

What's News

Business & Finance

Twitter accepted Musk's bid to take over the company in a \$44 billion deal that would give the world's richest person control over the social-media network, where he is also among its most influential users. **A1, A6**

Chinese stocks suffered their worst selloff in over two years and the yuan hit its lowest level since late 2020 as investors worried about economic fallout from strict policies to combat Covid-19. **A1**

Fidelity plans to allow investors to put a bitcoin account in their 401(k)s, the first major retirement-plan provider to do so. **A1**

U.S. stocks rose, with the S&P 500, Nasdaq and Dow gaining 0.6%, 1.3% and 0.7%, respectively. Government-bond yields fell. **B1**

The Senate moved ahead with consideration of Biden's Fed nominees, beginning with a procedural vote that clears the path to confirm Brainard later this week as vice chairwoman. **A2**

Coca-Cola logged higher quarterly sales as stronger demand and price increases helped the beverage giant offset surging input costs. **B1**

Royal Philips has been subpoenaed by the Justice Department in relation to a recall of breathing-aids devices affecting millions of sleep-apnea patients. **B4**

GM is developing a hybrid version of its Chevrolet Corvette that could hit dealerships as early as next year. **B3**

World-Wide

The Biden administration's aim in the Ukraine war is to see Russia's military capabilities degraded and Ukraine's strengthened, to prevent Moscow from attempting to conquer territory by force in the future, U.S. officials said. **A1, A7-8**

A New York judge held Trump in contempt of court and fined the ex-president \$10,000 a day for what he said was Trump's failure to comply with a subpoena by the state's attorney general for a civil-fraud probe. **A3**

Chinese authorities raced to carry out citywide Covid-19 tests across Beijing, betting their rapid action to crush a nascent outbreak in the capital will avoid a repeat of the chaos seen in Shanghai. **A9**

Supreme Court justices tussled over the line between permitted private prayer by a public school employee and prohibited coercion of students to join in religious exercise. **A4**

A Turkish court sentenced dissident businessman and philanthropist Osman Kavala to life in prison on charges of attempting to overthrow the government. **A18**

Israel fired artillery shells into southern Lebanon after militants there launched a rocket into northern Israel, Israeli military said. **A18**

Footage released by authorities shows Alec Baldwin drawing a revolver and pointing it toward the camera twice while rehearsing for a scene in the movie "Rust." **A3**

JOURNAL REPORT

Climate Technology: Innovations that make a difference. **R1-12**

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Musk Strikes Deal to Buy Twitter

Social-media firm opts to sell for \$44 billion, one of the biggest tech acquisitions in history

Twitter Inc. accepted Elon Musk's bid to take over the company and go private, a deal that would give the world's richest person control over the social-media network where he is also among its most influential users.

The \$44 billion deal marks the close of a dramatic courtship and a change of heart at Twitter, where many executives and board members initially opposed Mr. Musk's takeover approach. The deal has polarized Twitter employees, users and regulators over the power tech giants wield in determining the parameters of discourse on the internet and how those companies enforce their rules. The two sides worked

through the night to hash out a deal in which Mr. Musk plans to take Twitter private in a deal that values the company at \$54.20 a share. The takeover, if it goes through, would mark one of the biggest acquisitions of a tech company and will likely affect

the direction of social media. Mr. Musk will bring a commitment to a more hands-off approach on speech moderation to a company that has struggled to reconcile free-wheeling conversations with content that appeals to advertisers. On Monday, a day after The Wall Street Journal first reported that a deal was close, Mr. Musk tweeted to indicate that he wants the platform to be a destination for wide-ranging

discourse and disagreement. "I hope that even my worst critics remain on Twitter, because that is what free speech means," he wrote. Please turn to page A6

Winning Hand
◆ How the Tesla chief prevailed with his bid..... A6
◆ Heard on the Street: Ads needed to stay aloft..... B14



Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said the Biden administration wants the Ukraine war to reduce Russia's military might to deter future incursions. Above, the remains of a destroyed Russian tank left on the roadside in Rusaniv, Ukraine.

U.S. Seeks to Weaken Russia To Deter Future Aggression

The Biden administration's aim in the Ukraine war is to see Russia's military capabilities degraded and Ukraine's strengthened.

By William Mauldin in Poland and Thomas Grove in Lviv, Ukraine

ened, to prevent Moscow from attempting to conquer territory by force in the future, U.S. officials said Monday.

"We want to see Russia weakened to the degree that it can't do the kinds of things that it has done in invading Ukraine," Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said after he and Secretary of State Antony Blinken became the highest-level U.S. officials to visit the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

A senior U.S. official said after Messrs. Blinken and Austin

returned from Kyiv. "However this ends up, Russia will be in a much weaker position. Ukraine will be in a much stronger position to further deter against any renewed aggression once this is over."

Meanwhile, on Monday the U.S. said it will train diplomats to Ukraine and work to re-establish its embassy in Kyiv, and the White House said President Biden would appoint an ambassador to Ukraine, the

first since 2019. In an attempt to stem the flow of heavy weapons from the U.S. and other allies to the front lines in Ukraine, Russia on Monday hit several Ukrainian cities.

◆ War drains Russia's arms supply..... A7
◆ Career U.S. diplomat is named Kyiv envoy..... A7
◆ Big Four auditors struggle to exit Russia..... A8

INSIDE



SPORTS

More women are advancing in baseball's on-field coaching jobs. **A14**

Fidelity to Allow Bitcoin in 401(k)s

By Anne Tergesen

Fidelity Investments plans to allow investors to put a bitcoin account in their 401(k)s, the first major retirement-plan provider to do so.

Later this year, the 23,000 companies that use Fidelity to administer their retirement plans will have the option to put bitcoin on the menu. The endorsement of the nation's largest retirement-plan provider suggests crypto investing

is moving further into the mainstream, but it remains to be seen whether employers will embrace it for their workers.

Fidelity's move comes a month after the Labor Department expressed concerns about including cryptocurrencies in retirement plans. It is also an uneasy time for the stock market, with the S&P 500 down almost 10% this year in part due to rising interest rates. Bitcoin lost more than 40% of its value since its November high.

"There is a need for a diverse set of products and investment solutions for our investors," said Dave Gray, head of workplace retirement offerings and platforms at the Boston company. "We fully expect that cryptocurrency is going to shape the way future generations think about investing."

Under the plan, Fidelity would let savers allocate as much as 20% of their nest eggs to bitcoin, though that threshold

On Monday, the Shanghai Composite and CSI 300 indexes fell 5.1% and 4.9%, respectively. Those were the largest single-day percentage declines for both benchmarks since February 2020, when anxiety over the fast-spreading coronavirus in the early days of the pandemic led to sharp falls in Chinese markets after the Lunar New Year holiday.

Chinese markets regained some ground in morning trading Tuesday. The CSI 300 index and Hang Seng both added.

◆ Beijing conducts massive Covid-19 testing..... A9

The \$67 Billion Tariff Loophole

China benefits as retailers take advantage of rule waiving duties for small purchases

By Josh Zumbrun

WASHINGTON—The rule that allows American tourists to bring back souvenirs from overseas duty-free is now being used by companies to avoid billions of dollars in tariffs—and it's perfectly legal.

