



EE UU Biden perdona las condenas leves por posesión de marihuana **P27**

SALUD Juan Antonio Madrid: "El capitalismo nos mata de sueño" **P26**



LOS PRESUPUESTOS DEL ESTADO PARA 2023

La inversión pública marca un récord con los fondos de la UE

El proyecto para el año electoral trata de evitar el enfriamiento económico

Bruselas aporta este año unos 28.000 millones, más los pendientes de ejecución

El gasto en pensiones sube un 11% por la revalorización y las nuevas jubilaciones

ANTONIO MAQUEDA
LAURA DELLE FEMMINE, Madrid
Los últimos Presupuestos del Estado de la legislatura, los de 2023, tienen como prioridades una inversión en niveles sin precedentes, apoyada en los fondos europeos, y el gasto social, también en cifras récord. El proyecto presentado ayer por el Gobierno cuenta con 28.000 millones de fondos comunitarios contabilizados para este año y con todo lo que no se haya ejecutado en los ejercicios anteriores. El objetivo es que el enfriamiento de la economía que se avecina no sea tan acusado, pese al empeoramiento de las previsiones de organismos y firmas de análisis. Pero esa meta dependerá de la agilidad en la ejecución de los proyectos que financia la Unión Europea.

La revalorización de las pensiones en un 8,5%, para compensar la inflación, y la entrada de nuevos jubilados elevará la partida en 19.000 millones de euros, un 11%, hasta suponer más de un tercio del gasto público. En el lado de los ingresos, el Gobierno prevé una recaudación tributaria también récord de 262.000 millones, impulsada por la inflación y el empleo, y unas cotizaciones de 184.000 millones. El Ejecutivo espera que los salarios suban el año próximo un 4,1%. **PÁGINAS 36 A 41**



Ernaux, ayer en la rueda de prensa en la sede de la editorial Gallimard en París. / CHRISTOPHE PETIT TESSON (EFE)

Annie Ernaux gana el Nobel por su literatura "como un cuchillo"

La autora francesa, de 82 años, reivindica el feminismo y a los perdedores. Su obra aspira a llegar "hasta el fondo de una verdad"

MARC BASSETS / ÁLEX VICENTE
París / Madrid

La escritora francesa Annie Ernaux, de 82 años, ganó ayer el Premio Nobel de Literatura por "la valentía y la precisión clínica con la que desvela las raíces, los extrañamientos y las trabas colectivas a la memoria personal", según el jurado. Ernaux concibe

la literatura "como un cuchillo", que debe tocar hueso para llegar "hasta el fondo de una verdad". Ayer declaró: "Recibir el Nobel es, para mí, una responsabilidad para continuar".

Su obra, que abarca cinco décadas, se sitúa a medio camino entre la narrativa y las ciencias humanas. Puede considerarse el

primer Nobel al género de la autoficción, aunque ella no se define así: "El yo es solo un lugar". Ernaux reivindica el feminismo, porque "sigue existiendo esta dominación que toma formas más ligeras o más pesadas". Y retrata el paisaje de la Francia de los perdedores. **PÁGINAS 28 A 30**

EDITORIAL EN LA PÁGINA 10

La cumbre de 44 países de Europa exhibe la soledad de Putin

MARÍA R. SAHUQUILLO, Praga
Europa plantó ayer los cimientos de una nueva comunidad política en una simbólica cumbre de 44 líderes en Praga que visibiliza un frente unido contra la agresión rusa a Ucrania. La llamada Comunidad Política Europea reúne a la UE, a los países candidatos a entrar en ella y al Reino Unido o Turquía. Se quedan fuera Rusia y su aliado Bielorrusia. Josep Borrell dijo: "Esta Rusia, la Rusia de Putin, no tiene asiento". **PÁGINA 2**

Washington expresa su "decepción" a la OPEP por su pacto con Rusia

P4

Abascal aparta a Ortega Smith de la cúpula de Vox tras su choque con Olona

MIGUEL GONZÁLEZ, Madrid
El líder de Vox, Santiago Abascal, apartó ayer por sorpresa a Javier Ortega Smith de la secretaría general del partido, y decidió sustituirlo por el portavoz de Vox en Cataluña, Ignacio Garriga. Ortega, que será por segunda vez candidato a la alcaldía de Madrid, controlaba el aparato del partido y había tenido un sonoro enfrentamiento con Macarena Olona. **PÁGINA 17**

El maquinista del Alvia: "Me metieron en el calabozo con tres costillas rotas"

SILVIA R. PONTEVEDRA, Santiago
Francisco Garzón Amo, el maquinista del Alvia 730 que descarriló en Santiago en 2013, pidió perdón a las víctimas ayer en el juicio, dijo que no pudo evitar el accidente y se quejó del trato recibido: "Es criminal que me sacasen del hospital con tres costillas rotas". Fue llevado así al calabozo, dijo, "porque al día siguiente venía el ministro del Interior". **PÁGINA 18**

Indignación por el rito machista en un colegio mayor: "Putas, ninfómanas..."

ELISA SILIÓ, Madrid
Decenas de estudiantes del colegio mayor masculino Elías Ahuja, en Madrid, participaron en una acción en la que gritaron a las chicas de un centro femenino cercano: "Sois unas putas ninfómanas". El vídeo causó escándalo y fue condenado por el Gobierno y los partidos políticos. La Fiscalía estudia si hubo delito. **PÁGINA 24**

CHRONIQUE DE RAKKA
 SOUS L'ÉTAT ISLAMIQUE

LA MÉMOIRE EN RUSSIE
 SELON MARIA STEPANOVA

LE MONDE
 DES LIVRES

Sobriété énergétique : le plan du gouvernement

- L'exécutif devait présenter jeudi ses mesures pour faire baisser en deux ans la consommation énergétique du pays de 10% face au risque de coupures
- Télétravail, eau froide dans les bâtiments publics, réduction de la vitesse des véhicules de service... l'administration est en première ligne
- Le gouvernement donne la priorité à l'incitation, surtout pour les entreprises et les ménages, et lancera une campagne de pédagogie dans les médias
- Le chef de l'Etat, qui a toujours misé sur la libre entreprise et sur la croissance, a dû changer son logiciel pour faire face à la crise énergétique
- La réduction de la production de pétrole des pays de l'OPEP+ devrait encore accentuer les tensions dans ce secteur

PAGES 10-11 ET 18-19

DU SÉNÉGAL À PARIS, LA ROUTE DES VENDEURS DE CRACK

► Les dealers sont pour la plupart issus d'une ville que les jeunes rêvent de quitter PAGES 14-15



A Louga (Sénégal), le 24 septembre. Ouassane rase le son passé de dealer à Paris.

Etats-Unis L'immigration au cœur de la campagne des midterms

L'augmentation du nombre d'interpellations aux frontières fait de l'immigration un thème politique de premier plan à l'approche des élections de mi-mandat américaines du 8 novembre. Le terme d'« invasion » est devenu banal pour les candidats républicains sous la présidence de Joe Biden, qui a mis fin à la ségrégation des familles et à la politique de Donald Trump bloquant les candidats à l'asile au Mexique avant l'examen de leur dossier. Les élus conservateurs ont concocté un plan : expédier par bus entiers les migrants depuis l'Arizona, le Texas ou la Floride vers les villes démocrates du nord-est.

PAGE 2

Royaume-Uni Les Tories affichent leurs divisions

Le Parti conservateur britannique est en guerre ouverte contre un gouvernement formé il y a tout juste un mois. Il a montré, lors de son congrès, à Birmingham, son incapacité à se renouveler

PAGE 3

Europe Les populistes à l'épreuve de l'économie

De Fratelli d'Italia au PIS polonais, les partis populistes et nationaux-conservateurs proposent des visions différentes de l'économie, derrière des discours proches sur le souverainisme

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Chronique
 En Iran, les voiles de la révolte contre le pouvoir

PAGE 35

Chômage
 L'Assemblée nationale restreint les règles d'indemnisation

PAGE 12

Cinq ans de #metoo
 Comment la libération de la parole a percuté le monde politique

PAGES 30-31

VU PAR URBS (FRANCE)

CARTOONING FOR PEACE

L'ARABIE SAOUDITE PRÉPARE
 LES JEUX ASIATIQUES D'HIVER...



ÉDITORIAL
 DES JEUX D'HIVER SAOUDIENS ANACHRONIQUES

PAGE 35

Justice Les certitudes ébranlées des jurés d'assises

Tirés au sort sur les listes électorales pour participer à la constitution des jurys d'assises, ces citoyens ordinaires chargés d'une lourde responsabilité sont, pour la plupart, confrontés pour la première fois à l'institution judiciaire. La rencontre se révèle souvent vertigineuse

PAGES 22-23

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Late Edition

Today, sunshine and clouds, breezy in the afternoon, high 73. Tonight, partly cloudy, breezy, cooler, low 46. Tomorrow, mostly sunny, cool, high 58. Weather map is on Page A22.

Blunt Criticism Of War Effort Tests Kremlin

Dissent From Hawks Is
Challenge for Putin

By ANTON TROIANOVSKI
and NEIL MACFARQUHAR

Russia's floundering invasion of Ukraine has produced an extraordinary barrage of criticism from supporters of the war in recent days, directed primarily at the leadership of the Russian military. The outpouring of discontent is creating a new challenge to President Vladimir V. Putin, who, after cracking down on Russia's liberal opposition, now faces growing dissent in his own camp.

The latest salvo came on Thursday when a Russian-installed official in an occupied region of Ukraine belittled the Kremlin's defense minister, Sergei K. Shoigu, a close associate of Mr. Putin. The official, Kirill Stremousov, said Mr. Shoigu should consider killing himself because of his army's failures in Ukraine.

"Many people are saying that as an officer, the defense minister could simply shoot himself for being the one who let things get to this state," said Mr. Stremousov, Russia's "deputy governor" of the Kherson region of southern Ukraine.

It was a strikingly blunt and public rebuke, and one that built on growing frustration with the war effort. Last month, it was largely pro-Russian bloggers who were voicing anger over the failings that led to the Russian army's being routed in northeastern Ukraine. But after Russian troops were forced to retreat in two other sections of the front line in the last week, prominent officials have increasingly joined the chorus.

