

What's News

Business & Finance

The resilience of Russia's domestic-payments network has been a bright spot for the country as Western sanctions target its financial system. **A1**

◆ **Two influential OPEC members**, Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E., rebuffed calls to expel Russia from a larger oil-production alliance with almost two dozen countries. **A9**

◆ **U.S. stocks rose**, with the S&P 500, Nasdaq and Dow gaining 1.2%, 1.8% and 1%, respectively. Oil prices recorded their largest declines in more than a week. **B1**

◆ **Nielsen agreed** to sell itself to a group of private-equity firms in a deal that values the media-measurement company at \$10 billion. **B1**

◆ **UnitedHealth agreed** to buy LHC for about \$5.4 billion, the latest step in linking a managed-care company to the home-health business. **B1**

◆ **The Senate**, in a procedural step, voted to advance the nomination of economist Lisa Cook for a seat on the Fed's board. **A2**

◆ **A cryptocurrency startup** that operates a popular online game called "Axie Infinity" said that hackers stole more than \$500 million of cryptocurrency. **B1**

◆ **Incub is seeking** two board seats at Kroger, pushing it to make changes among its pork suppliers and address what he said was a widening gap in worker and executive pay. **B3**

◆ **Robinhood said** it is extending the hours it will let its users trade to between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. Eastern time. The company's stock rose 24%. **B3**

World-Wide

◆ **Ukraine and Russia** said they made progress in talks to end the war, with Kyiv presenting its proposal for a neutral status and international security guarantees as Moscow continued deadly strikes across Ukraine despite promises to focus its campaign on the eastern Donbas region. **A1, A7, A9**

◆ **The FDA cleared** a second Covid-19 booster shot for older adults and those with weakened immune systems, with officials expected to authorize additional doses for the broader population in the fall. **A1**

◆ **The Omicron BA.2 variant** represents more than half of new Covid-19 cases in the U.S., federal estimates show, as signs suggest infections are edging higher again in parts of the Northeast. **A6**

◆ **Americans could stash** more in their 401(k) plans and sit on their nest eggs longer under a bill passed by the House that aims to boost individual retirement savings. **A3**

◆ **The Jan. 6 panel** is trying to fill in an hours-long gap in White House call logs on the day a pro-Trump mob attacked the U.S. Capitol, lawmakers said. **A4**

◆ **China is planning** new curbs on the country's live-streaming industry, renewing a campaign aimed at reining in tech firms and exerting more influence over content consumed by the young. **A10**

◆ **A Palestinian gunman** killed five people in central Israel, the third suspected terrorist attack in the country in a week. **A10**

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Kyiv Offers Neutrality to Moscow



A Ukrainian soldier stands outside the regional government building in Mykolaiv, Ukraine, struck by a missile Tuesday.

Talks to end war show progress, but Russian forces continue deadly strikes across Ukraine

Ukraine and Russia said they made progress in talks to end the war, with Kyiv presenting its proposal for a neutral status and international security guarantees as Mos-

By James Marston,
Yaroslav Trofimov
and Jared Malsin

cow continued deadly strikes across Ukraine despite promises to focus its campaign on the eastern Donbas region.

Though the latest round of negotiations, opened by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey in Istanbul, made advances toward drafting a peace treaty, violence continued unabated, with dozens of reported civilian casualties.

In a sign of progress, President Vladimir Putin of Russia agreed to meet President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine for the initialing of the treaty once the negotiations are completed, said Moscow's chief

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Russia Blunts Credit-Card Companies' Exit

By ALEXANDER OSIPOVICH
AND ANNA MARIA ANDRIOTIS

Western sanctions have disrupted nearly every part of Russia's financial system, but there is one big exception.

Russia's domestic-payments system continued to work smoothly after Visa Inc. and Mastercard Inc. pulled out this month. While the card giants' exit from Russia was viewed as a significant move by the West, the reality on the ground was anything but.

Most Russian consumers never lost the ability to use their

Mastercard- and Visa-branded cards to pay for things within the country.

There were about 197 million Mastercard or Visa cards in Russia at the end of 2020, according to the Nilson Report, a trade publication. But behind the scenes, the cards don't rely on the U.S. networks' systems to process payments in Russia. For years, they have used a homegrown system overseen by Russia's central bank.

The National Payment Card System—known by its Russian initials NSPK—runs the finan-

The Ukraine Crisis

- ◆ Abramovich debuts as envoy at peace talks... **A7**
- ◆ Oil alliance rebuffs calls to oust Russia... **A9**
- ◆ Countries turn to Canada as Russia trade drops... **A9**

cial plumbing that underpins card transactions in Russia, even for cards bearing Visa and Mastercard logos.

The system was part of Moscow's eight-year effort to insulate the Russian economy from Western financial pres-

sure. The Kremlin also has aggressively promoted Russia's own card company, called Mir, which is built on NSPK's infrastructure. More than 100 million Mir cards have been issued since its launch in 2015, according to Mir's website.

The resilience of Russia's payments system is a rare win for President Vladimir Putin in his financial war with the West. Russia failed to break its dependence on Western imports, leaving the country in dire need of key parts for manufacturing. Before the war, Russia amassed \$630 billion in

reserves to ensure it could protect the ruble, but that effort was undermined when the U.S. and European Union froze Russian central-bank assets.

"We provided for our national security in the payments space," said Alma Obayeva, head of the National Payments Council, a Russian trade association.

The retreat of Visa and Mastercard did have one big consequence for Russians: In many cases, their cards now don't work outside the country. The Mir network extends

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Second Boosters Approved For Older Adults

By JARED S. HOPKINS
AND STEPHANIE ARMOUR

Federal health regulators cleared a second Covid-19 booster shot for older adults and for those with weakened immune systems, with officials expected to authorize additional doses for the broader population in the fall.

The Food and Drug Administration said Tuesday it had cleared extra shots of Pfizer Inc. and its partner BioNTech SE and from Moderna Inc. for adults 50 years and older.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention followed up by endorsing the second booster shots of those mRNA vaccines.

The extra doses are "especially important for those 65 and older and those 50 and older with underlying medical conditions that increase their risk for severe disease from Covid-19, as they are the most likely to benefit from receiving an additional booster dose at this time," CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said.

Under the moves, the older adults can get the shots at least four months after a first booster dose. People will be able to choose between the two vaccines regardless of whether they earlier received a shot from Moderna, Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson.

The thumbs-up for the extra doses comes as Covid-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to fall but public-health experts express concerns about future surges. One

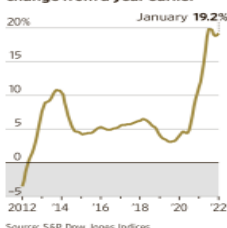
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◆ Omicron subvariant strengthens grip in U.S.... **A6**

Home-Price Rise Escalates

The increase in home prices accelerated in January. **A3**

The S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller National Home Price Index, change from a year earlier



Source: S&P Dow Jones Indices

Brand Loyalty Is Undercut By Inflation and Shortages

By JAEWON KANG

U.S. shoppers are buying what they can find—and afford.

Well-known brand names and flashy ad campaigns are no longer enough to command U.S. consumers' loyalty in grocery stores, retail executives said. As inflation spreads and stretched supply chains leave gaps on shelves, shoppers are becoming increasingly fickle, with availability and price determining what goes into their shopping carts.

Shoppers' new willingness to switch brands could shift the balances of power inside grocery stores. Big food com-

panies like Kraft Heinz Co. and Kellogg Co. risk losing market share to competitors and store brands that are more readily able to fill in empty spots in store aisles, industry executives said. Supermarket operators, while grappling with shortages, said the situation is giving them more leverage with major brands and flexibility to test newer, often lower-cost products.

"We are seeing people make more choices on items because they are available," said Tony Sarsam, chief executive officer of grocery chain SpartanNash Co. In the Grand Rapids, Mich.-based company's supermarket aisles, Mr. Sarsam

said, Tropicana orange juice lost share to Coca-Cola Co.'s Simply Orange in recent months, which has been easier for SpartanNash to stock, while Tyson Foods Inc. similarly lost share in frozen breaded chicken to Conagra Brands Inc.'s Banquet meals.

Mr. Sarsam said he and his team now are examining the variety of groceries the company sells, recently trimming the number of items it offers in cookie, cracker and salty snack sections in response to some brands' inability to meet demand and slower sales. SpartanNash is sometimes giving more shelf space to local

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Forget Employee of the Month—Try Praising Colleagues Every Day

Companies encourage giving thanks through gift cards, unicorn badges

By TE-PING CHEN

Jacob Coite sent more than 2,700 compliments to co-workers last year, and he's just getting started.