Known as the de minimis rule, the exemption has been around for decades, deriving its name from the Latin term for something too small to fuss with.

For many years, it was just that—accounting for such a sliver of imports that U.S. Customs and Border Protection didn't even bother to keep track of them. It's a sliver no more. The known value of de minimis

imports soared to over \$67 billion in 2020 from an estimated \$40 million in 2012, according to previously unreported U.S. Customs data reviewed by The Wall Street Journal.

The rise of e-commerce in recent years accustomed shoppers to order just a few items at a time—which easily falls under the de minimis rules—and led to steady growth in such shipments. Then a sharp jump came in the wake of higher tariffs imposed by the Trump administration on Chinese imports, according to the Customs data and logistics industry executives, who say the new levies led importers to devise ways to dodge pay-

Argentines Don't Cry For Inflation

Coping tactics include hoarding; '40% is normal'

By Silvina Frydlewsky and Juan Forero

BUENOS AIRES—Shopkeeper Jonathan Faez has a word of advice to people around the world obsessing about inflation: Chill out.

"I have friends in the United States and Spain and they're telling me they're going crazy with their annual inflation of 5% or 7%," says Mr. Faez, owner of a lingerie store. "Here, we reach 4% almost every month!"

Welcome to Argentina, where high, nearly uncontrollable inflation—now at an estimated 55.1% over the past year—is as natural as the

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The Netflix effect

Choice and personalisation weigh on our politics — STEPHEN BUSH, PAGE 14

Macron's moment

Time for re-elected leader to build his EU vision — GIDEON RACHMAN, PAGE 15



Donbas reckoning

A bloody Russian onslaught looms in Ukraine's east — BIG PAGE, PAGE 15

Twitter talk

Musk nears \$43bn deal

Three weeks after Elon Musk snapped up a near 10 per cent stake in Twitter, the world's richest man is on the cusp of taking the rest of the social media platform private in a \$43.4bn deal that would be one of the largest buyouts.

The tech group's board, which includes founder Jack Dorsey, right, was meeting last night to finalise the terms of an agreement with Musk, according to people briefed on the matter. They added that there was still a slim chance the deal could fall apart.

If Musk, left, takes control of what he calls the world's "de facto public town square", he would have the potential to shape politics, business and culture. Report and Patrick Jenkins page 5

Lex page 16



FT portrait: ARTY/Getty Images/Roumberg

Beijing gripped by panic buying as Covid cases show 'grave' rise

◆ Prospect of full lockdown ◆ Jitters spread to Chinese stocks ◆ Biggest sell-off for 2 years

RYAN MCNORROW — BEIJING
TOM MITCHELL — SINGAPORE
ANDY LIN — HONG KONG

Beijing health officials have sounded the alarm over a "grave" rise in Covid-19 cases, raising the prospect of a city-wide lockdown and sparking the biggest Chinese stock sell-off since February 2020.

Health officials yesterday said the Omicron variant was spreading and ordered several Beijing neighbourhoods to lock down. A full lockdown of the capital would be a huge test of the tough "zero-Covid" strategy set out by Xi Jinping as the Chinese president seeks to seal an unprecedented third term at a Communist party congress this year.

Beijing reported just 41 cases last weekend, but officials said evidence had emerged of community spread.

Panic buying gripped several Beijing supermarkets and the growing unease spread to financial markets in Shanghai and Shenzhen, with equities selling off sharply on the prospect of widening lockdowns. The benchmark CSI 300 index of mainland-listed stocks closed down 4.9 per cent, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 5.7 per cent.

Market jitters also spread to Europe, where the Stoxx 600, the regional European gauge, suffered its biggest decline since early March.

Shoppers in Beijing rushed to hoard supplies after the city's largest district, Chaoyang, with a population of 3.5m, ordered residents to undergo three rounds of Covid-19 testing from yesterday. Chaoyang is also Beijing's main commercial area, popular with multinational corporations and home to dozens of embassies.

Beijing residents emptied supermarket shelves of meat, vegetables and non-perishable foods, with several online grocery delivery apps also selling out of food yesterday.

"I'm hoarding rationally... there's no harm in being prepared," said Shi Wei, a 32-year-old hospitality worker. "My colleagues in Shanghai learned the hard way — they are strongly urging I hoard as much as possible, at least a month's worth of supplies."

Xue Ce, a 28-year-old tech worker, was one of dozens who joined a block-long queue at a testing centre in the district. "I'm here because the Chaoyang government has ordered mandatory tests [and] also because there's a surge



Supermarket shelves were emptied, with several online grocery delivery apps also selling out of food

In cases now so I want to be tested just to be safe," he said.

Shanghai has endured more than three weeks of a harsh lockdown. Over the weekend, workers in hazmat suits installed felt fences at the base of some apartment blocks with a recent history of cases to stop residents leaving.

Despite the chaos and economic hardship stemming from the restrictions, Xi has shown no indication of relaxing his zero-Covid-19 campaign. "We will not waver in pursuing dynamic zero-Covid," Liang Wannian, a Covid-19 government adviser, told state media. "It maximises the safety of people's lives and economic and social development."

Additional reporting by Niam Liu in Beijing and Hudson Lockett in Hong Kong
Covid treatments page 4

Briefing

► **SoftBank lender shrugs off tech slide**
Masahiro Kihara, chief executive of Mizuho, has said he is "totally unconcerned" about the Japanese technology conglomerate's financial health despite the sell-off forcing it to slow its investments. — PAGE 5

► **Hong Kong human rights award shelved**
The territory's Foreign Correspondents' Club has suspended its human rights journalism prizes for fear they could break China's security law. Breaches carry a maximum penalty of life in prison. — PAGE 4

► **Palm oil jumps after Jakarta export ban**
Prices have surged and the rupiah has lost ground after Indonesia levied a blanket prohibition, the latest food export ban by countries suffering from soaring domestic food prices. — PAGE 8

► **Biden nominates Ukraine ambassador**
The president has tapped diplomat Bridget Brink as the next envoy, as the US pledged to resume diplomatic ties and said it wanted to see Russia "weakened" by its war. — PAGE 3



► **Aircraft leasing groups make safety plea**
The trade body has launched a multinational effort to persuade safety authorities to allow planes returned from Russia without full maintenance records back into commercial service. — PAGE 6

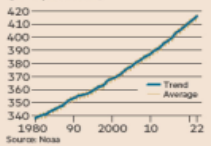
► **French police raid Gupta businesses**
Companies linked to Sanjeev Gupta's GFG Alliance, including a metalworks it formerly owned, have been targeted in an escalation of a criminal probe into the metals magnate's empire. — PAGE 7

► **Roche buoyed by demand for virus tests**
North American demand for rapid coronavirus tests has boosted the Swiss pharmaceutical's sales but it predicted that revenue from Covid-19 treatments would fall this year. — PAGE 6; LEX, PAGE 16

Datawatch

CO2 rising

Carbon dioxide global monthly mean (parts per million)



Levels of carbon dioxide continued to soar in 2021, with an annual average of 414.7 parts per million. That is the 10th year running that CO2 rose by more than two parts per million, the fastest sustained increase in 63 years of monitoring



Crypto's Super Bowl play fails to start rushing game

The stampede into crypto expected by an industry that splashed out millions on Super Bowl advertisements has failed to materialise. Stars like LeBron James played on fears of missing out on the next big thing but trading has turned sluggish as factors ranging from rising interest rates to the war in Ukraine diminished investors' animal spirits. Prices have also dipped. The drift, say observers, is being led by big institutions rather than retail investors. Ad blitz ► PAGE 8

Turkish philanthropist jailed for life in blow to human rights and rule of law

LAURA PITEL — ANKARA

A court in Istanbul has sentenced a prominent Turkish businessman and philanthropist to life in prison without parole in a verdict that campaigners described as an "outrageous" blow to human rights.