Andrei Kartapolov, the head of the defense committee in Russia's lower house of Parliament, excoriated the Defense Ministry for covering up the bad news from the front. Another lawmaker said that members of Parliament had written to Russia's prosecutor general asking for an investigation into the military's supply problems.

"They need to stop lying," Mr. Kartapolov, who served as a senior military commander before becoming a lawmaker, said on Wednesday. "Our people aren't stupid, far from it, and they see that they are not being taken seriously. It's not being considered necessary to tell them even part of the truth, let alone all of it."

Mr. Shoigu, who has vacationed with Mr. Putin in Siberia, has yet to respond to the criticism, and Mr. Putin did not comment on it Thursday. Some of the faultfinding was directed at Gen. Vasily Gerasimov, the head of the armed forces, in addition to Mr. Shoigu.

There were indications that the criticism was part of infighting in the Russian ruling elite that was spilling into the open. It comes on the heels of a tirade against the military leadership published over the weekend by Ramzan Kadyrov, the strongman ruler of the southern Russian republic of Chechnya and an ally of Mr. Putin. Mr. Kadyrov's broadside appeared to open the floodgates — especially after the Kremlin did nothing public to punish him for his breach of wartime discipline. While none of the prominent pro-

Continued on Page A11



A coffin with the body of a victim of a shooting on Thursday in northeast Thailand. Among the 24 children killed was a 2-year-old.

A Doctor, a Limo Driver and an Arms Deal

By JUSTIN SCHECK

EUREKA, Mo. — After falling out with his partner at a limousine company in the St. Louis suburbs, Martin Zlatev recently sought a lucrative new business opportunity: selling \$30 million worth of rockets, grenade launchers and ammunition to the Ukrainian military.

Mr. Zlatev and his new business partner, a local osteopath, took their first crack at international arms dealing. Contract documents and other records obtained by The New York Times show that the deal relied on layers of middlemen and transit across seven countries. And it exists in a legal gray area, designed to skirt the arms-export rules of other countries.

Missouri Pair Pitched a \$30 Million Sale to Ukraine's Military

"Time is of the essence," the pair recently wrote to Ukraine's Ministry of Defense. They outlined a plan to sell American, Bulgarian and Bosnian arms to Ukraine. Since the Russian invasion in February, the Biden administration has quietly fast-tracked hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of private arms sales to Ukraine, slashing a weeklong approval process to a matter of hours. In just the first four months of the year — the latest data available —

the State Department authorized more than \$300 million in private deals to Ukraine, government documents show. The department authorized less than \$15 million worth of such sales to Ukraine during all of the 2021 fiscal year.

That has helped open another stream of weapons to the Ukrainian battlefield, but it has also enticed new players like Mr. Zlatev and his partner, Heather Gjorgjievska, into a shadowy market.

Weapons sold through private brokers are far more likely to end up on the black market and resurface in the hands of American adversaries, according to government advisers and academics who study the trade. Recent experience in Afghanistan and Syria

Continued on Page A10



Writer of Piercing Honesty

Annie Ernaux of France became the 17th woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Page A8.

Thai Gunman Massacres 36 At a Preschool

This article is by Hannah Beech,
Mukhtar Suhariono, Sui-Lee Wee
and Ryn Jirenuwat.

The tiny bodies lay on tiny mats, tiny heads occasionally resting on pillows.

But the children were not asleep. On Thursday at what was normally nap time at government-run day care centers in Thailand, a recently fired police officer armed with a handgun and a knife went on a rampage that by day's end had killed 36 people, 24 of them children, according to Dr. Surapong Phadungwong, a provincial health official.

The victims at the facility, the Child Development Center Uthaisawan, included a 2-year-old child and a teacher who was eight months pregnant, the police said. After the massacre at the child care facility, in Nong Bua Lamphu Province, the gunman shot himself fatally at his own home, where his wife and son were also found dead, Gen. Damrongrak Kitipraphat, the national police chief, said. About 10 people were injured in the attack, he added. The police identified the gunman as Panya Kamrab, 34.

The attack on Thursday ranks as the worst mass shooting by a sole perpetrator in Thailand's history and exceeds the death tolls of the deadliest school shootings in the United States. Twenty-six people, including 20 children, were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012, and 19 children and two adults were killed in Uvalde, Texas, in May.

The rampage on Thursday — which came two years after a mass shooting at a Thai shopping mall and an army base by a soldier

Continued on Page A12

PRESIDENT ISSUES FEDERAL PARDONS OVER MARIJUANA

A MAJOR POLICY SHIFT

Thousands Convicted of
Possessing the Drug
Will Be Cleared

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR
and ZOLAN KANNO-YOUNGS

WASHINGTON — President Biden on Thursday pardoned thousands of people convicted of marijuana possession under federal law and said his administration would review whether marijuana should still be in the same legal category as drugs like heroin and LSD.

The pardons will clear every one convicted on federal charges of simple possession since it became a crime in the 1970s. Officials said full data was not available but noted that about 6,500 people were convicted of simple possession between 1992 and 2021, not counting legal permanent residents. The pardons will also affect people who were convicted under District of Columbia drug laws; officials estimated that number to be in the thousands.

The pardons will not apply to people convicted of selling or distributing marijuana. And officials said there are no people now serving time in federal prisons solely for marijuana possession. But the move will help remove obstacles for people trying to get a job, find housing, apply to college or get federal benefits.

Mr. Biden urged governors to follow his lead for people con-



A pro-legalization protest in 2016 near the White House.

victed on state charges of simple possession, who vastly outnumber those charged under federal laws.

Still, the president's actions — which come about a month before the midterm elections and could help energize Democratic supporters — represent a fundamental change in America's response to a drug that has been at the center of a clash between culture and policing for more than a half-century.

"Sending people to jail for possessing marijuana has upended too many lives — for conduct that is legal in many states," Mr. Biden said on Twitter on Thursday. "That's before you address the clear racial disparities around prosecution and conviction. Today, we begin to right these wrongs."

In a video, he added: "While white and Black and brown people use marijuana at similar rates,

Continued on Page A17

Poor Nations Find Steep Cost to Chinese Loans

By KEITH BRADSHAW

BEIJING — When Suriname couldn't make its debt payments, a Chinese state bank seized the money from one of the South American country's accounts.

As Pakistan has struggled to cope with a devastating flood that has inundated a third of the country, its loan repayments to China

Beholden to Beijing in a Global Slowdown

have been rising fast.

When Kenyans and Angolans went to the polls in presidential elections in August, the countries' Chinese loans, and how to repay

them, were a hot-button political issue.

Across much of the developing world, China finds itself in an uncomfortable position, a geopolitical giant that now holds significant sway over the financial futures of many nations but is also owed huge sums of money that may never be repaid in full.

Continued on Page A12

U.S. Is Said to Believe Trump Has More Records

This article is by Michael S. Schmidt, Maggie Haberman and Katie Benner.

A top Justice Department official told former President Donald J. Trump's lawyers in recent weeks that the department believed he had not returned all the documents he took when he left the White House, according to two

His Lawyers Disagree on How to Respond

people briefed on the matter.

The outreach from the official, Jay I. Bratt, who leads the department's counterintelligence operations, is the most concrete indica-

tion yet that investigators remain skeptical that Mr. Trump has been fully cooperative in their efforts to recover documents the former president was supposed to have turned over to the National Archives at the end of his term.

It is not clear what steps the Justice Department might take to retrieve any material it thinks Mr.

Continued on Page A16



BUSINESS B1-5

Dollar Wreaks Havoc Abroad
The strong U.S. dollar could create debt issues for low-income countries already hurting from the pandemic. PAGE B1

Musk's Twitter Trial Delayed
A judge gave Elon Musk until Oct. 28 to complete his deal with Twitter. The trial could still happen in November. PAGE B1

INTERNATIONAL A4-12

Insights Into Protests in Iran

The New York Times analyzed dozens of videos circulating online to better understand what is propelling the demonstrations, and how women are leading the movement. PAGE A6

Mexico's Military Is Hacked

A data breach exposes the Defense Ministry's influence over the civilian government, attempts to evade cooperation on a human rights investigation, and spying on journalists. PAGE A5

OPINION A20-21

David Brooks

PAGE A21



WEEKEND ARTS C1-18

A '1776' Cast for 2022

A revival of the musical features a pregnant Thomas Jefferson and several other nontraditional choices. PAGE C1

Joan Didion's Western Spirit

A new show at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles highlights the late writer's deep ties to California. PAGE C1

NATIONAL A13-19, 22

New York Gun Law Blocked

A federal judge ruled that many of the state's new limits on carrying guns in public violated its residents' rights. An appeal is expected. PAGE A19

Threat to Traffic Pricing Plan

New Jersey's governor wants a federal review of New York's effort to curb congestion, citing added driver costs and mass transit concerns. PAGE A19

Attack Ads Take a Toll

The Democratic nominee for the Senate in Wisconsin is sagging fast under an advertising onslaught from the Republican incumbent. PAGE A14



SPORTS B6-9

Scrambling for Those Stickers
In Argentina, a hot market for a beloved World Cup collectible has produced long lines, surging prices and, briefly, government intervention. PAGE B9





Quest to reuse millions of defunct data drives

BIG READ, PAGE 15

Four areas that threaten financial stability

GILLIAN TETT, PAGE 17

US looks at oil export ban over 'unnecessary' Opec+ cuts

- White House says 'nothing off table'
- Democrats push to punish Riyadh

FELICIA SCHWARTZ — WASHINGTON

The White House yesterday said there was "nothing off the table" as it considered responses to Opec+'s sharp cuts to world oil supply, including new releases from the US Strategic Petroleum Reserve to contain energy prices.

The Opec+ cartel led by Saudi Arabia and Russia on Wednesday agreed to lower production targets by 2m barrels a day, or roughly 2 per cent of global oil consumption. Oil markets rose yesterday, with Brent crude at \$94 a barrel.

Brian Deese, director of the White House's National Economic Council, described the decision as "unnecessary and unwarranted" and said the US was looking at further sales from its strategic stockpile, which has already been drawn down by more than 200m barrels in the past year.

