed licence to buy Bond studio as watchdogs offer no resistance

DAVE LEE — SAN FRANCISCO

Amazon has closed its deal to acquire film studio MGM after US and European competition regulators declined to block the move, despite concern over the size of the e-commerce group.

The \$8.4bn acquisition, which includes debt, is Amazon's biggest media swoop and its largest of any kind since the \$13.7bn purchase of Whole Foods in 2017. It brings into Amazon a host of entertainment content, including the rights to the James Bond franchise, allowing it to gain ground on the huge libraries of Netflix, HBO and other streaming players.

"We welcome MGM employees, creators and talent to Prime Video and Amazon Studios, and we look forward to working together to create even more opportunities to deliver quality story-

telling to our customers," said Mike Hopkins, senior vice-president of the division.

The deal, announced in May, came under immediate scrutiny from regulators on both sides of the Atlantic, against a mounting political backlash against Big Tech groups.

But the US competition regulator has, at least at this initial stage, decided not to block the acquisition, letting a 30-day review period — which began once the companies filed necessary documentation — elapse without a challenge.

Amazon said yesterday the deal had closed, signalling that the US Federal Trade Commission, led by noted Amazon critic Lina Khan, had declined to delay or block the deal.

Doing so would have required the majority backing of the FTC board, currently deadlocked between two Demo-

crats and two Republicans. The process to place Georgetown university visiting professor Alvaro Bedoya into the fifth and final seat, which has been vacant since October, has stalled in the Senate.

It limits temporarily the power of Khan, a Biden appointee, to achieve the goal of refining in not just Amazon, but also tech peers such as Alphabet, Apple and Facebook's parent Meta.

Once a full board is in place, the FTC could retrospectively challenge the Amazon-MGM deal in court. The FTC declined to comment. The FTC's go-ahead for the deal comes after the European Commission said it did not see sufficient overlap between the two groups.

It said: "The addition of MGM's content into Amazon's Prime Video offer would not have a significant impact on Amazon's position as provider of marketplace services."

World Markets

STOCK MARKETS					CURRENCIES					INTEREST RATES				
Index	Mar 17	prev	%chg		Pair	Mar 17	Prev			price	yield	chg		
S&P 500	4364.55	4357.88	0.15		\$ per €	1.111	1.089			US Gov 10 yr	94.99	2.16	-0.02	
Nasdaq Composite	13432.12	13438.55	-0.05		\$ per £	1.376	1.370			UK Gov 10 yr	99.24	1.56	-0.01	
Dow Jones Ind	34095.36	34083.10	0.05		€ per \$	0.944	0.940			Ger Gov 10 yr	99.50	0.38	-0.01	
FTSE100	1780.18	1780.18	0.00		¥ per \$	119.440	119.450			Jpn Gov 10 yr	99.92	0.20	0.00	
Euro Stoxx 50	3897.84	3899.69	-0.05		¥ per €	159.839	159.181			US Gov 30 yr	105.29	2.44	-0.05	
FTSE 100	2385.34	2385.34	0.00		Sfr per €	1.039	1.035			Ger Gov 2 yr		-0.34	0.01	
FTSE All-Share	4120.17	4120.17	0.00											
CAC 40	6912.52	6908.64	0.36											
Xetra Dow	14388.06	14440.74	-0.36											
Nikkei	26652.88	25742.07	3.46											
Hang Seng	21501.23	20997.50	2.34											
MSCI World	2936.33	2965.89	-2.46											
MSCI EM	1081.00	1028.77	5.28											
MSCI ACWI	683.17	684.83	-2.36											
FT Warrants 2500	5205.94	5340.00	-1.39											
FT Warrants 5000	41160.83	41740.40	-1.39											

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Survivors Found in Theater Rubble, but Suffering Widens



PAVEL DOROGOV/ASSOCIATED PRESS



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ANDREW MARENKO/ASSOCIATED PRESS

From top: Debris in the center of Kharkiv, Ukraine; the regional administration building; and an apartment blown open by shelling.

Unable to Seize Kharkiv, Russia Destroys It

This article is by Allison McCann, Lazaro Gamio, Denise Lu and Pablo Robles.

Last month, Dmytro Kuzubov put on his headphones and walked around Kharkiv for hours. He felt that the war would start soon and he wanted to visit some of his favorite places. Kharkiv is his hometown: a vibrant,

youthful city of nearly 1.5 million people steeped in academia, art and literature.

The attacks started a few days later. Unable to take control of the city, Russia has resorted to destroying it. As in Syria and Chechnya, Russia aims to demoralize the city's inhabitants with overwhelming and indiscriminate firepower. It is following a similar plan in other Ukrainian cities, such as Mariupol and

Mykolaiv.

"The most horrible thing was the whistle of jets. I will remember them all my life," said Mr. Kuzubov, who has since fled Kharkiv, along with hundreds of thousands of others.

There were scenes of a destroyed kindergarten classroom, a living room blown open and the Old Hem, a popular pub in the base-

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'Finish Them Off': Aid Workers Slain in Ethiopia

By SIMON MARKS
and DECLAN WALSH

As the fight intensified in northern Ethiopia in June last year, three aid workers from Doctors Without Borders jumped into their four-wheel drive and raced across the battle-scarred landscape, searching for casualties.

Hours later they vanished. The aid workers stopped answering their satellite phone. A tracking device showed their vehicle making a sudden U-turn, then stopping. Colleagues frantically tried to locate them.

The next day they were found dead, their bullet-riddled bodies sprawled on a dusty roadside near their burned-out vehicle: Maria

Hernández, a 35-year-old Spaniard and conflict veteran, in a bloodstained white bib with the Doctors Without Borders logo; Yohannes Halefom, a 32-year-old Ethiopian medic, face down in the dirt; and their Ethiopian driver Tedros Gebremariam, 31, lying on the road about 300 yards away.

Doctors Without Borders, Continued on Page A6

G.O.P. Targets Voter Crime, No Matter if It Exists

By REID J. EPSTEIN
and NICK CORASANTINI

The Florida Legislature last week created a law enforcement agency — informally called the election police — to tackle what Gov. Ron DeSantis and other Republicans have declared an urgent problem: the roughly

0.000677 percent of voters suspected of committing voter fraud. In Georgia, Republicans in the House passed a law on Tuesday handing new powers to police personnel who investigate allegations of election-related crimes. And in Texas, the Republican attorney general already has created an "election integrity unit" that is charged solely with investigat-

ing illegal voting. Voter fraud is exceedingly rare — and often accidental. Still, ambitious Republicans across the country are making a show of cracking down on voter crime this election year. Legislators in several states have moved to reorganize and rebrand law enforcement agencies while stiffening penal-

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Taking Heavy Losses on Battlefield, Russians Aim Missiles at Cities

This article is by Andrew E. Kramer, Michael Schwartz and Eric Nagourney.