Mr. Coite works in Northborough, Mass., as a scheduler for Esler Cos., a window and door installation company, and prides himself on coming up with creative ways to virtually backslap his colleagues.

"If this company was a California roll, you'd be the seaweed that holds the whole thing together," he recently wrote to a customer service representative.

"Your empathy is like Kool-Aid. The way it adds flavor to a boring call," he wrote to another.

In a time of high turnover

and remote work, companies have tried ukulele classes, staff talent shows and other ways to keep workers connected. Now many are trying to get their employees to praise each other—well, praise each other more.

Some companies offer a monthly allotment of points that colleagues can give each other to show their appreciation, redeemable for Amazon and Target gift cards and other perks, such as lunch with the CEO. Others have public channels in Slack, where people can share thank-

and heap compliments on their co-workers.

For Mr. Coite's efforts, his company recently awarded him a trophy emblazoned with

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Olympics Organizers Aim for a Reset

Games head for Western democracies in favorable time zones, but Russia looms

By JOSHUA ROBINSON
AND RACHEL BACHMAN

PARIS—The closing ceremony of the Beijing Olympics was supposed to end one of the darkest chapters in Olympic history, a run that saw the Games travel into autocracies, slog through a pandemic and navigate nuclear posturing, all while global interest dipped to new lows.

So as Beijing handed off to Paris, which will welcome the 2024 Summer Olympics, organizers breathed a sigh of relief. They could look forward to a decade of alluring host cities in liberal democracies—the French capital, Milan and Los Angeles—combined with the ebbing pandemic and hope for a

meaningful rebound in ratings.

"This can potentially be when the page turns and we're thrilled to try to contribute to that," said Tony Estanguet, the three-time Olympic canoeing champion who is now in charge of the Paris 2024 organizing committee. "The horizon is very positive."

Looming over the horizon, though, is one shadow the Olympics can't seem to escape: Russia.

The country that caused organizers such embarrassment and persistent problems with doping, right up until the final day of figure skating at the Beijing Games, now endangered more than the Olympics' hope for a ros-

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Currency converter

Turning the dollar into a weapon will risk its status — MARTIN WOLF, PAGE 17

Macron by default

President's poll lead masks broad scorn for French elite — BIG READ, PAGE 15



A hit at the Oscars

Apple struck the biggest blow this year — CHRISTOPHER GRIMES, PAGE 16

Mystery yacht
Antigua eyes
Abramovich

Garçon, a yacht built to carry helicopters, a submarine and jet-skis, is being investigated by Antigua over its apparent links to Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich.

The Caribbean island, which this month said it would enforce all western sanctions on Russian individuals, is trying to discover the ownership of the 67-metre "support" vessel for mega-yachts moored on the isle.

A British Virgin Islands-domiciled company called Wenham Overseas Limited bought Garçon in January 2021. Wenham owns a Boeing 787 private jet reportedly linked to Abramovich, while he is also named as owner of Wenham in a private plane ownership database. **Antiguans probe yacht page 9**



Briefing

► **Auditors desert China's property sector**
International firms have resigned from the heavily indebted real estate developers as a wave of delayed results raises uncertainty over the full scale of the crisis and the threat of hidden debts. — PAGE 6

► **Taiwan takes lessons from Zelensky**
The charismatic Ukrainian president's leadership of his country's resistance to the Russian invasion has inspired Taipei to adjust its own defence plans against a potential attack from China. — PAGE 4

► **Mnuchin in \$525mn cyber security deal**
The private equity group of former US Treasury secretary Steven Mnuchin has made its first buyout since he stepped down, taking control of Zimperium. — PAGE 6



► **Warning over aircraft leasing write-offs**
Domhnall Slattery, chief executive of Irish lessor Avolon, has warned of an impending big hit as the industry comes to terms with the likely loss of hundreds of jets leased to Russian carriers. — PAGE 8

► **Bolsonaro switches Petrobras chief again**
Brazil's president has decided to replace the boss of Latin America's biggest oil producer for the second time in a year, after a dispute over fuel costs that threatens his re-election prospects. — PAGE 9

► **Australia budget giveaway as poll looms**
Treasurer Josh Frydenberg has announced a budget aimed at easing the cost of living, and investing in defence and infrastructure. Prime minister Scott Morrison's coalition trails in opinion polls. — PAGE 4

► **Talenthouse gig platform plans debut**
The London-headquartered service that connects clients like Facebook and Snapchat with over 14mn digital content creators, has said it will list in Zurich as the metaverse era stimulates demand. — PAGE 10

Datawatch

Carbon copy

EU emissions (bn tonnes of CO₂ equivalent compared with 2019)



Source: Eurostat • Based on economic activity data in EU member states

Any potential environmental benefits from the pandemic appear to have been short-lived in the EU, with greenhouse gas emissions rising at pre-pandemic levels by the second and third quarters of last year

Russia and EU in stand-off as Putin digs in on rouble payments for gas

◆ Prospect rises of cut-off ◆ Europe seeks to pay in dollars or euros ◆ Peace talks progress

HARRY DEMPSKY
AND NEIL HUME — LONDON
NASTASSIA ASTRASHEUSKAYA — RIGA
SARAH WHITE — PARIS

Europe and Russia are locked in a stand-off over Moscow's insistence that its gas is paid for in roubles, raising the prospect of a halt in supplies as the Kremlin doubled down on its demands yesterday.

Russian officials said Moscow would not "supply gas for free" to Europe, a day after G7 countries rejected President Vladimir Putin's directive. "Payments will be accepted in roubles only," said Dmitry Peskov, Kremlin spokesperson. "Companies need to understand the changed market situation, the absolutely new reality that has emerged amid the economic war waged on Russia."

European leaders have said that pay-

ments must continue in euros or dollars, questioning the legality of Putin's proposed move in the gas industry where long-term contracts reign supreme.

The escalation over gas payments came as Russia said it had decided to "dramatically" scale back its military activities in the Kyiv area, following fresh peace talks with Ukrainian counterparts in Istanbul, Turkey.

But while Alexander Fomin, Russia's deputy defence minister, said the move aimed to "increase mutual trust", western officials were sceptical. "Nothing we have seen so far suggests that Putin and his colleagues are particularly serious about the talks, they are likely just playing for time," said one. However, both sides signalled progress at the meeting. Gazprom, Russia's state-owned gas

supplier, and the Russian central bank will report to Putin tomorrow on how to facilitate gas payments in roubles.

European customers of Gazprom have said the supply contracts do not allow for payment in roubles.

Robert Habeck, Germany's economy minister, said this week that payment for gas in roubles was not acceptable. "We urge the relevant companies not to comply with Putin's demand," he said.

Pawel Majewski, head of Poland's state-controlled gas group PGNiG, said last week there was "not much possibility" of switching payments to roubles. "It is not the case that our counterparty can just freely change the means of making payments as it wishes," he said.

The biggest buyers of Russian pipeline gas in Europe are German



Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov says 'companies need to understand the new reality amid the economic war waged on Russia'

utility Uniper, Turkey's Botas and Italy's Eni, each sourcing more than 20bn cubic metres per year from Gazprom, according to energy consultancy ICFIS.

Jonathan Stern, research fellow at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, said: "We are talking about sums of money that are eye-watering here."

The EU buys about 300mn cubic metres of Russian gas a day. ICFIS estimated Gazprom made about \$340mn per day from gas sales between the start of the war on February 24 and March 15.

Additional reporting by James Shotter in Warsaw, Roman Olearchyk in Kyiv and Ayka Jean Yachley in Istanbul
West sceptical on pullback page 2
LNG deal page 2
Markets insight page 11
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Elliott and Brookfield show faith in TV ratings with \$16bn deal to buy Nielsen

ANTOINETTE GARA AND JAMES FONTANELLA-KHAN — NEW YORK

A private equity consortium led by Elliott Management and Brookfield Asset Management has agreed to acquire television ratings group Nielsen for \$16bn, including debt, in the largest buyout since Russia invaded Ukraine.

The US and Canadian investors will pay \$28 per share in cash to Nielsen shareholders. The revised offer represents a 60 per cent premium to the company's value before reports of a potential sale first emerged.

Elliott and Brookfield's deal to take Nielsen private highlights how financing markets, particularly in the US, remain active amid rising interest rates and concerns of a prolonged war in Europe. The consortium will inject \$5.7bn in equity and the remaining

\$10.3bn will be provided by large banks and private lenders.

As part of the deal, Nielsen's advisers have the opportunity to seek a higher bid under a "go-shop" clause that is valid for 45 days. In past years, several private equity groups, including Blackstone and Carlyle, had expressed interest in buying the TV ratings group but ultimately walked away.