He did not rule out an export ban or limiting exports on petrol and other refined products when reporters asked if the idea was under consideration. "What the president has directed us, and it continues to be the case, is to take nothing off the table," Deese said.

Opec+ approved its output cut after US president Joe Biden made a controversial visit to Saudi Arabia in July in an effort to increase supplies of oil. He said after his meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman that he expected Riyadh to "take further steps" to increase oil supplies.

Biden said yesterday he did not regret his visit. "The trip was not essentially for oil. The trip was about the Middle East and about Israel and rationalisation of positions. But it is a disappointment and says that there are problems," he added that he had not yet decided

how to respond to Opec+. "We are looking at alternatives. We haven't made up our minds yet."

Opec+'s decision has given ammunition to lawmakers critical of the US-Saudi relationship. They have questioned the wisdom of Biden's about-face on relations with Prince Mohammed.

Three Democratic members of Congress said they would introduce legislation that would mandate the removal of US troops and missile defence systems from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. "We see no reason why American troops and contractors should continue to provide this service to countries that are actively working against us. If Saudi Arabia and the UAE want to help Putin, they should look to him for their defence," House Democrats Tom Malinowski, Sean Casten and Susan Wild said in a statement.

Deese said White House officials were disappointed by the Opec+ move as energy supplies remained tight around the world. "If you look at the global energy picture and oil picture, the lack of supply continues to be a significant challenge," he said.

The oil industry has become increasingly worried over the prospect of curbs on refined oil product exports to bring down domestic fuel prices at the pump. US energy secretary Jennifer Granholm in August told oil refiners to build domestic inventories rather than export more fuel. Europe's energy crisis would probably be made worse by such a move, as the continent imports significant quantities of fuel from the US and is soon to halt all seaboard Russian oil imports.

Energy shock page 10
FT View page 16

United front European leaders assemble in Prague to build common ground on security



Harriet Dwyer/CPA/OT/PhotoDisc

French president Emmanuel Macron and European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen chat during the first meeting yesterday of the European Political Community in Prague, Czech Republic.

The summit brings together leaders from across Europe, including non-EU members, with the aim of strengthening the continent's security, stability and prosperity, a statement released

by the European Council said. It would also discuss energy security.

Proposed by Paris as a means to coordinate views from London to Ankara, the European Political Community group saw UK prime minister Liz Truss and Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan huddle with the EU's 27 leaders and those from 15 other states.

While British officials were keen to

steer clear of Brexit, Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte told reporters: "The relationship between the UK and the EU will be on the agenda."

The 44 leaders also plan to show a united front against Russia's war in Ukraine with discussions on European defence. Moscow and Belarus were the only two continental powers not invited to the forum.

Report page 3

Briefing

» **UN blocks Uyghur debate**
China won a diplomatic victory as the UN Human Rights Council narrowly voted against holding a debate on a report that found abuses against the Muslim Uyghur population in Xinjiang. — PAGE 4

» **Shell's record run to end**
Lower refining and chemicals margins and weaker gas trading have led Shell to signal that its run of record profits is set to end in the third quarter. — PAGE 6

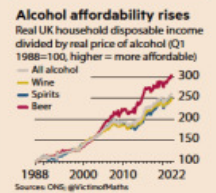
» **IMF boss delivers warning**
IMF head Kristalina Georgieva has warned falling incomes and rising prices would mean many countries next year would feel like they were in a recession. — PAGE 2

» **Munich Re climate action**
Pressure on reinsurance groups to do more to tackle climate change has led Germany's Munich Re to cut back its coverage of oil and gas projects. — PAGE 6

» **ECB flags fiscal fears**
Policymakers at the European Central Bank have flagged worries over fiscal packages and euro weakness threatening to push up inflation for years to come. — PAGE 2

» **Porsche overtakes VW**
A week after one of Europe's largest flotations, Porsche has taken the crown of the region's most valuable carmaker from parent group Volkswagen. — PAGE 4

Datawatch



Alcohol sold in the UK in 2022 was 92% more affordable than it was in 1988. Alcohol tax rises between 2008 and 2012 halted this trend but tax cuts meant affordability rose steeply again, albeit more modestly in pubs and restaurants



Russia's call-up blunders feed disquiet in Moscow

With Russia losing ground in Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin has been forced to admit that many Russian troops have been called up to fight in error. The backlash has left the Kremlin looking for scapegoats to deflect the blame. Pundits are shining a light on a system whose failings have grown apparent as Russia's invasion stutters. "There's no way out of this rat-trap," said one retired army colonel. "The Kremlin seems to have realised that."

Blame game — PAGE 2

Bank of England says UK was on brink of financial crisis after market turmoil

TOMMY STUBBINGTON — LONDON

The Bank of England yesterday said its intervention in the UK government debt market last week stopped a £50bn fire sale of gilts that would have taken Britain to the brink of a financial crisis.

The central bank defended its action, saying had it not launched its emergency bond-buying in the wake of finance minister Kwasi Kwarteng's "mini" Budget, pension funds would have been forced to sell £50bn worth of long-term UK government debt "in a short space of time". This would far exceed the average daily trading volume of £12bn.

The BoE's defence of the scheme, in which it said it would buy up to £65bn in gilts over a 15-day period, is the clearest sign yet of how close the UK came to a market meltdown following Kwarteng's plan for £45bn in unfunded tax cuts.

Had the central bank not intervened, it feared there would have been a "self-reinforcing spiral" that threatened "severe disruption of core funding markets and consequent widespread financial instability". Sir Jon Cunliffe, the BoE's deputy governor for financial stability, wrote to the chair of parliament's Treasury committee.

The letter provided details on warnings received by the BoE ahead of its action. Cunliffe said managers of the liability-driven investment strategies at the centre of a crisis in Britain's pension fund industry had warned on the day Kwarteng made his fiscal statement that the huge moves in gilt yields would force them to dump government debt.

A number of LDI investors warned that their funds were likely to fall into negative net asset value, forcing them to wind up leveraged bets on interest rates

that they use to manage the swings in the value of their long-term liabilities to pensioners. That in turn would have led banks that lent to the funds to sell the gilts used to back these bets, creating a downward spiral in gilt prices.

The BoE has spent just £3.8bn in the first seven days of its programme, far below the potential maximum of £65bn. Traders said the possibility of larger central bank purchases had been successful in backstopping the market.

However, yields have begun to move higher again this week after the BoE bought no bonds at all on Tuesday and Wednesday. Thirty-year borrowing costs traded at 4.37 per cent yesterday, up from a low of 3.64 per cent after the BoE's intervention, but below the 20-year high of more than 5 per cent that forced the central bank to act.

Lex page 18

World Markets

STOCK MARKETS				CURRENCIES				GOVERNMENT BONDS			
	Oct 6	Prev	%Chg	Pair	Oct 6	Prev	%Chg	Yield (%)	Oct 6	Prev	%Chg
S&P 500	3759.19	3783.28	-0.64	\$/£	0.984	0.986	-0.2	US 2 yr	4.20	4.16	0.04
Nasdaq Composite	11105.14	11148.64	-0.39	\$/€	1.120	1.124	-0.4	US 10 yr	3.81	3.77	0.04
Dow Jones Ind	30065.24	30273.87	-0.69	\$/¥	0.879	0.877	0.2	US 30 yr	3.77	3.76	0.00
FTSE 100	1572.27	1582.40	-0.64	\$/HK\$	144.885	144.765	0.8	UK 2 yr	4.08	3.98	0.10
Euro Stoxx 50	3436.96	3447.72	-0.31	\$/N¥	162.186	162.774	-0.35	UK 10 yr	4.16	4.03	0.13
FTSE 100	6887.27	7052.62	-2.36	\$/S¥	0.924	0.922	0.2	UK 30 yr	4.30	4.19	0.11
FTSE All-Share	3626.39	3648.67	-0.58	\$/C¥	0.010	0.010	0.0	JPN 2 yr	0.08	0.07	0.01
CAC 40	5688.42	5685.86	0.02	\$/IN¥	80.04	80.76	-0.9	JPN 10 yr	0.24	0.24	-0.01
Hang Seng	12470.70	12517.19	-0.37	\$/B¥	20060.80	20159.57	-0.49	JPN 30 yr	1.34	1.30	0.01
Nikkei	27211.30	27120.53	0.33	\$/R¥	1363.62	1362.35	0.02	GER 2 yr	1.78	1.67	0.11
Hang Seng	18012.15	18087.97	-0.42					GER 10 yr	2.08	2.03	0.05
MSCI World	2560.08	2511.72	1.94					GER 30 yr	2.03	2.02	0.01
MSCI EAFE	588.02	583.85	0.70								
MSCI ACWI	580.05	582.14	-0.32								
FT Wilshire 2500	4934.32	4946.09	-0.24								
FT Wilshire 5000	36536.94	36632.53	-0.25								

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Companies & Markets

Fall in refining margins to end Shell’s record run on profits

- Chemicals and gas trades also suffer
- Recession fears weigh on oil price

TOM WILSON — LONDON

Shell has signalled that its run of record profits is set to end after lower refining and chemicals margins and weaker gas trading weighed on earnings in the third quarter.

Europe’s biggest oil and gas company reported consecutive quarterly profit records in the first half of the year as the disruption in energy markets from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February drove up prices for fossil fuels.

But oil prices have dropped from more than \$120 a barrel in June to about \$90 a barrel as recession fears in Europe hit economic activity.

In the three months to the end of September, Shell said margins in its refining

‘We see the statement as disappointing given the weaker integrated gas trading result’

business were expected to be \$15 a barrel, down from \$28 a barrel in the previous quarter. This would reduce that division’s third-quarter adjusted earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation by \$1bn to \$1.4bn compared with the previous three-month period.

At the same time, margins at the FTSE 100 group’s chemicals unit have collapsed from \$86 a tonne in the last quarter to an expected minus \$27 a tonne, after a fall in global demand for plastics.

The trading update, which comes ahead of the release of Shell’s third-quarter earnings at the end of the month, is the first sign that oil industry profits may drop this quarter from the record levels set earlier this year.