Osman Kavala, whose prosecution has become a litmus test of the rule of law in Turkey, was found guilty of seeking to overthrow the government despite years of objections to his treatment by western officials, human rights groups and one of Europe's top courts.

His sentence risks casting a shadow over a drive by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to forge better relations with the west amid the Ukraine war. Kavala's case was at the centre of a diplomatic crisis last year after a group of 10 western ambassadors called for his release.

The court, which acquitted Kavala on a charge of espionage, also sentenced several others to 18 years in jail for aiding what prosecutors called an attempt to overthrow the government during protests that swept Turkey in 2013.

Kavala, 64, had already spent four and a half years behind bars without any conviction. He is seen by human rights groups as a symbol of Erdogan's growing intolerance to dissent.

Milena Buyum, a campaigner on Turkey for Amnesty International, said the prosecution had not provided "a single shred of evidence" that Kavala had tried to overthrow the government.

She added: "This outrageous verdict is designed to send a very chilling message to the rest of civil society [and] to human rights defenders."

The European Court of Human Rights found in a ruling in 2019 that his

detention was an attempt by the Turkish authorities to "silence" Erdogan's critics, and ordered his release. Turkey's refusal to abide by that ruling last year prompted the Council of Europe, the continent's top human rights body, to launch disciplinary proceedings against the country that could result in the suspension of Turkey's voting rights.

Kavala, a former businessman who used his wealth to support projects focused on conservation and minority rights, was arrested in 2017 in the midst of a sweeping crackdown that followed a bloody attempted coup that took place the previous year.

He was accused of seeking to overthrow the government during the Gezi Park protests that gripped Turkey in 2013, as well as during the 2016 coup attempt — charges that he has always denied.

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World Markets

STOCK MARKETS					CURRENCIES					INTEREST RATES				
Pair	Apr 25	Prev	%chg		Pair	Apr 25	Prev	%chg		price	yield	chg		
S&P 500	4208.09	4271.78	-1.45		\$ per €	1.071	1.078	-0.65		US Gov 10 yr	91.40	2.77	-0.12	
Nasdaq Composite	12745.46	12809.29	-0.73		\$ per £	1.271	1.264	0.55		UK Gov 10 yr	120.88	1.84	-0.12	
Dow Jones Ind	33410.70	33581.40	-1.19		€ per £	0.842	0.839	0.36		Ger Gov 10 yr	90.59	0.83	-0.14	
FTSE 100	1740.29	1772.32	-1.81		¥ per \$	127.895	128.465	-0.44		Jan Gov 10 yr	99.56	0.25	0.00	
Euro Stoxx 50	3762.43	3840.01	-2.02		¥ per €	162.586	164.982	-1.46		US Gov 30 yr	96.45	2.87	-0.07	
FTSE 100	7380.54	7521.68	-1.98		SGD per €	1.026	1.032	-0.58		Ger Gov 2 yr	99.49	0.13	-0.14	
FTSE All-Share	4106.36	4180.05	-1.79											
CAC 40	6448.30	6561.42	-1.69											
Nikkei 225	13924.17	14142.09	-1.54											
Hang Seng	18869.34	19038.52	-0.73											
MSCI World \$	2892.45	2954.82	-2.02											
MSCI EM \$	1075.80	1088.93	-1.04											
MSCI ACWI \$	671.63	688.47	-2.45											
FT Wilshire 2500	5871.91	5927.70	-0.92											
FT Wilshire 5000	43517.99	44732.00	-2.72											

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A Ukrainian soldier reuniting with his wife on Monday in Zaporizhzhia. She and their children fled the Russian-held city of Tokmak.

LYNSEE ADDARIO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Musk Reaches Deal for Twitter, Pledging Fewer Limits

Intends to Make the Company Private

By MIKE ISAAC
and LAUREN HIRSCH

SAN FRANCISCO — Elon Musk struck a deal on Monday to buy Twitter for roughly \$54 billion, in a victory by the world's richest man to take over the influential social network frequented by world leaders, celebrities and cultural trendsetters.

Twitter agreed to sell itself to Mr. Musk for \$54.20 a share, a 38 percent premium over the company's share price this month before he revealed he was the firm's single largest shareholder. It would be the biggest deal to take a company private — something Mr. Musk has said he will do with Twitter — in at least two decades, according to data compiled by Dealogic.

"Free speech is the bedrock of a functioning democracy, and Twitter is the digital town square where matters vital to the future of humanity are debated," Mr. Musk said in a statement announcing the deal. "Twitter has tremendous potential — I look forward to working with the company and the community of users to unlock it."

The blockbuster agreement caps what seemed an improbable attempt by the famously mercurial Mr. Musk, 50, to buy Twitter — and immediately raises questions about what he will do with the platform and how his actions will affect online speech globally.

The billionaire, who has more than 83 million followers on Twitter and has romped across the service hurling gibes and memes, has repeatedly said he wants to "transform" the platform by promoting more free speech and giving users more control over what they see on it. By taking the company private, Mr. Musk could work on the service out of sight of the prying eyes of investors, regulators and others.

Yet scrutiny is likely to be intense. Twitter is not the biggest social platform — it has more than 217 million daily users, compared with billions for Facebook and Instagram — but it has had an outsized role in shaping narratives around the world. Political leaders have made it a megaphone, while

INSIDE TWITTER Employees say they've been kept in the dark about what happens next. PAGE B1

New Gatekeeper, Same Issue: Balancing Freedom and Harm

A decade ago, Twitter executives, including the chief executive, Dick Costolo, declared that the social media site was the "free-speech wing of the party."

Today, Twitter has pages upon pages of rules prohibiting content such as material that promotes child sexual exploitation, coordinated government propaganda, offers of counterfeit goods and tweets "wishing for someone to fall victim to a serious accident."

The past 10 years have seen repeated confrontations between the high-minded principles of

employees over tweets they didn't like. Like Facebook, YouTube and other internet companies, Twitter was forced to morph from hard-liner on free expression to speech nanny.

Today, Twitter has pages upon pages of rules prohibiting content such as material that promotes child sexual exploitation, coordinated government propaganda, offers of counterfeit goods and tweets "wishing for someone to fall victim to a serious accident."

