

What's News

Business & Finance

Lingering inflation and fears of higher interest rates lifted the 10-year Treasury yield above 4% on Wednesday, marking a fresh acceleration for a historic bond-market rout. **A1**

◆ **The S&P 500 and Nasdaq** fell 0.5% and 0.7%, respectively, as manufacturing data came in stronger than expected, while the Dow eked out a 0.02% gain. **B11**

◆ **Demand for U.S. workers** shows signs of slowing, a long-anticipated development that is appearing in private-sector job postings even while government reports indicate the labor market is running hot. **A1**

◆ **Salesforce forecast** increased profitability this fiscal year as the business-software provider deals with activist shareholders focused on the company's spending levels. **B1**

◆ **Missing financier** Fan Bao has been detained by Chinese authorities in connection with a corrupt investigation targeting a former president of China Renaissance, according to people familiar with the matter. **B1**

◆ **The founder of telehealth** provider Ontrak was charged in a first-of-its-kind criminal insider-trading case, with prosecutors alleging he sold millions of dollars worth of stock while misusing a pre-arranged trading plan. **B1**

◆ **Tesla sought** to quell shareholder concerns about the depth of its leadership team, calling on a range of Musk lieutenants at an investor event to lay out the company's path ahead. **B4**

World-Wide

◆ **Russian forces** pressed their offensive around Bakhmut in an effort to surround the eastern Ukrainian city that for months has been the site of the bloodiest fighting in Russia's slow-moving invasion. **A1, A9**

◆ **China's Xi welcomed** Belarusian leader Lukashenko, Moscow's closest ally, to talks in Beijing. **A9**

◆ **A larger share** of people are being diagnosed with colorectal cancer at a younger age and at a more dangerous stage of the disease, a report showed, and doctors aren't sure why. **A1**

◆ **The Senate voted** 50-46 to overturn a Biden administration regulation that would allow retirement-plan managers to consider climate change and other factors when they make investment decisions, setting up what could be Biden's first veto. **A4**

◆ **Eli Lilly, facing pressure** to curb diabetes-treatment costs, will cut the list prices for its most commonly prescribed insulin products by 70% and take other steps to make it easier for patients to afford the drugs. **A6**

◆ **The illness known as** Havana Syndrome reported by U.S. intelligence and other officials overseas was unlikely to have been the work of a foreign adversary targeting Americans, according to a U.S. intelligence report. **A3**

◆ **Ohio senators** are leading a bipartisan bid to respond to last month's train derailment in their state, proposing legislation that would subject railroads to new safety rules. **A4**

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Death Toll Expected to Grow in Fiery Greek Train Collision



CRUSHED: Greece's infrastructure and transport minister resigned Wednesday after a train carrying several hundred people crashed into a freight train on Tuesday night, killing at least 38 people and injuring more than 80. **A8**

Robust U.S. Labor Market Shows Fresh Signs of Cooling

By JON HILSENRATH AND BRYAN MENA

Demand for U.S. workers shows signs of slowing, a long-anticipated development that is appearing in private-sector job postings even while government reports indicate the labor market is running hot.

Figures from ZipRecruiter Inc. and Recruit Holdings Co.,

two large online recruiting companies, show the number of job postings on private hiring sites declined more late last year than the Labor Department report on job openings for that period indicated. The companies report available jobs fell further this year, potentially foreshadowing a drop in openings in coming Labor Department reports and a

slowdown in hiring this year. Investors recently hammered shares of those companies after disappointing earnings reports.

Robust government data on job openings and hiring are among the reasons Federal Reserve officials believe the U.S. economy is overheated, fueling high inflation. Fed officials are raising interest rates in an attempt to slow growth and reduce price pressures. If government reports move in line with the recruitment business, Fed officials could feel less pressure to move aggressively.

The Labor Department is scheduled next week to report job-opening figures for January and payrolls for February. Openings rose in December

and payrolls rose in December. *Please turn to page A2*

Putin's Propaganda Fuels War Support

By EVAN GERSHKOVICH

PSKOV, Russia—A jackhammer pounded the frozen ground on a recent afternoon as gravediggers uncovered fresh soil to provide the resting place for the body of a Russian soldier killed in Ukraine.

At the Vybuty village cemetery in the western region of Pskov, the digging, the men said, has become a near daily job. But even as the fatalities rise—Western officials estimate nearly 200,000 Russians have been killed or wounded in Ukraine—there is little resistance in places such as Pskov to Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion.

