

What's News

Business & Finance

An analysis of nearly 400 block trades of stock over three years indicates that information about such sales routinely leaks out ahead of time, a potentially illegal practice that costs sellers millions and benefits banks and their hedge-fund clients. **A1**

◆ **The SEC proposed** new requirements for SPACs and their takeover targets amid widespread concern that the vehicles skirt important investor protections. **A1**

◆ **Biden is preparing** to announce the release of up to 1 million barrels of oil a day from the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve, according to people familiar with the plans. **A7**

◆ **Sorrell's \$4 Capital** lost more than one-third of its market value after disclosing that its auditor needed more time to certify its results. **B1**

◆ **U.S. stocks fell**, with the S&P 500, Nasdaq and Dow Industrials losing 0.6%, 1.2% and 0.2%, respectively. Oil prices climbed. **B10**

◆ **Waymo is sending** fully autonomous vehicles onto San Francisco's streets, its first attempt to put them into a major metropolitan area. **B1**

◆ **A second mistrial** was declared in the Justice Department's effort to prosecute alleged price fixing in the poultry industry. **B3**

◆ **CVS Health will pay** \$484 million to settle opioid-related claims by the state of Florida. **B3**

◆ **The CDC dropped** its Covid-19 travel health notice for cruise ships, a move that leaves passengers to make their own risk assessments. **B3**

World-Wide

◆ **Moscow dismissed** a diplomatic overture by Ukraine in peace talks, while Russian forces hit targets around Kyiv on Wednesday despite saying they would limit attacks there as they stepped up ground and air assaults in eastern portions of the country. **A1, A6-9**

◆ **Western officials** are balking at Ukraine's proposal for a NATO-style mutual-defense pledge that could draw their military forces into a war with Russia, even as they expressed some receptiveness to the idea of international security guarantees as part of a deal to end hostilities. **A1**

◆ **The Biden administration** plans to end its use of Title 42, a pandemic border policy that allows officials to immediately turn away people who are arrested trying to enter the country illegally, as well as those who seek asylum at a border checkpoint. **A3**

◆ **The trial began** of El Shafee Elsheikh, an Islamic State member charged in connection with the captivity, torture and killing of U.S. hostages in Syria. **A4**

◆ **Sen. Collins of Maine** said she would vote to confirm Jackson to the Supreme Court, making her the first Republican to back the nominee. **A4**

◆ **The Justice Department** is investigating a prescription drug-trafficking network that allegedly sold second-hand and fake medications, including HIV treatments. **A3**

◆ **The organization** that puts on the Oscars said it initiated disciplinary proceedings against Will Smith. **A3**

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Russia Plays Down Peace Talks



People sought shelter in a church in Mostyska, Ukraine, on Wednesday after an air raid siren sounded.

Moscow dismisses Tuesday negotiations with Kyiv as it steps up assaults in the east

By ALAN CULLISON
AND MATTHEW LUXMOORE

Moscow dismissed a diplomatic overture by Ukraine in peace talks, while Russian forces hit targets around Kyiv on Wednesday despite saying they would limit attacks there as they stepped up ground and air assaults in eastern portions of the country.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said talks Tuesday in Turkey between Ukrainian and Russian delegates didn't represent a turning point in the conflict. "No one said that the sides have made headway," he said. "We can't point to anything particularly promising."

Less than 24 hours earlier, Moscow's chief negotiator, Vladimir Medinsky, had described proposals from Kyiv in the negotiations as a constructive step and held out the prospect of a meeting between President Vladimir Putin of Russia and his Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

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U.S. Sanctions Oligarch, Exempts His Companies

Yellen said penalties would 'impose massive costs'; the impact is milder

On March 3, the day the U.S. Treasury Department sanctioned Russian oligarch Alisher Usmanov, a cargo ship arrived in Mobile, Ala., carrying 53,000 tons of pig iron destined for a Mississippi steel plant. It came from a subsidiary of the company that accounts for much of Mr. Usmanov's wealth.

By Justin Scheck,
Betsy McKay and Rob Barry

shipping records show. Another subsidiary owns the shipping firm that delivered it. It was all legal.

In imposing economic sanctions after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, U.S. officials created exceptions. Their worry was that oligarchs like Mr. Usmanov had interests so deeply woven into the global economy that

curtailing their businesses could trigger broader economic pain and legal blowback, said current and former Treasury officials. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, in announcing penalties against Russian oligarchs including Mr. Usmanov, said the measures would "impose massive costs on Putin's closest confidants and their family members and freeze their assets."

At the same time, the Treasury's exception

The Ukraine Crisis

- ◆ Refugee count tops 4 million... **A6**
- ◆ Biden to release more oil from reserve... **A7**
- ◆ Europe woos Qatar for natural gas... **A7**
- ◆ U.S. split on curbing Russian cyber firm... **A9**

Western Allies Cool To Plan for Ukraine Security Guarantee

Western officials are balking at Ukraine's proposal for a NATO-style mutual-defense pledge that could draw their military forces into a war with Russia, even as they expressed

By Jared Malsin,
Lindsay Wise
and Bojan Pancevski

some receptiveness to the idea of international security guarantees as part of a deal to end hostilities.

At peace talks in Istanbul on Tuesday, Ukrainian negotiators handed Russia a detailed proposal of a neutral status for Ukraine with its security guaranteed by the U.S.,

U.K., France, Turkey, Germany, Canada, Poland and Israel. The Ukrainian proposal would ask countries to respond to a violation of its sovereignty the way members of North Atlantic Treaty Organization would act under Article 5, the alliance's mutual-defense promise.

"That's what we call Ukrainian NATO," said Ukrainian negotiator David Arakhamia, the majority leader in the country's parliament, in an interview in Istanbul. "So we get neutrality but our idea is to get formal security status."

President Biden has yet to comment on the proposal, and

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Leaks Appear to Dent Profits on Big Stock Sales

For years, something strange kept happening on Wall Street.

Before a big shareholder could carry out plans to sell a

By Liz Hoffman,
Corrie Driebusch
and Tom McGinty

slug of stock, the price dropped. It was as if other investors knew what was coming.

It happened when Bain Capital sold shares of Canada

Goose Holdings Inc., the maker of trendy parkas; when 3G Capital sold stock in Kraft Heinz Co.; when Apollo Global Management Inc. sold shares of Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings Ltd.; and when Alaska's state oil fund trimmed its stake in an artificial-intelligence software firm.

These transactions, known as block trades, are supposed to be a secret between the selling shareholders and the investment bankers they hire to ex-

ecute the trades. But a Wall Street Journal analysis of nearly 400 such trades over three years indicates that information about the sales routinely leaks out ahead of time—a potentially illegal practice that costs those sellers millions of dollars and benefits banks and their hedge-fund clients.

The Journal's analysis, covering 393 block trades between 2018 and 2021, found that 58% of the time, the share price declined in the trading

session immediately beforehand, controlling for the performance of peer companies. Of the 268 trades for which the Journal was able to determine how much the banks paid, the sellers would have received \$382 million more if the stocks had performed in line with the benchmark, or about \$1.4 million per trade.

A handful might be explained by a negative headline or chalked up to bad luck. But the persistent pattern of

stocks falling in the run-up to big insider sales suggests a more widespread problem: Information that should be confidential is getting out.

That pattern is now at the heart of a federal investigation into whether banks tip off favored clients to coming block trades. The Securities and Exchange Commission has sought trading records and electronic communications from a number of big banks

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Jai Alai's Heyday Is Long Past, But Miami Casino Aims for Reboot

Baseball and football players recruited to help breathe new life into betting sport

By ARIAN CAMPO-FLORES

MIAMI—Michael Carballo used to play center field in the minor leagues for the Chicago White Sox. Now, three times a week, he dons a helmet, straps a basket-like contraption to his arm and rifles a plastic ball at a wall at up to 150 miles an hour as one of 28 players in the last remaining professional jai alai league in the U.S.

Mr. Carballo, who is 30 years old, works by day as a financial adviser. As a relative newcomer to the sport, he said, he plays all out. "Veterans 'do certain things fundamentally better....I'm just some dude off the street who happens to be athletic.'"

Miami's Magic City Casino hopes Mr. Carballo and his

fellow players will save jai alai from extinction in the U.S. The crew includes longtime jai alai players from the Basque region of Spain and France, where the sport originated, recruits from Mexico and the Philippines, and, in a 21st-century twist, former professional baseball and football players from the U.S.