KYIV, Ukraine — A day after a Russian strike reduced to rubble a theater in southern Ukraine where hundreds of people had been huddling for shelter, rescuers wading through the debris — even as Russian shells kept falling — began pulling out survivors one by one.

"Adults and children are emerging from there alive," Ukraine's human rights ombudsman, Lyudmila Denisova, reported early Thursday as the rescue effort continued at the Drama Theater in Mariupol, a southern port city under siege by Russian forces.

But information was scarce from the desperate city, which has been squarely in Moscow's cross hairs since the invasion began three weeks ago.

With as many as a thousand people, many of them children, reported to have taken shelter at the theater and still unaccounted for, fears remained that whatever hope emerged from the rescue scene Thursday would eventually be eclipsed by despair.

"Our hearts are broken by what Russia is doing to our people, to our Mariupol," President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine said

in an overnight public address. The rescue efforts at the theater came against a fearsome backdrop of thousands of civilian casualties across much of Ukraine. Taking heavy losses on the battlefield, Russian forces have increasingly been aiming bombs and missiles at towns and cities. Unable to capture urban centers, they are leveling them instead, and the toll on civilians is worsening.

In Mariupol, it was people sheltering in a theater where the word "children" was written in huge letters on the pavement on both sides of the building, clearly visible from the air. In Chernihiv, it was people waiting in a bread line. In Kyiv, it was a 16-story apartment building pierced by a missile fragment, and amid the debris and broken glass outside, a man with a sweatshirt pulled over his head kneeling silently beside a body under a bloody sheet, holding a lifeless hand for several minutes and then staggering away in grief.

As a fourth consecutive day of peace talks Thursday yielded no announcements, and the United Nations Security Council held an emergency session on the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, Western officials portrayed the

Continued on Page A12

NEWS ANALYSIS

Biden Makes It Personal By Use of 'War Criminal'

By DAVID E. SANGER

WASHINGTON — When President Biden declared to reporters on Wednesday, almost off the cuff, that President Vladimir V. Putin was a "war criminal," he was speaking from the heart, his aides said, reacting to the wrenching images of civilians — including children — being dragged, dead or disfigured, from ruins of buildings shelled by Russian forces.

But he was also personalizing the conflict, in a way past presidents have avoided at moments of crisis with the United States' leading nuclear-armed adversary. And his remark underscored how personal condemnation has become policy, Mr. Biden and his top aides frame Mr. Putin as a pariah, an indiscriminate killer who should be

standing trial at The Hague. Mr. Biden amplified his attacks on Thursday, calling Mr. Putin "a murderous dictator, a pure thug who is waging an immoral war against the people of Ukraine." His secretary of state, Antony J. Blinken, chimed in, saying: "Personally, I agree. Intentionally targeting civilians is a war crime."

But what began as a visceral reaction appears to reflect a strategic decision. Branding Mr. Putin as a war criminal supports the administration's case as it simultaneously tries to keep the Western alliance unified and attempts to pressure China not to bail Mr. Putin out of his economic crisis and military mistakes. That effort will face a new test on

Continued on Page A12

In Conjuring 'Nazis' in Ukraine, Putin Stokes Russian Memories

By ANTON TROIANOVSKI

Ukraine's government is "openly neo-Nazi" and "pro-Nazi," controlled by "little Nazis," President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia says.

American officials led by President Biden are responsible for the "Nazification" of Ukraine, one of Russia's top lawmakers says, and should be tried before a court. In fact, another lawmaker says, it is time to create a "modern analogy to the Nuremberg Tribunal" as Russia prepares to "denazify" Ukraine.

In case the message was not clear, the Kremlin's marquee weekly news show aired black-and-white footage on Sunday of German Nazis being hanged on what is now central Kyiv's Independence Square. The men drop, dangling from a long beam, and the crowd cheers.

The language of Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been dominated by the word "Nazi" — a puzzling assertion about a country whose president, Volodymyr Zelensky, is Jewish and who last fall signed a law combating antisemitism. Mr. Putin only began to apply the word regularly to the country's present-day government in recent months, though he has long referred to Ukraine's pro-Western revolution of 2014 as a fascist coup.

The "Nazi" slur's sudden emergence shows how Mr. Putin is trying to use stereotypes, distorted reality and his country's lingering World War II trauma to justify his invasion of Ukraine. The Kremlin is casting the war as a continuation of Russia's fight against evil in what is known in the coun-

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NATIONAL A14-19

Doubting Columbia's Laurels

A professor identified discrepancies in data Columbia University provided to U.S. News & World Report before it ranked the school No. 2. PAGE A19

BUSINESS B1-5

When Squeezing Falls Short

Economic sanctions, a go-to foreign policy punishment for war or rights abuses, often create plenty of pain but don't always deliver results. PAGE B1

SPORTS B6-11

Kentucky and UConn Are Out

The second-seeded Wildcats lost to St. Peter's, a 15th seed, in the men's round of 64. The Huskies, a No. 5 seed, fell to No. 12 New Mexico State. PAGE B6

WEEKEND ARTS C1-22

Making Her Daydreams Real

The Spanish singer Rosalía has never had a Top 40 hit in the United States, but she is one of the most worshipped young artists in the world. PAGE C1

OPINION A22-23

David Brooks

PAGE A22



U.S. to pursue war crime case

Lifting spirits and the economy in Kyiv

Residents who stayed in the capital get a psychological boost as shops begin to reopen.

By NABIH BULOS

KYIV, Ukraine — It's hard to think of a more unlikely combo than war zones and cinnamon buns.

Yet there the buns are in the display cabinet of Khlibar, a high-end bakery and coffee shop (whose name means Bread Bar) in Podil, the hipster neighborhood in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv. Slathered in cream cheese frosting, they sit on trays laden with poppy seed pastries, cherry rolls, cheese braids and delicately constructed puff pastry cakes with a bouffant of icing.

There's no lack of takers, with dozens of patrons lining up in a chaotic queue outside or sitting on high chairs inside for a sugar-and-caffeine fix despite the drumbeat of Russian artillery and rockets blasting on Kyiv's outskirts.