Instead, Mr. Putin's use of state oppression and relentless nationalist propaganda has se-

cured the acquiescence to the war of most Russians, for whom the military offers a rare escape from the crushing poverty still widespread outside Moscow and St. Petersburg.

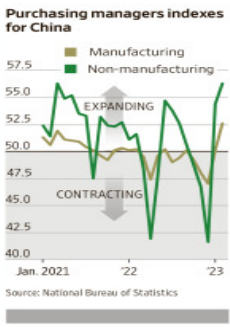
Mr. Putin's claim that the war in Ukraine is meant to protect Russia from an aggressive West is felt vividly in Pskov, home to an elite paratrooper division 35 miles from Latvia and Estonia, both members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

"Look at our history. Russia

◆ **Russia intensifies** Bakhmut attacks..... **A9**
 ◆ **Beijing's weapons** would aid Moscow war effort..... **A9**
 ◆ **Xi welcomes** Belarus president, a key Putin ally..... **A9**

China Economy Picks Up Pace

Economic activity in China expanded sharply for a second straight month. **A8**



Colorectal Cancer Rates Are Rising In Younger People

By BRIANNA ABBOTT

A larger share of people are being diagnosed with colorectal cancer at a younger age and at a more dangerous stage of the disease, a report showed. Doctors aren't sure why.

The American Cancer Society said Wednesday that about 20% of new colorectal cancer diagnoses were in patients under 55 in 2019, compared with 11% in 1995. Some 60% of new colorectal cancers in 2019 were diagnosed at advanced stages, the research and advocacy group said, compared with 52% in the mid-2000s and 57% in 1995, before

screening was widespread. Cases and death rates for colorectal cancer have continued a decadeslong decline overall thanks to screening, better treatments and reductions in risk factors such as smoking, the ACS report's authors said. But the shift of the burden toward younger people and diagnoses at more advanced stages has oncologists on alert.

"The improvements have slowed, and they've slowed because of this opposite trend we're seeing in young people," said Kimmie Ng, director of the Young-Onset Colorectal *Please turn to page A6*

Pulp Fiction? Nope, It's a Police Blotter

'Rat-a-tat-tat!!!' go the 'sleuths' of the Kenyan FBI

By MICHAEL M. PHILLIPS

NAIROBI—As a young teen, Mike Mugo would surreptitiously read crime novels from his father's collection, lured by tales of tough-talking detectives and ruthless crooks and the gorgeous women whose pictures graced the paperback covers.

Which explains why Kenyan police crime reports read like 1940s pulp fiction.

Inspector Mugo, now 38 years old and head of communications for the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, is trying to soften the branch's image by publicizing its suc-

Dangerous Trucks Haul U.S. Mail

USPS pays low rates, sets tight schedules

By CHRISTOPHER WEAVER

For years, the U.S. Postal Service has faced competition from the likes of United Parcel Service Inc. and FedEx Corp. To fight them off, it hired outside trucking companies at cut-rate prices, required them to meet aggressive schedules and then looked the other way when they ran afoul of highway safety rules, a Wall Street Journal investigation found.

The result has been deadly. Postal contractors have been involved in at least 68 fatal crashes that killed 79 people in the past three years, according to police crash and inspection records.

Nearly 50 long-haul trucking contractors that moved

mail for the Postal Service had safety records so poor that another arm of the federal government, the Transportation Department, put them on probation, DOT data show.

Particularly common among the postal contractors were violations of DOT rules meant to guard against fatigue by limiting how many hours truckers can drive. About 39% of trucking companies that hauled U.S. mail busted those limits and related rules at a rate DOT says raises red flags, compared with 13% of for-hire trucking firms that were inspected during the time period, a Journal analysis of DOT scoring data covering 2021 and 2022 found. *Please turn to page A10*

Salesforce. #1 CRM.

Ranked #1 for CRM Applications based on IDC 2022 H1 Revenue Market Share Worldwide.

Year	Salesforce	Microsoft	Oracle	SAP	Adobe
2018	15.5%	5.8%	5.3%	3.7%	3.6%
2022 H1	22.9%	5.8%	5.3%	3.7%	3.6%

Source: IDC, Worldwide Semiannual Software Tracker, October 2022.

salesforce.com/number1CRM

CRM market includes the following: B2C and B2B Functional Markets, Sales Force Production/Management, Marketing, Campaign Management, Customer Service, Contact Center, Advertising, and Digital Commerce Applications. © 2022 Salesforce, Inc. All rights reserved. Various stakeholders hereby their respective owners.