Dubbed the world's fastest ball sport, jai alai involves players hurling a *pelota* with a three-walled court. The idea is throw the ball off the wall in such a way that the opposing player is unable to retrieve it on one bounce or less, loosely akin to a game of squash. The game had its American heyday in the 1970s and 1980s when it packed

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INSIDE



BUSINESS & FINANCE
Martin Sorrell's S4 Capital loses more than one-third of its market value. **B1**



U.S. NEWS
U.S. to lift border policy that turned away migrants because of Covid-19 fears. **A3**

SEC Proposes Stricter Regulations for SPACs

By PAUL KIERNAN

WASHINGTON—Federal regulators proposed new requirements for special-purpose acquisition companies, or SPACs, and their takeover targets amid widespread concern that the vehicles skirt important investor protections.

The Securities and Exchange Commission advanced a set of rules Wednesday that, if implemented, would make it harder for SPACs to raise money from investors and execute mergers. Its goal is to force the vehicles to meet similar regulatory standards as initial public offerings, though critics accused the agency of aiming to end their use altogether.

Also known as blank-check companies, SPACs became wildly popular on Wall Street in 2020 and 2021, when they accounted for the majority of U.S. initial public offerings. Like cryptocurrencies and

meme stocks, critics saw them a symbol of the excesses that bubbled up in financial markets as governments and central banks pumped trillions of dollars of stimulus money into the economy to battle the pandemic.

SPACs function as pools of cash listed on a stock exchange that can be used by a sponsor to buy a private company. If acquired by a SPAC, the private company effectively gets access to everyday investors without providing the timely disclosures that a traditional IPO would involve. Existing rules also enable target companies to make lofty forecasts about their business prospects, something they wouldn't be able to do in an IPO.

Wednesday's proposal is part of SEC Chairman Gary Gensler's push to rein in Wall Street through tougher regulation. He has recently backed rules that would place more

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Carbon countdown

War can be making of EU's emissions trading scheme — HELEN THOMAS, PAGE 17

An eerie calm

Risks below the surface of surprisingly tranquil stock markets — BIG READ, PAGE 15



Women turn left

The economics behind the shift to liberal parties — STEPHEN BUSH, PAGE 16

Old ground
Retaken land
boosts Kyiv

Ukrainian soldiers and foreign fighters wait in freshly dug trenches before moving out on to the streets of a suburb west of Kyiv this week that has been retaken from Russian forces.

Five weeks into its war, Russia's defence ministry yesterday said it was in the "final phase" of its operations in eastern Ukraine after "achieving all the main tasks" in the north.

The comments come a day after Russia said it was scaling back military activities around the capital to "increase mutual trust".

The number of Ukrainian refugees surpassed 4mn yesterday, according to the latest UN data, while the Red Cross warned that time was "running out" to evacuate civilians trapped in Mariupol.



Daniel Berezhnii/Reuters/Corbis Outright

Germany and Austria prepare gas rationing in stand-off with Russia

◆ Benchmark prices up 9% ◆ Moscow wants rouble payments ◆ Putin hints at compromise

OLAF STORBECK — BERLIN
HARRY DEMPSEY — LONDON
NASTASSIA ASTRAKHOVSKAYA — RIGA
SAM JONES — VIENNA

Germany and Austria have taken the first formal steps towards gas rationing as officials rushed to avoid a potential halt in deliveries from Russia because of a dispute over payments.

If supplies fall short and attempts to lower consumption do not work, the German government would cut off parts of industry from its gas network and give preferential treatment to households. Russia has insisted that all "unfriendly" buyers of its natural gas pay in roubles rather than in currencies such as the euro or dollar.

But in a call with Olaf Scholz, Germany's chancellor, yesterday evening,

Vladimir Putin hinted at a potential compromise, saying that payments by European gas customers could continue to be made in euros — as long as they were made to Gazprombank, which has not been placed under sanctions by the EU, according to a readout of the call. Germany and the G7 nations that have imposed sanctions on Russia since it invaded Ukraine have refused to use roubles to buy gas, saying they will continue to pay in currencies specified in supply contracts.

As talks to resolve the stand-off continued between Russia and EU officials, future contracts tied to TTF, the European gas price benchmark, rose 9 per cent to €118 per megawatt hour on fears of supply disruption.

Even though the UK obtains only 4

per cent of its gas from Russia, supply shocks in Europe would have global ramifications. Prices in the UK gained 6 per cent to trade at 280 pence a therm.

EU officials and their Russian counterparts have discussed using a euro-rouble swap mechanism, which would be likely to avoid forcing corporate customers to pay by roubles from the central bank. Instead, payments would be routed through Gazprombank, which is not under EU sanctions.

"Neither side is ready to pull the plug, so there's going to be a framework that's acceptable to both sides," said one person briefed on the matter.

Berlin said Scholz had not agreed to any proposals in the call with Putin but had requested more information on how it would work. German inflation



Germany and the G7 nations that have placed sanctions on Russia refuse to pay in roubles, saying they will use currencies specified in supply contracts

rose to its highest rate for 40 years yesterday, as Christine Lagarde, European Central Bank president, warned that Russia's war in Ukraine had delivered a "supply shock" to the eurozone.

Earlier Robert Habeck, Germany's economy minister, had activated the "early warning phase" of a gas emergency law to deal with acute shortages. Austria said it would implement the first stage of its three-stage emergency national contingency plan, citing a "concrete and reliable" expectation that gas supplies will drop dramatically.

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Trading conditions worsen page 10

FT View page 16

Tony Barber page 17

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Briefing

◆ **Banks' fossil fuel finance defies pledges**
Activists have calculated that big lenders provided \$742bn to coal, oil and gas companies last year, despite signing pledges to join a climate alliance led by ex-Bank of England chief Mark Carney. — PAGE 6

◆ **Arm share transfer plan to help listing**
The British chip designer has drawn up plans to transfer shares in its unwieldy China joint venture to a special SoftBank vehicle in a bid to speed up its path to a New York listing. — PAGE 8, LEX, PAGE 18

◆ **MAN lays off 11,000 as war blocks parts**
The German truckmaker has furloughed workers after the Ukraine war led to a "massive" shortage of wiring harnesses sourced from the country. Plants in Munich and Krakow shut on March 14. — PAGE 6

◆ **Berkshire awarded lowest climate mark**
Warren Buffett's company has received the lowest possible climate action score for a second year from Climate Action 100+, which has \$68tn under management. — PAGE 9



◆ **More Israelis die in 'wave of terror'**
Police have been put on the highest alert for the first time in nearly a year after five Israelis were killed by a Palestinian gunman on Tuesday night in the third such attack over the past week. — PAGE 4

◆ **Kishida aide underlines demand push**
Chief cabinet secretary Seiji Kihara, one of premier Fumio Kishida's top aides, has told the FT that Japan must hit its inflation target through higher demand rather than commodity prices. — PAGE 4

◆ **Top aircraft lease group in \$5.5bn claim**
Dublin-based AerCap has filed an insurance claim to cover the potential loss of planes and engines stuck in Russia, setting the stage for a protracted battle between the industry and insurers. — PAGE 8

Datawatch

Households squeezed

Adults reporting rise in living costs last month (Q)



Source: Office for National Statistics

Eight in 10 adults in Great Britain report a rise in living costs, up by a third from 6 in 10 in November. The most common reason given in February's survey was the rising cost of food, although a substantial increase in energy costs is looming.

Criminal investigation into
Trump runs out of steam

The criminal probe into the Trump Organization is starting to unravel after a change at the top of the Manhattan prosecutor's office. District attorney Cyrus Vance was on the point of presenting evidence to a grand jury before his term ended, but successor Alvin Bragg is less enthusiastic. Vance was slowed by tough opposition, loyalty within the Trump Organization and Covid-19. The former president still faces jeopardy from a civil case. Case starts to unravel — PAGE 4

Biden to use Korean war-era powers to
boost supply of EV battery minerals

AIME WILLIAMS — WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden will invoke Korean war-era powers to boost the domestic supply of minerals crucial for electric vehicles and large-capacity batteries, as his administration tries to cut US dependence on overseas energy.

Biden will use a presidential determination as soon as this week to invoke the Defense Production Act to help increase the availability in the US of lithium, nickel, cobalt, graphite and manganese.

Under the terms of the DPA, an administration can compel companies to give government contracts priority over private ones, for instance, or to provide loans and grants to boost manufacturing.

A person familiar with the White House's plans said the administration was not contemplating making direct

purchases of minerals but would aim to make government funding available for mining feasibility studies and safety upgrades, as well as producing minerals from existing mining waste.

The person said triggering the DPA would not allow mining companies to bypass or expedite any permitting or environmental review processes.

The US currently imports the vast majority of minerals that the White House intends to add to the list of items covered by the DPA.

Biden ordered a review of critical supply chains last year as he sought to reduce US dependence on China for imports deemed important to national security, including minerals, pharmaceuticals and computer chips.