It's one sign of the new normal here, as the city's remaining residents readjust to a life under conflict.

The two columns of Russian armor thrusting toward the city spurred Kyiv to go on a war footing. Checkpoints with caltrops — the large toy-jack-shaped antitank obstacles — concrete slabs and sandbags, manned by jittery soldiers and reservists, sprouted on every major street and boulevard.

People lined up in front of supermarkets and pharmacies to stock up on supplies before hurrying home. Most other establishments were shuttered as possibly half the city's 3 million people fled to safer areas.

But three weeks into the invasion, some of those still here have begun to make a change.

Khlibar closed at the start of the war but opened again three days later, first by offering loaves of bread to help alleviate supply shortages, said Sergei Chernets, 42, an entrepreneur who owns the bakery and three other businesses.

"We saw a problem. People [See Kyiv, A4]



A BODY lies near a residential tower in Kyiv hit by the debris of a downed Russian rocket. In Chernihiv, northeast of the Ukrainian capital, at least 10 civilians were killed in a bread line, including an American.



RELATIVES MOURN Ukrainian soldier Ivan Skrypyk in Lviv. He and two others were killed when a mine destroyed their armored vehicle near Kyiv. Ukraine says 1,300 of its troops have died in the war.

ANALYSIS

Not all are keen to spurn Putin

Some nations want to keep trade and other Moscow links

By LAURA KING AND DAVID PIERSON

Soon after Russia's army pushed in to try to seize control of Ukraine, Maria Zakharova, the bellicose Foreign Ministry spokeswoman in Moscow, insisted that her country still had plenty of friends in the

world. She mostly meant China, but others too.

"Look at the reaction of world giants — those who are not seeking to present themselves as giants, but who really are giants," Zakharova said in a prime-time state television interview on Feb. 26, four days after Russian troops com-

menced a bloody onslaught targeting cities and towns across Ukraine.

Zakharova and her Kremlin associates have spun plenty of false conspiracy theories to justify Russian President Vladimir Putin's unprovoked attack on a sovereign neighbor. But she was not wrong to suggest that much of

the world, at least as measured by population, is unwilling to fully spurn Russia in response to the war in Ukraine.

The United States and its European allies, with the backing of close partners such as Canada, Australia, Japan and South Korea, have imposed harsh [See Nations, A5]

Washington warns China against helping Russian military as Putin's forces bombard civilian centers.

By NABIH BULOS, JAWED KALEEM AND KATE LINTHICUM

KYIV, Ukraine — As Russia launched an onslaught of new attacks on civilian sites across Ukraine, U.S. officials on Thursday reached up their accusations that Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces have committed war crimes, including the bombing of a theater this week where more than 1,000 people were sheltering.

The allegations came as Washington sought to intensify international pressure on Moscow by warning China — Putin's most powerful ally — not to send military aid to Russia. U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken delivered the message ahead of Friday's expected meeting between President Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

"President Biden will be speaking to President Xi tomorrow and will make clear that China will bear responsibility for any actions it takes to support Russia's aggression, and we will not hesitate to impose costs," Blinken told journalists in Washington.

The fighting across Ukraine in recent days has seen Ukrainian counteroffensives slowing Russian advances even as Putin's forces bombard cities and civilian centers.

Those attacks have led the State Department to begin a legal process to document potential war crimes against Russia, noting that any formal accusations would probably be brought before the International Criminal Court at The Hague.

Intentionally targeting civilians is a war crime, Blinken said. "After all the destruction of the past three weeks, I find it difficult to conclude that the Russians are doing otherwise."

His comments came as civilian deaths across Ukraine were mounting, with bodies in some cities heaped hastily into mass graves. The United Nations said Thursday that at least 726 civilians have been killed, including 52 children, although officials said the true number was probably much higher.

"Most of these casualties were caused by the use in populated areas of explosive weapons with a wide impact area," Rosemary A. DiCarlo, the U.N. undersecretary for political and peace-building affairs, said at an emergency [See Ukraine, A4]

COLUMN ONE

Delivery robots' human minders

These little guys have AI but still need adult supervision

By RONALD D. WHITE

In a low-light Culver City control room, Lily Shaw is getting her pilot mood on.

A can of mint Guayaki Yerba Mate sits near her carefully manicured fingers. "Good jams to get pumped" from alt rock band Slothrust blast on her earbuds. Horn-rimmed, blue-light filtering glasses protect her eyes. Her favored chartreuse Xbox controller stands ready to command her laptop.

Shaw is set for her mission: piloting an order of burritos and doughnuts along Santa Monica sidewalks to a hungry customer.

It's not exactly "Top Gun," but Shaw's job at delivery startup Coco highlights a little-known fact about the autonomous delivery robot industry, which is projected to mushroom in growth over the next few years. Those cute sidewalk-traveling ice chests on wheels aren't com-

[See Robots, A9]



CRAIG MITCHELLE/EVERETT Associated Press

BRUINS SURVIVE

Tyger Campbell (10) drives during the first half of UCLA's 57-53 win over Akron. SPORTS, B12

UCLA offers housing promise

Campus guarantees four years of lodging, amid statewide shortage. CALIFORNIA, B1

Weather Sunny and warm. L.A. Basin: 79/54. B7



Cars, gas taxes and tricky turns

Rebate proposal avoids the question of whether levies at the pump are too high.

By JOHN MYERS

SACRAMENTO — Few California cultural touchstones have had more staying power over the years than the state's affinity for cars and its aversion to taxes.

Both tap into what was long a powerful sales pitch about the good life in the Golden State, where the open road that lies ahead is always better with a little spending cash for a few stops along the way.

Clashes between the two desires can even reshape the

political fortunes of the state's elected leaders. It's happened before and, in light of the current wrangling over ideas for handling out state tax dollars to cover drivers' fuel costs, could happen again.

On Thursday, a group of legislative Democrats jumped out in front of negotiations in Sacramento on a cash-back plan to offset the impact of gas prices that have pushed the statewide average to almost \$5.79 per gallon. That's almost a dollar higher than the average at the same time in February, according to AAA, and just \$2 higher than California's average gas prices in the early spring of 2020.