Earnings from Shell’s integrated gas business were also expected to be “sig-

nificantly lower” than in the second quarter because of lower seasonal demand and the impact of a “volatile and dislocated” market, the company added. Shell is the world’s biggest trader of liquefied natural gas.

Shares dropped nearly 4 per cent in early London trading yesterday, chipping into gains of about 41 per cent for the year, but ended 2.8 per cent down.

“Overall, we see the statement as disappointing given the weaker integrated gas trading result, coupled with another working capital outflow,” said Biraj Borkhataria, head of oil and gas equity research at RBC Capital Markets.

In July, Shell reported quarterly earnings of \$11.5bn, breaking the record \$9.1bn recorded in the first three months of the year and more than double the \$5.5bn achieved in the same period a year earlier. It used the profits to launch a \$6bn share buyback scheme, on top of the \$8.5bn of buybacks it completed in the first half of the year.

The bumper earnings have led governments in several countries, including the UK, to impose additional taxes on energy companies this year, with some calling for another round of additional levies as long as energy prices remain elevated.

Outgoing Shell chief executive Ben van Beurden told an energy conference in London this week that governments were right to increase taxes to help protect the poorest parts of society from soaring energy costs. “One way or another there needs to be government intervention,” he said.

The oil major ended months of speculation when it announced in September that Wael Sawan, head of gas and renewables, would replace van Beurden as chief executive at the end of the year.

Additional reporting by Mark Wembridge in London

Opec+ energy shock see Markets

Up a gear Porsche overtakes Volkswagen to become Europe’s most valuable carmaker



Ahead of the curve: Porsche sells 300,000 cars a year, compared with the 10mn sold by VW— Krisztián Böcsi/Bloomberg

PATRICIA NILSSON AND PETER CAMPBELL — LONDON

Porsche has become Europe’s most valuable carmaker, taking the crown from parent company Volkswagen just a week after going public in one of the region’s largest-ever flotations.

Shares in the sports car group climbed 3.5 per cent to €91 yesterday, giving Porsche a market capitalisation of €82.9bn and eclipsing Volkswagen, which was valued at €78.3bn.

VW braved a grim economic backdrop and the downturn in global stock markets to sell 12.5 per cent of Porsche, its most profitable brand, as the group tries to fund a major push into electric vehicles.

While VW has lost its title, Porsche’s rapid ousting of its parent company as Europe’s most valuable car group provides vindication for the initial public offering. VW executives had hoped that investors would attach a higher

valuation to Porsche, a luxury brand that produces far fewer cars than its parent.

The shift in valuations between the two groups echoes what happened with Italian sports car maker Ferrari, whose valuation eclipsed that of its parent Fiat following its 2015 IPO.

After being sold for €82.50 each, 300,000 cars a year versus the 10mn that VW does, had dipped below their IPO price earlier this week.

VW said measures to support the stock in the early days of trading were necessary because “September inflation data, renewed concern about energy supplies in Europe . . . and a worsening of the situation in Ukraine”, had made the market backdrop tougher.

VW plans to return some of the €9.4bn it raised through the Porsche IPO to its shareholders via a special dividend, as well as ploughing money into electric vehicles.

Former VW boss Herbert Diess set a company target of beating Tesla in electric sales by 2025, which requires the group to sell millions of battery models.

Diess was replaced this summer by Porsche chief executive Oliver Blume, who will lead the sports car maker as well as its German parent.

By passing parent group VW’s market cap, Porsche provides vindication for its initial public offering

shares in Porsche climbed on their debut and have outperformed Germany’s benchmark Dax index since.

However, the share price has been supported by the banks that advised on the IPO, which purchased the stock between September 29 and October 4. Shares in Porsche, which sells roughly

Munich Re cuts coverage for oil and gas projects

KENZA BRYAN — LONDON

Munich Re, the world’s biggest re-insurer, has cut back its coverage of oil and gas projects, as activists step up pressure on the industry to do more to tackle climate change.

The German reinsurance group said yesterday that from April next year, it would no longer invest in or insure the planning, financing, construction or operation of new oil and gasfields, new oil-fired power plants or developments in “midstream” oil infrastructure, such as storage and transport. But it did not rule out offering coverage for new gas pipelines, liquefied natural gas plants and gas-fired power plants.

Its listed equities and corporate bond portfolio will also end new direct investments in companies where oil and gas is the main activity. The group’s Lloyd’s of London syndicate, an underwriter for areas including offshore energy, said last week it would stop underwriting a wider range of oil and gas contracts from January. It already excludes activities such as Arctic drilling.

Insurers and reinsurers Swiss Re, Hannover Re, Scor, Axa XL, Mapfre, Italy’s Generali and Fidelis have all introduced restrictions on reinsuring oil and, in some cases, gas since June.

Following Munich Re’s decision, 43 per cent of the global reinsurance market by premiums has restricted cover for oil, according to analysis of industry data by campaign group Insure Our Future. Munich Re’s global premium share is 13 per cent.

Reinsurers provide coverage for primary insurers and have been grappling with the fallout from increasingly frequent extreme weather events such as Hurricane Ian, which caused widespread destruction across Cuba and the south-eastern US last week.

Munich Re estimates insurers covered \$120bn of the \$280bn in global losses from natural disasters in 2021, and has flagged growing demand for catastrophe insurance in Europe. It has previously committed to reducing carbon emissions associated with its oil and gas coverage by 5 per cent relative to 2019 by 2025.

Lindsay Keenan, European co-ordinator at Insure Our Future, said Munich Re’s decision sent a message to the insurance industry and energy companies that they could struggle for cover if they did not “align their business with climate science and the 1.5C climate target”.

Text and image advances promise to write a new chapter for AI

INSIDE BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

Richard Waters



For all its huge potential, the field of artificial intelligence has been something of a backwater in the investment world.

There are certainly companies that have ridden the AI wave in important ways: Google claims to have refined many of its services with the help of AI, machine learning has boosted sales of Nvidia’s graphics processing units and TikTok’s algorithm is reputedly a big part of what keeps users coming back to its short videos.

But it’s hard to find the pure AI company that has risen on the back of the technology, or to identify a big new market that has been created.

That picture may be about to change, and in a big way.

According to Pat Grady, a partner at Sequoia Capital, something significant has happened in AI in recent weeks. Generative systems — ones that automatically produce text and images from simple text prompts — have advanced to a level where they could have wide-ranging business uses. A partner at another leading Silicon Valley venture capital firm, who describes the recent history of AI as a graveyard for start-up investors, also reports that the race is on to find breakthrough applications for this new technology.

Since the launch of OpenAI’s GPT-3 text-writing system two years ago, gen-

erative models such as this have been all the rage in AI. The ethical issues they raise are profound, ranging from the biases they could imbibe from the data they are trained on, to the risk that they could be used to spew out misinformation. But that hasn’t prevented the hunt for practical uses.

Three things have changed to turn these systems from clever party tricks into potentially useful tools.

One is that the AI systems have moved beyond text. Last week, Meta unveiled the first system capable of producing a video from a text or image prompt. That breakthrough was thought to be two years or more away. Not to be outdone, Google responded with not one but two AI video systems of its own.

This year’s biggest AI breakthrough, though, has come in image generation, thanks to systems such as OpenAI’s Dall-E 2, Google’s Imagen and the start-up Midjourney. Emad Mostaque, the London hedge fund manager behind Stable Diffusion, the latest image-generating system to take the AI world by storm, claims pictures will be the “killer app” for this new form of AI.

For the generation that grew up with TikTok and Snapchat, this new creative tool could be profound, he says. It also presents an obvious threat to anyone whose livelihood rests on creating images in other ways.

The second big change comes from the rapidly falling cost of training giant AI models. Microsoft’s \$1bn backing of OpenAI three years ago highlighted the prohibitive expense of this for ever-larger models. New techniques that

The trick will be to find ways to embed the tech in existing work processes, creating tools that can suggest new ideas

make it possible to achieve high-quality results by training neural networks with fewer layers of artificial neurons are changing the picture. The computing resources used to train Stable Diffusion would have cost only \$600,000 at market prices, according to Mostaque.

The third change has been in the availability of the technology. Google and OpenAI have been wary about making their technology widely available, partly out of concern about possible misuses. By contrast, Midjourney’s image system is available to all users through a freemium pricing model. Stable Diffusion has gone further, open-sourcing its software and releasing details of how it trained its system. That makes it possible for other organisations to train an image model on their own data sets.

The risks that stem from such generative systems have received much attention. They churn out fresh images or text based on the millions of examples from which they have learnt, with no understanding of the underlying material. That can lead to nonsensical results as well as deliberate misinformation.

But in a business setting, at least some of these shortcomings could be controlled. The trick will be to find ways to embed the technology in existing work processes, creating tools that can suggest new ideas or speed up creative production, with human workers filtering the output. The idea is already being used to generate computer code.

The big question now, says one investor, is: will the existing giants of industries such as marketing, media and entertainment be the first to make use of these powerful new creative tools? Or will they be disrupted by a new generation of startups with their roots in AI?

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Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva discursa em São Bernardo do Campo *Marlene Bergamo/Folhapress*



Jair Bolsonaro dá entrevista no Alvorada após encontro com congressistas eleitas *Evaristo Sá/AFP*

ilustrada C1 a C3
Annie Ernaux
ganha Nobel
Francesa pioneira da autoficção recebe prêmio de Literatura

ilustrada C4
Ruy Castro se torna imortal da Academia Brasileira de Letras

guia C12
Conheça novos rooftops para ver São Paulo do alto

Caso suspeito de pólio em criança é investigado no PA

A Secretaria de Saúde do Pará investiga o vírus da poliomielite achado nas fezes de um menino de três anos que apresentou sintomas após ser imunizado. Há suspeita de que o caso derive de erro de protocolo vacinal. Nos EUA, a doença ressurgiu. *saúde B1*



A escritora Annie Ernaux em Paris em 1984; hoje ela tem 82 anos *Pierre Guillaud/AFP*

Partidos deram R\$ 51 milhões do fundo a possíveis laranjas

Ao menos 1.430 candidatos que receberam verba tiveram menos de 300 votos

Partidos políticos entregaram R\$ 50,6 milhões oriundos dos fundos eleitoral e partidário a 1.430 candidatos a deputado federal que, individualmente, obtiveram menos de 300 votos nestas eleições, informaram Lucas Marchesini, João Gabriel e Ranier Bragon. É um indício de candidaturas laranjas.