The Department of Energy last year released a blueprint aimed at reviving the US domestic battery supply chain

and forecast that a boom in electric vehicles would lead to a surge in demand for batteries in the next decade.

It proposed securing US access to the raw minerals needed to make batteries by incentivising "safe, equitable and sustainable" domestic mining, and devoting money to researching ways to capture minerals through recycling waste or expired batteries.

In its paper, the energy department noted that China dominated the supply chain for the manufacturing of lithium batteries, including the processing of minerals. Last month, the department said it would make nearly \$5bn available to companies in the US battery manufacturing supply chain.

Biden's infrastructure bill also made \$7bn available over five years for the processing of minerals and for recycling end-of-life batteries.

World Markets

STOCK MARKETS				CURRENCIES				INTEREST RATES			
	Mar 30	prev	%chg	Pair	Mar 30	prev	%chg		price	yield	chg
S&P 500	4612.36	4601.66	+0.42	\$ per £	1.116	1.110	+0.54	US Gov 10 yr	95.41	2.35	-0.08
Nasdaq Composite	14537.35	14619.64	-0.56	\$ per €	1.317	1.314	+0.23	US Gov 5 yr	124.37	1.67	-0.03
Dow Jones Ind	35647.26	35594.15	+0.15	£ per €	0.848	0.845	+0.36	UK Gov 10 yr	94.00	0.64	-0.01
FTSE 100	7197.78	7184.67	+0.18	¥ per €	122.015	122.710	-0.57	Japan Gov 10 yr	98.60	0.21	-0.03
Euro Stoxx 50	3945.32	4002.19	-1.42	¥ per \$	160.743	161.191	-0.28	US Gov 30 yr	94.59	2.47	-0.05
FTSE 250	7578.75	7537.25	+0.55	CHF per €	1.030	1.024	+0.59	Swiss Gov 2 yr	100.10	0.00	0.00
FTSE AEX-Share	4219.75	4206.38	+0.32								
CAC 40	6741.59	6752.15	-0.14								
Xetra Dax	14606.05	14605.33	+0.05								
Nikkei	28027.25	28052.42	-0.09								
Hang Seng	22232.03	21927.63	+1.39								
MSCI World	3110.81	3061.61	+1.61								
MSCI EM	1136.45	1124.82	+1.03								
MSCI ACWI	1225.16	1212.18	+1.04								
FT Worldex 2500	6061.93	5978.72	+1.39								
FT Worldex 1000	47349.99	46950.45	+1.41								

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U.S. TO WITHDRAW A PANDEMIC RULE FROM THE BORDER

MIGRANT SURGE IS LIKELY

Officials Already Facing
Record Numbers of
Asylum Seekers

By EILEEN SULLIVAN
WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is expected to lift a pandemic-related public health order this week that has restricted immigration for the past two years, a change that could more than double what is already a historic number of migrants surging into the United States from Mexico.

The change is to take effect in late May, according to people familiar with the planning, and should restore the right of migrants to request asylum once they are in the United States, just as they did before the pandemic.

Even with the rule in place, the administration has struggled to manage a record spike in illegal migration along the border with Mexico, which Republicans have cast as out of control since President Biden took office.

In recent days, border officials have encountered about 7,000 migrants daily. An even bigger surge — Homeland Security officials said on Tuesday they were preparing for as many as 18,000 migrants a day — could pose a serious political problem for Democrats ahead of the midterm elections this fall.

The public health order has given border officials the authority to quickly expel undocumented migrants, even those seeking asylum, to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus at border facilities and in border communities.

In all, there have been 1.7 million expulsions under the order, which was issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and is known as Title 42.

It was not clear whether the C.D.C. would lift the order in phases or all at once. The move will likely draw court challenges from Republican-led states, as have most of the Biden administration's actions on immigration.

Continued on Page A17

Justice Dept. Broadens Inquiry To Array of Pro-Trump Figures

This article is by Alan Feuer, Katie Benner and Maggie Haberman.

Federal prosecutors have substantially widened their Jan. 6 investigation to examine the possible culpability of a broad range of figures involved in former President Donald J. Trump's efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election, people familiar with the inquiry said on Wednesday.

The investigation now encompasses the possible involvement of other government officials in Mr. Trump's attempts to obstruct the certification of President Biden's Electoral College victory and the push by some Trump allies to promote slates of fake electors, they said.

Prosecutors are also asking about planning for the rallies that preceded the assault on the Capitol, including the rally on the Ellipse on Jan. 6 of last year, just before a pro-Trump mob stormed the Capitol.

The federal investigation initially focused largely on the rioters who had entered the Capitol, an effort that has led to more than 700 arrests. But the Justice Department appears to have moved into a new phase, seeking information about people more closely tied to Mr. Trump. This develop-

Caution Urged As States Slow The Virus Fight

Experts Voice Concern
as Variant Spreads

By JULIE BOSMAN
and SOPHIE KASAKOV

CHICAGO — As Americans shed masks and return to offices and restaurants, local and state officials are scaling back the most visible public health efforts to address the coronavirus pandemic.

States like Illinois are shuttering free Covid-19 testing sites after nearly two years of operation. Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii and Ohio have stopped releasing daily data on virus hospitalizations, infections and deaths. And, perhaps most notably, some places are diminishing their campaigns to vaccinate residents even as federal authorities announced on Tuesday that people 50 and older could get a second booster shot.

The slowing of state and local efforts comes as the virus in the United States appears, at least for now, to be in retreat, with cases falling swiftly in recent weeks.

But the cutbacks also arrive at a moment when a more transmissible version of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus, known as BA.2, is spreading through Europe, Asia and is now the dominant version of new virus cases in the United States. New coronavirus infections are edging upward once again in several states, including New York.

And Americans are still lagging behind many other countries in vaccination. Only about 65 percent of Americans have received initial shots, and less than one-third of Americans have had a first booster shot.

If another surge in the pandemic is ahead, public health officials said, it could be a challenge to quickly ramp up the vaccination and testing sites and other measures that are now being shut down.

"We have to be cautious in how we move forward," said Dr. Ben Weston, chief health policy adviser for Milwaukee County, Wis., where he has kept vaccine clinics open. "Imagine that we're a boat at sea and we just got off the largest tidal wave we've ever been on. It would be a strange time to throw out the life jackets."

Continued on Page A17

RUSSIA STEPS UP ATTACKS DESPITE TALK; U.S. SUGGESTS TENSIONS INSIDE KREMLIN



IVOR PICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
Apartment in Kyiv.



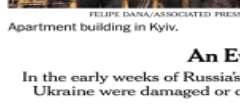
MARKA TECHNOLOGIES
Drama Theater in Mariupol.



IVOR PICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
Backyard kitchen in Vrubivka.



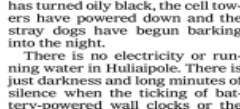
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Residential area in Kyiv.



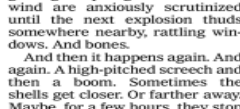
VADIM GHIBIDA/ASSOCIATED PRESS
Food storage in a brovary.



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Apartment building in Kyiv.



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Home in Nyvky, a district in Kyiv.



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Neighborhood in Mykolaiv.



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Warehouse in Kyiv.



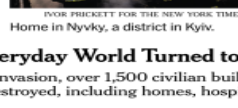
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Carwash in Baryshivka, Kyiv.



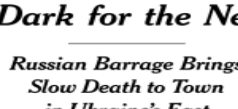
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House in Huliaipole.



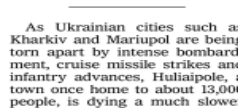
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Neighborhood in Mykolaiv.



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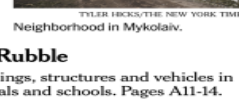
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Neighborhood in Mykolaiv.



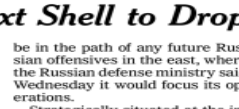
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Neighborhood in Mykolaiv.



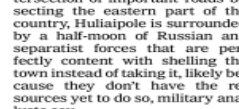
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Conflicting Messages in Moscow as War Enters 6th Week

This article is by Anton Troianovski, Megan Specia and Julian E. Barnes.

Belying its claims of de-escalation, Russia increased bomb and artillery attacks in Ukraine on Wednesday and sent conflicting signals about the prospects for peace, suggesting new tensions in the Kremlin hierarchy about the course of the war.

The contradictory messaging came as a newly declassified U.S. intelligence assessment suggested that President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia had been misinformed about the war's trajectory by subordinates, who were fearful of his reaction to the Russian military's struggles and setbacks.

The intelligence, according to multiple American officials, showed Mr. Putin's isolation and what appeared to be growing tension between him and the Ministry of Defense, including with his defense minister, Sergei K. Shoigu, who was once among the most trusted members of the Kremlin inner circle and had been rumored to be a possible successor one day to Mr. Putin.