"We know our constituents are hurting right now," Assemblymember Cottie [See Driving, A12]

BUSINESS INSIDE: A planned office and recording complex aims to be a creative hub. A8

The Washington Post

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Partly sunny 76/60 • Tomorrow: T-storm 76/52 B3

Democracy Dies in Darkness

FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2022 • B2

War's ravages torment Ukraine's civilians

In Russia's propaganda bubble, war isn't war

BY PAUL SONNE
AND MARY ILYUSHINA

RIGA, LATVIA — Fake U.S. bio-warfare labs. Fake killer birds. Tucker Carlson and Donald Trump cameos. Ukrainian "Nazis" everywhere.

Russia's domestic television propaganda machine has reached such an intensity amid President Vladimir Putin's war against Ukraine that a tiny — but previously unthinkable — crack in Moscow's state news juggernaut broke open this week with an on-air protest.

For three weeks, what are known as Russia's "federal channels" — separate state-controlled news networks that offer different flavors of the same Kremlin-fawning fare — have been serving up Putin's spin on a war that his government calls a "special military operation."

It goes like this: It was a necessary measure to save the people of the Moscow-backed separatist regions in Ukraine's eastern Donbas and liberate the rest of the nation from illegitimate "Nazi" authorities armed by reckless Americans — and the Russian military is hitting only Ukrainian military targets while its opponents are killing civilians.

To watch is to gaze through the Kremlin's looking glass. It's also a lesson in why Putin feels confident that his domestic apparatus, armed with a combination of propaganda and repression, can withstand the blowback of a war that U.S. officials say already has left thousands of Russian soldiers dead since the invasion Feb. 24.

Anton Shirikov, a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin at Madison who studies Russian state propaganda, said that trying to pierce the propaganda bubble can feel impossible. Shirikov compared it to telling a fervent supporter of President Donald Trump and voracious consumer of right-wing U.S. media that President Biden won the 2020 election fairly.

SEE PROPAGANDA ON A12



ALEXANDER ERMOCHENKO/REUTERS



WOJCIECH GRZECZINSKI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

FROM TOP: A destroyed block of apartments in the strategic port city of Mariupol, Ukraine. Airstrikes continued Thursday, while diplomats voiced lukewarm optimism for peace talks. Bagged bodies of civilians lie in front of the morgue in Kharkiv. Even in the icy temperatures, the stench of death soured the air.

Odessa: Community hopes to shield hallowed opera house. **A8**

Desperate for word: Many wait to hear from their loved ones. **A13**

Seeking safety: Family from Lviv shelters with relatives in Md. **B1**

Peter Marks: Barbaric bombing strikes at the heart of society. **C1**

Bodies pile up in devastating toll of assault on Kharkiv

BY LOVEDAY MORRIS

KHARKIV, UKRAINE — The morgue in Kharkiv was overflowing.

In the courtyard outside, scores of black and green body bags were stacked along two of its walls. On the other side, dozens more victims of Russia's assault on this eastern city lay exposed to the elements.

Some wore slippers, one had on army boots and fatigues. Pale, bloodied bellies sat open to the skies.

"We need body bags," morgue director Yuriy Nikolaevich explained. Or at least plastic wrap, he said. There was nothing left to use to hand the dead back to their families. "There are no coffins left in the city."

The grotesque scene was a small glimpse of the human toll

of Russian President Vladimir Putin's assault on Ukraine. Just 25 miles from the country's eastern border with Russia, Ukraine's second-largest city was an early target in Moscow's advance.

But failing in their attempts to enter the city for the past three weeks, Russian forces have rained down a daily shower of artillery fire, missiles and rockets, which appear to strike at random in civilian neighborhoods. The Washington Post also witnessed evidence of cluster bombs being used in the area around the main market in the city center.

Officials here said at least 250 civilians have died, but that is not a full toll and countless more lie buried under the rubble. It is a grim bellwether of the trajectory

SEE KHARKIV ON A10

A high-stakes rescue effort amid theater's rubble

This article is by Annabelle Timisi, Hannah Allam, Adela Suliman, Sammy Westfall and Paulina Villegas

LONDON — Hampered by rubble and under continued shelling, Ukrainians on Thursday dug through the wreckage of a Mariupol theater that officials say was decimated by a Russian strike a day earlier, with uncertain fates for hundreds of civilians believed to have been sheltering in a basement bunker.

Accounts emerged of survivors, though information was scarce because of the siege conditions in Mariupol, the strategic southern port city that has faced intense Russian attacks and has been largely cut off from the outside world for weeks.

"We live in frightening times that are called war," Mayor Vadym Boychenko said. "We want to close our eyes and forget, like a bad dream, everything that is happening to us now, but we open them and see war again, we see the devastation, we see all this horror."

The high-stakes rescue effort in Mariupol was a microcosm of the steadily worsening conditions for Ukrainian civilians caught in the open-ended war Russia launched last month. Airstrikes continued Thursday in the capital of Kyiv and other cities, while diplomats voiced lukewarm optimism for peace talks.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Thursday that the United States believes Russia may be preparing to deploy a campaign of terror in Ukraine, including chemical weapons attacks, mercenary deployments and systematic kidnappings of local officials, forecasting an even grimmer outlook for the conflict that has already inflicted immeasurable damage.

A U.S. citizen was killed in the northern city of Chernihiv, the State Department confirmed Thursday. The man's sister identified him in a Facebook post as

SEE UKRAINE ON A11

For covid long-haulers, a grueling fight for benefits

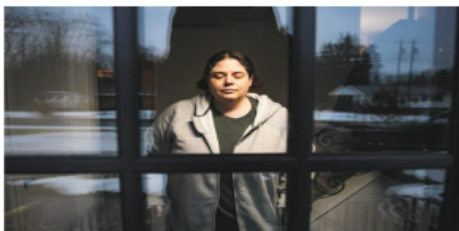
Patients with a puzzling syndrome that's hard to measure face denials by both insurers and government

BY CHRISTOPHER ROWLAND

Deepa Singh, 30, of Louisville, has been seriously ill for two years, racked with extreme fatigue, racing heartbeat and memory problems from long covid that she says prevent her from working. Adding to her distress, she says, has been a grueling — and so far unsuccessful — battle for disability payments.

Singh, who worked as a project manager for a Fortune 100 company, is among a cohort of long covid patients who have been denied disability benefits, either by private insurance companies, which operate benefit plans offered by employers, or by the Social Security Administration, which manages government disability benefits.

Tasked with sorting legitimate health claims from fraudulent or



JEFF SWANSEN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Laurie Bedell, 42, of Pennsylvania, was recently denied disability. "I spend 95 percent of my time in this room ... exhausted," she said.