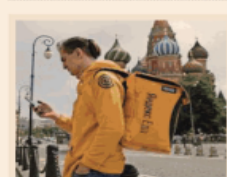
Yesterday's deal signals that Nielsen's private equity buyers remain confident in its core business of measuring advertising reach on cable and broadcast, despite being threatened by the rise of streaming platforms such as Netflix. For years, Nielsen has struggled to retain its dominance as an intermediary for buyers of advertising, and battled cable and broadcast networks over its measurement data. However, industry observers have said there is an opportunity in the

market for companies that can offer more sophisticated audience data about streaming services.

Elliott highlighted Nielsen's new measurement product, Nielsen ONE, which cuts across network TV and streaming media in unravelling their deal.

"After months of deep market analysis, industry diligence and management reviews, we are firmly convinced that Nielsen will continue to be the gold standard for audience measurement as it executes on the Nielsen ONE road map," said the firm's managing partner Jesse Cohn and senior portfolio manager Marc Steinberg in a statement.

For Elliott, the Nielsen takeover is the second-largest buyout this year involving a company it has long held a large public stake in, after it led the \$16.5bn takeover of Citrix with private equity group Vista Equity Partners in January.



Yandex's embedded code sends user data to Russia

App software made by top Russian internet group Yandex allows mobile users' information to be sent to servers in its home country. The revelations come at an awkward moment for the group often dubbed Russia's Google. It has long tried to stay independent without falling foul of Vladimir Putin's desire to control the web. Researchers fear this harvested 'metadata' may be accessed by the Kremlin and used to track people through their mobiles.

Home to Russia • PAGE 9

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World Markets

STOCK MARKETS				CURRENCIES				INTEREST RATES			
	Mar 29	prev	%chg	Pair	Mar 29	Prev			price	yield	chg
S&P 500	4610.81	4629.32	-0.41	\$ per £	1.110	1.097	£ per \$	0.900	94.80	2.41	-0.04
Nasdaq Composite	14535.54	14554.90	-1.26	\$ per €	1.214	1.209	€ per \$	0.783	123.94	1.84	0.02
Dow Jones Ind	35267.79	34955.89	0.72	£ per €	0.945	0.938	€ per £	1.183	94.40	0.83	0.05
FTSEurofirst 3000	1804.67	1775.87	1.62	¥ per \$	122.710	123.545	¥ per €	136.239	98.72	0.25	-0.01
Euro Stoxx 50	3996.70	3989.10	0.19	₩ per \$	161.191	161.853	₩ index	81.541	93.03	2.51	-0.05
FTSE 100	7512.25	7473.14	0.58	Sfr per €	1.034	1.026	Sfr per £	1.223	100.29	-0.06	0.08
FTSE All-Share	4208.30	4164.50	1.05								
CAC 40	6792.16	6898.11	-1.59								
Hang Seng	14420.33	14417.37	0.02								
Hong Kong	26752.42	27043.09	-1.10								
Hong Kong	21927.63	21984.97	-1.12								
MSCI World \$	3061.63	3049.11	0.41								
MSCI EM \$	1124.82	1125.01	-0.02								
MSCI ACWI \$	712.16	709.58	0.36	Oil WTI \$	102.23	105.96	-3.52	Fed Funds Eff	0.09	0.09	0.00
FT Worldex 2500	5879.72	5908.39	-0.71	Oil Brent \$	106.40	112.48	-5.36	US 3m Bill	0.59	0.55	0.04
FT Worldex 5000	48893.45	48373.30	0.89	Gold \$	1807.05	1863.80	-4.86	Euro Libor 3m	-0.58	-0.58	0.00
								UK 3m	1.05	1.02	0.03

Prices are latest for edition

Data provided by Bloomberg
A Nikkei Company

BOVET
1822
Engineering Brilliance

Awarded 'Hyper GT of the Year' - Top Gear

Battista Tourbillon

Unique Automobili Pininfarina Design, Battista Hyper GT Details Throughout, Brand-New Patented Double-Sided Flying Tourbillon Movement, 10-day Power Reserve with Patented Spherical Rewinding System, Double-Sided Box Sapphire Crystal, Asymmetrical Dial, Limited to 30 Pieces in Titanium.

bovet.com

Talks Show Progress, but Russia Fights for More Territory



Fighters of the Ukrainian Odin Unit, including volunteers from the United States and Britain, in Irpin, outside Kyiv, on Tuesday.

Kyiv Would Pledge Neutrality if West Guarantees Its Protection

By ANTON TROIANOVSKI

ISTANBUL — The first signs of significant progress in peace talks between Russia and Ukraine emerged on Tuesday, but there was no hint of an imminent end to the suffering, with Russia appearing determined to capture more territory in eastern Ukraine and officials predicting that weeks of further negotiation were needed.

After three hours of talks in Istanbul, Ukrainian officials said their country was ready to declare itself permanently neutral — forsaking the prospect of joining NATO, a key Russian demand — and discuss Russian territorial claims in exchange for “security guarantees” from a group of other nations. An aide to Ukraine’s president called the Russian delegation “constructive,” while Russia said it would “drastically” scale back its military activity around Kyiv to “increase mutual trust.”

Russia’s statement that it will de-escalate the fighting around Kyiv — even as it keeps pounding other parts of Ukraine — may be little more than putting a positive gloss on its military being stymied in its attempts to seize or encircle the capital. In recent days, Ukrainian counteroffensives around the city have forced back Russian forces in some of the

fiercest street battles of the war, though they remain within striking distance of Kyiv.

Now, Russian officials said, the goal will be to take more territory in Ukraine’s eastern Donbas region, where Russia has installed two separatist statelets that President Vladimir V. Putin recognized last month as independent, but that no other nation has formally acknowledged.

Western officials and security analysts cautioned against taking at face value Russia’s statements about its aims in Kyiv or elsewhere.

President Biden said he would not draw any conclusions about Russia’s intentions “until I see what their actions are.” Speaking after a White House meeting with the prime minister of Singapore, Mr. Biden added, “We’ll see if they follow through with what they are suggesting.”

“In the meantime,” Mr. Biden said, “we’re going to continue to keep strong the sanctions and will continue to provide the Ukrainian military with the capacity to defend themselves.”

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, on a diplomatic trip to Morocco, told reporters, “There is

Continued on Page A6

Those Over 50 Eligible to Get Second Booster

By SHARON LAFRANIERE

WASHINGTON — Federal regulators authorized second booster shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna coronavirus vaccines on Tuesday for everyone 50 and older, describing the move as an effort to bolster waning immunity against severe disease in case the virus sweeps the nation again in the coming months.

The Food and Drug Administration said people in the age group could get the additional shot at least four months after their first booster. The agency also authorized a second booster for people 12 and older with certain immune deficiencies.

The decision means that tens of millions of Americans are now eligible for what would be their fourth shot. And even though the public may be tiring of repeated doses, the move is most likely an interim one. Federal health officials say it is quite possible that Americans of all ages may need another shot in the fall to prepare for any winter surge. The hope is that by then, scientists will have reconfigured the existing vaccines to work better and last longer against the variants that have emerged since November.

Federal health officials initially considered limiting second boosters to those at least 60 or 65 years old. But at a news briefing, Dr. Peter Marks, who oversees the F.D.A.’s vaccine division, said a lower age limit made more sense because so many Americans over 50 have chronic medical conditions that put them at risk.

While a single booster dose continues to protect most Americans from hospitalization and death caused by Covid-19, he said, those 50 or older who got their first booster more than four months ago “should seriously consider getting another.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was a bit more circumspect.

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At the Edge of Kyiv, Signs of a Russian Retreat

By ANDREW E. KRAMER

IRPIN, Ukraine — Creeping forward block by block, Ukrainian soldiers in a reconnaissance unit on Tuesday found signs of a retreating Russian army everywhere: a charred armored vehicle, abandoned body armor decorated with an orange and black St. George ribbon, a Russian military symbol, and the traditional blue-and-white striped underwear issued to Russian soldiers, cast aside in a forest.

What they did not encounter was the Russian army in any organized state. After a month of savage street fighting, one of the most pivotal battles in the war so far ended this week — at least for now — with an improbable victory in Irpin for Ukraine’s outnumbered and outnumbered military. By Tuesday, Ukrainian forces had quashed any significant Russian resistance in this strategic outlying town near Kyiv, the capital.

Pockets of Russian soldiers re-

Ukrainian Patrols Find Charred Vehicles and Abandoned Armor

mained, posing risks. A firefight erupted in the afternoon when Ukrainian soldiers destroyed a lone Russian armored personnel carrier in an otherwise empty neighborhood, according to a commander.

But Ukraine’s military had essentially recaptured Irpin, a town both strategically and symbolically important as the closest Russian army had gotten to Kyiv, just three miles away. Its success in driving the Russians away may have factored into the peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine in Istanbul on Tuesday, when the two sides achieved what appeared to be their most substantive progress to date.