It was not clear whether the release of the declassified intelligence was intended to sow anxiety within Mr. Putin's circle as part of a broader information battle between the United States and Russia over Ukraine, the source of the worst tensions between the two nuclear powers since the Cold War. Nor was it clear if the intelligence was accurate.

But American intelligence officials have proved right so far in their assessments of Mr. Putin's intentions toward Ukraine, beginning with the Russian troop build-up along its borders last year that culminated in the Feb. 24 invasion.

White House officials said that they had released the intelligence to share what they said was a "full understanding" of how Mr. Putin had miscalculated.

"We believe he is being misinformed by his advisers about how badly the Russian military is performing and how the Russian economy is being crippled by sanctions," Kate Bedingfield, the White House communications director, told reporters.

Asked about the declassified assessment during a trip to Algiers, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken said it was not surprising that Mr. Putin was ill informed.

"One of the Achilles' heels of autocracies," he said, "is that you don't have people in those systems who speak truth to power or who have the ability to speak truth to power. And I think that is something that we're seeing in Russia."

The latest assessment also appeared to track with the mixed messages from the Kremlin on Wednesday about peace talks with Ukraine this week in Istanbul. The chief Russian negotiator described them as promising, but was basically contradicted by the Kremlin's top spokesman.

New Russian attacks in Ukraine, on the northern city of Chernihiv and the suburbs of Kyiv, also appeared to reflect disarray.

Continued on Page A9

An Everyday World Turned to Rubble

In the early weeks of Russia's invasion, over 1,500 civilian buildings, structures and vehicles in Ukraine were damaged or destroyed, including homes, hospitals and schools. Pages A11-14.

Waiting in the Dark for the Next Shell to Drop

Russian Barrage Brings Slow Death to Town in Ukraine's East

As Ukrainian cities such as Kharkiv and Mariupol are being torn apart by intense bombardment, cruise missile strikes and infantry advances, Huliaipole, a town once home to about 13,000 people, is dying a much slower death.

The town, about 90 miles northwest of Mariupol and on the edge of the Donbas region, would likely

be in the path of any future Russian offensives in the east, where the Russian defense ministry said Wednesday it would focus its operations.

Strategically situated at the intersection of important roads bisecting the eastern part of the country, Huliaipole is surrounded by a half-moon of Russian and separatist forces that are perfectly content with shelling the town instead of taking it, likely because they don't have the resources yet to do so, military analysts say.

The residents of the shrinking enclave — now down to about

Continued on Page A8

In Serbia, Putin Is a 'Brother' and Russia the West's Fellow Victim

By ANDREW HIGGINS

BELGRADE, Serbia — Mindful of the angry and still-unhealed wounds left by NATO's bombing of Serbia more than 20 years ago, Ukraine's ambassador appeared on Serbian television after Russia invaded and bombed his country in the hope of rousing sympathy.

Instead of getting time to explain Ukraine's misery, however,

the ambassador, Oleksandr Alekseyandrovich, had to sit through rants by pro-Russian Serbian commentators, and long videos of Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin, denouncing Ukraine as a nest of Nazis. The show, broadcast by the pro-government Happy TV, lasted three hours, more than half of which featured Mr. Putin.

Angry at the on-air ambush, the ambassador complained to the

producer about the pro-Kremlin propaganda exercise, but was told not to take it personally and that Mr. Putin "is good for our ratings."

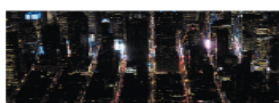
That Russia's leader, viewed by many in the West, including President Biden, as a war criminal, serves in Serbia as a lure for viewers is a reminder that the Kremlin still has admirers in Europe.

While Germany, Poland and several other E.U. countries dis-

play solidarity with Ukraine by flying its flag outside their Belgrade embassies, a nearby street pays tribute to Mr. Putin. A mural painted on the wall features an image of the Russian leader alongside the Serbian word for "brother."

Part of Mr. Putin's allure lies in his image as a strongman, an appealing model for President Alek-

Continued on Page A9



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Lost? Are You From the City?
Growing up in a rural area is often best for honing a sense of direction, a study finds. PAGE A21

A.L.S. Treatment Falls Short

A panel narrowly concluded that there is not yet enough evidence that the drug therapy helps patients. PAGE A19

INTERNATIONAL A4-15

5 Diverse Lives, All Cut Short

The victims of Tuesday's attack in Israel came from different walks of life, illustrating the complexity of a society mired in the same endless conflict. PAGE A4

Still on the Same Team in Space

A NASA astronaut and two cosmonauts returned to Earth after steering around the topic of Russia's invasion. PAGE A15

BUSINESS B1-6

Biden May Tap Oil Reserve

The president's plan would release a million barrels of oil for up to 180 days to combat rising gas prices. PAGE B5



ARTS C1-8

Tiny Writing, High Price
A little book, presumed lost, created by the 13-year-old Charlotte Brontë will go on sale for \$1.25 million. PAGE C1

Brain Disorder Sidelines Actor

Bruce Willis was diagnosed with aphasia, and will step away from acting, said his ex-wife, Demi Moore. PAGE C3

SPORTS B7-9

Anger Mismanagement

Emotions have always run hot in tennis, but rackets are being hurled and smashed with alarming frequency to little or no consequence. PAGE B8

OBITUARIES B10-11

The Met's Curator of Donors

With legal acumen and a vast social network, Ashton Hawkins arranged multimillion-dollar gifts of money and art to the museum. He was 84. PAGE B10

OPINION A24-25

Gail Collins

PAGE A24



THURSDAY STYLES D1-8

Lizzo's New Line of Fashion
The Grammy-winning singer says she isn't trying to change other people's bodies. She's trying to change the essence of shapewear itself. PAGE D7



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NEAR A destroyed Russian tank, a man takes in the damage to the train station in Trostyanets, Ukraine. Ukrainian forces announced this week that they had retaken the northeastern town from Russian control.

CHRIS MCCOY/GETTY IMAGES

As Russian strikes continue, U.S. says Putin being misled

Attacks contradict pullback pledge. Aides in Kremlin appear 'too afraid' to tell truth.

BY PATRICK J. McDONNELL, JAWED KALEEM AND LAURA KING

LVIV, Ukraine—A day after Russia said it would “drastically” reduce attacks on strategic northern cities in its war against Ukraine, those regions came under fresh bombardment Wednesday, deepening Ukrainian and Western officials’ skepticism over any easing of the offensive.

As Moscow offered mixed signals about its war aims and negotiating prospects, the White House said Wednesday that U.S. intelligence indicates Russian President Vladimir Putin’s senior aides have been “too afraid to tell him the truth” about an invasion seemingly gone awry.

“It is increasingly clear that Putin’s war has been a strategic blunder that has left Russia weaker over the long term, and increasingly isolated on the world stage,” said White House communications director Kate Bedingfield.

She pointed to U.S. intelligence indicating that the Russian leader had been misled by top aides’ too-rosy estimates about the situation on the ground in [See Ukraine, A4]



A VOLUNTEER British fighter prepares to cross the Polish border into Ukraine this month. “The general attitude among legionnaires was low morale,” says one.

WALLY SKALIS/LOS ANGELES TIMES

Volunteers eager to fight

Foreigners find enlisting in Ukraine far from easy

BY PATRICK J. McDONNELL

LVIV, Ukraine—First he missed his flight. Then his gear got lost somewhere between Little Rock and Warsaw. Finally, after traveling thousands of miles to help Ukraine fight the Russian military, the country’s foreign legion rejected him.

Cody Heard, a 29-year-

old U.S. Army veteran from Arkansas, was undeterred. He and three other young volunteers—a Brit and two Dutchmen—were headed to the Ukrainian capital the next day to try to hook up with a military reserve unit.

“They will take us—I hope,” said Heard, hanging outside a hostel in Lviv with his three comrades, all bedraggled after days on the move, their packs lying on

the ground. “I mean, I messaged them. But I haven’t heard back yet.”

Heard is among hundreds of possibly thousands of foreign nationals who have swooped into Ukraine in recent weeks to join the battle against the Russians. Some are ex-soldiers. Many are not.

They come from the United States, Europe, Asia [See Fighters, A5]

Biden takes steps to revoke border policy blocking asylum

Title 42, which Trump used to expel migrants due to COVID, could end within weeks.

BY ANDREA CASTILLO

WASHINGTON—The Biden administration has reportedly drafted a plan to end a controversial border policy by late May that has prevented most migrants from seeking humanitarian protections at the U.S. border.