Isolated: In Hong Kong, elders are facing a mental health crisis. **A9**

Covid czar: Biden names public health expert to key position. **A18**

marginal ones, these gatekeepers now face a novel challenge as the coronavirus pandemic drags on: a flood of claims citing a post-infection syndrome that is poorly understood by the medical community and difficult to measure.

Patients cite a long list of symptoms that defy verification through basic medical tests. They become exhausted at the merest exertion. They can't remember simple words. Their hearts feel like they are fluttering. Yet neurological exams, EKGs and chest X-rays come back clean.

Doctors said in interviews that they are treating long covid patients who are clearly too sick to work but have difficulty meeting the evidence threshold insurers demand: objective medical test results showing an inability to

SEE VIRUS ON A17

Parents of trans children in Texas wait and worry

Court halts abuse inquiries, but uncertainty looms

BY CAITLIN GIBSON

The sticky note left on Amber Briggie's desk was scrawled with a name, a phone number and the words *urgent and private*.

When Briggie, a mother of two and a small-business owner in Texas, arrived at her office on Feb. 28, she felt sure she knew what the note meant: Another parent of a transgender child — perhaps one who was under investigation by the state's protective services agency — was calling for guidance. Briggie has long been a prominent advocate for the rights of transgender children and their families. Briggie dialed the number, prepared to hear about a family in trouble. Then an investiga-

tor from Child Protective Services (CPS) answered, and she realized the family in trouble was her own.

What followed, Briggie said, was a sickening, surreal blur: She ran down the hallway, collapsed in the arms of a co-worker, and tried to explain through sobs: *It's happening. CPS has opened an investigation on my family. I'm so scared they're going to take my kids away.* She sank to the floor and felt like she was still falling. The investigator was already on the way to see her, and Briggie had half an hour to summon her husband to her office, to hire an attorney, and to prepare for the moment she had dreaded for years.

She had been braced for this

SEE TEXAS ON A5

IN THE NEWS



MICHAEL CONROY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

March Madness The NCAA tournament opens with the usual fanfare — and fans flocking to bars — that had been missing since 2019. **D1**

THE NATION Under federal rules, "significant progress" on infrastructure can mean more road deaths and decrepit bridges. **A2**
The Justice Department is poised to launch a revamped voluntary police reform program. **A3**
A law clerk who claimed pregnancy discrimination after a federal judge fired her testified before a House panel weighing greater anti-discrimination rights for

judiciary employees. **A4**
Republicans have struggled to land an effective attack on Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson ahead of her Senate hearings next week. **A6**
With their agenda stalled and midterms approaching, Democrats are worried that not delivering will cost them votes and are pressing President Biden to issue executive orders. **A7**

THE WORLD Once a success story of

the pandemic, South Korea has seen its case rate soar to one of the world's highest. **A9**

THE ECONOMY Real-world consequences of the Fed's interest rate increase will ripple from the real estate market to grocery store aisles. **A15**
NASA's SLS rocket, designed to launch astronauts back to the moon, began its first roll to a launchpad. **A16**

THE REGION A Texas man pleaded guilty to assaulting police in the Jan. 6 attack

on the Capitol. **B1**
Gov. Glenn Youngkin said a letter criticizing his school policies misrepresented Virginia superintendents' views, but none are rejecting the letter's message. **B1**
New data from D.C. Public Schools showed a widening of the learning proficiency gap between young White students and students of color. **B1**
Several police officers for the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission were suspended after a colleague complained of racist texts. **B4**

INSIDE



WEEKEND D.C. rite of spring A roundup of can't-miss events at the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

STYLE The family plan Bashing millennials who are on their parents' cell account is so 2015. **C1**

BUSINESS NEWS **A15**
COMICS **C4**
OPINION PAGES **B3**
LOTTERIES **B9**
OBITUARIES **B6**
TELEVISION **A8**
WORLD NEWS **A8**

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espectáculos

Keith Richards:
"Charlie nos dijo
que siguiéramos"

El mítico Rolling Stone dice que extraña a Watts y que están cumpliendo la voluntad del baterista.

RECLAMO DE JUSTICIA
POR EL ATENTADO A LA
EMBAJADA DE ISRAEL

—política

En el acto por el 30° aniversario del ataque, el vicepresidente israelí acusó a Irán y se quejó de la inacción de la Justicia. Página 16

UNO DE LOS ASESINOS
DE AXEL BLUMBERG
PIDE SALIR DE PRISIÓN

—seguridad

A 18 años del secuestro, Carlos Díaz, que era menor cuando participó de un crimen que conmovió a la sociedad, solicitó la libertad condicional. Página 26

LA NACION

VIERNES 18 DE MARZO DE 2022 | LANACION.COM.AR

El acuerdo con el FMI es ley, pero
profundiza la fractura oficialista

DEUDA. Lo aprobó el Senado; Cristina Kirchner no estuvo en la votación; el Frente de Todos se dividió y crece la pelea interna

Después de meses de discusión, finalmente anoche el Senado convirtió en ley el acuerdo con el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI), que habilita una refinanciación de la deuda de 44.500 millones de dólares asumida por el gobierno de Mauricio Macri. El proyecto se aprobó por 56 votos a favor, 13 en contra y 3 abstenciones. El dato sa-

liente es que, como ocurrió en Diputados, el bloque oficialista quedó dividido entre 22 senadores que votaron a favor y 13 en contra. Fue un reflejo de la debilidad del kirchnerismo duro en la cámara que preside Cristina Kirchner.

La aprobación se da en un marco de fuertes divisiones dentro del Frente de Todos (FDT), producto

precisamente del acuerdo ahora convertido en ley. El Gobierno admitió públicamente que está interrumpido el diálogo entre el presidente Alberto Fernández y su vice. También quedó expuesto un reclamo del secretario de Energía, Darío Martínez, al ministro de Economía, Martín Guzmán, que refleja la interna en esa cartera. Páginas 10 a 13

EL ESCENARIO
Con armas viejas,
Fernández va
a la guerra

Claudio Jacquelín
Página 13

El Fondo reconoce que la guerra complica el pacto

Rafael Mathus Ruiz
Página 11

La vice, distante del Gobierno en una reunión

Paz Rodríguez Niell
Página 15



EN MEDIO DEL HORROR, LA VIDA. Milan nació el 8 de marzo en Kiev y es hijo de Gabriel y Mariel, dos argentinos de 50 años que (como muchas otras parejas) procrearon mediante maternidad subrogada, una práctica legal en Ucrania. Tras una odisea, se encontraron con su bebé en medio de la guerra. Página 8