The past 10 years have seen repeated confrontations between the high-minded principles of

Silicon Valley's founding generation of social media companies and the messy reality of a world in which "free speech" means different things to different people. And now Elon Musk, who on Monday struck a deal to buy Twitter for roughly \$54 billion, wades directly into that fraught history.

Successive generations of Twitter's leaders since its founding in 2006 have learned what Mark Zuckerberg and most other internet executives have also discovered: Declaring that "the tweets must flow," as a Twitter

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RUTH FREEMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Celebrating a Designer of Public Spaces

Cherokee Park in Louisville, Ky., is among Frederick Law Olmsted's creations. A special section.

New York Judge Finds Trump to Be in Contempt

This article is by Jonah E. Bromwich, Ben Protess and William K. Rashbaum.

A New York state judge on Monday held Donald J. Trump in contempt of court for failing to comply with a subpoena from the state attorney general's office, an extraordinary rebuke of the former president that came as that office suggested it might soon file a

Rebuke Over Failure to Turn Over Papers

long-threatened lawsuit against him.

The judge, Arthur F. Engoron, ordered Mr. Trump to respond fully to the subpoena from the attorney general, Letitia James —

who sought records from the former president about his family business — and assessed a fine of \$10,000 per day until he satisfied the court's requirements.

"Mr. Trump: I know you take your business seriously, and I take mine seriously," Justice Engoron said before he held Mr. Trump in contempt and banded his gavel.

The contempt order amounted

Continued on Page A17

U.S. VOWS TO DULL RUSSIA'S CAPACITY TO ACT MILITARILY

NEWS ANALYSIS

Hint of a More Direct Confrontation

By DAVID E. SANGER

WASHINGTON — When Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III declared Monday at the end of a stealth visit to Ukraine that America's goal is to see Russia so "weakened" that it would no longer have the power to invade a neighboring state, he was acknowledging a transformation of the conflict, from a battle over control of Ukraine to one that pits Washington more directly against Moscow.

President Biden entered the war insisting that he did not want to make this a contest between the United States and Russia. Rather, he was simply helping a small, struggling democracy defend itself against takeover by a far more powerful neighbor. "Direct confrontation between NATO and Russia is World War III, something we must strive to prevent," he said in early March, just two weeks into the war.

He has committed to keeping American troops out of the fight, and has resisted imposing a no-fly zone over Ukraine that would risk putting American and Russian forces into direct combat. Yet as Russian war atrocities have become more evident, and Ukraine's need for heavy armor has increased, the lines have grown blurrier and the rhetoric sharper. At the same time, in word and deed, the United States has been gradually pushing in the direction of undercutting the Russian military.

It has imposed sanctions that were explicitly designed to stop Russia's military from developing and manufacturing new weapons. It has worked — with mixed success — to cut off the oil and gas revenues that drive its war machine.

The immediate impetus for Mr. Austin's carefully orchestrated declaration that the United States wants "Russia weakened to the point where it can't do things like invade Ukraine" several administration officials said, was to set up President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine with what one senior State Department official called "the strongest possible hand" for what they expect will be some kind of cease-fire negotiations in coming months.

But over the longer term, Mr. Austin's description of America's strategic goal is bound to reinforce President Vladimir V.

Continued on Page A8

Emboldened to Offer More Weapons to Zelensky

This article is by Marc Santora, John Ismay and Rick Gladstone.

KRAKOW, Poland — The United States toughened its messaging on the Ukraine war on Monday, saying the American aim was not just to thwart the Russian invasion but also to weaken Russia so it could no longer carry out such military aggression anywhere.

The aim was stated in explicit terms by the highest-ranking Biden administration delegation to visit Ukraine since the war began. It reflected an emboldened intent to counter Russia by giving more numerous and powerful arms to the Ukrainians, who have battled Russian forces with unexpected tenacity, sapped Kremlin resources and flustered President Vladimir V. Putin's hope for a quick victory.

The American delegation also announced that the United States would reopen its embassy in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv — another signal aimed at portraying Russia as headed toward defeat. The embassy, closed in the run-up to the



DAVID GUTTENFELDER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A charred Ukrainian tank in Hostomel, northwest of Kyiv.

Feb. 24 invasion, will be led by a newly appointed ambassador.

The American visit itself, led over the weekend by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III and Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, was completed early Monday and amounted to a risky dare to Russia, which has been seeking to subjugate Ukraine by force for more than two months. Russia has demanded that the United States and its NATO allies quit supplying advanced arms to Ukraine's military.

Although the trip was supposed to be secret, word leaked, and Russia rained rockets on at least five Ukrainian rail stations hours after the visitors had finished

Continued on Page A6

With Win, Macron Becomes Most Influential Voice in E.U.

By STEVEN ERLANGER

BRUSSELS — There were sighs of relief throughout the European Union after President Emmanuel Macron beat back a serious challenge in France from the populist far-right champion Marine Le Pen.

Then another populist went down. In Slovenia, where the country's three-time prime minister, Janez Jansa, lost to a loose coalition of centrist rivals in parliamentary elections on Sunday.

Those two defeats were widely seen as a reprieve for the European Union and its fundamental principles, including judicial independence, shared sovereignty and the supremacy of European law. That is because they dealt a blow to the ambitions and world-

view of Viktor Orban, Hungary's prime minister, who avidly supported both Ms. Le Pen and Mr. Jansa in an effort to create a coalition of more nationalist, religious and anti-immigration politics that could undermine the authority of the European Union itself.

"Europe can breathe," said Jean-Dominique Giuliani, chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation, a pro-European research center.

After his own electoral victory earlier this month, Mr. Orban declared: "The whole world has seen tonight in Budapest that Christian democratic politics, conservative civic politics and patriotic politics have won. We are

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NATIONAL A14-17, 20

Chinatown vs. Developers

Civic groups have been holding back gentrification in one of Manhattan's few working-class neighborhoods. PAGE A14

Woman's Execution Halted

The highest criminal court in Texas stepped in to spare a mother of 14 convicted of killing her 2-year-old. PAGE A15

INTERNATIONAL A4-13

Covid Outbreak in Beijing

Supermarkets stocked up as panic buying began. City officials have ordered almost all residents to be tested three times this week. PAGE A10

Rights Advocate Steps Down

Led by Kenneth Roth, Human Rights Watch became one of the world's most influential advocacy groups. PAGE A11

SPORTS B8-10

Celtics End Nets' Season

Boston completed a four-game sweep, dashing the hopes of a team that had begun with dreams of a title. PAGE B10



ARTS C1-6

The End of 'Better Things'

Pamela Adlon wanted the FX comedy to "go out with a beautiful bang." She seems to have succeeded. PAGE C1

A Steward of Art

Laura Mattioli has made a future for the Futurists at the Center for Italian Modern Art in Manhattan. PAGE C1

BUSINESS B1-6

Ghosts of Economies Past

With lockdowns, China is meddling with free enterprise as it hadn't in decades. The results are familiar to those old enough to remember: scarcity, and the rise of black markets. PAGE B1

Enemies of the Mask Mandate

Many Republican lawmakers opposed the federal rule requiring masks for travel, but it was brought down by a vaccine critic's little-known nonprofit, a conservative judge and chance. PAGE B1

OPINION A18-19

Michelle Goldberg

PAGE A19



SCIENCE TIMES D1-8

More More! Mushrooms, Please

Jacob and Karsten Kirk, twins from Copenhagen, say they have devised a method that allows them to grow more of the prized mushrooms. PAGE D1





A WOMAN who gave her name only as Inna, 53, cries in her destroyed house in Ozera, near Kyiv, Ukraine.