The decision by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is not yet final, according to people familiar with the matter, but would give officials time to prepare at the border before a change takes effect, several news organizations, including the Associated Press, reported.

Department of Homeland Security officials had been in talks for weeks over

how to respond to the potential influx of asylum seekers if the policy known as Title 42 were ended. The Trump administration invoked a 1944 public health statute to quickly expel migrants either to Mexico or to their home countries, citing the need to curb the spread of COVID-19.

The CDC reassesses the need for the policy every two months and is expected to issue its latest decision this week.

Title 42 applies to adults traveling alone and to parents traveling with their children. Last year, the Biden administration exempted children traveling without a parent from being expelled under the policy.

Over the last two years, border authorities have used Title 42 to expel migrants in about 60% of encounters—more than 1.7 million expulsions—while allowing others in with humanitarian exemptions. [See Border, A7]

Filmmakers were concerned about Willis for years

BY MEG JAMES AND AMY KAUFMAN

Just days before Bruce Willis was scheduled to turn up on the set of one of his latest action films, the director of the project sent out an urgent request: Make the movie star’s part smaller.

“It looks like we need to knock down Bruce’s page count by about 5 pages,” Mike Burns, director of “Out of Death,” wrote in a June 2020 email to the film’s screenwriter. “We also need to abbreviate his dialogue a bit so that there are no monologues, etc.”

Burns did not outline one of the reasons why Willis’ lines needed to be kept “short and sweet.” But on Wednesday, the public learned what he and many other filmmakers have privately been concerned about for years: The 67-year-old’s [See Willis, A9]



CHARLES SYKES/INVISION
BRUCE WILLIS has ended his acting career after being diagnosed with a cognitive disorder, his family announced.

Will Smith faces Oscars censure

The academy says the actor was asked to leave after the slap but refused. **CALENDAR, E1**

Garcetti nomination faces more obstacles

Mayor’s office and White House dig in as senators scrutinize former aide’s conduct.

BY DAKOTA SMITH AND JAMES RAINEY

Mayor Eric Garcetti’s nomination to be U.S. ambassador to India has touched off a pitched battle in the U.S. Capitol, as more senators express concern about his handling of sexual harassment allegations and

Garcetti and his aides step up their defense.

Sen. Charles E. Grassley’s widening probe of the alleged misconduct by Rick Jacobs, a former top Garcetti advisor, and what the mayor may have known about it is forcing senators to weigh the claims ahead of a vote on Garcetti’s nomination.

At the same time, Garcetti and White House staffers continue to reach out to senators to rally support for the nomination, which was announced by [See Garcetti, A12]

L.A.’s homelessness crisis boils over



KRIDIKEL Race Truth Bey, right, founder of the Kingdom Warriors Foundation, tells unhoused people how to apply for emergency housing vouchers Tuesday.

BY CONNOR SHEETS

The nonprofit advocacy group had planned three events at a South Los Angeles office to help unhoused people obtain emergency shelter. Nothing more. Nothing less.

But then an unofficial social media post erroneously promised that those who showed up would get rare vouchers for permanent, subsidized housing. And Fathers and Mothers Who Care was swamped. Homeless people lined up on a corner in West Athens before day-break Friday and Tuesday only to have their hopes dashed.

At the Friday event, heated arguments broke out among the hundreds of people who turned out for assistance, more evidence of the brutal Los Angeles housing market and the desperation felt by the tens of thousands of Angelenos who are unable to secure permanent places to lay their heads.

The crowd overwhelmed Los Angeles Homeless Serv. [See Homeless, A12]

Spotting the most distant star

Astronomers say the supergiant dates to the dawn of the universe. **NATION, A6**

Weather Afternoon sunshine. L.A. Basin: 66/53. **B6**

U.S. loses but qualifies for Cup

The soccer team falls 2-0 to Costa Rica but is bound for Qatar anyway. **SPORTS, B10**



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T-storms 73/53 • Tomorrow: Partly sunny, windy 60/37 B6

Democracy Dies in Darkness

THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2022 • B2

Documents show scope of Hunter Biden deal

Washington Post verifies key details of interactions with Chinese executives

BY MATT VISER, TOM HAMBURGER AND CRAIG TIMBERG

The deal was years in the making, the culmination of forging contacts, hosting dinners, of flights to and from China. But on Aug. 2, 2017, signatures were quickly affixed, one from Hunter Biden, the other from a Chinese executive named Gongwen Dong.

Within days, a new Cathay Bank account was created. Within a week, millions of dollars started to change hands.

Within a year, it would all begin to collapse.

While many aspects of Hunter Biden's financial arrangement with CPEC China Energy have been previously reported and were included in a Republican-led Senate report from 2020, a Washington Post review confirmed many of the key details and found additional documents showing Biden family interactions with Chinese executives.

Over the course of 14 months, the Chinese energy conglomerate

SEE BIDEN ON A8



Hunter Biden, President Biden's son, in May 2021. His business deals have been under scrutiny.

The analysis: How security experts authenticated a batch of emails. A9

Meta hired Republican firm to sully rival TikTok

BY TAYLOR LORENZ AND DREW HARWELL

Facebook parent company Meta is paying one of the biggest Republican consulting firms in the country to orchestrate a nationwide campaign seeking to turn the public against TikTok.

The campaign includes placing op-eds and letters to the editor in major regional news outlets, promoting dubious stories about alleged TikTok trends that actually originated on Facebook, and pushing to draw political reporters and local politicians into helping take down its biggest competitor. These bare-knuckle tactics, long commonplace in the world of politics, have become increasingly noticeable within a tech industry where companies vie for cultural relevance and come at a time when Facebook is under pressure to win back young users.

Employees with the firm, Tar-

SEE META ON A20

Putin misled by advisers, U.S. claims



HEIDI LEVINE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Ukrainian soldiers find Russian ammunition near where heavy fighting has taken place in the village of Moshchun on Wednesday. Ukrainian officials said Russia continued shelling cities near Kyiv and Chernihiv, but they saw a drawdown by Wednesday night.

In front-line town, steely Ukrainians keep enemy at bay

BY SUDARSHAN RAGHAVAN, JON GERBERG AND HEIDI LEVINE

MOSCHUN, UKRAINE — Sgt. Anton Kolumbet, his black rifle slung over his shoulder, walked along a damp road, past flattened houses and the burned carcasses of cars. With a steady beat, artillery shells thundered in the woods, a symphony of war the 35-year-old soldier embraced with a zeal he couldn't have imagined five weeks ago.

He walked past spent ammunition rounds that glistened in the rain and past other detritus of the violent battles fought in this once-peaceful village that is now an important front line in Ukraine's war with Russia. Decomposing corpses of Russian soldiers and the bodies of at least two civilian men who appeared to have been shot lay scattered about.

A half-mile down the road was a cluster of trees. The Russians were on the other side, about a mile away.

"It's safe. It is our artillery," said

SEE MOSCHUN ON A14



WOLDECH GIZEDZINSKI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Galyna Morohovska, covered in antiseptic, tells of dark days in Mariupol. "I don't know when it's ever going to see the light again," she said. Story, A16

Invasion deepens rift between U.S. and gulf nations

BY KAREN DEYOUNG AND MISSY RYAN

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has heightened existing strains in the Biden administration's relationships in the Middle East, even as it has brought new unity to NATO and transatlantic ties.

Nowhere have the bonds been as frayed as with Persian Gulf partners Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Their reluctance to increase oil output as gas prices rise, along with what the Biden administration sees as a less-than-robust condemnation of Moscow, are among the most visible current reasons.

But in both cases, the sources of estrangement go far deeper. Gulf officials describe a mix of complaints that have caused them to doubt U.S. security guarantees, including what they consider the administration's failure to respond vigorously enough to ongoing missile attacks on their countries by Iran-backed Houthis rebels in Yemen, and its eagerness to sign a new

SEE GULF ON A13

Justice Dept. expands Jan. 6 probe to look at rally preparation

BY DEVLIN BARRETT, JOSH DAWSEY, JACQUELINE ALEMANY AND SPENCER S. HSU

The criminal investigation into the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol has expanded to examine the preparations for the rally that preceded the riot, as the Justice Department aims to determine the full extent of any conspiracy to stop Congress from certifying Joe Biden's election victory, according to people familiar with

Subpoena requests seek details on planning for event that preceded riot

the matter.

In the past two months, a federal grand jury in Washington has issued subpoena requests to some officials in former president Donald Trump's orbit who assisted in planning, funding and ex-

cuting the Jan. 6 rally, said the people familiar with the matter, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation.

The development shows the degree to which the Justice Department investigation — which already involves more defendants than any other criminal prosecution in the nation's history — has moved further beyond the storming of the Capitol to examine events preceding the attack.