LA NACION EN UCRANIA — DÍA 22

Se frena la ofensiva terrestre de Rusia

Las fuerzas del Kremlin, sin embargo, mantienen las operaciones sobre blancos civiles

Elisabetta Piqué
ENVIADA ESPECIAL

LVIV. — Al comenzar hoy la cuarta semana de una guerra que, según el jefe de los negociadores ucranianos, Mykhailo Podolyak, podría terminar con un acuerdo de paz "en diez días", paradójicamente Rusia aumentó sus ataques contra objeti-

vos civiles. Bombardeos que, enfureciendo al presidente ruso, Vladimir Putin —"el zar del siglo XXI", cada vez más aislado y arrinconado—, fueron calificados por los grandes actores del escenario internacional, como Estados Unidos y Gran Bretaña, de "crímenes de guerra". Mientras las actualizaciones de la inteligencia militar británica revelaban

un estancamiento de la ofensiva en todos los frentes, las bombas y misiles rusos aumentaron la lista de civiles muertos en varias ciudades ucranianas, ataques perpetrados por un "Estado terrorista", según los calificó el presidente de Ucrania, Volodimir Zelensky, cuando brindó un discurso ante el Parlamento alemán. Continúa en la página 2

La raza y el imperio: motivaciones de fondo que impulsan a Putin

Steven Erlanger
Página 3

Biden buscará la neutralidad de China

Rafael Mathus Ruiz
Página 4

Cuarta dosis
para que los
vacunados
con Sputnik
puedan viajar

COVID. Es para quienes recibieron dos aplicaciones rusas; sumarán otras dos aprobadas por la OMS

El Gobierno decidió habilitar una cuarta dosis de vacuna contra el Covid para aquellos argentinos que hayan recibido las dos primeras de Sputnik V. De esa manera, podrán viajar a los países que no aceptan la vacuna rusa, por no haber sido aprobada todavía por la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS).

La decisión se toma en momentos en que Rusia recibe severas sanciones por la invasión de Ucrania, lo que también frena el proceso de reconocimiento de su vacuna. Para acceder a la cuarta dosis habrá que acreditar las razones del viaje al exterior. Página 24

Google, ante
la Corte por
el derecho
al olvido

AUDIENCIA. Comenzó en el máximo tribunal un debate por el reclamo de Natalia Denegri para que se esconda su pasado. Página 22

GENTILEZA

SP deixa de exigir uso de máscara

Doria faz anúncio em programa de aliado; item ainda será exigido em hospitais, serviços de saúde e transporte público

O governador de São Paulo, João Doria (PSDB), derrubou ontem a obrigatoriedade do uso de máscara no estado mesmo em ambientes fechados. Na semana passada, o tucano anunciara que o item não era mais necessário em locais a céu aberto.

A proteção continua a ser exigida em hospitais e serviços de saúde, aeroportos e no transporte público, inclusive em estações e terminais. A Arquidiocese de São Paulo anunciou que manterá a orientação de uso nos templos católicos.

Escolas, shoppings e mercados pretendem abolir o uso do item, segundo entidades que representam esses setores. Empresas e condomínios ficam livres para decidir se mantêm a exigência, em vigor desde maio de 2020 para frear a pandemia.

O secretário estadual da Saúde, Jean Gorinchteyn, afirmou que houve queda de 77% em internações em enfermarias e UTIs. Mas o Comitê Científico registrou um aumento de 41,7% em números de casos de Covid na semana encerrada sábado (12).

Gorinchteyn atribuiu o crescimento a um represamento de dados na semana anterior por causa do Carnaval. A média de mortes por Covid no país, que considera sete dias até a data, tem flutuado no patamar de 400 ao dia —ontem, ficou em 334.

Doria antecipou o anúncio, inicialmente previsto para o fim deste mês, e buscou capitalizá-lo politicamente ao escolher como palco o programa de TV de seu aliado político e pré-candidato ao Senado José Luiz Datena e criticar o governo federal. **Saúde B1**

Bolsonaro anuncia pacote para liberar mais de R\$ 150 bi

Jair Bolsonaro (PL) anunciou amplo conjunto de medidas para liberar mais de R\$ 150 bilhões em recursos a trabalhadores e aposentados em ano eleitoral. A iniciativa é mais uma do presidente para se cacificar à reeleição, reduzir a rejeição e melhorar sua avaliação na disputa contra Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT).

O pacote inclui saque de até R\$ 1.000 a 40 milhões de brasileiros com saldo nas contas do FGTS. A expectativa é que isso injete R\$ 30 bilhões na economia. O governo também vai antecipar o pagamento do 13º de aposentados e pensionistas do INSS (Instituto Nacional do Seguro Social) para abril e maio. **Mercado A13**

Cúpula da Petrobras não vê prazo para baixar preço

Apesar da pressão pública de Jair Bolsonaro (PL), a cúpula da Petrobras tem dito internamente que não há prazo para baixar o preço dos combustíveis, mesmo com queda na cotação do petróleo.

Para o chefe da estatal, Joaquim Silva e Luna, a decisão de rever o mega-aumento na gasolina e no diesel depende do comportamento do mercado. Ele já avisou que não sairá por conta própria. **Mercado A14**

Militar suspeito de arrendar terra indígena é preso

A Polícia Federal prendeu ontem o coordenador regional da Funai (Fundação Nacional do Índio) em Ribeirão Cascalheira (MT), o militar inativo da Marinha Jussielson Gonçalves Silva, acusado de intermediar arrendamento de terras indígenas para pecuaristas. A defesa de Silva não foi localizada. **Ambiente B6**

TRE paulista arquiva suspeita de caixa 2 contra Alckmin

Política A6

Governo diz que vai manter censura contra filme de Gentili

Ilustrada C1 e C2

Marquezine com legendas. Atriz ganha papel em filme de super-herói da DC Comics e dá recado a haters: 'ninguém vai poder dizer que tem a ver com homem nenhum'

Ilustrada C6

Netflix avalia cobrar de quem emprestar a própria senha para pessoas de outra casa

Esporte B7

Nadadora Ana Marcela Cunha busca medalha que falta por carreira completa

Putin quer Rússia 'purificada de traidores' contrários à guerra

Em novo sinal de endurecimento do controle de Vladimir Putin, o Kremlin disse ontem que a Rússia precisa se livrar de "traidores" contrários à guerra na Ucrânia.