'Russia is failing,' Blinken says

After their Kyiv visit, Austin wants to see Moscow 'weakened'

BY NABIH BULOS,
LAURA KING
AND JENNY JARVIE

DNIPRO, Ukraine — U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken declared Monday that "Russia is failing" in its war aims, as new fighting flared in Ukraine's eastern battle zone and Russian

forces reportedly aimed a round of airstrikes at railway facilities in the country's west and center. Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III, who traveled with Blinken to the Ukrainian capital to meet with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday, made it clear that Washington's goals extend far beyond seeing

Ukraine repel Moscow's forces. He said he wanted to see Russia "weakened to the point" where it cannot mount such aggression again. Blinken and Austin made their remarks to reporters after crossing into Poland from Ukraine, after the first official U.S. visit to Kyiv

since the war began two months ago. In a show of support, the two announced a fresh infusion of \$300 million in military aid and a revived U.S. diplomatic presence in Ukraine. "The first step in winning is believing that you can win," Austin said after the visit. "We believe that they

[See Ukraine, A-1]

Trump held in contempt in N.Y. civil case

He's fined \$10,000 a day until he complies with a records search.

BY LARRY NEUMEISTER

NEW YORK — A New York judge found former President Trump in contempt of court and set in motion \$10,000 daily fines Monday for failing to adequately respond to a subpoena issued by the state's attorney general as part of a civil investigation into his business dealings.

Judge Arthur Engoron said a contempt finding was appropriate because Trump and his lawyers hadn't shown they had conducted a proper search for records sought by the subpoena.

"Mr. Trump, I know you take your business seriously, and I take mine seriously," Engoron said in a Manhattan courtroom that was packed with reporters but absent of Trump. "I hereby hold you in civil contempt and fine you \$10,000 a day" until the terms of the subpoena are met.

[See Trump, A7]



LGBTQ Disney employees and supporters stage a walkout last month in Burbank to protest the company's approach to a Florida bill dubbed "Don't Say Gay."

For LGBTQ Californians, laws elsewhere spark worry

BY EMILY ALPERT REYES,
LAURA NEWBERRY,
MELISSA GOMEZ
AND LAURA J. NELSON

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Californians have watched with alarm and sadness in recent weeks as lawmakers in the Midwest and South have debated the rights of LGBTQ people within their borders.

Among the issues: whether transgender children can play in youth sports leagues or on high school teams, whether

teachers can discuss same-sex relationships in the classroom and whether parents who help their children seek gender-affirming care will be investigated for abuse.

For many, the debates feel deflating and jarring after years of apparent progress. They fear that the rhetoric and legislation will continue to barrel forward across the country, leading to a clawback of important protections.

"Visibility is a double-edged sword," said Madin Lopez, founder of the non-

profit ProjectQ, which gives free haircuts to unhoused LGBTQ youths in Los Angeles. "The more we show ourselves and stand tall and proud in who we are, the opposition has a direction to point in when they want to say there's something wrong. The louder we get, the louder they get."

For Robert Gamboa, a gay man who serves as policy advocacy manager of the Los Angeles LGBT Center, the proposed bills send a clear message: "I can't go home in the same way."

[See LGBTQ, A7]

Twitter agrees to \$44-billion buyout by Musk

BY SAM DEAN
AND RUSS MITCHELL

Elon Musk's bid to buy Twitter and take the company private succeeded Monday, 11 days after the world's wealthiest man first announced that he'd like to buy the social media company.

"Free speech is the bedrock of a functioning democracy, and Twitter is the digital town square where matters vital to the future of humanity are debated," Musk said in a statement announcing the board's approval of the \$44-billion deal. "I also want to make Twitter better than ever by enhancing the product with new features, making the algorithms open source to increase trust, defeating the spam bots, and authenticating all humans."

The company's leadership initially tried to fend off the bid, adopting a "poison pill" measure that would make a hostile takeover difficult.

But Musk announced that he had \$46 billion in financing lined up in filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Thursday, prompting Twitter's board to meet Sunday to discuss the bid. After that meeting, the board opened negotiations with Musk that stretched late into the night, according to reporting by the New York Times.

The deal values Twitter stock at about \$54 a share, above the \$39 that the stock was trading at before Musk's interest in the company became clear in early April, when he purchased a 9% stake in the company, but also well below the stock's 2021 high of \$77 a share.

After the news of the deal went out, Twitter shares rose 5.7% to \$51.70 by the end of Monday's trading.

In a virtual all-hands meeting Monday afternoon, Twitter Chief Executive Parag Agrawal said that layoffs are not planned "at this time."

In response to an employee question about reinstating the Twitter account of former President Trump, Reuters reported that Agrawal said, "Once the deal closes, we don't know which direction the platform will go."

Musk stated that his interest in Twitter is motivated

[See Twitter, A9]

Death knell for #BlackTwitter?

Activists will flee Musk's platform, writes Erika D. Smith. CALIFORNIA, B1

A deceptively quirky strategy

"As deals go, it was fast, it was furious," one expert says. BUSINESS, A8

ICYMI, the GOP is giddy over this purchase

Conservatives who chafe against bans and content moderation are celebrating.

BY MELANIE MASON

With tweets laden with exclamation marks and celebratory hashtags, Republicans on Monday made their mood abundantly clear: They were elated by the news Elon Musk was buying Twitter.

"WELCOME BACK FIRST AMENDMENT!" blared Rep. Jody Hice (R-Ga.), in all caps. A Twitter survey by Sen. Ted Cruz asked if Musk's purchase was a good thing, with the only options to answer being "yes" or "no, I hate free speech." His fellow Texan, Rep. John Carter, signaled his approval with no words at all; three clapping-hands emojis were sufficient.

A pot-smoking, meme-posting evangelist for electric vehicles may be an unlikely hero for conservatives. But the Tesla chief executive's amorphous vow to restore free speech to the social media platform has resonated among Republicans, who see themselves — starting with their de facto

[See Conservatives, A9]

Desalination plant: boon or boondoggle?

BY IAN JAMES

Among the many complex arguments over water in California, one particularly heated debate centers on whether the state should seek more drinking water from a plentiful but expensive source: the Pacific Ocean.

The debate has reached a critical stage in Huntington Beach, where Posedon Water has been trying for more than two decades to build one of the country's largest desalination plants. The California Coastal Commission is scheduled to vote next month on whether to

April showers didn't help much

Despite recent storms, state still faces a major drought. CALIFORNIA, B1

grant a permit to build the plant.