Tax diversification can help with retirement savings

Tips on how to vary your portfolio and what types of accounts to consider. **In Money**

NFL draft prospect Carter wanted over fatal crash

Georgia football player and recruiting staffer killed in January. **In Sports**



'Mandalorian': Deeper ties and learning curves ahead

Season 3 continues to explore father/son bond between Mando and Grogu as they navigate new situations and run into old allies. **In Life**

USA TODAY
THE NATION'S NEWS | \$3 | THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2023

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC



Director Christopher Wray says the FBI has assessed that the COVID-19 pandemic's origin was "most likely a potential lab incident" in Wuhan, China. MANDEL NGAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Secretive 'Z Division' seeks origin of COVID

Biosecurity mission born in aftermath of 9/11

Michael Collins and Josh Meyer
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Tucked away in a secretive office, a little-known team of government scientists began looking into al-Qaida and the possibility of a biological weapons attack after terrorists exposed a "gaping hole" in national security on Sept. 11, 2001.

Known simply as the "Z Division," the team was established in the U.S. Department of Energy to help intelligence agencies understand the significance of Soviet nuclear weapons tests. But the 9/11 terrorist attacks would change its mission.

Two decades later, the Z Division finds itself in the middle of a storm as it tries to answer the question scientists, doctors and ordinary Americans are asking about the roots of the COVID-19 pandemic: How did it happen?

A new classified intelligence report prepared by experts from the Energy Department's national laboratory complex, including scientists in the Z Division, concluded the pandemic probably started with an unintentional laboratory leak in Wuhan, China. The findings have been sent to White House and key members of Congress, according to The Wall Street Journal, which first reported the news.

The report has ignited a backlash against the Biden administration from members of the scientific community and elsewhere who are pushing the argument that the virus most likely emerged through natural means, such as animal-to-human transmission.

The White House hasn't endorsed the Energy Department's findings, noting there is still disagreement across the government on the virus' origins.

Four agencies within the intelligence community have concluded with "low confidence" that the virus was initially transmitted from an animal to a human, according to a report by the director of national intelligence in October 2021. A fifth intelligence agency believed with "moderate" confidence that the first human infection was linked to a lab.

FBI Director Christopher Wray said late Tuesday that the bureau — one of

See Z DIVISION, Page 5A

Head-on train collision kills scores in Greece



At least three cars burst into flames after the trains collided at high speed late Tuesday in northern Greece, authorities said. PHOTOS BY GIANNIS PAPANIKOS/AP

'People screaming, people trapped' in wreckage; transport chief resigns

John Bacon
USA TODAY

The death toll rose to at least 38 and a rail worker was arrested Wednesday after the fiery head-on collision of passenger and freight trains near the town of Tempe in northern Greece.

More than 80 people were injured, and the Greek government declared three days of national mourning.

Rail operator Hellenic Train said the passenger train was traveling from Athens to Thessaloniki, Greece's second-largest city and a popular tourist destination that describes itself as the "gateway to the Aegean Sea." The train carried more than 300 people, including many university students returning home from Carnival, a three-day national party that precedes the Christian season of Lent.

Multiple cars derailed and at least three burst into flames after the two trains ran into each other at high speed just before midnight Tuesday, authorities said. Rescue crews spent hours combing through the wreckage, listening for the calls of survivors. Cranes were brought in to peel away layers of

twisted, burned steel.

Eight rail workers died, including the two drivers of the freight train and the two drivers of the passenger train, Greek Railroad Workers Union President Yannis Nitsas said. Greece's fire-fighting service said nearly 60 people were in the hospital late Wednesday, including six in intensive care.

Greek Transport Minister Kostas Karamanlis resigned Wednesday, saying he felt it was his duty to step down. The stationmaster in the Greek city of Larissa, near where the trains collided, has been charged with manslaughter and grievous bodily harm by negligence, police said. The stationmaster, who is in charge of signaling, denies wrongdoing, the BBC reported.

Some survivors said the collision felt like an earthquake.

"We heard a big bang," Stergios Minenis, 28, who jumped to safety from the wreckage, told Reuters. "Then there was panic. Cables, fire."

He described 10 to 15 seconds of chaos amid dangling cables, broken windows and flames — "people screaming, people trapped."