Enquanto sufoca dissidências internas, Moscou mantém os ataques no entorno de Kiev. Hospitais já se preparam para a escalada do confronto. **Mundo A9 e A10**

EDITORIAIS A2

Mais juros, lá e aqui. A respeito de aumento das taxas nos EUA e no Brasil.

Tribunais opacos. Sobre omissão de contracheques em portal do CNJ.



Mariene Bergamo/Folhapress

ABSOLVIÇÃO DE PRESO INJUSTAMENTE EMOCIONA ADVOGADO

Kaique Mendes (dir.) ficou quase 3 anos preso, acusado de receptação; seu defensor, Ewerton Carvalho (esq.), viralizou em vídeo emocionado com a soltura após provada a inocência **B4**



Bombeiros trabalham no alto de um prédio bombardeado em Kiev **Fadel Senna/AFP**

Para especialistas, dispensar proteção hoje é prematuro

Saúde B2

ANÁLISE

Bruno Boghossian

Tucano troca cientistas por TV de olho em campanha. João Doria trocou as solenidades de praxe por um palanque digital para anunciar, num programa de TV, o fim da obrigatoriedade do uso de máscaras. Busca extrair benefícios de uma possível nova fase da pandemia rumo à campanha presidencial. **Saúde B2**

A pandemia em 17.mar

Dados das 20h

POPULAÇÃO VACINADA

No Brasil			
Ao menos uma dose (dose única ou 1ª dose)			83,6%
1ª ciclo vacinal completo (dose única ou 2ª dose)			73,8%
Dose de reforço			33,2%

Nos estados			
	Ao menos uma dose	1ª ciclo completo	Dose de reforço
SP	91,3%	83,1%	46,6%
PI	93,7%	80,6%	35,9%
PB	86,0%	76,9%	38,0%

ESTÁGIO DA DOENÇA

Óbitos	
Média móvel	Em 24 h
334	484
-25,9%*	
Total	656.487

Casos ↓ -14,6%* (desacelerado)

Casos nos estados		
	Média móvel (variação*)	Ritmo
SP	8.472 (+21,9%)	estável
GO	4.553 (+101,0%)	estável
RS	4.006 (-21,7%)	desacelerado

*Variação em relação a 14 dias

USP planeja trocar muro de vidro por cerca viva

A USP e o governo paulista admitiram que o muro de vidro na raia olímpica não deu certo. O plano é trocá-lo gradualmente por uma cerca viva, formando um corredor verde. **B4**

ATMOSFERA

São Paulo hoje	
32°	21°
0h	6h
12h	18h
24h	
Hoje	
Rio	22 39
Brasília	19 29
Ribeirão	22 33
Amanhã	
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Fonte: www.climatempo.com.br



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Hoy es día clave para que camioneros levanten los cierres de ruta

Bloqueos ponen en riesgo el abastecimiento de alimentos

Senado debate este viernes la creación de un Fondo de Estabilización de los precios de combustibles. Varias bancadas están por el rechazo. Movilizados tienen posturas diferentes.

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Empresarios piden el rechazo

Senado postergó por 15 días tratamiento de ley de régimen fronterizo

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CON ESTA EDICIÓN	COMPRA OPCIONAL
COLECCIÓN WASHOKU 3	RÁPIDO Y FURIOSO 7
TEISHOKU 定食	Auto: \$40.000
Diario + Fascículo	RALLY FIGHTER

Juan Hernández será enviado a EEUU
Autorizaron extradición por narcotráfico de ex presidente hondureño

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Expo Universidades abrió con gran éxito en CDE



**LA VACUNA CONTRA EL COVID-19
¡VACUNATE!
ES SEGURA**

Concurrido. Una gran cantidad de jóvenes estuvieron recorriendo los diferentes stands para interiorizarse de las ofertas educativas que existen.

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Añetete denuncia apriete a procesados para enviar al archivo el juicio a Quiñónez

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Los casos pueden llegar a triplicarse
Uso de tapabocas ayuda a que contagios sigan bajos

PÁGINA 19

NUEVA TOYOTA RAIZE	LA SUV FÁCIL DE CONDUCIR PARA UNA VIDA FÁCIL DE VIVIR.		+595 21 6190000 WWW.TOYOTA.COM.PY @TOYOTAPY	
				

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LE FIGARO

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



TENDANCE

CITRON, MANDARINE, YUZU...
QUAND LES AGRUMES ILLUMINENT
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FIGARO OUI
FIGARO NONRéponses à la question
de jeudi :
Faut-il plafonner le prix
des carburants ?NON
25% OUI
75%

TOTAL DE VOTANTS : 107 310

Votez aujourd'hui
sur lefigaro.frPrésidentielle 2022 :
êtes-vous convaincus
par la présentation
du programme
d'Emmanuel Macron ?Macron :
le changement
dans la
continuitéRetraite à 65 ans, indépendance énergétique,
école, santé, institutions... Le candidat-
président a dévoilé un projet dont il estime
le coût à 50 milliards d'euros par an.

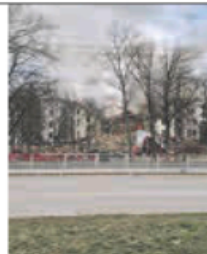
PAGES 2 À 4 ET L'ÉDITORIAL



FRANÇOIS BOUCHON / LE FIGARO

Bourse, taux d'intérêt,
monnaie... L'Ukraine
chamboule les marchésDes chutes, des rebonds et
beaucoup de nervosité. La pla-
nète financière est sens dessus
dessous depuis le début de la
guerre. Les investisseurs navi-
guent à vue et interprètent lamoindre rumeur. À plus long
terme, ils sont nombreux à re-
douter la stagflation, une pé-
riode de faible croissance sur
fond d'inflation élevée.

PAGES 22 ET 23

Le monde sous le choc
après le bombardement
du Théâtre de MarioupolUne frappe aérienne a éventré
mercredi soir le théâtre de ce
port ukrainien sur la mer
d'Azov, dans lequel avaient
trouvé refuge entre 500 et
1 000 personnes. Hier, les sau-veteurs cherchaient encore
des survivants et se disaient
incapables d'établir un bilan.
Le président Zelensky a com-
paré le sort de Marioupol à ce-
lui de Leningrad. PAGES 8 ET 9

ÉDITORIAL par Yves Thérard ythearad@lefigaro.fr

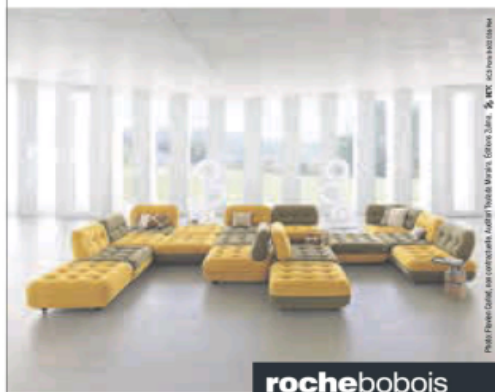
Comme un discours de mi-mandat...