Cruzamento dos resultados eleitorais com a distribuição pelas legendas dos fundos mostra que vários desses casos envolvem mulheres e pessoas que se declararam negras. Pelas regras, os partidos devem direcionar verba pública a esses dois segmentos na proporção de candidatos lançados.

Para cumprir as regras — ao menos 30% das candidaturas de cada partido devem ser de mulheres e a divisão de verbas deve se dar de forma equânime entre negros e brancos —, legendas inscrevem nomes de fachada, que não realizam ou simulam atos de campanha, e ganham acesso aos fundos.

O dinheiro, contudo, é usado em outras campanhas ou outros fins — isso ocorreu em 2018. A Folha procurou parte desses candidatos e partidos para questioná-los sobre o repasse. *Política A4*

Com índice de reeleição acima da média, bancada ruralista deve crescer *A13*

ENTREVISTA Simone Tebet
Falta de projeto claro foi erro fatal de Lula no 1º turno

Agora aliada de Lula (PT), a senadora diz que o plano de governo vago do petista custou sua vitória no 1º turno. Tebet avalia que deixou legado "mais político que eleitoral". *Política A7*

Claudia Costin
Voto e políticas públicas

Se o debate político se restringe a epítetos contra oponentes, não é necessário dizer o que se pretende fazer. Esperamos que, após as eleições, possamos discutir desarmados as políticas públicas que podem nos tirar desta noite escura em que estamos. *Opinião A2*

Lira ameaça agir para censurar pesquisas eleitorais e abrir CPI

O presidente da Câmara, Arthur Lira (PP-AL), ameaçou abrir CPI sobre institutos de pesquisas assim que assinaturas forem colhidas e votar projeto para banir por 8 anos empresas que errarem "duas ou três vezes" a margem de erro. *Política A14*


Esquerda usa tática bolsonarista nas redes; PT diz não apoiar *A11*

EDITORIAIS A2

Urna e o cofre
Sobre promessas e teses descabidas de Bolsonaro.

Petróleo em guerra
Acerca de corte de produção decidido por cartel.

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EX-POLICIAL INVADE CRECHE E MATA 37 NA TAILÂNDIA

Fachada da instituição na cidade de Uthai Sawan; 24 crianças estão entre as vítimas, a maioria morta a facadas pelo agressor, que assassinou esposa e filho antes de se suicidar. *Mundo A16*

Petista diz que não definirá ministro durante campanha

Cobrado por empresários para definir nomes de eventuais ministros durante a campanha, o ex-presidente Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva disse que só o fará após a eleição. Indicou, porém, que seu gabinete deve incluir "gente de fora", não só do PT. *Mercado A17*

Malan e Bacha declaram apoio a ex-presidente

Os economistas Edmar Bacha e Pedro Malan, considerados pais do Plano Real, declararam voto em Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT), ecoando Persio Arida, que também integra o grupo, e Arminio Fraga. Os quatro pediram responsabilidade econômica. *Mercado A18*

Bolsonaro requeenta programa de dívida em reação a rivais

Mercado A19

Eleitores do Nordeste sofrem ataques por causa de voto

Política A10



Avian illness

A wave of bird flu descends on Southern California **WORLD, PAGE 4**



Undaunted athletes

Visually impaired fitness enthusiasts hit the track **SPORTS, PAGE 12**

CHINA DAILY

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US chip tech ban threatens supply chain

Move against China would affect all players in semiconductor industry

By MA SI
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Washington's reported plan to announce new restrictions on China's access to US chip technology will severely disrupt the global semiconductor sector, which has already been struggling with risks of fragmentation amid the COVID-19 pandemic, experts said on Thursday.

Their comments came after Bloomberg reported on Tuesday that the US Commerce Department is expected to roll out a package of rules this week governing which semiconductor technologies can be exported to China, including making earlier guidance given to specific companies generally binding.

Bai Ming, deputy director of international market research at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, said the reported move would be part of a broader push by Washington to cut China off from the rest of the world in chip supply chains, a move that would be unrealistic and have painful results.

"Such an attempt will deal a big

blow not just to US chip companies, but the global semiconductor industrial chain too, given China's weight as the world's biggest chip market and its growing presence in semiconductor manufacturing," Bai said. Bloomberg quoted anonymous sources as saying that the new measures are expected to formalize export restrictions on technology that produces advanced semiconductors, prohibit the sale of tools for logic and memory chip production in China, and restrict access to chips used in supercomputing and artificial intelligence.

"These moves would harm global chip companies, which bank on China for revenue growth," said Pan Heli, co-director of the Digital Economy and Financial Innovation Research Center at Zhejiang University's International Business School.

The Chinese mainland imports more than \$300 billion of semiconductors annually, and most, though not all, major US semiconductor companies pull in at least 25 percent of their sales from the Chinese

See **Chips**, page 2

OPEC oil cut strikes a raw nerve in Washington

By CHEN WEIHUA in Brussels
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The US reacted angrily to the OPEC's decision on Wednesday to make its sharpest cuts to oil production in two years despite pressure from Washington to increase production, especially during the sensitive period as midterm elections approach.

After its first in-person meeting in Vienna on Wednesday, OPEC — which includes the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and other oil producers such as Russia — said it would cut oil produc-

tion by 2 million barrels a day starting in November.

The decision was based on "uncertainty that surrounds the global economic and oil market outlooks," OPEC said.

"The decision is technical, not political," United Arab Emirates Minister of Energy Suhail Mohamed Al Mazroui told reporters before the meeting.

Oil prices have dropped from \$120 a barrel in June to about \$90 amid growing fears of a global economic recession, which would also

See **Oil**, page 2

HK to play more active role in building of GBA

By OSWALD CHAN
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Hong Kong should accelerate its exploration, research and study of the changing situations in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area so that the city can better perform its super-connector role in the building of the region.

Political and business heavyweights made the observations on Thursday at the Greater Bay Area Conference 2022 and 25th Anniversary Ceremony of China Daily Hong Kong Edition, themed "GBA: Integration Writes a New Chapter".

Co-organized by China Daily and the Hong Kong Coalition, the conference consisted of three panel discussions on how to forge financial connectivity, preserve cultural heritage, and promote technology and innovation in the city-cluster area, which comprises the two special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macao, and nine cities in

Guangdong province.

Leung Chun-ying, vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, said that "knowledge about the changing situations on the other side of the tiny Shenzhen River is key", as better cross-boundary mobility of resources such as professionals, capital, goods and electronic data, is needed.

Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu said, "Hong Kong and other Greater Bay Area cities continue to collaborate closely and complement one another to bring about enormous opportunities for our people, our businesses and our communities."

Lee added: "Hong Kong will leverage its highly market-oriented and internationalized business environment, its well-developed professional-services sectors, as well as the city's status as an international financial, trade and shipping center" to develop the Greater Bay Area as a world-class city-cluster for living, traveling and working.

In 2021, the total gross domestic



Among China's exceptional irrigation projects are the Xinghua Duotian Irrigation and Drainage System in Jiangsu province, (below from left) Chongyi Shangbao Terraces in Jiangxi province, Tongjiyan Irrigation System in Sichuan province, and Songgu Irrigation Scheme in Zhejiang province. YANG BO/CHINA NEWS SERVICE AND HE JIANGHUA, YAO YONGLIANG AND YANG XI / FOR CHINA DAILY

Irrigation projects get world heritage designation

By WANG XIAOYU
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Four historical Chinese irrigation sites were recognized as World Heritage Irrigation Structures on Thursday, bringing the total number of Chinese projects on the list to 30, the Ministry of Water Resources said.

With the inclusion of the four projects — announced by the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage in Adelaide, Australia — China has become a country "with the richest type, widest distribution and highest irrigation efficiency of heritage structures", the ministry said.

The ICID is an international organization, created in 1950, that works to boost scientific and technological exchanges on irrigation,

drainage and flood control.

It established the World Heritage Irrigation Structures designation in 2014, aiming to protect and promote irrigation projects of historical and scientific value.

The 2,160-year-old Tongjiyan Irrigation System, one of the newly honored projects, is located in Sichuan province. It has a braided-shaped arrangement of canals that helps to increase its flood control capacity.

The project preserves the ecology of the water, which it provides to two cities and four counties and districts in Sichuan, an irrigation area of 34,667 hectares, for the populace and farming.

The Xinghua Duotian Irrigation and Drainage System, in Jiangsu province, stemmed from efforts

since the Tang Dynasty (618-907) to prevent flooding and has been in use since then. It is now the world's only irrigation and drainage system located on raised, dry farmland.

The system not only increases local grain production and population capacity in the area, but also creates a unique and pleasant landscape with a variegated folk culture that draws tourists.

The Songgu Irrigation Scheme, in Zhejiang province's Songyang county, has a rich display of historical weirs — low dams — ponds and wells, and it dates to the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220).

The project now irrigates 11,067 hectares of farmland and supports the development of the local fishing, tea, cane sugar and rice industries.

Chongyi Shangbao Terraces cover 3,400 hectares in mountainous areas of Jiangxi province, inclining from an altitude of 280 meters to 1,260 meters above sea level.

Construction of the terraces began around the time of the Qin (221-206 BC) and Han (206 BC-AD 220) dynasties, and they have developed into a sophisticated and sustainable irrigation network. The average grain harvest per mu (0.067 hectare) of the terrace has reached over 500 kilograms.

Besides the four Chinese projects, 15 irrigation projects from Australia, India, Iraq, Japan, South Korea and Sri Lanka were also honored this year.

So far, 140 projects from 18 countries have been listed.



Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu delivers a speech via video link to celebrate the 25th anniversary of China Daily Hong Kong Edition during the Greater Bay Area Conference. ANDY CHONG / CHINA DAILY

product of the Greater Bay Area was about 12.6 trillion yuan (\$1.7 trillion), and 25 of its corporations were in the top 500 globally. The city-cluster area has over 50 unicorns (start-ups with a value of over \$1 billion) and over 1,000 incubators. The city-cluster area also boasts the majority of the over 60,000 high-technology companies in Guangdong.