The events of Jan. 6, 2021, are a legally fraught puzzle for federal investigators. Prosecutors and FBI agents must distinguish between constitutionally protected First Amendment activity, such as speech and assembly, and the alleged conspiracy to obstruct Congress or other potential crimes connected to fundraising and organizing leading up to Jan. 6.

The task is also complicated by the proximity of those two very different types of activities —

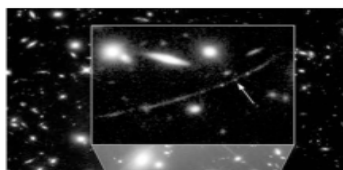
speech and violence — that occurred within hours of each other and less than a mile apart.

A spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office in Washington declined to comment.

On the morning of Jan. 6, thousands of people from all over the country gathered at the Ellipse, near the White House, to rally behind the false premise that Trump had won the 2020 presidential election. The outgoing president began speaking to

SEE RALLY ON A6

IN THE NEWS



SPACE TELESCOPE SCIENCE INSTITUTE/NASA/ESA

Far, far away Astronomers say the Hubble Space Telescope has detected the most distant star ever seen, near the cosmic dawn. A4

World Cup berth The U.S. men's national soccer team secures passage to Qatar in November despite a 2-0 loss at Costa Rica. D1

THE NATION A British militant on trial in federal court was a "simple ISIS fighter" and not involved in torturing hostages, his attorney argued. A2
The White House plans to lift the Title 42 border restrictions that authorities have relied upon during the pandemic. A3

Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) announced she will vote to confirm Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court, ensuring bipartisan support. A3
NASA astronaut Mark Vande Hei returned

safely to Earth, setting an American record after spending 355 days in space. A4
Bias against transgender students would be a violation of federal civil rights law under proposed Education Department rules. A6

THE WORLD The rebels fighting Myanmar's junta are outnumbered and outgunned, but they're still winning battles. A10
Britain withdrew its judges from Hong Kong's highest court, citing a "tipping point" where the presence of its

judges would "risk legitimizing oppression." A17
Canada's former top military commander pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice in one of several high-profile cases of alleged sexual misconduct. A17

THE ECONOMY The White House announced funding to make hundreds of thousands of homes in low-income areas more energy-efficient. A20

THE REGION The interim president at George Washington University seeks to steady a school rattled by a pandemic, distrust and big departures. B1

Vice President Harris halted a \$4.7 billion pledge by D.C.-region corporate leaders to aid minority businesses. B1
After 72 years under wraps, data from the 1950 Census will be unveiled Friday, releasing a potential gold mine for researchers. B1
A company that will bring a rail car factory and hundreds of jobs to western Maryland could receive more than \$11 million worth of state and local incentives. B1

STYLE Bruce Willis is stepping away from acting after being diagnosed with the language disorder aphasia. C4

INSIDE



LOCAL LIVING A private oasis in your backyard

Tips for designing an outdoor area that doesn't require much upkeep — or money.

STYLE Commanding turn A great actor tackles Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice" — one of Shakespeare's most challenging plays. C1

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espectáculos**Bruce Willis, un duro de Hollywood, sufre de afasia y deja de actuar**

Estrella de *Duro de matar* y *Sexto sentido*, padece una dolencia evolutiva que le impide seguir con su carrera

**PROBARÁN LA PRIMERA VACUNA ARGENTINA CONTRA EL COVID**

—sociedad

La Anmat aprobó ayer que se inicie la fase I de los ensayos clínicos con Arvac, el suero de desarrollo nacional; se testeará en 80 personas. **Página 26**

CON SUS POLÉMICAS, EL VAR DEBUTA HOY EN EL FÚTBOL LOCAL

—deportes

Empezará a usarse en la fecha que comienza hoy, y en todos los partidos de Primera de aquí en más; las imágenes y los audios no se difundirán, como si ocurre en la Conmebol.

LA NACION

JUEVES 31 DE MARZO DE 2022 | LANACION.COM.AR

En medio de la interna oficialista, Massa amenaza con abandonar la coalición

TENSIÓN. Dirigentes de su partido lo plantearon ante las disputas entre el Presidente y su vice

Sin ninguna señal de distensión en el horizonte entre el presidente Alberto Fernández y su vice, Cristina Kirchner, la coalición oficialista sumó ahora un nuevo problema: el tercer actor del espacio, Sergio Massa, amenaza con dejar el Frente de Todos (FDT) si no hay una

resolución positiva de la disputa interna.

Así lo plantearon dirigentes del Frente Renovador (FR), una fuerza que Massa conduce en forma unipersonal, en encuentros previos al congreso provincial del partido, que tendrá lugar en Mar del Plata

el mes próximo.

El planteo sonó hacia el interior de la coalición gobernante como una advertencia ante la imposibilidad de Alberto Fernández y Cristina Kirchner de retomar el diálogo y plasmar en hechos concretos los recurrentes llamados a la unidad

que hizo el Presidente, a los que se sumaron varios dirigentes oficialistas, entre ellos, el propio Massa. Si bien la incidencia del FR en la alianza gobernante es minoritaria, la posibilidad de una fractura significaría la primera escisión del FDT desde 2019. **Página 10**

Desafío piquetero con carpas en la 9 de Julio

política— En una escalada de las protestas piqueteras, organizaciones de izquierda acamparon ayer en la avenida 9 de Julio y amenazan con quedarse hasta mañana en reclamo de más planes sociales; la manifestación provocó un caos de tránsito. **Página 16**



Decenas de carpas fueron desplegadas anoche frente al Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, en la 9 de Julio

GERARDO VIERCOVICH

EL ESCENARIO

Tres episodios que desnudan la crisis

Carlos Pagni

—LA NACION—

El Poder Ejecutivo está bloqueado por el conflicto entre Alberto Fernández y Cristina Kirchner, y, con independencia de ese factor, por el singular estilo del Presidente para conducir la administración. Es un *modus operandi* "endibado", por utilizar un adjetivo de su teología.

Esa parálisis es la que más llama la atención. Pero no es la única. El Congreso Nacional también está paralizado. Continúa en la página 12

La pobreza bajó al 37,3%, pero supera la de 2019

INDEC. Se redujo por el rebote del PBI, pero afectaba a 17 millones de personas en 2021. **Página 21**

Ordenan detenciones por un bloqueo de Camioneros

Página 16

LA NACION EN UCRAINA — DÍA 36

Rusia minimiza los diálogos y vuelve a bombardear

Tras anunciar que iniciaría una desescalada militar, el Kremlin mantuvo bajo fuego de artillería a varios centros urbanos de Ucrania

Luisa Corradini
CORRESPONSAL EN FRANCIA

PARÍS.—A pesar de sus promesas de reducir en forma radical su agresión militar en Ucrania, y mientras aumentan los rumores de que Vla-

dimir Putin está desinformado por sus consejeros sobre la verdadera situación en el terreno, Rusia continuó ayer bombardeando violentamente numerosas ciudades ucranianas. Chernihiv, en el norte, la segunda ciudad de Ucrania más

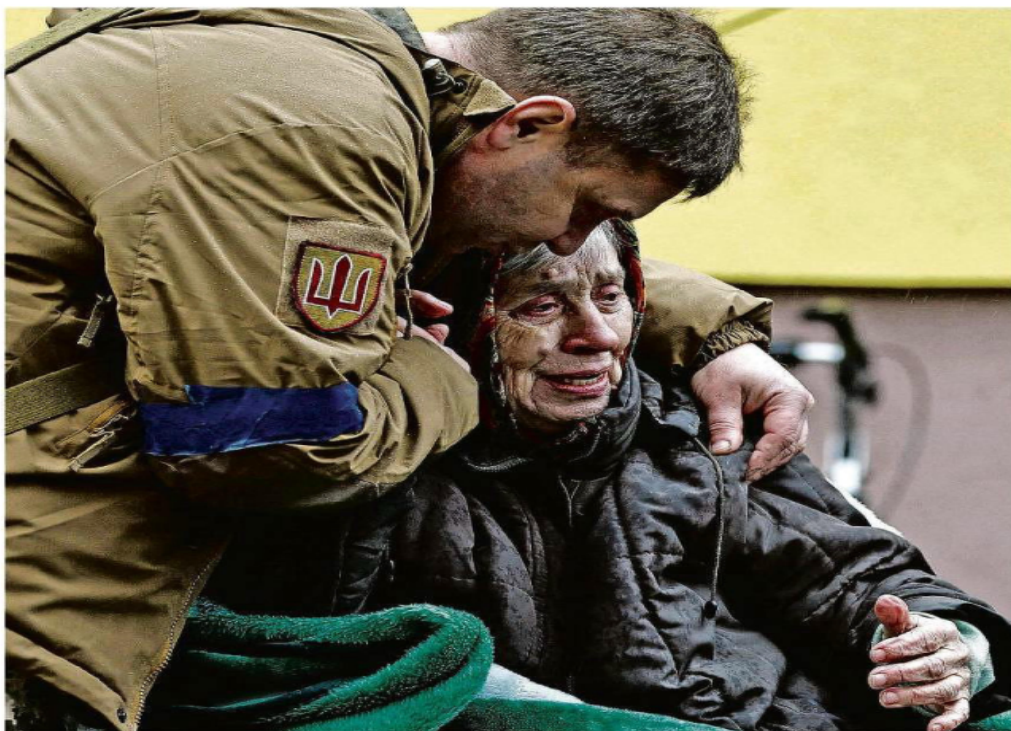
destruida por los bombardeos después de Mariupol (sur), continuó bajo ataque de la poderosa artillería del Ejército ruso, a pesar del compromiso de Moscú de reducir "radicalmente" su actividad militar. Continúa en la página 2