The California Coastal Commission is scheduled to vote next month on whether to grant a permit to build the plant. But in a stance that could hinder the company's plans, the agency's staff recommended on Monday that the commission reject the project.

[See Plant, A12]

Supreme Court leans for coach

He says he had a free-speech right to pray at public high school football games. NATION, A6

Big push for film on the big screen

As streamers sag, Hollywood is selling its product to CinemaCon's exhibitors. CALENDAR, E1

Texas mom wins stay of execution

Doubts grow as to whether Melissa Lucio fatally beat 2-year-old daughter. NATION, A12

Weather

Partly sunny.

L.A. Basin: 81/55, B6

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Democracy Dies in Darkness

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022 • \$2

\$44 billion puts Musk in control of Twitter

Tesla CEO's views on speech and transparency could signal site changes

BY DOUGLAS MACMILLAN, FAIZ SIDDIQUI, RACHEL LERMAN AND TAYLOR TELFORD

SAN FRANCISCO — Elon Musk acquired Twitter for \$44 billion on Monday, the company announced, giving the world's richest person command of a highly influential social media site that serves as a platform for political leaders, a sounding board for experts across industries and an information hub for millions of everyday users.

The acquisition followed weeks of evangelizing on the necessity of "free speech," as the Tesla CEO seized on Twitter's role as the "de facto town square" and took umbrage with content moderation efforts he views as an escalation toward censorship. He said he sees Twitter as essential to the functioning of democracy and said the economics are not a concern.

Ownership of Twitter gives Musk power over hugely consequential societal and political issues, perhaps most significantly the ban on former president Donald Trump that the site enacted in response to the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol riot.

Under the terms of the deal, Twitter will become a private company and shareholders will receive \$54.20 per share, the company said in a news release. The deal is expected to close this year.

"Free speech is the bedrock of a functioning democracy, and Twitter is the digital town square where matters vital to the future of humanity are debated," Musk said in the release. "I also want to make Twitter better than ever by enhancing the product with new features, making the algorithm open source to increase trust, de-

SEE MUSK ON A17

Ground battle may mark war's turn



A Ukrainian service member examines a Russian missile's booster stage that fell in a field in Bohodaro, east Ukraine, on Monday. Equipment is being rushed to Ukraine before troops are caught in a maneuver that would bring them under attack from two sides.

U.S. OFFICIALS SAY NEXT PHASE IS KEY

West speeds weapons to Kyiv ahead of assault

BY KAREN DEYOUNG

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, GERMANY — U.S. military officials assess that a crucial, and perhaps decisive, phase of the Ukraine war is shaping up in the eastern part of the country, where Russian troops may surround Ukrainian forces in an epic, long-distance ground battle reminiscent of the last century.

New U.S. shipments of heavy artillery and counter-artillery radar, tactical drones, armored vehicles and other equipment are being rushed to Ukraine before tens of thousands of troops, amounting to up to half of the Ukrainian army, are caught in a "double envelopment" maneuver that would bring them under simultaneous attack from two sides.

The Ukrainians are located in a north-south crescent between deep Russian lines in the southwestern Donbas region, and a potential pincer movement to

SEE WAR ON A12

As bombs fall, a Ukrainian professor teaches economics — and survival

BY SYDNEY TRENT

PHILADELPHIA — The sprawling stone house is dark and quiet, the grandchildren fast asleep, when Iryna Pyenska opens her laptop at the kitchen table at 1:20 a.m.

In Ukraine, which is seven hours ahead, her students at Kharkiv National University of Economics are scattered and sheltering as bombs fall — are greeting the morning.

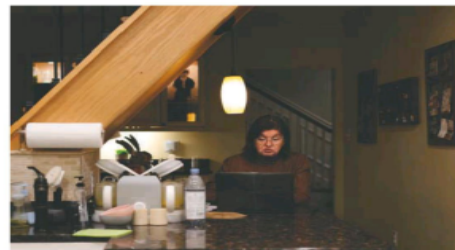
Russia is preparing a massive offensive in eastern Ukraine, and, before the 44th day of this brutal invasion is over, Russian forces will have shelled crowds of civilians fleeing the region at a

train station in Kramatorsk. Dozens will die, including children, all while the world still reels from the discovery of the massacre of civilians the previous week in Bucha, a suburb of the capital, Kyiv.

Pyenska, 61, puts on metal-frame glasses and stares directly at the Zoom screen on her computer. Her daughter, Katerina Tulio, 39, sits at the wooden table to interpret for a visitor. A small pendant lamp casts a dim glow.

Slowly, the squares begin to light up on Pyenska's laptop — one, two; then a few minutes pass, and more squares light up. Three students in the profes-

SEE PROFESSOR ON A10



CAROLINE GUTMAN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Iryna Pyenska teaches a class at Ukraine's Kharkiv National University of Economics in Philadelphia, which is seven hours behind, on April 11.

War crimes cases: U.S. seeks to assist prosecutions. A13

Oil protest: Activists try to block a tanker in Norway. A15

U.S. names new ambassador after officials visit Kyiv

BY MISSY RYAN, JOHN HUDSON AND ANNABELLE TIMSIT

President Biden named a new ambassador to Ukraine on Monday after his top diplomat and defense official embarked on a risky visit to the war-torn country, pledging increased military assistance and a return of America's diplomatic presence after a hasty evacuation in February.

The cloak-and-dagger visit by Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was meant to hail Ukraine's

SEE UKRAINE ON A11

Biden hits road to drive midterm message home

As president campaigns, Democrats wrestle with comprehensive strategy

BY TYLER PAGER

PORTLAND, ORE. — President Biden has stepped up his domestic travel schedule, hitting the districts of numerous vulnerable Democrats. He has resumed in-person fundraising. And he is fine-tuning a message criticizing the GOP as an off-the-rails force that "ain't your father's Republican Party."

As an anxious Democratic Party hurtles toward the midterm elections led by a president whose approval ratings have dropped precipitously, Biden is beginning to put the pieces together for an aggressive campaign to help limit Democratic losses in November.

But it's an effort some in the

party say is long overdue, and despite Biden's ramped-up efforts, there is no finalized, comprehensive strategy for the midterms inside the White House. There's no overarching document that outlines the president's involvement in key races, nor a set message that will carry the party through November, according to multiple people familiar with the situation who spoke on the condition of anonymity to talk candidly.

Even the president has acknowledged he is struggling to convey to voters what his administration has accomplished, including a covid relief package, an infrastructure bill and creating millions of jobs.

"I admit to you, what I haven't done — and the reason I'm getting out on the road again instead of dealing with the day-to-day emergencies in my office — is making the case of what we've done," Biden said Thursday at a Democratic fundraiser in Portland, Ore.