Contributing: The Associated Press



Firefighters search through the wreckage early Wednesday. The passenger train carried more than 300 people, including many university students.

Eli Lilly cuts price of insulin up to 70%

Reductions, caps will take effect this year

Ken Alltucker
USA TODAY

Eli Lilly and Co. said it will cut prices of its most commonly prescribed insulins up to 70% and expand a program that limits out-of-pocket monthly costs for some consumers.

The Indianapolis drugmaker's price cuts and discounts for insulin come as federal and state lawmakers and patient advocates pressure drug companies and health insurers to improve affordability for the lifesaving medication used by millions of Americans.

"The aggressive price cuts we're announcing today should make a real difference for Americans with diabetes," said Lilly Chair and CEO David Ricks.



An estimated 8.4 million Americans rely on insulin to treat their diabetes, but a study last year found more than 1.3 million adults skipped, delayed or rationed doses because of the cost. JOHN DAVID MERCER/USA TODAY SPORTS

Lilly will cut list prices by 70% for the fast-acting injectable Humalog, the company's most commonly prescribed insulin. Lilly also will discount an older fast-acting drug, Humulin.

• The list price for Humalog U-100, 10 mL vial will drop from \$274.70 to \$66.40.

• The list price for Humulin U-100, 10 mL vials will drop from \$148.70 to \$44.61.

The price changes will take effect between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31. Lilly also will reduce the price of its nonbranded, fast-acting insulin to \$25 a vial, effective May 1.

On April 1, Lilly also will launch a biosimilar to Sanofi's Lantus that will be a less expensive version of the long-acting insulin. The new drug, Rezvoglar, will be interchangeable with Lantus, which means a pharmacist can substitute the drug without a new prescription. Rezvoglar will cost \$92 per five-pack of KwikPens, a 78% discount to Lantus, Lilly said.

See INSULIN, Page 5A



Women in Congress

In a month that celebrates women in history, we take a look at Capitol Hill to see the strides women have made in politics and the gender disparity that remains. Visual explainer, 3A



Will salary rises prolong high inflation?

BIG READ, PAGE 13

US-China cold war threatens global health

EDWARD LUCE, PAGE 15

Thumbs up Tinubu edges Nigeria poll

Bola Tinubu, centre, celebrates in Abuja yesterday after winning Nigeria's presidential election.

Opposition parties, which have called the election a sham, are demanding a rerun for Nigeria's closest election since the end of military rule in 1999.

Tinubu, the 70-year-old former Lagos governor, won 8.8m votes, just over a third of the total, to defeat main rival Atiku Abubakar. Abubakar secured 7m votes, failing in his sixth bid to become Nigeria's president. Peter Obi, backed by many urban, middle-class voters, came third with 6.1m votes, taking the capital Abuja and 11 states, including Tinubu's home state of Lagos.

Tinubu, whom critics have accused of turning the state into his own fiefdom, has also faced allegations of corruption and questions about his vast wealth.

Tinubu wins election page 4
FT View page 14



Ben Curtis/AP

Briefing

▶ **Wall Street alarm over ethical investing backlash**
Big US asset managers, including BlackRock, Blackstone and KKR, have warned "divergent views" on ESG investments represent a threat to profits. — PAGE 5

▶ **Bundesbank in C1bn hit**
Germany's central bank has said high interest rates have dented earnings from bond holdings and future losses will threaten its financial buffers. — PAGE 2

▶ **Call to 'wipe out' town**
Ultrarationalist finance minister Bezalel Smotrich has said a Palestinian town where scores of Jewish settlers torched homes should be "wiped out". — PAGE 4

▶ **Revolut account warning**
The UK fintech's auditor has said problems with the company's IT systems mean there is a risk that the bulk of its 2021 revenues were "materially misstated". — PAGE 5

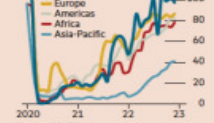
▶ **Law firm clients cut back**
Three international firms have said corporate clients have asked for discounts or a postponement of payments as budget pressures increase. — PAGE 6

▶ **Adani claims \$5bn credit**
The Indian conglomerate has told bondholders it has access to a credit line as it tries to assuage financial concerns in the wake of fraud accusations. — PAGE 6

Datwatch

Tourism revival

International tourist arrivals as a proportion of 2019 levels (C)



Tourism has recovered slowly in the Asia-Pacific, despite a rebound elsewhere to near pre-pandemic levels. Most affected is north-east Asia, which had a fifth as many international tourists in December 2022 as two years previously

Source: UNWTO

West presses UAE to halt suspected sanctions-busting trade with Russia

◆ Fear of re-export of banned items ◆ Trade in chips and drones soars ◆ Gulf state says it is vigilant

SAM FLEMING
AND HENRY FOY — BRUSSELS
FELICIA SCHWARZ
AND JAMES POLTY — WASHINGTON
SIMEON KERR — ABU DHABI

Western allies are pushing the United Arab Emirates to halt exports of critical goods to Russia as they seek to starve Vladimir Putin's military of components to sustain its war against Ukraine.