Moscow promised to reduce

“by multiples” the intensity of its military activity around Kyiv, an area that includes Irpin, in effect acknowledging that its advance toward the capital had stalled and was at least in some places being pushed back.

With superior numbers and weaponry, Russia could always decide to mount another assault on Irpin. And Ukrainian security experts expressed skepticism about Russia’s pledge to pull back. “They will not abandon plans to take the capital,” Oleksandr Danylyuk, a former secretary of Ukraine’s Security and Defense Council, said in an interview.

Still, some people saw the recapture of Irpin as a moral victory, even if street fighting continues in the town and the military gains may be tentative.

Kyiv was always the biggest prize of all for the Russian military, as the seat of government and a city ingrained in both Russian and Ukrainian identity. But

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Germany Shifts Foreign Policy, And the Power Shifts to Women

By KATRIN BENNHOLD and STEVEN ERLANGER

BERLIN — It was Chancellor Olaf Scholz who, a few days after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, broke with Germany’s postwar pacifism, vowing to give his country the necessary resources and an armament program of 100 billion euros.

Those now tasked with carrying out that change — the biggest foreign-policy shift in Germany since World War II — are women. Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht, who is in Washington this week, is overseeing a rearmament program of 100 billion euros, about \$110 billion, for the German military. Annalena Baerbock, the foreign minister, is devising Germany’s first national security strategy. And Nancy Faeser, in charge of homeland security, is organizing the welcome for hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees.

As war rages in Ukraine, a mere 10-hour drive from Berlin, it is the first time that Germany has all three national security positions filled by women, putting them on the frontline of both a cultural and a strategic revolution in their country.

“Security lies in the hands of strong women in this government,” Mr. Scholz, 63, said when he presented his cabinet to the country in November — the first featuring as many women as men. The shift would have been momentous at any time, but is now especially notable as Germany faces its biggest security crisis since the Cold War: the Russian aggression in Ukraine that has unsettled Europe and jolted the NATO alliance to attention.

Mr. Scholz’s conservative pred-

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JIM HUYLENBROEK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Coal Miner at 8 Years Old

Desperate for cash, Afghans of all ages labor in Baghlan’s dark and dangerous mines. Page A12.

Two Industries Stymie Justice For Lead Paint’s Young Victims

By ELLEN GABLER

When Selena Wiley signed the lease for an older rental home in South Bend, Ind., she asked the property manager about lead paint and was assured the house was safe.

But in November 2018, almost two years after moving in with her partner and three children, Ms. Wiley noticed that their 2-year-old’s appetite had vanished and his constant chattering had stopped.

A doctor soon discovered that the boy, Joeson, known as J.J., had lead poisoning. The level was so high that he immediately began a 19-day treatment to help rid his body of the toxin, which can cause irreversible damage to a child’s brain and nervous system. A health inspector soon found lead paint and dust throughout the family’s rental home.

As J.J. faces an uncertain future, no one has been held responsible so far — the firm that owns the home protected its assets in a tangle of limited liability companies, and the property insurer excluded lead from its coverage. These practices are now the norm across the United States. The New York Times has found, part of a decades-long campaign by the real estate and insurance industries to shield themselves from liability in lead-poisoning cases. The effort has helped allow what is often considered a problem of the past to remain a silent epidemic today.



ANDREA BRUCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Selena Wiley and her son J.J., who was exposed to lead paint in an Indiana rental home.

Although lead poisoning has decreased substantially since the late 1970s as a result of regulatory actions and public health initiatives, about 500,000 children under 6 have elevated blood lead levels in the United States and are at risk of harm. The issue has only intensified in the era of Covid-19: Rental inspections lagged, exposure increased as people spent more time at home and testing of children fell by 50 percent at times in 2020.

Continued on Page A14

Evidence Grows That Dec. 19 Trump Tweet Paved Way for Jan. 6

This article is by Alan Feuer, Mitchell S. Schmidt and Luke Broadwater.

Federal prosecutors and congressional investigators have gathered growing evidence of how a tweet by President Donald J. Trump less than three weeks before Jan. 6, 2021, served as a crucial call to action for extremist groups that played a central role

in storming the Capitol.

Mr. Trump’s Twitter post in the early hours of Dec. 19, 2020, was the first time he publicly urged supporters to come to Washington on the day Congress was scheduled to certify the Electoral College results showing Joseph R. Biden Jr. as the winner of the presidential vote. His message — which concluded with, “Be there, will be wild!” — has long been

A Call to ‘Be There’ Led Extremists to Plan

seen as instrumental in drawing the crowds that attended a pro-Trump rally on the Ellipse on Jan. 6 and then marched to the Capitol. But the Justice Department’s criminal investigation of the riot

and the parallel inquiry by the House select committee increasingly show how Mr. Trump’s post was a powerful catalyst, particularly for far-right militants who believed he was facing his final chance to reverse defeat and whose role in fomenting the violence has come under intense scrutiny.

Extremist groups almost im-

Continued on Page A19

INTERNATIONAL A4-12

Palestinian Gunman Kills 5

The attack near Tel Aviv brought the number of people killed in the past two weeks to 11, making it one of the deadliest periods in Israel in years. PAGE A11

NATIONAL A13-23

A Megachurch Diminished

A series of crises, including its leader’s resignation, has led the evangelical powerhouse Hillsong to shed half its U.S. churches in a few weeks. PAGE A22

FOOD D1-8

Cooking in Community College

Many culinary schools closed down during the pandemic. But excellent instruction is available elsewhere, usually at a much lower price. PAGE D1

OBITUARIES B10-11

Sensation in Softball and More

Joan Joyce, whose pitching feats included striking out Ted Williams and Hank Aaron, also excelled in basketball, volleyball and golf. She was 81. PAGE B10

OPINION A24-25

Roxane Gay

PAGE A25



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Russia's offer met with suspicion



OLEG SUPEREKA has guard duty at the regional administration building in Kharkiv, Ukraine. He is undaunted by the Russian airstrikes that he survived. "If someone attacks us, as recent events show, we unite and fight back," said the citizen-turned-soldier.

Photographs by MARCUS YAM Los Angeles Times

PORTRAIT OF A SOLDIER

Guard in Kharkiv returns to duty after each airstrike, to 'defend our country'

BY MARCUS YAM
AND LAURA KING

KHARKIV, Ukraine — In a war that has upended millions of lives, killed thousands of people and unleashed almost unfathomable destruction across Ukraine, a country of 44 million, he's only one soldier.

One man, in one particular place — a place that was bombed three separate times.

What citizen-turned-soldier Oleg Supereka experienced this month as he stood guard over the regional administration building in the northeastern city of Kharkiv is extraordinary — yet in the surreal context of this war, almost banal.

With Russian troops training battlefield weap-



THE REGIONAL administration building is among hundreds of structures in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, destroyed by Russian forces.

onry on cities and towns across Ukraine, combatants and noncombatants alike have found themselves in during close-range encounters with heavy armaments designed to pulverize military targets and level large infrastructure.

Some people survive; many do not.

"We want to defend our country, after each explosion," said Supereka, 53, who worked as a portrait photographer before the war.

The portrait he sees daily now is the face of a beloved city disfigured. More than 600 buildings in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest metropolis, were destroyed in the three weeks ending in mid-March, the city's mayor reported, and hundreds more have been hit since.

[See Soldier, A6]

Even the drinks at peace talks are distrusted, let alone idea of a pullback.

BY PATRICK J. McDONNELL,
JAWED KALEEM
AND TRACY WILKINSON

LVIV, Ukraine — Russian negotiators Tuesday offered to pull back attacks on the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, in a step toward ending the war between the two nations, but U.S. and Western officials remained skeptical of Moscow's true intentions.

The offer came as Russian and Ukrainian officials held a new round of talks and Ukrainian forces continued to mount fierce resistance in northern parts of the country against a relentless campaign of Russian shelling and missile attacks that has destroyed residential neighborhoods, hospitals and fuel storage depots.

But rather than ending the war, it seemed more likely that Russian President Vladimir Putin was merely shifting focus to the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine, where his forces have moved deeper into the separatist Donbas region and battered the coastal town of Mariupol.

"There is what Russia says and there is what Russia does," Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken said. "We're focused on the latter, and what Russia is doing is the continued brutalization of Ukraine and its people, and that continues as we speak."

In Tuesday's talks, held in Istanbul, Ukraine also suggested it would accept a position of "neutrality" — giving up its aspiration to join NATO — as long as other outside entities, such as the European Union, guarantee its security. [See Ukraine, A4]

NEWS ANALYSIS

New era in war crimes tracking

Evidence of possible Russian complicity in Ukraine is being collected in real time.