Qu Yingpu, publisher and editor-in-chief of China Daily, said the Thursday conference invited some of the finest minds in the region to unravel the nuances embedded in the idea of the Greater Bay Area, and

to find some well-thought-out responses to some questions.

He said the upcoming 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China — a key meeting of great significance — will map out a new blueprint for China's development in the next five years and beyond. "I believe this will bring fresh opportunities and benefits to the Greater Bay Area," he said.

Qu said that for 25 years, the Hong Kong Edition has performed the all-important task of interpreting China for an international audience with diligence and clarity.

FALLING MARRIAGE RATE CREATES CONCERN

Implications huge in aging society as families with children encouraged

By WANG QINGYUN
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It's not hard to find videos on China's social media showing young people being encouraged or even pressured by their parents to get married.

The exaggerated reactions of parents to their offspring's reluctance to go on blind dates or failure to bring home a girlfriend or boyfriend often provoke laughter. But with the average age of the country's population on a continuing upward trend, some people aren't laughing when it comes to whether young adults are becoming more and more disinclined to tie the knot.

A report released by the Ministry of Civil Affairs in August marked a new low in enthusiasm for marriage. The report shows that the number of couples registered to get married in China last year, after eight years of steady decline, hit fewer than 8 million, also the lowest in 36 years.

Tang Mengjun, a researcher with China Population and Development Research Center, said the decline is a result of a combination of factors, including the reduction of the marriage-age population due to a drop in birth rates, a decrease in their willingness to get married and a tendency to postpone marriage.

See **Population**, page 3

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BEACHES and boat launches have been closed due to the declining water level at Lake Mead. Without major cuts in water use, the latest projections show growing risks of the reservoir approaching “dead pool” status. **LUIS SINCO** Los Angeles Times

State water agencies will reduce share of Colorado

As reservoirs continue to decline, MWD says it plans to endorse rationing measures.

By IAN JAMES

With the Colorado River in crisis and reservoir levels continuing to decline, some California water agencies are planning to significantly reduce the amount they take from the river starting next year.

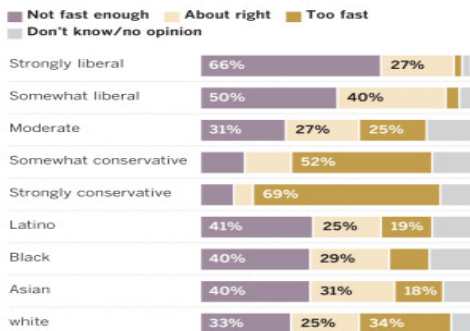
As a result, officials with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California said they plan to endorse mandatory conservation measures to begin rationing water for cities and local agencies that supply 19 million people across six counties.

California is entitled to use 4.4 million acre-feet of Colorado River water per year, more than any other state. The water flows through canals to farmlands in Imperial and Riverside counties, and to cities from Los Angeles to San Diego.

Four water districts and the state's Colorado River [See Colorado, A7]

Too slow or too fast?

Liberal voters are more likely to say the state is moving too slowly to combat climate change. About 4 in 10 voters of color say the state is moving too slowly, compared with about 1 in 3 white voters.



Poll conducted Sept. 22-27 among 8,725 California registered voters. Margin of error approximately +/- 2 percentage points for the full sample. UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies

DAVID LAUTER Los Angeles Times

Voters support EVs, in theory

By RUSS MITCHELL

In August, California regulators issued a mandate both dramatic and historic: Ban the sale of most new gasoline-powered cars and light trucks by 2035, in favor of electric vehicles.

So far, a majority of California voters back the move, according to a UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies poll co-sponsored by the Los Angeles Times. Fifty-five percent of registered voters favor the mandate and 39% oppose it.

Support for the mandate was fairly widespread among voters of different [See Climate poll, A9]

Biden pardons thousands for pot possession

Federal convictions are affected. He urges states to follow suit and seeks review of Schedule I drug status.

By ELI STOKOLS

WASHINGTON — President Biden on Thursday pardoned all individuals convicted on federal charges of simple marijuana possession, a move that the White House estimated would affect more than 6,500 people nationwide.

Biden urged all governors to follow his example, and called for a formal review of marijuana's classification in federal law as a Schedule I drug — the same classification as heroin and LSD, and a stricter classification than fentanyl.

A change to the legal classification of marijuana, although not certain, would be a significant reform, clearing the way for major changes to the federal government's approach to the drug.

Reclassifying marijuana would be “a big step in the right direction,” said Tianna Mays, a civil rights lawyer in Washington. “It would take this down from being a felony, the same as possessing heroin. So we're hopeful about the steps the Biden administration is taking.”

Biden's actions, which many Democratic activists have been calling for, are the most significant steps he has taken toward reforming America's drug laws. The moves appear to be timed to boost turnout in next month's midterm election,

which will decide whether his party can hold on to control of Congress.

Black and Latino groups, whose communities are disproportionately affected by the enforcement of drug laws, have been especially outspoken in calling for marijuana decriminalization.

Asked about the timing of the announcement just 33 days ahead of the election, an administration official who briefed reporters on the plan said that Biden was looking to fulfill a campaign promise after Congress failed to take action.

“As I said when I ran for president, no one should be in jail just for using or possessing marijuana,” Biden said in a White House video on his plan, which he also laid out in a series of tweets.

“It's legal in many states, and criminal records for marijuana possession have led to needless barriers to employment, to housing and educational opportunities,” he continued. “And that's before you address the racial disparities around who suffers the consequences. While white and Black and brown people use marijuana at similar rates, Black and brown people are arrested, prosecuted and convicted at disproportionately higher rates.”

Joshua Ulibarri, a Democratic pollster who focuses on Latinos, had viewed Biden's previous inaction on marijuana as a missed opportunity to solidify his standing with Latino voters.

“This is another step showing this president not only gets it done but evolves,” he said. “I think it not only matters justice but [See Marijuana, A6]

MPX cases fall in L.A. County

Health officials credit vaccinations, changes in behavior, possible long-lasting immunity.

By LUKE MONEY, GRACE TOOEY AND RONG-GONG LIN II

A promising decrease in new MPX cases in Los Angeles County is probably the result of vaccination efforts, changes in behavior among higher-risk individuals and growing natural immunity for survivors, officials said.

The nation's most populous county publicly reported just 53 new cases of the disease for the seven-day period that ended Thurs-

day. At the apparent peak of the outbreak, from Aug. 19 to Aug. 25, 313 cases were publicly reported.

A similar trend is evident when looking at cases by episode date — a slower but more accurate process that tracks infections based on when someone first tested positive for MPX or started experiencing symptoms. Using that method, L.A. County peaked at about 288 weekly cases for the seven-day period that ended Aug. 20, compared with 62 weekly cases observed in late September.

“We remain encouraged that we continue to see this steady decline in cases in L.A. County,” Dr. Rita Singh, chief medical director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, said during a briefing Thursday.

Similar trends can be seen elsewhere. As of mid-September, California was seeing about 260 cases a week, down from a peak of about 680. San Francisco had nine weekly cases by late September after peaking at 145 in late July.

Citing a recent report from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Singh said likely factors that have contributed to the slowing of new infections include vaccinations, a reduction in riskier behavior, and, possibly, infection-acquired immunity within networks where high transmission of monkeypox was occurring.

MPX, as California health officials are referring to the disease because of widespread concerns that its original name is stigmatizing and racist, behaves far [See MPX, A12]

THE END OF FOOTBALL

Rumors of players' racist chat prompt school to scrap season

By JESSICA GARRISON

SUTTER CREEK, Calif. — The stadium lights blazed onto the brand new turf and the varsity football players braced themselves for the struggles and triumphs of the game ahead.

Then, just moments before the match between Amador High, a mostly white school perched in the

foothills southeast of Sacramento, and Rosemont High, a largely Black and Latino school tucked into the city's industrial eastern fringe, Amador officials abruptly called it off. Everyone would have to leave. And to make sure they departed safely, the Police Department in the bucolic tourist town of Sutter Creek had called in reinforcements from the Amador County Sheriff's Office and other

agencies.

As shaken parents and kids made their way home, rumors swept both communities that an ugly act of racism had triggered the extraordinary action — something so serious that school officials in this conservative community felt compelled to respond strongly.

That aborted game on Sept. 16 [See Chat, A12]

Russian mercenaries step in spotlight

Self-declared chieftain of paramilitary group offers firepower and rare criticism at home.

By MARKUS ZIENER AND LAURA KING

BERLIN — As Russia suffers one devastating military setback after another in Ukraine, a key player in the conflict is stepping out of the shadows: the private army known as the Wagner Group.

Despite the Kremlin's longtime practice of publicly distancing itself from the paramilitary organization,



A UKRAINIAN soldier stands beside the remains of a Russian tank in Ukraine's Kharkiv region Tuesday. **ANDRII MARIENKO** Associated Press

Wagner mercenaries — who first emerged during Russia's 2014 conquest of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula — have taken part in the most consequential battles of the 7-month-old war, according to Western military analysts.

Now, at a potentially fateful juncture in the fighting, experts say Russia is likely to become even more dependent on the private army, which has been implicated in human rights abuses in Ukraine and other conflict zones, including Syria, Libya, Mali and Central African Republic.