Mykolaiv, la ciudad que hizo replegar a los rusos

Elisabetta Piqué
Página 4

Quién paga RT, el canal de Putin que se ve en el país

José Crettaz
Página 18



Soldado ucraniano abraça sua mãe, Larissa Kolesnik, 82, após ela ser retirada de Irpin, perto de Kiev. Zohra Benserraf/Reuters

Bolsonaro faz nova ameaça ao Judiciário sobre eleição

Presidente afirma que votos serão contados e pleito não será decidido por 'dois ou três', em indireta ao TSE

Jair Bolsonaro (PL) voltou a ameaçar o Judiciário sobre as eleições, desta vez em discurso no Rio Grande do Norte. Disse que os votos serão contados —sem explicar como, já que a proposta da cédula impressa foi derrubada no Congresso— e fez críticas indiretas ao Tribunal Superior Eleitoral.

"Não serão dois ou três que decidirão como serão contados esses votos", declarou, em aparente referência a Luís Roberto Barroso, ex-presidente do TSE; Edson Fachin, o atual; e Alexandre de Moraes, que assume a chefia em agosto.

O presidente participou de evento em Parnamirim (RN), onde fez oração, motocicleta e cavalgada. Afirmando que o pleito "não é de esquerda contra direita, é de bem contra o mal, [...] e o bem vencerá". Mais tarde, em Baixa Grande do Ribeiro (PI), tornou a falar sobre contagem dos votos.

Ataques ao sistema eleitoral têm sido rotina do governo e voltam a gerar tensão institucional, após curta trégua em 2021. **Política A7**

Golpe de 64 foi 'marco histórico da política brasileira', dizem Forças A7

Ucrânia vive noite de ataques, apesar de promessa russa

Embora tenham prometido redução da atividade militar, forças russas bombardearam quase todas as cidades na fronteira com o território controlado pela Ucrânia de áreas separatistas apoiadas por Moscou em Donetsk, segundo o governo local. **Mundo A12**

Esporte B7

São Paulo bate Palmeiras

Com 3 a 1 sobre adversário até então invicto, time de Ceni abre vantagem na final do Paulista

Ilustrada C1

É Tudo Verdade começa hoje, com filmes para entender conflito e Putin

Turismo C8

Animais domésticos são incorporados a roteiros familiares de luxo e de aventura

Presidente não interferiu na PF, conclui inquérito

Dois anos após o pedido de demissão e as acusações de Sérgio Moro, a Polícia Federal encerrou inquérito e concluiu não haver indícios de que o presidente Jair Bolsonaro (PL) interferiu para proteger aliados e familiares ao trocar o comando do órgão. **Política A4**

Por tornozeleira, Silveira volta a gerar tensão entre Poderes

A recusa do deputado Daniel Silveira (União Brasil-RJ) em cumprir a ordem de pôr tornozeleira eletrônica, dada pelo ministro do STF Alexandre de Moraes, provocou ontem nova tensão institucional e acirrou os ânimos de bolsonaristas contrários à determinação.

Agentes da PF foram ao Legislativo para fazer valer a decisão, em vão. Moraes fixou multa diária de R\$ 15 mil por descumprimento e bloqueio de bens. O deputado, então, disse que colocaria o equipamento, o que não havia feito até a conclusão desta edição. **Política A6**

Aprovado uso de pílula para tratamento de Covid

A Anvisa deu aval para uso emergencial do medicamento da Pfizer. A droga é recomendada a adultos com risco de contrair forma grave da doença. **B4**

Sérgio Rodrigues

O machista e o sexista vão à guerra

Por que a imprensa preferiu chamar de sexista, em vez de machista, a ode nojenta de Mamãe Falei à predação sexual de refugiadas de guerra? Talvez porque aqui machismo também tem a acepção de "qualidade, ação ou modos de macho". Vai que ele tomasse como elogio. **Cotidiano B3**

Luciano Hang desiste de concorrer ao Senado

O empresário de SC disse que mal súbito de filho o fez repensar plano e que vai se dedicar à família e aos 22 mil funcionários das lojas Havan. **Política A7**

Interino do MEC também esteve com pastores pivôs de escândalo

Victor Godoy Veiga, cotado para ficar de vez no lugar de Milton Ribeiro, também foi a eventos com Gilmar Santos e Arilton Moura, suspeitos de terem criado balcão de negócios na pasta. Procurado, o MEC não respondeu. **B3**

A pandemia em 30.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)	74,7%
Dose de reforço	35,8%

Nos estados

	Ao menos uma dose	1º ciclo completo	Dose de reforço
SP	91,7%	84,3%	49,6%
PI	94,1%	81,7%	38,8%
CE	87,0%	78,0%	39,2%

ESTÁGIO DA DOENÇA

Óbitos	
Média móvel	Em 24 h
215	-37,8%*
	276
Total	659.570

Casos -35,1%* (desacelerado)

*Variação em relação a 14 dias



Sem trabalho desde a pandemia, Aida dos Santos usa lenha para cozinhar. Eduardo Anzelli/Folhapress

Um terço de pessoas sem emprego tenta vaga há dois anos

Pela primeira vez desde 2012, o desemprego medido pelo IBGE chegou a 30,3% da população. O problema afeta 3,6 milhões de desocupados, que buscam vagas há mais de 24 meses. Os números foram compilados pela IDados, a pedido da Folha. **Mercado A15**

Dois terços dos brasileiros temem sair na rua à noite

O temor atinge 64% dos brasileiros; 37% afirmam se sentir muito inseguros após escurecer em relação ao que percebiam há um ano, e 27% dizem ter um pouco de insegurança. Os dados são de pesquisa Datafolha com 2.556 pessoas em 181 cidades. **Cotidiano B1**

Governo privatiza porto em Vitória de olho em SP

No primeiro leilão de portos no país, a Quadra Capital levou Vitória e Barra do Riacho (ES) por R\$ 106 milhões. O governo viu certa-me como teste para privatizar o de Santos. **Mercado A16**

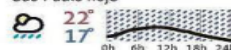
EDITORIAIS A2

Pessimismo em alta
Sobre piora da percepção sobre a economia do país.

Um pequeno passo
A respeito de negociações entre Rússia e Ucrânia.

ATMOSFERA

São Paulo hoje



Está pendiente un pedido de informes del JEM sobre sus actuaciones

Fiscales aplican ley de silencio sobre los aprietes para RGD

Solo 2 de las 11 unidades fiscales enviaron las documentaciones al organismo que juzga a jueces y fiscales. Volverán a ser intimadas y pueden ser intervenidas con la fuerza pública.

PÁGINA 48

Cartistas dilatan intervención
Allanan Gobernación del Guairá y la SET le bloquea el RUC

PÁGINAS 2 y 3

Litigio entre ANDE y Engineering
Ínfima deuda pasa a una multimillonaria condena de pago

PÁGINA 10

Legislación tiene rechazo empresarial
Capasu plantea volver a fojas cero proyecto de régimen fronterizo

PÁGINA 14

LOS ENFERMOS



Llegó el fresco y no los antigripales

A cuidarse. Tras la lluvia se vino el frío, lo que generó que la población desempolve abrigos. Vacunas contra la influenza se tendrán recién la próxima semana.