Officials from the US, EU and UK have in recent weeks visited the wealthy Gulf state to spell out the wide-ranging scope of their trade restrictions, and to press UAE officials to clamp down on suspected sanctions busting, according to people involved in the trips.

The US government is worried the UAE is becoming a hub for the shipment of items such as electronics that can be

repurposed to help Russia's war effort. One particular concern is so-called "re-exporting", where goods routed through the UAE sidestep restrictions.

James O'Brien, head of the US office of sanctions co-ordination, joined David O'Sullivan, EU sanctions envoy, and David Reed, director of the UK's sanctions directorate, on a trip to the UAE last month to press their case.

"Our main request [to the UAE] is that they stop the re-exports [and] that they

'Part of the message for the private sector – in any of these countries – is that they're playing roulette'

acknowledge these re-exports are problematic," said one western official, adding that "conversations are continuing".

Exports of electronic parts from the UAE to Russia jumped more than sevenfold last year to almost \$285m, making the category the largest type of product shipped in that direction, according to Russian customs data analysed by the Free Russia Foundation.

The UAE exported 15 times more microchips to Russia in 2022 than the previous year, with the trade jumping from \$1.6m in 2021 to \$24.3m last year. The Gulf country also exported 158 drones to Russia last year, worth almost \$600,000, according to the data.

The discussions with the UAE come as western allies shift their focus from unloading fresh rounds of sanctions to

tightening enforcement and encouraging private sector compliance.

O'Sullivan told the Financial Times last month that western countries had picked up "unusual spikes" in Russia's trade with some states. The allies are watching the UAE, Turkey and countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The UAE is also seen as a favoured destination for wealthy Russians seeking a place to shelter their assets.

US officials want to underline the consequences for businesses involved in facilitating the flow of consumer goods that can be used by the Russian military. "Part of the message for the private sector – in any of these countries – is that they're playing roulette," said O'Brien. "Anyone who's trading in these goods, they now are subject to sanctions

because some of the goods they ship are showing up on the battlefield."

The UAE positions itself as a neutral regional power, balancing its close security and historical relations with western partners with increasingly close ties with Russia and China.

Dubai has long been the region's re-export hub. In a bid to tighten enforcement on such export hubs, the EU introduced new measures this year enabling it to sanction individuals who help European companies evade sanctions.

"The UAE recognises its critical role in safeguarding the integrity of the global financial system," a UAE official said. "The UAE takes this responsibility extremely seriously, and has clear and robust processes in place."

Andriy Zagorodnyuk page 15



US child labour violations jump in race to hire staff

Staff shortages have led US companies to hire those once overlooked but the scramble for workers has also sparked a 37 per cent rise in child labour law violations. An increase in the hiring of teenagers to fill graveyard shifts has coincided with a rise in employers flouting laws about when and where minors can work. Some seem to be sidestepping authorisation processes. "Employers are being opportunistic and careless," says one expert.

Employment exploitation ▶ PAGE 4

Madrid says Ferroviario proposal to shift its base from Spain is not 'acceptable'

BARNEY JOYSON — MADRID

Ferrovial, the Spanish infrastructure group and part owner of Heathrow airport, has triggered a political storm by proposing to shift its head office to the Netherlands after its founder raised questions over the business environment in Spain.

"I don't think it's acceptable," said Nadia Calviño, Spain's deputy prime minister, as several members of the government condemned Ferroviario's move and suggested that it was betraying a country to which it was indebted. Calviño said she had "expressed my rejection of this wrong decision" on a call yesterday with Rafael del Pino, Ferroviario's billionaire chair and the son of its founder.

The Socialist-led coalition government has made attracting foreign capital a priority and secured several high-

profile investments but it remains unpopular with Spanish corporate leaders who dislike its tax policies, legal reforms and criticism of big business.