BY TRACY WILKINSON

WASHINGTON — With rare speed, the U.S. government has determined that Russian forces are committing war crimes as they attempt to bombard Ukraine into submission, a brutal onslaught that has displaced millions and probably killed thousands of civilians.

But even after egregious actions, war crimes prosecutions are methodical endeavors that can last for more than a decade before perpetrators are brought to justice — if they ever are.

Something different, though, is occurring with Ukraine, legal and human rights experts say. Thanks to smartphones, social media and the publicity savvy and pointed eagerness of Ukrainian officials, evidence of potential war crimes is being compiled even as they unfold.

"It's all happening in real time," said Jane E. Stromseth, a professor of international law and human rights at Georgetown University, who previously worked on global justice for the State Department.

This will allow investigators to build cases more rapidly than in previous wars, such as the Balkans or Sudan or [See Crimes, A6]

Activision settles U.S. harassment, bias case

Game maker resolves suit by setting aside \$18 million for victims. State agency objects.

BY SAM DEAN
AND BRIAN CONTRERAS

Activision Blizzard agreed to set up an \$18-million fund for employees who experienced sexual harassment or discrimination, pregnancy discrimination or retaliation as part of a settlement with a federal employment agency Tuesday.

The consent decree, which a federal judge said she intended to sign after a

hearing Tuesday, comes in response to a lawsuit filed against the Santa Monica video game company in September by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which alleged that Activision employees were subject to "severe" and "pervasive" sexual harassment in the workplace.

Anyone who worked at the company after September 2016 and believes that they were subject to harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be eligible to apply for a share of the cash payout. The company officially denied all wrongdoing as part of the settlement, which also included require-

[See Activision, A13]



FREDERIC J. BROWN AP/GETTY IMAGES

A WOMAN gets a COVID-19 vaccination at Union Station in Los Angeles. The CDC on Tuesday authorized a second booster shot for those age 50 and up.

Second boosters approved as BA.2 becomes dominant

BY LUKE MONEY AND
RONG-GONG LIN II

The highly contagious BA.2 Omicron subvariant is now the dominant version of the coronavirus in the U.S., including the West Coast — a development that added urgency to federal authorities' decision Tuesday to allow a second vaccine booster shot for those age 50 and up. The Los Angeles County

Where to get shots in L.A. County

Several government-run sites will begin offering second boosters Wednesday. **CALIFORNIA, B2**

Department of Public Health will be ready to offer second booster shots to those in that age group starting Wednesday, at

seven clinics.

An additional shot "is especially important for those 65 and older, and those 50 and older with underlying medical conditions that increase their risk for severe disease from COVID-19, as they are the most likely to benefit from receiving an additional booster dose at this time," Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and [See Booster, A10]

Biden signs anti-lynching law

A century after it was introduced, a proposal to make the act a federal crime finally becomes reality. **NATION, A8**

Rule on assisted suicide broadens

Oregon will no longer limit the medically aided procedure to state residents. **NATION, A10**

Sheriff denies role in cover-up

Villanueva says aides tried to conceal case of a deputy who knelt on an inmate. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Weather

Partly sunny. L.A. Basin: 68/54. **B6**



BUSINESS INSIDE: Delta Air Lines offers a peek at its new \$1.9-billion LAX terminal. **A12**

ALL-MET TEAMS

Winter's best athletes
from across the DMV

SPECIAL SECTION



FOOD

Secrets to building
a better salad

EXPANDED SECTION



GREEN HOUSING

Homes constructed
to weather a storm

SPECIAL SECTION

The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington



Mostly cloudy 58/53 • Tomorrow: T-storm 76/54 B8

Democracy Dies in Darkness

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2022 • \$3.50

Logs show 7-hour gap in Trump's Jan. 6 calls

House panel investigates if it got full records and if he used back channels

BY BOB WOODWARD
AND ROBERT COSTA

Internal White House records from the day of the attack on the U.S. Capitol that were turned over to the House select committee show a gap in President Donald Trump's phone logs of seven hours and 37 minutes, including the period when the building was being violently assaulted, according to documents obtained by The Washington Post and CBS News.

The lack of an official White House notation of any calls placed to or by Trump for 457 minutes on Jan. 6, 2021 — from 11:17 a.m. to 6:54 p.m. — means the committee has no record of his phone conversations as his supporters descended on the Capitol, battled overwhelmed police and forcibly entered the building, prompting lawmakers and Vice President Mike Pence to flee for safety.

The 11 pages of records, which consist of the president's official daily diary and the White House switchboard call logs, were turned over by the National Archives earlier this year to the House select committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack.

The records show that Trump was active on the phone for part of the day, documenting conversations that he had with at least eight people in the morning and 11 people that evening. The seven-hour gap also stands in stark contrast to the extensive public reporting about phone conversations he had with allies during the attack, such as a call Trump made to Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) — seeking to talk to Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R-Ala.) — and a phone conversation he had with House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.).

The House committee is now
SEE LOGS ON A10

Call for lenience: Judge contends some rioters shouldn't go to jail. B1

West wary as peace talks raise hopes



PHOTOS BY HEDI LEVINE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

As Russian attacks kill civilians, Kyiv's defense tactics add to the danger

BY SUDARSAN RAGHAVAN

KYIV, UKRAINE — The suspected Russian missile hit the tall apartment building, engulfing it in flames and smoke. It killed at least four people, including elderly residents, and shattered the lives of a close-knit community. For lawmaker Oleksii Goncharenko, the tragedy was yet another example of potential Russian war crimes.

"They are just hitting residential buildings in these areas," said the Ukrainian parliament member, who arrived at the scene shortly after the explosion two weeks ago. "You can walk around, you will not find any military targets, or any military people. This is just terror."

Yet a few minutes later, the whooshing sound of Ukrainian rockets fired from a multiple rocket launcher startled residents staring blankly at their destroyed homes. Then, another outgoing barrage. The weapons seemed to be nearby, perhaps a



TOP: Yuri Yunevych's home and farm on the outskirts of Brovary, a suburb of Kyiv, were heavily damaged in fighting between Russian forces and the Ukrainian military, which has deployed weaponry in civilian areas. **ABOVE:** A woman passes a destroyed Russian military vehicle in Brovary.

7 days in Chernihiv: A man details life in a city under siege. A19

Berlin dilemma: Germany is wary of a ban on Russian energy. A20

Old-school deterrent: The U.S. has long kept nukes in Europe. C1

few streets away, certainly well inside the capital.

Increasingly, Ukrainians are confronting an uncomfortable truth: The military's understandable impulse to defend against Russian attacks could be putting civilians in the crosshairs. Virtually every neighborhood in most cities has become militarized, some more than others, making them potential targets for Russian forces trying to take out Ukrainian defenses.

"I am very reluctant to suggest that Ukraine is responsible for civilian casualties, because Ukraine is fighting to defend its country from an aggressor," said William Schabas, an international law professor at Middlesex University in London. "But to the extent that Ukraine brings the battlefield to the civilian neighborhoods, it increases the danger to civilians."

Ukraine's cities — and civilian areas — have become the crucible of the war, where an intense
SEE CIVILIANS ON A16

RUSSIA PLEDGES TO EASE ATTACKS

Ukraine would forgo NATO bid for security

BY KAREEM FAHIM,
DAVID L. STERN,
DAN LAMOTHE
AND ISABELLE KHURSHUDYAN

ISTANBUL — Ukrainian negotiators in Turkey said Tuesday they had offered a detailed peace proposal to their Russian counterparts, exchanging military neutrality for security guarantees, as Moscow said it would "drastically reduce" military activity near the Ukrainian cities of Kyiv and Chernihiv "to increase mutual trust and create the necessary conditions for further negotiations."

The declarations signaled a rare moment of optimism nearly five weeks into the bloody invasion. But U.S. and other Western leaders were skeptical, saying they would judge Russia by its actions and not its words. Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said
SEE UKRAINE ON A18

War is rallying extremists to both sides

BY ISAAC STANLEY-BECKER
AND SOUAD MEKHENNET

BERLIN — The graphic circulated by the neo-Nazi party shows two arms locked in a handshake, framed by a heading in capital letters: "Nationalists help nationalists."

"Accommodations wanted for Ukrainian nationalists!" the German group wrote on the Telegram messaging app, saying, "During the fighting in Ukraine, nationalists are at the forefront."