SEE BIDEN ON A4

Fear and frustration over China's covid rules



ALEX PLOVINSKY/EPIC/SHUTTERSTOCK

A quarantined woman looks outside Monday as Shanghai's coronavirus lockdown continues. In Beijing, residents worry that Shanghai-style restrictions are coming after officials reported a cluster of cases and ordered mass testing. Story, A8

Sniper's link to D.C. school he targeted is still unclear

BY PETER HERMANN AND JULIE ZAUZMER WEIL

D.C. Police Chief Robert J. Contee III said the sniper who sprayed bullets across the Van Ness neighborhood in Northwest Washington on Friday had his sights on a nearby private school, firing more than 200 bullets out his apartment window, with about 800 unspent rounds in his residence.

"The school was certainly in his crosshairs," Contee said, referring to the shooter as a "lone-wolf sniper."

Raymond Spencer had six firearms in the apartment on Van Ness Street, including three fully automatic rifles, the chief said at a news conference Monday. He said police found thousands more rounds of ammunition inside another residence in Fairfax County

SEE SHOOTING ON A18

IN THE NEWS



BILL O'LEARY/THE WASHINGTON POST

Power struggle in McLean A drag storytelling event at the suburb's community center has led to an unusually divisive board election. B1

THE NATION
An Air Force general was found guilty of sexual assault, the first court-martial and conviction of a general officer in the branch's history. A2
The Supreme Court's conservative majority seemed to sympathize with a high school football coach who was fired after leading postgame prayers on the field. A5
A Texas court issued a stay of execution for Melissa Lucio, whose

2008 conviction in the death of her 2-year-old daughter has come under scrutiny. A6
A New York judge agreed to fine Donald Trump \$10,000 for each day he fails to provide business records sought in a civil probe. A7
THE WORLD
French President Emmanuel Macron faces an intense road ahead as he seeks to unite a divided country. A9
A Turkish philanthro-

pist was sentenced to life in prison in a case human rights groups have dismissed as politically motivated. A14
THE ECONOMY
National labor groups are offering support to the Amazon Labor Union as they seek to make their own inroads at the company. A16
THE REGION
The Supreme Court ruled that Thomas Jefferson High School's ad-

missions system can stay in place as a legal battle over it continues. B1
A West Virginia priest said he faced a tough choice after presiding over a secret D.C. funeral for fetal remains. He buried them in an undisclosed location. B1
The family of Ryan LeRoux, fatally shot by police in Montgomery County, filed a lawsuit arguing that officers are insufficiently trained to deal with mental health crises. B1

INSIDE



STYLE
Tough act followed Beanie Feldstein is just shy of a star turn in "Funny Girl." C1
HEALTH & SCIENCE
Medical mystery Drugs just weren't fixing his blood pressure. E1

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TELEVISION.....C4
WORLD NEWS.....A8

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PIORA DA COVID NA CHINA PREOCUPA MERCADOS

Funcionário usa desinfetante em spray dentro de sala de cinema em Shenyang; bolsas operaram sob temor de ruptura no abastecimento, e dólar fechou perto de R\$ 4,90 Mercado A19

Lula silencia sobre indulto, e petistas veem armadilha

Lula (PT) tem se mantido em silêncio diante do indulto concedido por Jair Bolsonaro (PL) a Daniel Silveira. Segundo petistas, a avaliação é de que não se deve cair na agenda do presidente. Para eles, a medida foi armadilha de Bolsonaro para ditar a pauta das eleições. Política A8

Barroso cala; Supremo tenta reatar com demais Poderes

Diante da crescente tensão entre o Supremo Tribunal Federal e o Congresso e o Planalto, que culminou na declaração do ministro Luís Roberto Barroso sobre as Forças Armadas serem orientadas a atacarem o sistema eleitoral, integrantes da corte buscam refazer pontes para evitar serem surpreendidos.

O indulto individual a Daniel Silveira, por exemplo, não era esperado pelo STF. Para mitigar a crise, Barroso calou sobre nota em que militares o acusam de ofensa grave. O texto emitido pelo ministro da Defesa, general Paulo Sérgio Nogueira de Oliveira, recebeu aval presidencial prévio. Política A4 e A6

Bilionário Elon Musk compra por US\$ 44 bi o Twitter

Aquisição por dono da Tesla, crítico de moderação a usuário, é uma das maiores da história e pode mudar rede

O Twitter aceitou, nesta segunda-feira (25), a oferta de US\$ 44 bilhões (R\$ 214 bilhões) feita pelo bilionário Elon Musk para comprar a rede social. A decisão ocorre após o conselho de administração da empresa aprovar a oferta feita aos acionistas.

A aquisição é uma das maiores da história corporativa e dará poder ao novo proprietário para controlar o que ele definiu como a "praça pública de fato do mundo".

Musk se descreve como um absolutista da liberdade de expressão e é um crítico das políticas de moderação da plataforma, que já banuiu, entre outros, o ex-presidente dos EUA Donald Trump.

"Espero que até meus piores críticos continuem no Twitter, porque isso é o que liberdade de expressão significa", tuitou ele ontem.

O empresário é dono da Tesla, que produz carros elétricos e painéis solares.

Também criou e vendeu a PayPal (grupo de pagamentos online) e está à frente da SpaceX, empresa voltada para exploração aeroespacial.

Após o anúncio da aquisição, as ações do Twitter encerraram o dia em alta de 5,66%. Fundada em 2006, a plataforma possui 217 milhões de usuários e registra, em média, 500 milhões de postagens por dia. A receita, em 2021, foi de US\$ 5 bilhões. Mercado A14, A15 e A16

Vinicius Sassine Capitão e generais são uma coisa só

O mandato de Jair Bolsonaro teve um efeito pedagógico. Serviu para que se enxergasse às claras: Bolsonaro e generais do Exército são uma coisa só.