Del Pino, who owns 20 per cent of the €19bn company, said in January: "I believe that we must turn Spain back into an attractive investment destination and a magnet for the best talent, and for this we need a competitive labour framework and legal certainty in all areas."

Calviño said: "This is a company that owes everything to Spain, that has grown thanks to public investments financed by Spanish citizens. It is an emblem of our country." Ferroviario's decision "seems to go against the interests and the heritage" of Spain, she added.

Explaining its move, Ferroviario said in a presentation for investors that the Netherlands had a "stable legal frame-

work" and triple A credit rating and was already the "country of choice" for companies with a significant presence in both Europe and the US.

It said the move would align its corporate structure with its growing international profile, noting that it earned 82 per cent of its revenue outside Spain last year. The company added that it would facilitate its plans to apply for a US stock listing.

Ferrovial said it would need to secure shareholder approval and would aim to complete the move in the second or third quarter of 2023.

It stressed that the reorganisation "has been designed to keep employment, activity and investments in Spain intact". It also said it would have "no material tax impact for the group", anticipating criticism that it was trying to cut its tax bill.

World Markets

STOCK MARKETS

	Mar 1	Prev	%chg
S&P 500	3982.24	3970.15	+0.20
Nasdaq Composite	11419.73	11455.54	-0.32
Dow Jones Ind	32721.05	32656.70	+0.20
FTSE London 100	1884.89	1817.45	+3.69
Euro Stoxx 50	4213.62	4238.38	-0.58
FTSE 100	7914.93	7876.28	+0.49
FTSE All-Share	4321.10	4304.48	+0.39
CAC 40	7234.25	7267.93	-0.46
Nikkei 225	15269.02	15393.14	-0.79
Hong Kong	20819.51	19765.94	+4.21
MSCI World \$	2714.57	2721.63	-0.26
MSCI EM \$	484.01	487.25	-0.64
MSCI ACWI \$	629.02	630.71	-0.27
FT Wilshire 2500	5185.37	5199.82	-0.28
FT Wilshire 5000	42611.17	42620.31	-0.27

CURRENCIES

Pair	Mar 1	Prev	Pair	Mar 1	Prev
\$/£	1.067	1.061	€/£	0.937	0.943
\$/¥	1.201	1.211	€/¥	0.833	0.826
\$/HK\$	0.889	0.876	€/HK\$	1.125	1.142
\$/NZ\$	1.38	1.375	€/NZ\$	145.265	144.456
\$/C\$	163.429	164.909	\$/INR	78.537	78.071
\$/R\$	1.002	0.994	\$/KRW	1.129	1.135

CRYPTO

	Mar 1	Prev	%chg
Bitcoin (\$)	23645.40	23126.34	+2.20
Ethereum	1648.97	1605.00	+2.80

COMMODITIES

	Mar 1	Prev	%chg
Oil WTI \$	77.02	77.05	-0.04
Oil Brent \$	83.63	83.45	+0.22
Gold \$	1824.60	1816.65	+0.33

GOVERNMENT BONDS

Yield (%)	Mar 1	Prev	Dtg
US 2 yr	4.87	4.80	0.06
US 10 yr	3.98	3.94	0.04
US 30 yr	3.94	3.94	0.00
GER 2 yr	4.10	4.07	0.03
GER 10 yr	3.72	3.71	0.00
GER 30 yr	4.18	4.11	0.06
JPN 2 yr	-0.03	-0.04	0.01
JPN 10 yr	0.50	0.50	0.01
JPN 30 yr	1.36	1.36	0.00
GER 2 yr	3.19	3.14	0.06
GER 10 yr	2.71	2.65	0.06
GER 30 yr	2.65	2.60	0.05

BOVET 1822

Engineering Brilliance

Awarded 'Hyper GT of the Year' - Top Gear

Battista Tourbillon

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

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No: 41,261*

Printed in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Dublin, Frankfurt, Milan, Madrid, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore, Seoul, Dubai



"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

LATE EDITION Today, morning showers, decreasing clouds, high 56. Tonight, partly cloudy, low 36. Tomorrow, cloudy, afternoons snow, sleet and rain, high 45. Weather map is on Page B10.