PÁGINA 20

¡VACUNATE!
ES SEGURO

Póliza de USD 5,7 millones por incumplimiento
MOPC cobró el seguro por el fallido Metrobús

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Jefes comunales se aferran al cargo
Los intendentes quieren un año más de mandato

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Uno de los últimos en ver a Édgar Lomaquis
Miguel Insfrán salpicado en caso de desaparición

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



VACCINS
COMMENT BIONTECH
ET MODERNA PRÉPARENT
L'APRÈS-COVID PAGE 22

LE FIGARO LITTÉRAIRE
LES DÉMAGOGUES, CES TRIBUNS
INDISSOCIABLES DE LA VIE
POLITIQUE NOTRE SUPPLÉMENT



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Moscou continue de bombarder le pays PAGE 7

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Des volcans crachent de l'eau glacée à la surface de Pluton PAGE 14

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• Les tribunes de Jean Leonetti et d'André Kaspri
• La chronique de Luc Ferry
• L'analyse de Marc Landré

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FIGARO OUI
FIGARO NON

Réponses à la question de mercredi:

Pensez-vous que Jean-Luc Mélenchon peut accéder au second tour de la présidentielle ?

OUI 23% NON 77%

TOTAL DE VOTANTS : 216 925

Votez aujourd'hui sur lefigaro.fr

McKinsey: approuvez-vous le recours par l'État à des cabinets de conseil privés ?

VICTOR MOUSSA/STOCKADORE.COM

La Russie s'enfoncé dans l'isolement et les sanctions

L'impact des représailles internationales à l'invasion de l'Ukraine commence à être ressenti par la population russe, même s'il ne semble pas de nature à faire bouger les lignes politiques.

Rayons vides, valse des étiquettes, files d'attente: le nœud coulant des sanctions internationales imposées après l'agression de l'Ukraine commence à se resserrer

sur la population russe. Certains produits de première nécessité subissent une véritable razzia. Jour après jour, les Russes sont confrontés aux restrictions

croissantes, qui bousculent le quotidien et raniment le spectre des pénuries, courantes du temps de l'URSS et que beaucoup ont encore en mémoire. Mais la population

n'est pas à égalité face aux sanctions. Directement affectés dans leur mode de vie, les jeunes se montrent plus déboussolés que les anciens. En province, les gens s'in-

quiètent pour l'avenir mais n'en font pas moins bloc derrière la version officielle d'une opération de « dénazification » de l'Ukraine présentée par le Kremlin.

→ A TOULA, LA LANCINANTE INQUIÉTUDE POUR L'AVENIR → GRIGORY IOUDINE : « CETTE GUERRE EST UN DÉSASTRE POUR NOTRE SOCIÉTÉ » → UNE JEUNESSE SIDERÉE ET DÉBOUSSOLÉE PAGES 7 À 9 ET L'ÉDITORIAL



Israël sous le choc après une vague d'attaques terroristes

En une semaine, le pays a été frappé par trois attentats qui ont fait onze morts, dont cinq à Bnei Brak, près de Tel-Aviv, mardi. Les attaques ont été perpétrées par une nouvelle nébuleuse terroriste, inspirée des méthodes de Daech. PAGE 10

La polémique McKinsey perturbe la campagne de Macron

Le cocktail McKinsey est détonant. Une somme astronomique pour les prestations d'un cabinet de conseil américain qui a travaillé pour les services de l'État durant le quinquennat Macron. Des accusations d'optimisation fiscale et des soupçons de collusion. Depuis que le Sénat a publié son rapport, les critiques pleuvent. Il y avait urgence à déminer l'affaire. Mercredi, deux ministres ont essayé de « ramener de la raison, du calme et du rationnel dans un moment où il y a beaucoup de raccourcis ». Pas sûr que cela suffise. PAGE 6

ÉDITORIAL par Philippe Gélie pgelie@lefigaro.fr

Rideau de fer

Tandis que son armée s'enlise en Ukraine dans la *raspoutitsa* (saison des mauvaises routes), la Russie s'enfoncé dans les sanctions. Bannie de partout, elle se voit coupée des circuits bancaires, du commerce et des investissements étrangers. Ses avions ne volent presque plus, faute de pièces d'entretien ou d'autorisations d'atterrir. Ses partenaires économiques l'abandonnent, parfois sous la seule pression des opinions publiques et des médias. Son isolement commence à peser sur les approvisionnements et les prix. Ses élites s'exilent - pas seulement les oligarques passés de Monaco à Dubaï, mais les intellectuels et les artistes affluant à l'Ouest. Quand ses diplomates ne sont pas expulsés à la dizaine - on s'aperçoit soudain qu'une majorité d'entre eux seraient des espions ? -, elle coupe les ponts avec nombre d'institutions multilatérales, du Conseil de l'Europe à l'Association internationale des procureurs.

C'est un véritable rideau de fer que les Occidentaux sont en train de tirer sur la Russie - avec, paradoxe, la participation de Vladimir Poutine. À sa mise au ban des nations comme fauteur de guerre, le maître du Kremlin a choisi de répondre par le défi et le repli. Il en-

tend faire payer son gaz en roubles et laisse son entourage insinuer qu'il n'a plus besoin d'ambassades. Bravades contre-productives pour qui voudrait atténuer l'impact des sanctions. Mais Poutine est parti pour entraîner tout le pays dans sa paranoïa.

Nous l'y aidons sans le vouloir. Parce que nos représailles sont trop massives pour être finement calibrées et parce que nous ne disposons

Poutine entraîne tous les Russes dans sa paranoïa

d'aucun moyen de communication avec la population russe. Les médias étant censurés sous peine de prison, comment un citoyen pourrait-il remettre en cause la version officielle d'une guerre économique totale, menée au prétexte d'une anodine et justifiée « opération militaire spéciale » chez un voisin nazillon ? Poutine a commis un crime contre les Ukrainiens et il en commet un autre contre son peuple. Nous en sommes complices, faute de concentrer les sanctions sur son système de pouvoir personnel. Il faut craindre le résultat que nous obtiendrons en traitant le plus vaste pays du monde comme la Corée du Nord. ■

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Russell T Davies' 80s drama up for 11 awards at television Baftas



→ Page 9

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NHS maternity scandal: police investigate 600 further cases

Report condemns staff failures that may have led to 201 baby deaths

Andrew Gregory
Health editor

Police are examining 600 cases linked to the biggest maternity scandal in NHS history after a damning report into baby deaths condemned health staff for blaming mothers while ignoring their own catastrophic blunders. The independent inquiry into maternity practices at Shrewsbury and Telford hospital NHS trust

uncovered hundreds of cases in which health officials had failed to undertake serious incident investigations, while deaths were dismissed or not investigated appropriately.

Instead, grieving families were denied access to reviews of their care and mothers were blamed when their babies died or suffered horrific injuries.

A total of 201 babies and nine mothers could have or would have survived if the NHS trust had provided better care, the inquiry found.

There were 29 cases where babies suffered severe brain injuries and 65 incidents of cerebral palsy.

Rhiannon Davies, one of the mothers who fought for justice for

years after her daughter Kate died in 2009, said the numbers did "not tell the whole story" of the impact on the families.

Sajid Javid, the health secretary, issued a Commons apology yesterday, telling MPs: "We entrust the NHS with our care, often when we're at our most vulnerable. In return we expect the highest standards."

"When those standards are not met, we must act firmly and the failures of care and compassion set out in this report have absolutely no place in the NHS. To the families that have suffered so gravely, I am sorry."

Javid offered reassurances that NHS staff responsible for the "serious and repeated failures" would be

"The families live with unimaginable trauma and grief"

DCS Damian Barratt
West Mercia police

held to account. "There is also an active police investigation, Operation Lincoln, which is looking at around 600 cases," he said.

Detective Chief Superintendent Damian Barratt, of West Mercia police, said the investigation was "very much active" and added: "We will be fully reviewing the findings

of the report and feeding appropriate elements into our investigation.

"We do not underestimate the impact the report's findings and our ongoing investigation has on the families involved, who have suffered unimaginable trauma and grief that they still live with today."

A combination of an obsession with "natural births" over caesarean sections coupled with a shocking lack of staff, training and oversight of maternity wards resulted in a toxic culture in which mothers and babies died needlessly for 20 years while "repeated failures" were ignored again and again.

Julie Rowlings, whose daughter Olivia died

The lights are off. But Ukraine's rail lifeline brings hope

Shaun Walker
Kyiv

Windows shuttered and lights dimmed, a darkened train pulls into a station platform, also unlit. As the train comes to a halt, attendants toss boxes of humanitarian aid to station workers on the platform.

Huddles of passengers, who arrived at the station hours earlier so as not to be on the streets during curfew hours, search in the inky blackness for the right carriage, before the train is on its way again with a gnashing of wheels and a long hiss of steam.

This scene has played out at stations across Ukraine repeatedly over the last month, as Ukrainian Railways has been engaged in one of the most impressive elements of Ukraine's



▲ Evacuees on the train for the two-day journey from Kryvyi Rih in eastern Ukraine to Chop, close to the western border with Slovakia PHOTOGRAPH: JELLE KRINGS

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