Soudain, alors qu'il présentait son projet pour les cinq ans à venir, le président-candidat a lancé à l'assistance : « Dites-moi s'il y a quelque chose qui n'est pas clair. » De fait, son exposé d'une heure et demie, articulé en trois convictions et trois axes, avec des agendas en vœux-tu en voilà, n'a pas toujours évité le jargon technocratique. On aura compris qu'il « nous faut » - l'expression a été répétée mille fois - décroïssoner, déréférer, déségmenter, disrupter, mais aussi renouveler et consolider. On aura aussi appris que le chef de l'État veut changer de méthode, se montrer moins jupitérien. Son slogan - « Macron avec vous » - montre que les « gilets jaunes » sont passés par là...

Au-delà de la forme, les propositions s'inscrivent, pour certaines, dans la continuité des réformes inachevées. À ce titre, figure bien sûr celle des retraites. Emmanuel Macron a reconnu qu'il convenait de s'en tenir désormais au recul de l'âge de départ à 65 ans. La transformation du RSA en revenu d'activité est un engagement qui, quant à lui, a souvent été énoncé sans être tenu. Hier, on croyait entendre un discours de mi-mandat.

Si on n'échappe pas aux gadgets - avec un plan protéines, « de la fourche à la fourchette », et Pôle emploi, qui devient France Travail -, des mesures destinées à rendre la « nation plus indépendante » et la « société plus unie » ont été longuement détaillées. La crise sanitaire et la guerre en Ukraine ont incontestablement souligné ces exigences de bon sens. Des enseignants aux agriculteurs, des militaires aux infirmiers, chacun devrait y trouver son compte tant les intentions paraissent bonnes pour gagner plus en travaillant davantage, dépenser moins, apprendre et se soigner mieux... Le tout avec la promesse de rendre l'État plus agile, moins bureaucratique.

Si le régalien demeure le parent pauvre du projet, le volet socio-économique relève d'un libéralisme à la française, d'un centrisme bon teint. On dira que l'ensemble ne brille guère par son originalité et que nombre de dispositions ont aussi été développées par ses concurrents, mais la France n'a-t-elle pas avant tout un urgent besoin d'efficacité ? ■

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'I can't speak to her'

Russia-Ukraine families torn apart by war

→ News, page 7 →



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Nations unite to condemn Putin over 'war crimes'

Daniel Boffey Brussels
Dan Sabbagh

Russia was accused by Britain, the US, France, Albania, Ireland and Norway of war crimes in Ukraine yesterday, as Paris claimed Vladimir Putin was only pretending to be interested in negotiating a peace deal.

The six nations challenged Russia before a UN security council meeting as the foreign secretary, Liz Truss, said there was now "very, very strong evidence" of war crimes being committed by Russian forces.

"Vladimir Putin is behind them," Truss said. "It is ultimately a matter for the international criminal court to decide who is or isn't a war criminal and for us to bring the evidence."

The US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, said he agreed with President Joe Biden that war crimes had been committed in Ukraine, adding that US experts were in the process of

documenting and evaluating potential war crimes.

The World Health Organization director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, told the UN security council that the WHO had verified 43 attacks on healthcare facilities in Ukraine that have killed 12 people and injured dozens more, without specifying who was behind them.

"In any conflict, attacks on healthcare are a violation of international humanitarian law," he said.

The UN's undersecretary general, Rosemary DiCarlo, called for an investigation into the reported attacks on civilians. She told the meeting that the attacks "are reportedly indiscriminate".

Earlier, Blinken, who has repeatedly warned that Putin will turn to the use of chemical weapons, said the US administration was gathering evidence of war crimes.

Last night, British defence intelligence analysts said they believed Russia was being forced to divert "large numbers" of troops to defend its supply lines rather than continuing its attacks in Ukraine.

The latest intelligence assessment published by the Ministry of Defence said logistical problems "continue to beset Russia's faltering invasion".

Rescue workers continued to search through rubble yesterday for survivors of a Russian airstrike on a theatre in the besieged Ukrainian city of Mariupol.

'Putin is behind [the war crimes]. It is ultimately a matter for the international criminal court'

Liz Truss
Foreign secretary



**Home at last
Reunited - and
ready to 'live
in the future,
not the past'**

News Page 14 →

Fury after P&O Ferries sacks all 800 UK crew

Gwyn Topham
Rachel Hall

Ministers and trade unions have condemned P&O Ferries' mass sacking of 800 British seafarers to replace them with cheap agency crew as "shameful" and "completely unacceptable",

amid furious calls for action against the company's Dubai owners.

P&O Ferries' services could be suspended for up to 10 days, disrupting its cross-Channel and Irish Sea routes, after an extraordinary day in which the operator sacked its entire British seafaring staff without notice. They learned the news of their

redundancy via a pre-recorded video message yesterday morning.

Politicians on both sides called on the government to act to stop what Labour and unions called a "scandalous betrayal".

Staff were told by P&O to discharge passengers and freight before being sent a video message telling them P&O "vessels will be primarily crewed by a third-party crew provider ... Your final day of employment is today."

Long-serving crew were removed from ships by security guards in Dover and Larne, near Belfast. Replacement agency workers, believed to

have been recruited in the UK and Europe, had already boarded some vessels in Dover yesterday.

Unions had instructed members to stay on board as they demanded urgent government intervention, but by the evening the potential for prolonged standoffs ended when crew in Hull left their ship. Earlier, the Dutch captain of P&O's *Pride of Hull* had backed crew who refused to leave.

In Dover, a 46-year-old P&O crew member with 30 years' service said he was worried about how he would support his family. He added: "There were grown men in tears worrying

about their mortgages. We've been treated abysmally. This was planned for ages; it's not on the hoof."

Legal experts raised questions about whether there had been a breach of employment laws, which stipulate that any employer planning to sack over 100 staff must give ministers 45 days' notice.

The government said it had been given no notice of the plans. The prime minister's spokesman said: "The way these workers were informed was completely unacceptable. Clearly the way that this was communicated to