“The more dire the situation gets for the regular [See Mercenaries, A4]

Ex-cop kills 36 at Thai day-care site

Dozens of preschoolers and teachers are slain by a 34-year-old who officials said was fired from the police department. **WORLD, A3**

Bass and Caruso debate again

Mayoral hopefuls go on defensive as they spar over USC, Scientology, policing and housing. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Weather Sunshine. L.A. Basin: 86/64. **B6**



Costa Salguero

Fiesta del arte, en marcha

Los grandes maestros y también las figuras emergentes, hasta el domingo en arteba. P.53



Con Duki, el trap ya copa los grandes estadios

Anoche convocó en Vélez a unas 40 mil personas. P.56

Desacuerdos dentro del Gobierno

En el Gabinete se abrió una nueva crisis por las detenciones de mapuches

La ministra de Mujeres, Elizabeth Gómez Alcorta, que fue abogada de Facundo Jones Huala, amenazó con renunciar. Dijo que está en desacuerdo con las detenciones de mujeres en Villa Mascarid. Sabina Frederic, ex mi-

nistra de Seguridad y hoy a cargo de Cascos Blancos, también fue muy crítica con todo el procedimiento de desalojo de la toma de Villa Mascarid que encabezó la Policía Federal. Alberto Fernández busca parar la crisis. P.36

Del Editor

Héctor Gambini

Una bomba cazabobos para el Gobierno P.2

LA INTERNA OPOSITORA

Macri dijo que "va a jugar", y Larreta replica: "El apoyo que vale es el de la gente"

Fue después de que el ex presidente lo colocara en línea de igualdad respecto de otros posibles candidatos presidenciales. Larreta se mostró rodeado por su Gabinete. Y resaltó que "el apoyo importante es el de la gente". Macri no define aún si será candidato en 2023. P.12

Dura con el peronismo

Díaz Ayuso, presidenta de la Comunidad de Madrid, comparó al gobierno de Pedro Sánchez con el PJ.

El Personaje

ANNIE ERNAUX, NOBEL DE LITERATURA

De la intimidad al compromiso

Francesa, de 82 años, describe las desigualdades sociales y hace foco en los derechos de las mujeres. P.52



Sin fútbol. Los graves incidentes ocurrieron fuera de la cancha, en La Plata.

SUSPENDIERON EL PARTIDO A LOS 9 MINUTOS

Incidentes en Gimnasia-Boca: un muerto y heridos

Gran cantidad de hinchas que no pudieron entrar -con el estadio colmado- fueron reprimidos por la Policía con gases lacrimógenos y balas de goma. El humo cubrió toda la zona, incluyendo el cam-

po de juego. Un hombre de 57 años murió por un infarto cuando lo trasladaban al hospital San Martín de La Plata y hubo al menos ocho heridos. El partido, clave para el campeonato, fue suspendi-

do por el árbitro Hernán Mastrángelo cuando apenas se jugaban 9 minutos y cientos de hinchas copaban la cancha tratando de evitar el humo. Anoche, el estadio fue clausurado. P.44

TURISMO Y TRAGEDIA

Punta Cana: una argentina muerta en un accidente de micro

Volcó el vehículo durante una excursión y hay otros 14 heridos graves. La víctima tenía 33 años. P.38

What's News

Business & Finance

OPEC's decision to slash oil production has Washington considering responses that could include measures aimed at breaking the cartel's hold on markets or limiting U.S. oil exports should shortages emerge. **A1**

◆ **TikTok parent ByteDance** saw its operating losses more than triple last year to above \$7 billion as it spent heavily to continue its torrid growth. **A1**

◆ **Banks that agreed to fund Musk's takeover of Twitter** face the possibility of big losses now that he has indicated a willingness to follow through with the deal. **A1**

◆ **A Delaware judge** presiding over the clash between Musk and Twitter postponed a trial in the matter, adding fresh uncertainty to efforts to close the transaction. **B1**

◆ **U.S. stocks moved lower**, with the S&P 500, Dow and Nasdaq falling 1%, 1.1% and 0.7%, respectively. **B11**

◆ **Peloton said it plans to cut about 500 jobs**, roughly 12% of its remaining workforce, in the company's fourth round of layoffs this year. **B1**

◆ **Juul's CEO told staff** the company is scrapping plans for an overseas expansion, has refinanced some debt and is fighting for its survival. **B1**

◆ **Brookfield is joining** with independent publisher Primary Wave Music in a \$2 billion deal to invest in music copyrights. **B1**

◆ **AMD cut its revenue forecast** for the most recent quarter, citing weaker-than-expected demand for the PCs that use its chips. **B4**

World-Wide

◆ **Ukraine hopes to increase its funding** by tens of billions of dollars by raising debt with foreign backing similar to the "Brady Plan," which helped Mexico and other developing countries access bond markets in the 1980s. **A1, A8**

◆ **A senior DOJ official** told Trump's legal team that law-enforcement officials don't believe he returned all of the government documents he took with him when he left the White House, people familiar with the matter said. **A4**

◆ **President Biden said** he will pardon all prior federal offenses of simple possession of marijuana and will call on federal regulators to review how the drug is classified. **A3**

◆ **Prosecutors are holding off** on a final decision on whether to bring a case against Hunter Biden while they review defense evidence in the investigation, said people familiar with the matter. **A4**

◆ **A member of the Proud Boys** pleaded guilty to seditious conspiracy for his role in the Capitol attack, providing a boost to federal prosecutors ahead of a trial against other members of the group. **A4**

◆ **Trump is jumping into** the midterm-election ad wars with a pair of spots in the hotly contested Pennsylvania and Ohio Senate races. **A6**

◆ **Iran protests have spread** to universities and high schools, infusing fresh energy into the demonstrations. **A10**

◆ **The Nobel Prize in literature** was awarded to French author Annie Ernaux. **A9**

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Thailand Reels After Deadly Rampage at a Child-Care Center



TRAGIC SCENE: Victims were gathered at a hospital in northeast Thailand on Thursday after an attack that began at a child-care center left at least 36 dead, including 24 children. Authorities identified the assailant as a former police officer. **A10**

TikTok's Rapid Growth Leads To Swelling Losses for Owner

By Salvador Rodriguez

TikTok parent ByteDance Ltd. saw its operating losses more than triple last year to more than \$7 billion as it spent heavily to continue its torrid growth, according to a financial report shared with employees that offers a rare look inside the private company's closely guarded finances.

ByteDance also produced an operating profit in the first quarter of 2022, the report showed, indicating one of the world's most valuable startups could be turning a corner after

years of incurring large losses. As a private company based in Beijing, ByteDance has closely guarded its finances and doesn't publicly disclose results. The report—sent to employees in August and covers the full years for 2020 and 2021 as well as the first quarter of 2022—provides one of the most detailed looks at how it is performing and is planning for the future.

The report shows a company rapidly increasing its revenue, accumulating a massive war chest of cash and other investments, but with

net results weighed down by tens of billions of dollars in unrealized market losses on convertible securities. An unrealized loss occurs when the market value of a security drops even though the asset hasn't been sold.

Largely because of the accounting treatment of those securities, ByteDance's net loss widened by more than 87% to \$84.9 billion in 2021, according to the report.

ByteDance's revenue continues to expand, up nearly 80% to \$61.7 billion in 2021, but so too are the company's ex-

penses as it focuses on growth. Its cost of sales rose 79% from a year earlier to \$27.4 billion for 2021. Among the factors offsetting its rapid revenue growth: \$14.6 billion in research and development spending, \$19.2 billion in selling and marketing expenses, and \$75.6 billion in market-value changes on a range of convertible securities. That was up more than 76% compared with 2020.

The Chinese company's operating losses in 2021 totaled \$71.5 billion, up from \$2.14 billion in 2020. **Please turn to page A9**

U.S. Plots Response To OPEC After Cut In Output

Steps weighed include retaliation against the cartel and moving to curb nation's exports

By Timothy Puko and Benoit Morenne

WASHINGTON—OPEC's decision to slash oil production has Washington considering responses that could include measures aimed at breaking the cartel's hold on markets or limiting U.S. oil exports should shortages emerge.

The cutback by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its Russia-led allies is the latest dilemma for President Biden, who has sought to transition the U.S. away from fossil fuels while at the same time keeping consumer prices in check. A long fall in gasoline prices has started to reverse, and this week's decision by OPEC to cut oil production by 2 million barrels a day threatens to push prices higher again just weeks before the Nov. 8 midterm elections.

Mr. Biden and lawmakers have decried the decision, raising the prospect of retaliatory action against OPEC and Saudi Arabia, the largest producer. Congressional leaders are threatening legislation that would charge OPEC members in front of the World Trade Organization or subject them to U.S. antitrust law.

The OPEC production cut threatens to accelerate an overhaul of U.S.-Saudi relations that began to take shape with the rise of King Salman's son, Mohammed bin Salman. **Please turn to page A4**

◆ Gasoline prices rise after a long decline..... **A4**
◆ OPEC faces hurdles in Venezuela..... **B10**

INSIDE



JASON GAY
Fishy fun and messy chess: Scandals in the sports world take a turn. **A14**



MANSION
'Game of Thrones' meets 'Harry Potter' inside a Beverly Hills home. **M1**

Adventure Seekers Want to Go Off the Grid—but Not Too Far

Trying to get away from it all, some find they can't get back into their Zipcar

By Sarah Donaldson

Marissa Battle and two friends marched out of the woods after a strenuous 5-mile hike near Olympic National Park, excited for the rest of their "Twilight" getaway in Forks, Wash., the rural setting for the popular vampire romance saga.

Then they got a jolt: They were locked out of the car. The trio had rented a technology-reliant Hyundai Elantra from Zipcar Inc., which had given the vehicle the fun name of "Monroe." The car-sharing service owned by Avis Budget Group Inc. operates rental cars equipped

with radio-frequency identification, known as RFID, and Bluetooth technology. "Monroe" is locked and unlocked through an app on a cellphone.

Despite being on a first-name basis with their car, the three friends couldn't get inside. Because the trailhead was so remote, there was no cell service. They figured that without a signal, Monroe couldn't hear them.

Another thing you can't do without cell service is easily summon help. At the trailhead, with the late-afternoon sun sinking, they debated whether to scrounge for a ride. "We were kind of making a gamble of like, 'OK, Please turn to page A10

Banks Funding Musk's Deal For Twitter Risk Major Hit

Banks that agreed to fund Elon Musk's takeover of Twitter Inc. are facing the possibility of big losses now that the billionaire has shifted course

By Alexander Saedy, Laura Cooper and Ben Dummett

and indicated a willingness to follow through with the deal, in the latest sign of trouble for debt markets that are crucial for funding takeovers.

The \$44 billion deal, which Mr. Musk had been trying to walk away from, would be paid

for in part with some \$13 billion of debt seven banks including Morgan Stanley, Bank of America Corp. and Barclays PLC agreed to provide when the takeover was sealed in April.