Europe's largest land war since 1945 has brought nationalist passions back with a vengeance. In launching his assault, Russian President Vladimir Putin invoked ethno-nationalist principles of blood and culture, denying the existence of an independent Ukraine. Leaders in Kyiv, responding to the aggression, have
SEE EXTREMISTS ON A19

Pandemic adds parallel perils for chronically ill

Millions struggle to get medical supplies amid global shortages caused by the crisis

BY KATIE SHEPHERD

Crystal Evans lives in constant fear that bacteria will grow inside the silicone tube that connects her windpipe to the ventilator that pumps air into her lungs.

Before the pandemic, the 40-year-old with a progressive neuromuscular disease followed a fastidious routine: She carefully changed the plastic circuits that carry air from the ventilator five times each month to keep them sterile. She also swapped out the silicone tracheotomy tube several times a month.

Now, though, those tasks have gotten infinitely harder. A shortage of medical-grade silicone and plastic used for the tubing means she must make do with just one new circuit each month. Since running out of new tracheotomy tubes early last month, Evans boils whatever she has to sterilize it before reusing, takes antibiotics to kill
SEE VIRUS ON A7

Second booster: FDA authorized the shot for people 50 and older. A6



Crystal Evans sits Feb. 7 at home in Braintree, Mass. Since running out of new tracheotomy tubes, the 40-year-old with a progressive neuromuscular disease has resorted to boiling her equipment.

Covid mental crisis ends in tragedy for Va. family

A grandmother is killed after taking in a troubled relative out of options

BY JUSTIN JOUVENAL

WINCHESTER, VA. — Pastor Brandon Thomas had just stepped away from the homeless shelter he runs when his buzzing phone signaled another mental health crisis.

That week in late August he had already sought help for one resident who suffered a psychotic break so severe she could not remember her name, and another who bit his own arm and swallowed a bottle of pills.

Now, texts were telling Thomas his most challenging client was out of control. He raced back to find David Austin Rowe pacing the shelter. The 18-year-old threatened to shoot one staffer, Thomas said, and to choke another. He rambled about blowing
SEE ROWE ON A24

up the Winchester Rescue Mission.

The pandemic has sparked a second epidemic of despair, and the mission is on the front lines. Death and isolation associated with the coronavirus created an uptick in people needing counseling, while degrading the ability of the mental health system to provide it.

Normally, 40 percent of the mission's residents have a diagnosed mental illness, but that number shot to 90 percent at times over the last six months. Virginia's hospitals were struggling to find beds for the mentally ill amid a surge in patients and a staffing shortage exacerbated by the pandemic. Problems in the state mirrored those nationwide.

Rowe, who suffers such profound autism and mental illness that he had been in the care of the local county since age 11, had a history of violent outbursts. On that August day, Thomas desperately tried to get Rowe an emergency hospital commitment but
SEE ROWE ON A24

BUSINESS A23
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TELEVISION C6
OBITUARIES B6
LOTTERIES B3

WORLD NEWS A15
SPORTS D1
STOCKS A23

CLASSIFIED ADS B7
WEATHER B8
STYLE C1

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The Washington Post / Year 145, No. 135



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espectáculos**Jada Pinkett-Smith, ante la bofetada que está en boca de todo el mundo**

La mujer de Will Smith dijo que se encuentra en una etapa de "sanación".

**POR PRIMERA VEZ HAY VACUNAS CONTRA LA GRIPE ANTIALÉRGICAS**

—sociedad

Es una nueva generación de fármacos sustentables; comenzó la campaña de inmunización, en medio de una suba prematura de influenza H3N2. **Página 22**

LITERATURA PARA HABLAR DE MALVINAS CON LOS CHICOS

—cultura

A 40 años de la guerra, hay distintas propuestas, desde cuentos hasta relatos de no ficción, para abordar esa historia con niños y adolescentes. **Página 24**

LA NACION

MIÉRCOLES 30 DE MARZO DE 2022 | LANACION.COM.AR

Cristina no logró los votos para cambiar el organismo que designa a los jueces

SENADO. El oficialismo suspendió la sesión que iba a reformar el Consejo de la Magistratura

El kirchnerismo debió suspender ayer la sesión del Senado en la que hoy iba a tratarse el proyecto de ley de reforma del Consejo de la Magistratura, elaborado por el Poder Ejecutivo después de que la Corte Suprema de Justicia declarara inconstitucional la integración del or-

ganismo que selecciona y sanciona a los jueces.

La causa del retraso es la negativa del senador Alberto Weretilneck (Juntos Somos Río Negro) a acompañar la iniciativa del Poder Ejecutivo si no le aceptan algunas de sus propuestas. Sin su apoyo, el Frente

de Todos no alcanza a reunir los 37 votos (mayoría absoluta) que exige la Constitución para reformar la ley del Consejo de la Magistratura. De fondo, la postergación confirma que Cristina Kirchner ya no dispone de una "mayoría automática" en el Senado. **Página 13**

Fernández criticó el "internismo" y pidió diálogo

Jaime Rosenberg

Página 12**Por el VAR, a la selección se le escapó el triunfo al final**

deportes— Justo cuando desde mañana el VAR entrará en escena en el torneo argentino, la tecnología apareció en el final del partido de la selección y le permitió a Ecuador empatar 1-1, de penal, en Guayaquil. Igual, el equipo de Scaloni alcanzó el invicto de 31 partidos.



El ecuatoriano Estupiñán intenta frenar a Messi en un partido que terminó con un penal decretado por el VAR

FRANKLIN JACOME/GETTY

LA NACION EN UCRANIA — DÍA 35

Rusia anuncia la "desescalada" sobre Kiev

Escéptico, Occidente dijo que las tropas rusas realizaron un "reposicionamiento" y no una retirada

Luisa Corradini
CORRESPONSAL EN FRANCIA

PARÍS.— Después de padecer la contraofensiva ucraniana en el sur y el oeste del país que obligó a sus fuerzas a replegarse, Rusia

anunció ayer que reducirá "radicalmente" su actividad militar en las regiones de Kiev y Tcherníguiv. La declaración fue recibida con escepticismo por los occidentales, decididos a esperar hasta que el Kremlin "cumpla con sus pala-

bras". En Estambul, los resultados de la nueva ronda de negociaciones ruso-ucranianas fueron calificados de "sustanciales" por Moscú y "positivos" por el gobierno de Volodimir Zelensky. El Pentágono verificó un movimiento de unida-

des terrestres rusas en zonas cercanas a la capital ucraniana, pero lo calificó como "un reposicionamiento" y no como una retirada, lo que llevó a la Casa Blanca a "dudar de la real seriedad" del anuncio del Kremlin. **Continúa en la página 2**

Redes: fuerte polémica por una iniciativa del Gobierno

COMUNICACIÓN. Beliz difundió una propuesta que se interpretó como un intento de regulación

El Gobierno generó ayer una fuerte polémica al difundir una iniciativa sobre el uso de las redes sociales. En el marco del Consejo Económico y Social, el secretario de Asuntos Estratégicos, Gustavo Beliz, habló de "profundizar los lineamientos centrales del uso de las redes sociales para el bien común", lo que fue interpretado por la oposición y organismos de libertad de expresión como un intento de regulación. Desde el Gobierno tuvieron que salir a aclarar que el objetivo de la propuesta no es generar un proyecto de ley para establecer pautas de funcionamiento. **Página 10**