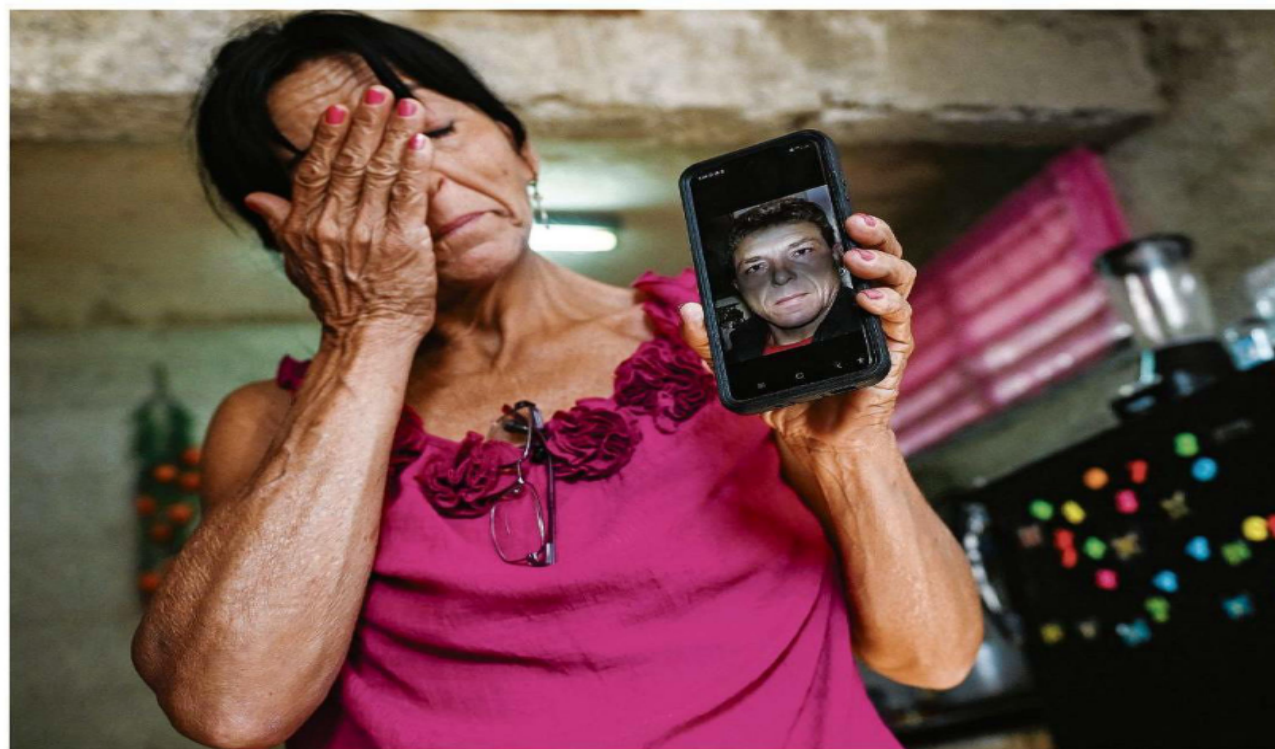
Ninguém modera ninguém; visões de mundo são coincidentes; cargos e benesses pavimentam a união. Opinião A2

ANÁLISE Nelson de Sá Novo dono chega para alterar modelo de negócios

Musk quer a plataforma, na qual ele é protagonista, incorporando uma liberdade de expressão "absoluta". Sem cancelamentos, que se tornaram norma na virada para o governo Joe Biden. Mercado A14

Joel P. da Fonseca Mudança poderá beneficiar usuário

Não sei se as restrições atuais no Twitter têm tido sucesso em reduzir extremismo e negacionismo na rede. Como usuário, as interações tóxicas, a má-fé e os ataques pessoais são muito mais prejudiciais à livre discussão do que erros e acertos em limitar ou não certas opiniões. Política A10



Cubana Virgen Frometa chora ao mostrar foto do irmão, condenado a 25 anos de prisão por participar de atos contra o regime, em Havana Yamil Lage - 29.mar.22/AFIP

Oposição se fragmenta em Cuba diante de condenações

Diante de onda de condenações após protestos contra o regime, Cuba vê sua oposição fraturada, relata Sylvia Colombo, de Havana. Há quem aposte em saída institucional e quem defenda a derrubada do poder com armas.

A repressão tem mirado menores de idade, enquanto ONGs denunciavam torturas. Mundo A11

Governador decide trocar comando das polícias em SP

Cotidiano B1

Furto de moto volta a nível pré-Covid no estado Levantamento aponta que 20.532 motos foram furtadas em 2021 em SP, ante 20.439 em 2019. B1

EDITORIAIS A2

Sangue frio Sobre caso Daniel Silveira e tensão entre os Poderes.

Impulsos franceses A respeito de desempenho de radicais na eleição.

Ambiente B4

Onde caem mais raios?

Índice mostra como a incidência nos estados varia e avalia a chance de alguém ser atingido

Esporte B7

Em ano de Copa, seleção francesa tem o que celebrar com derrota de Le Pen

Ilustrada C1

Elisabeth Moss e Wagner Moura caçam assassino em nova série

Comida C8

Fãs se dividem sobre melhor receita de pudim de leite, lisa ou com furinhos

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Javid urged to relax law as women forced to travel miles to find HRT

Andrew Gregory
Denis Campbell

Sajid Javid is being urged to change the law to let pharmacists in England alter prescriptions during medicine shortages, as it emerged that some women are travelling hundreds of miles to seek hormone replacement therapy products.

Calls for the health secretary to act came after acute shortages of some HRT products, which are used by about 1 million women in the UK to treat symptoms of the menopause.

Claire Anderson, the president of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, said pharmacists should be able to dispense substitute versions of medicines on prescription without having to contact the prescriber every time.

The law in England currently stipulates they must provide only the exact prescription. The proposed shake-up would also let community pharmacists make changes to quantities, strength and formulation of HRT and other medicines dispensed.

"At the moment pharmacists cannot amend prescriptions for HRT, so have to refer women back to their GPs when a medicine is not available,"

Anderson said. "Enabling pharmacists to do so will save time for patients, pharmacists and doctors, as well as lessening the anxiety for women waiting for medicines."

On Sunday, Javid announced plans to appoint an HRT tsar to get to grips with the shortages. The number of HRT products prescribed in England has more than doubled in the past five years, contributing to stocks

running low, while manufacturers have reported supply problems.

Some women are sharing prescriptions or travelling hundreds of miles to source products, and there are fears some may be becoming suicidal as a result of their debilitating menopause symptoms going untreated.

Anderson said she welcomed Javid's vow to recruit an HRT tsar but cautioned

6 →

The Tesla boss will soon be in charge of a social media company with 217 million global users

PHOTOGRAPH: BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/GETTY



\$44bn deal Musk wins fight to take over Twitter

Dan Milmo and Kari Paul

Elon Musk and Twitter have agreed a \$44bn (£35bn) takeover deal that will give the world's richest man control of a social network with more than 200 million users.

The sale puts the Tesla chief executive in charge of a company that he

has frequently criticised for not living up to its potential as a platform for "free speech".

The deal last night comes after weeks of speculation, triggered by Musk's emergence as Twitter's largest single shareholder on 4 April.

At first, Twitter's board seemed opposed to a deal, adopting a measure known as a poison pill that could have made a takeover attempt

prohibitively expensive. But its initial reluctance appeared to fade after Musk confirmed a funding package for the deal - including \$21bn of his own money - and shareholders warmed to it.

"Free speech is the bedrock of a functioning democracy, and Twitter is the digital town square where matters vital to the future of humanity are debated,"

13 →

Don't force staff back into offices, PM warned

Exclusive

Rowena Mason
Jessica Elgot
Aubrey Allegretti

The UK's top civil servant has privately warned Boris Johnson against forcing government workers back to the office amid growing anger in Whitehall over "scare tactics", the Guardian has learned.

Alongside Simon Case, at least four permanent secretaries - the most senior civil servants in their department - are understood to have raised alarm over rhetoric designed to encourage staff to return to their desks.

Spot checks on office working by Jacob Rees-Mogg, including "sorry you were out when I visited" notes left on empty Whitehall desks, have led to the Cabinet Office minister being branded "the milk monitor" by disgruntled officials.

Case told the prime minister over the weekend that Rees-Mogg's strategy was going too far. A No 10 source said Case was fully on board with a return to more face-to-face working.

Yesterday Downing Street backed Rees-Mogg's approach amid a rift with the culture secretary, Nadine Dorries, who had labelled it "Dickensian".

4 →