As is typical in leveraged buyouts, the banks planned to unload the debt rather than hold it on their books, but a decline in markets since April means that if they did so now they would be on the hook for losses that could run into the hundreds of millions of dollars, according to people familiar with the matter.

Banks are currently looking

at an estimated \$500 million in losses if they tried to unload all the debt to third-party investors, according to 9fint, a leveraged-finance analytics firm.

A Delaware judge ordered on Thursday a halt in the litigation over the stalled takeover, giving Mr. Musk and Twitter until Oct. 28 to close the deal. If the parties don't close the deal by then, a trial to settle the dispute would begin in November, the judge said. **Please turn to page A2**

◆ Delaware judge postpones Twitter trial..... **B1**

TOMORROW



WSJ. MAGAZINE
PALOMA ELSSER

Kyiv Woos Wall Street To Fund Rebuild Effort

Ukraine is using unconventional strategies in a bid to win over Wall Street.

Government officials have negotiated more than \$30 billion in international loans and aid and wrangled a \$6 billion

By Matt Wirz, Alexander Saedy and Caitlin Ostroff

debt holiday from Wall Street investors this year. Now they hope to raise tens of billions of dollars more by raising debt with foreign backing similar to the "Brady Plan," which helped Mexico and other developing countries access bond markets in the 1980s.

Ukraine needs funding to keep its economy functioning in wartime, and to rebuild once hostilities have subsided. The country expects to run \$36 billion—or about 50%—

over budget next year, and reconstruction will cost an estimated \$349 billion, according to a World Bank report.

"How can we use official-sector support to bring the private sector into the reconstruction phase?" said Yuriy Butsa, head of public debt management in Ukraine's Finance Ministry. "That's the conversation I want to be busy with for the next half year."

Like Ukraine's military, the Finance Ministry has used orthodox tactics to achieve its goals with surprising success. Emerging-market bond restructurings typically take months or years, but Ukraine pushed through its deal in less than a year. **Please turn to page A8**

◆ Threat at nuclear plant worsens..... **A8**
◆ Kyiv presses allies for longer-range missiles..... **A8**

The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

Partly sunny 79/52 • Tomorrow: Mostly sunny 63/45 B8

Democracy Dies in Darkness

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2022 • B3

Biden offers pardons for possession of pot

BY TOLUSE OLORUNNIPIN
AND YASMEEN ABUTALEB

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y. — President Biden announced major steps toward decriminalizing marijuana possession Thursday, offering mass pardons for anyone convicted of a federal crime for simply possessing the drug, and urging governors to do the

same.

He also directed his administration to expedite a review of whether marijuana should continue to be listed as a Schedule I substance, a classification reserved for the most dangerous drugs, including heroin, LSD and ecstasy.

"Too many lives have been upended because of our failed

approach to marijuana," Biden said in a video statement. "It's time that we right these wrongs." He added: "There are thousands of people who were convicted for marijuana possession who may be denied employment, housing or educational opportunities as a result."

The review of marijuana's classification, to be led by Health

and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra and Attorney General Merrick Garland, could address a long-standing question over whether possession of marijuana — deemed legal in several states — should ultimately be decriminalized at the federal level.

While Biden did not fully

SEE MARIJUANA ON A5

ELECTION 2022

Denial of 2020 is rife among GOP hopefuls

ANALYSIS: 53% REJECT OR DOUBT BIDEN WIN

Dominance in party imperils democracy, experts say

BY AMY GARDNER

A majority of Republican nominees on the ballot this November for the House, Senate and key statewide offices — 299 in all — have denied or questioned the outcome of the last presidential election, according to a Washington Post analysis.

Candidates who have challenged or refused to accept Joe Biden's victory — 53 percent of the 569 analyzed by The Post — are running in every region of the country and in nearly every state. Republican voters in three states nominated election deniers in all federal and statewide races The Post examined.

Although some are running in heavily Democratic areas and are

expected to lose, most of the election deniers nominated are likely to win: Of the nearly 300 on the ballot, 173 are running for safely Republican seats. An additional 52 will appear on the ballot in tightly contested races.

The implications will be lasting: If Republicans take control of the House, many political forecasters predict, election deniers

SEE REPUBLICANS ON A5

299

Republican nominees who have denied or questioned the outcome of the election. Of those, 173 are running for safely GOP seats.

Proud Boys plea: One leader guilty of seditious conspiracy. B1

Agents see viable case against Hunter Biden

Charging him with tax, other crimes would be up to a Trump appointee

BY DEVLIN BARRETT
AND PERRY STEIN

Federal agents investigating President Biden's son Hunter have gathered what they believe is sufficient evidence to charge him with tax crimes and a false statement related to a gun purchase, according to people familiar with the case. The next step is for the U.S. attorney in Delaware, a Trump administration holdover, to decide on whether to file such

charges, these people said.

The investigation into Hunter Biden began in 2018 and became a central focus for President Donald Trump during his unsuccessful 2020 reelection effort. Initially, the investigation centered around Hunter Biden's finances related to overseas business ties and consulting work. Over time, investigators with multiple agencies focused closely on whether he did not report all of his income, and whether he lied on gun purchase paperwork in 2018, according to the people familiar with the situation, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing case.

Agents determined months ago that they had assembled a viable

SEE HUNTER BIDEN ON A4



RICKY CAROTI/THE WASHINGTON POST

EXTREME SUMMER

'The worst we've seen'

BY ANNIE GOWEN

MCCOOK, NEB. — As the sun rose on another hot day, rancher Brad Randel rode through his feedlot working at a grim task — culling cattle from his herd because his ranch's sparse grass can't sustain them during a crushing drought.

As Randel swung his quarter horse Bay Belle in tight circles, he and a

Intense heat, record drought threaten ranchers' livelihoods

Brad Randel rounds up his cattle. He was forced to sell more of them at auction because the feed grass on his ranch has grown sparse.

ranch hand separated runty Black Angus heifers to be sold at a livestock auction from the more promising stock. The cows bellowed as the temperature began its climb into the high 90s, the remnants of a late-summer heat wave that blasted the American West with furnace-like temperatures.

In other years, Randel would have kept the smaller heifers longer to see if

SEE RANCHERS ON A6

GOP crisis in Walker race nearly 2 years in the making

Party operatives in Ga. knew of allegations, but he continued campaign

BY ISAAC ARNSDORF,
ASHLEY PARKER,
MICHAEL SCHERER
AND JOSH DAWSEY

In early 2021, as football star Herschel Walker considered running for Senate, he approached some of Georgia's top Republican operatives about advising his campaign. The operatives were warned about political vulnerabilities in Walker's past — including allegations of violence against women — that were openly discussed in the state's political circles, according to people familiar with the discussions.

Walker's reaction to being confronted with the allegations was also troubling, according to the people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe private conversations. When the consultants would ask the candidate about even incidents in the public record, he would often get simultaneously defensive and aggressive, accusing the questioner of being a Democratic plant or ally of Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky), the minority leader.

Those consultants passed on working with Walker, but he pressed ahead with his campaign. After all, Walker's overwhelming name recognition in Georgia as a Heisman Trophy-winning football star and backing from former president Donald Trump instantly

SEE WALKER ON A7

Monica Hesse: The defense of Herschel Walker is bewildering. C1

24 children among dozens killed at Thai day care



A police officer stands guard outside a day-care center in the town of Uthai Sawan in the province of Nong Bua Lamphu after Thursday's mass shooting, the deadliest of its kind in Thailand's history.

BY WILAWAN WATCHARASAKWEJ,
REBECCA TAN,
ANNABELLE TIMSIT
AND MAITE FERNANDEZ SIMON

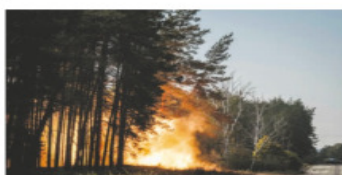
BANGKOK — A former police officer attacked a day-care center in northeastern Thailand with a pistol and a knife Thursday, in a rampage that left at least 36 people dead — at least 24 of them children, according to police.

The alleged attacker, identified by authorities as Panya Kamrath, 34, was fired from the police force in June after being caught with amphetamines. After the attack, he barricaded himself in his home and killed his wife, their 3-year-old son and himself.

At least 10 others were wounded, six critically, according to police. The slayings unfolded in the province of Nong Bua Lamphu, a largely agricultural region with one of the highest poverty

SEE THAILAND ON A14

IN THE NEWS



YASUYOSHI CHIBA/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

Pressure mounting: Growing criticism of military defeats in Ukraine suggests Russia's defense minister may soon be dismissed. A10

THE NATION

A study from the National Youth Tobacco Survey found that more than 2.5 million middle and high school students are e-cigarette users. A3

The United States will begin redirecting travelers from Uganda to five U.S. airports to screen them for the Ebola virus, a senior administration official said. A3

Elon Musk and Twitter ended wrangling

over whether the Tesla chief can pony up the cash to buy the social media company. A4

THE WORLD People seeking to flee Lebanon's 'forgotten North' are going to desperate lengths to escape. A9

Canada's top court heard arguments on whether asylum seekers are safe when they're sent back to the United States. A11

The death of 16-year-

old Nika Shakarami, and her family's claims of a government coverup, have given protesters in Iran a renewed rallying cry. A14

THE ECONOMY Facebook parent Meta will shut down the newsletter platform Bulletin in January. A15

Bethenny Frankel, a former reality star, sued TikTok for failing to crack down on scam ads that used her videos. A16

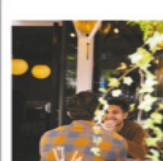
THE REGION A Maryland court began weighing the fight

over the sale of an apartment building that has a historic Black cemetery buried beneath a parking lot. B1

The Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, which has undergone major renovations, unveiled its treasures ahead of next week's reopening. B1

In Virginia's 10th Congressional District, Democratic Rep. Jennifer Wexton and Republican challenger Hung Cao tangled in a debate on issues such as abortion and inflation. B1

INSIDE



WEEKEND Happy hours that double as dates Six spots to wine, dine and get a good deal.

STYLE Literature Nobel French author Annie Ernaux is known for her memoir 'The Years.' C1

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