EL ANÁLISIS

Pescando para perseguir y castigar

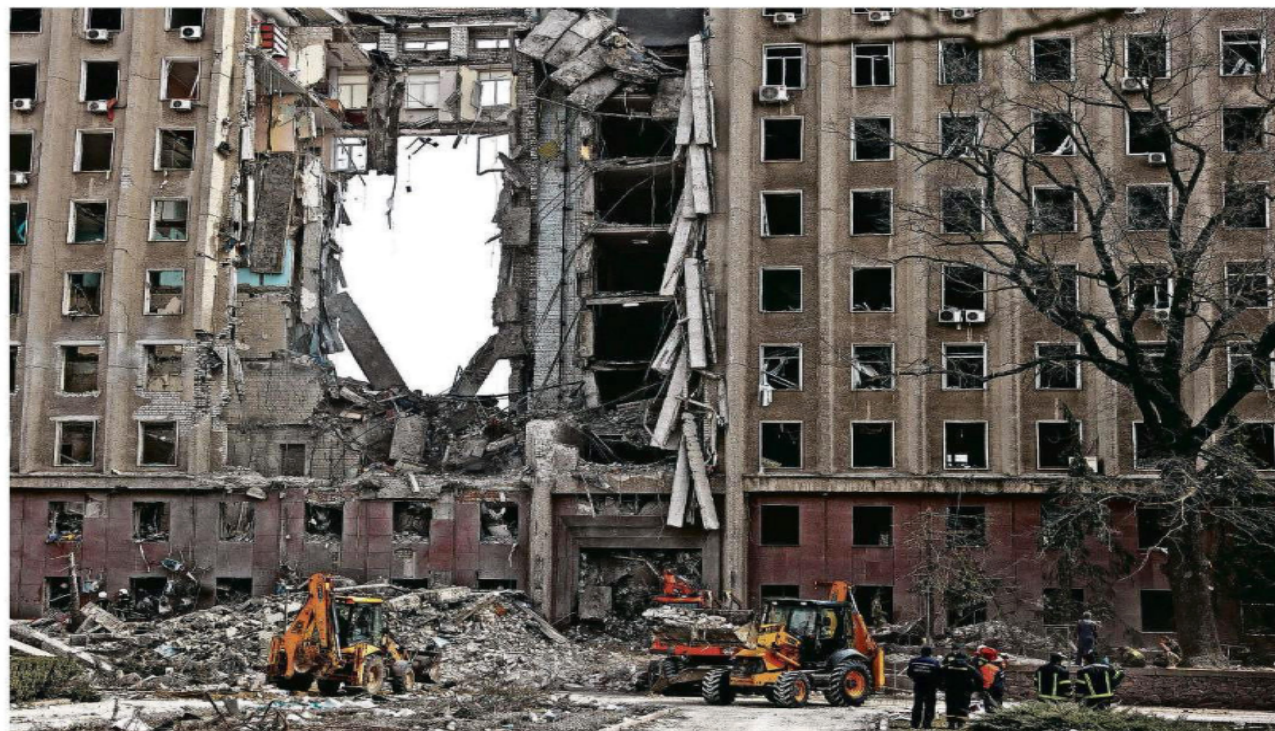
Joaquín Morales Solá

—LA NACION—

Puede ser un capítulo más del largorelato kirchnerista. O puede ser un síntoma de la desesperación de la facción política gobernante para hacerse de algunos dólares, cuando ya ni siquiera sabe si tendrá recursos para comprar el gas que se necesitará en el invierno cercano. **Continúa en la página 14**

Se agudiza la falta de bienes por la escasez de dólares

IMPORTADOS. Cerámicas, neumáticos, tractores y electrodomésticos son algunos ejemplos. **Página 19**



Equipes de resgate observam prédio governamental destruído por bombardeio russo em Mikolaiv, no sul da Ucrânia Nacho Doce/Reuters

Ministro do TSE revoga censura ao Lollapalooza

O ministro do TSE Raul Araújo, que censurou o festival Lollapalooza a pedido do PL, partido de Jair Bolsonaro, derrubou sua própria liminar na noite de segunda. Ele acolheu representação em que a legenda desistia da ação, após repercussão negativa, inclusive de colegas do tribunal eleitoral. **Política A5**

Sistema eleitoral faz vista grossa para campanhas

Política A4 e A5

Corrupção vai crescer, dizem 53% dos brasileiros

A percepção de crescimento da corrupção no país registrou um salto de 36% para 53% nos últimos três meses, segundo pesquisa Datafolha realizada na semana passada. Para 17% dos brasileiros, os casos vão diminuir. **Política A7**

A pandemia em 29 mar

Dados das 20h

POPULAÇÃO VACINADA

No Brasil	
Ao menos uma dose (dose única ou 1ª dose)	84,0%
1º ciclo vacinal completo (dose única ou 2ª dose)	74,6%
Dose de reforço	35,6%

ESTÁGIO DA DOENÇA

Óbitos	
Média móvel	Em 24 h
217 ↓ -43,9%*	282
	Total 659.294
Casos ↓ -31,0%* (desacelerado)	
*Variação em relação a 14 dias	



Elifas Andreato em lançamento de livro em 2018

Rússia anuncia 'redução drástica' de ataques a Kiev

Putin e Zelenski dissimulam metas para alegar êxito; Turquia surge de mediadora

A Rússia anunciou a primeira diminuição, sem motivação humanitária, de ataques desde o começo da guerra na Ucrânia. A pasta da Defesa falou em "reduzir drasticamente a atividade militar em torno de Kiev e Tchernihiv".

A justificativa oficial é facilitar as negociações que começaram em Istambul, com a presença do presidente turco, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Mas a medida também daria tempo ao Kremlin para adaptar seu discurso.

O ministro russo da Defesa, Serguei Chogu, disse que o "objetivo principal" da ofensiva é a "libertação do Donbass", no leste ucraniano — o que desviaria o foco dos erros militares em Kiev e outros pontos de batalha.

O presidente da Ucrânia, Volodimir Zelenski, também tem alternado suas posições. De um lado, faz cobrança por armas ao Ocidente; de outro, declara que pode aceitar a neutralidade exigida por Moscou. **Mundo A10**

Ilustrada C7 Morre Elifas Andreato

Autor de capas de discos marcantes de artistas da MPB, como Chico Buarque e Elis Regina, o ilustrador e artista gráfico Elifas Andreato morreu por complicações de um infarto, aos 76.

Auxílio alcança 23% da população, mas valor é criticado

Principal programa federal de transferência de renda, o Auxílio Brasil alcança quase um quarto da população (23%), mas a maioria dos beneficiários (68%) considera insuficientes os valores pagos, diz pesquisa Datafolha. **Mercado A13**

Atrito com governo deve seguir com Pires na Petrobras

Executivos do mercado de combustíveis afirmam que a chegada de Adriano Pires à Petrobras não vai mudar os atritos com o Planalto. O novo comandante da estatal deve manter a política de preços, mas estuda compensações. **Mercado A18**

ANÁLISE Ranier Bragon

Trocas na petroleira e no MEC têm mesma motivação: evitar corrosão eleitoral **A6**

Um em 4 brasileiros considera comida em casa insuficiente

Pesquisa realizada pelo Datafolha aponta que 24% dos entrevistados consideram insuficiente a quantidade de comida de que dispõem em casa. Insegurança alimentar é mais aguda no Nordeste e entre desempregados. **A13**

EDITORIAIS A2

À moda de Bolsonaro
Sobre as trocas de comando no MEC e na Petrobras.

Faz de conta no Ibama
Acerca de atraso na aplicação de multas ambientais.



Helena Nader, em seu laboratório na Unifesp Eduardo Knapp/Folhapress

ENTREVISTA Helena Nader Ciência e educação precisam ser políticas de Estado

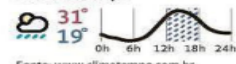
Professora da Unifesp, a biomédica Helena Nader foi eleita presidente da Academia Brasileira de Ciências, primeira mulher a ocupar o cargo nos 106 anos da instituição. "Não pode ser construída a educação com cor político-partidária, isso é um desastre", afirma à Folha. **Ciência B6**

Doria afirma ter ordenado remoção da nova cracolândia

Cotidiano B1

ATMOSFERA

São Paulo hoje



Fonte: www.climatempo.com.br



Tirantez en el marco de las negociaciones por el precio de la tarifa

Brasil presiona para restar al Paraguay beneficios en Itaipú

Autoridades nacionales de la binacional señalaron que los brasileños quisieron revisar el acuerdo que da prioridad a los paraguayos sobre los excedentes de energía de la hidroeléctrica.

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Revisión factura por factura

DNCP plantea control exhaustivo de gastos en Gobernación del Guairá

PÁGINA 2

Denuncia del defensor del Pueblo

Cadete está internado en UTI a causa de torturas en las FFAA

PÁGINA 9

Quieren reemplazarlo con el suplente

Con incidentes impiden que asuma edil crítico al clan González Daher

PÁGINA 4



Las tragamonedas pululan en Limpio

Un peligro. Máquinas de juegos de azar colman irregularmente la ciudad. Son un riesgo de adicción para niños. Senado analiza ley de protección a menores.

PÁGINAS 8 y 21

Tributación recomendó el rechazo de la normativa

Senado pospone sine die tratamiento de proyecto de régimen fronterizo

PÁGINA 15

La estatal sostiene que la empresa incumplió el contrato

Engineering ganó una demanda de más de G. 11.000 millones a la ANDE

PÁGINA 18

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FIGARO
scope

- **À la une** : les meilleurs spectacles de la saison
- **Restaurants** : les bonnes tables de la Méditerranée orientale

EXCLUSIF
CE QUE RÉVÈLE L'ENQUÊTE
ANTITERRORISTE SUR
L'ASSASSIN DE COLONNA **PAGE 8**



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Divisée sur le cas Mélenchon, la gauche prépare déjà l'après-présidentielle

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UKRAINE

• La Biélorussie rechigne à s'engager
• L'idylle autoritaire « sans limite » de Xi Jinping avec Poutine à l'épreuve de la guerre

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• Le rôle inédit des cryptomonnaies dans le conflit

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Des cimetières militaires surplombés par des éoliennes ? **PAGE 10**

CHAMPS LIBRES

- La Bosnie-Herzégovine déchirée par les tensions nationalistes
- Dix scrutins dans le rétroviseur, 9/10 : la présidentielle de 2012
- Les tribunes de Pierre Lellouche et de Marcel Pochard
- La chronique de Bertille Bayart
- L'analyse d'Albert Zennou

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**FIGARO OUI
FIGARO NON**

Réponses à la question de mardi :
Êtes-vous prêt à faire des économies d'énergie dès maintenant ?

NON 32% OUI 68%

TOTAL DE VOTANTS : 148 789

Votez aujourd'hui sur lefigaro.fr
Pensez-vous que Jean-Luc Mélenchon peut accéder au second tour de la présidentielle ?

AFP

La dette publique, grande oubliée de la campagne

L'endettement de la France atteint un sommet de 2 813 milliards d'euros, soit l'un des taux les plus élevés d'Europe. Mais le sujet n'est pratiquement jamais évoqué dans le débat public.

Grâce au fort rebond de la croissance économique, le taux d'endettement de la France s'est légèrement amélioré l'an dernier, pour termi-

ner à 112,9 % du PIB. Mais ce dynamisme de l'activité doit beaucoup à une dépense publique qui ne cesse d'augmen-

ter et qui entretient un niveau de dette très élevé en valeur absolue (2 813 milliards d'euros). La France est, avec les pays méditerranéens, le mauvais élève de l'Europe

concernant la gestion de ses comptes. La question des finances publiques n'est que très peu présente dans la campagne. Le programme d'Em-

manuel Macron ne l'évoque quasiment pas et la majorité de ses opposants présentent des mesures dont la plupart ne sont pas jugées crédibles.

→ **BRUNO CAVALIER** : « LA SITUATION APPELLE À UNE GRANDE VIGILANCE » → **L'IMPACT DE L'INFLATION SUR LE DÉSENETTEMENT DU PAYS**
→ **LES FICELLES DES CANDIDATS POUR FINANCER LEUR PROJET** PAGES 20, 21 ET L'ÉDITORIAL



Le confinement de Shanghai marque l'échec de la stratégie anti-Covid de la Chine

Pour tenter d'enrayer la propagation du variant Omicron, les autorités ont décidé de cloîtrer la mégapole de 25 millions d'habitants. Une méthode brutale qui commence à être critiquée sur les réseaux sociaux du pays. **PAGE 11**

Premiers signaux positifs dans la négociation entre Kiev et Moscou

Accueillis à Istanbul par le président turc, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, qui les a exhortés à stopper la « tragédie », les négociateurs russes et ukrainiens ont fait état hier de « discussions substantielles », Moscou saluant les propositions « claires » de Kiev sur une neutralité assortie de garanties de sécurité. Le chef de la diplomatie américaine a toutefois tempéré cet optimisme, affirmant douter du « réel sérieux » du Kremlin. **PAGE 5**

ÉDITORIAL par Gaëtan de Capèle gdecapelle@lefigaro.fr

Spirale vertigineuse

C'est l'éléphant dans la pièce que tout le monde fait mine d'ignorer : à douze jours de l'élection présidentielle, l'énorme sujet de la dette publique brille par son absence dans le débat politique. Les chiffres, pourtant, donnent le vertige. L'endettement de la France, pris dans une spirale vertigineuse, a triplé en vingt ans pour dépasser les 2 800 milliards d'euros. La Cour des comptes, chargée de surveiller le bon usage de l'argent public, s'inquiète ouvertement de cette trajectoire, en passe de devenir hors de contrôle. Depuis un demi-siècle, quelle que soit la météo économique, la France vit au-dessus de ses moyens, en dépensant systématiquement davantage que ce qu'elle possède. Avec la pandémie, puis la flambée des prix de l'énergie, les dernières années ont été lachées. Au nom de circonstances exceptionnelles qui le sont de moins en moins, l'État se charge de tout, se substitue à tout, paie tout, quoi qu'il en coûte. Cette infantilisation du pays prépare des lendemains difficiles. Personne, à part Jean-Luc Mélenchon, ne croit à la fable d'un effacement de la dette. La réalité est qu'avec son gonflement sans fin et la remontée des taux

d'intérêt, il faudra, à l'avenir, consacrer de plus en plus de moyens à son remboursement. Et que la générosité publique actuelle, purement factice, annonce les impôts de demain.

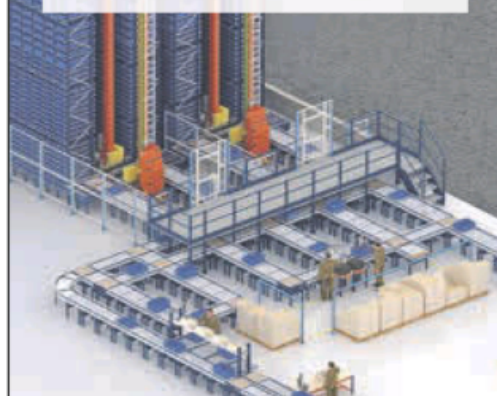
On cherche en vain, dans la frénésie dépendante des programmes électoraux, ce qui pourrait interrompre cette fuite en avant.

La générosité publique actuelle annonce les impôts de demain

Emmanuel Macron ou son successeur devra pourtant bien s'y astreindre. Car le monde d'avant, que l'on croyait révolu, revient au galop. Les banques centrales préparent la fin de l'argent gratuit à volonté. Les créanciers internationaux recommencent à trier les bons et les mauvais risques. Les Européens s'apprentent à renégocier les règles budgétaires applicables dans la zone euro. La France, qui n'a quasiment jamais respecté les précédents, espère davantage de souplesse et ambitionne même de convertir ses voisins aux bienfaits de la dette commune. Son lourd passif ne plaide pas en sa faveur. ■

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The sheltering citizens who call Kharkiv's subway 'home'

→ Page 14



Law-breaking in No 10: police issue first 20 Partygate fines

Johnson faces renewed pressure after Met takes action on rule breaches

Peter Walker, Rowena Mason and Jessica Elgot

Boris Johnson faced a renewed threat to his position over the Partygate scandal yesterday after the police

decision to issue fixed penalties to 20 people for lockdown breaches appeared to shatter his claim that Covid rules were followed in No 10.

The move by the Metropolitan police was seen as clear-cut confirmation of law-breaking at the heart of government, yet Downing Street provoked fury and derision by refusing to accept the fixed-penalty notices meant the rules had definitively been broken.

On a febrile day, No 10 was also

forced to back down after initially saying it would not disclose whether Simon Case, the cabinet secretary and civil service head, was one of those issued with a fixed-penalty notice. With the Met making clear this was only the first tranche of referrals, and interviews with key figures likely to take place in the coming weeks, there is still a possibility Johnson will be among those having to pay.

The threat by some Conservative MPs to depose him has lessened

in recent weeks amid the crisis in Ukraine, but confirmation of the first penalties yesterday reignited talk of a possible challenge. Rebel Tory MPs who previously organised against Johnson said they would now renew efforts to convince colleagues the PM had lied to parliament. "They're the first proof that laws were broken, despite denials," one said.

Another rebel said that while the number of open malcontents remained low, if Johnson was to be

issued with a penalty, the threat of a no-confidence vote against him could resurface: "We're perfectly capable of returning to address this issue when it finally concludes."

Johnson was attempting to shore up his leadership last night with a dinner for Tory MPs, but a number of them were declining to attend.

Ministers who attended were heckled by bereaved families of Covid victims as they arrived. Shouts of "shame on you" 4 →



Andrew given key role at Queen's tribute to Philip

Prince Andrew escorted the Queen to Westminster Abbey yesterday and sat in the front row as the royal family paid tribute to his father, Prince Philip, who died last year. Andrew's prominent role on his first

public appearance since settling the sexual assault case against him raised eyebrows. One former royal correspondent said it showed the Queen thought he 'still has a role in family occasions'. News Page 20 →

Suspicion as Russia vows to rein in its forces

Jon Henley
Pjotr Sauer
Shaun Walker Kyiv

Russia pledged to drastically cut back its military activity in northern Ukraine yesterday to help advance peace talks, but experts and western diplomats expressed doubts that the offer was more than a ploy to dress up setbacks on the ground.

Russia's deputy defence minister, Alexander Fomin, said after talks in Istanbul that Moscow wanted to "increase mutual trust, create the right conditions for future negotiations and reach the final aim of signing a peace deal with Ukraine", and that the Kremlin would "radically reduce military activity in the direction of Kyiv and Chernihiv".

However, while Moscow presented the move as a goodwill gesture, it came as Russia's advance appeared to have stalled on several fronts, with the Kremlin's forces thwarted by stiff Ukrainian resistance, heavy losses and logistical 12 →



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