VOL. CLXXII . . . No. 59,715

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NEW YORK, THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2023

\$4.00

CHICAGO REFLECTS DEMOCRATIC SPLIT ON PUBLIC SAFETY G.O.P. SEEKS ADVANTAGE

Divide in Mayoral Runoff May Mirror National Crime Debate

By JONATHAN WEISMAN and MICHAEL C. BENDER

CHICAGO — For nearly three years, since the ebbing of the George Floyd protests of 2020, almost nothing has divided the Democratic Party like the issues of crime, public safety and policing, much to the delight of Republicans eager to center urban violence in the nation's political debate.

Now, an unanticipated mayoral runoff in the country's third-largest city between Paul Vallas, the white former Chicago public schools chief running as the tough-on-crime candidate, and Brandon Johnson, a Black, progressive Cook County commissioner questioning traditional methods of policing, will elevate public safety on the national stage and test how ugly the Democratic divide might get in a city known for bare-knuckled politics and racial division.

"It's going to be good," Christopher Z. Mooney, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said of the runoff contest, which will culminate on April 4. "It's going to get pretty rancorous, and underlying all of it will be the racial subtext."

The mayoral runoff pits two Democrats against each other, divided not only by ideology but also by race in a city where racial politics have been prominent since it elected its first Black mayor, Harold Washington, 40 years ago.

A Republican hasn't controlled City Hall since William H. "Big Bill" Thompson left office in 1931, with an open alliance with Al Capone and three safe deposit boxes containing almost \$1.6 million.

But this year's Chicago election will be watched by Republicans intently. Crime has already emerged as a potent weapon for a G.O.P. eager to win back the suburbs and chip away at Democratic gains among urban professionals.

It has also highlighted the Democratic divide between a liberal left that coined the phrase "defund the police" and a resurgent center insisting the party does "back the blue."

In New York City, a moderate Democrat, Eric Adams, harnessed the surge of violence that hit cities across the country, exacerbated by the pandemic, to win

Continued on Page A14

Shift in Mood Puts Also-Ran Ahead of Pack

Rises on Vow to Make a City America's Safest

By MITCH SMITH

CHICAGO — When Paul Vallas ran for mayor of Chicago four years ago, it did not go well. He finished in a distant ninth place, winning only 5 percent of the vote and barely registering as an electoral afterthought.

But on Tuesday, Mr. Vallas, who hammered a tough-on-crime message on the campaign trail, finished well ahead of eight other candidates in an election that denied Mayor Lori Lightfoot a second term and made her the city's first incumbent to lose re-election since the 1980s.

Mr. Vallas's strong showing reflects a much different electoral mood in Chicago, where homicides spiked on Ms. Lightfoot's watch during the pandemic, property crime rates have continued to rise and promises to crack down have taken on a new appeal.

Across the country, even in liberal cities, calls for more expansive policing and harsher prosecution have gained political favor. Debates over those issues will shape Mr. Vallas's runoff on April 4 with Brandon Johnson, who has outlined a progressive agenda for dealing with Chicago's problems.

That matchup gives voters a choice between two starkly different Democrats: the younger, unabashedly liberal Mr. Johnson, a county commissioner and former union organizer who is Black; and the older, more conservative Mr. Vallas, a white man who is a former public school executive and a vocal supporter of law enforcement. Mr. Vallas has used a political playbook similar to the one that helped Mayor Eric Adams of New York City emerge from a crowded Democratic field to win the election in 2021.

"Public safety is the fundamental right of the citizen. It is a civil right, and it is the principal responsibility of government," Mr. Vallas, 69, said Tuesday night in a speech. "And we will have a safe Chicago that is the safest city in America."

But on Chicago's influential political left, the prospect of a Vallas mayoralty has been met with fear, derision and implications that he is really more of a Republican than the lifelong Democrat he says he is.

"We cannot have this man as the mayor of the city of Chicago," Mr. Johnson, 46, whose campaign was lifted by an endorsement from the local teachers' union, told his supporters on Tuesday night. "Our children and families across Chicago can't afford it."

Mr. Vallas grew up on Chicago's South Side and is a familiar figure

Continued on Page A14



A QR code for customers to make instant payments at a roadside vegetable stall in Mumbai, India.

Digital Payment, Not Cash, Is King Across India

By MUJIB MASHAL and HARI KUMAR

NEW DELHI — The little QR code is ubiquitous across India's vastness.

You find it pasted on a tree next to a roadside barber, propped on the pile of embroidery sold by female weavers, sticking out of a mound of freshly roasted peanuts on a snack cart. A beachside performer in Mumbai places it on his donations can before beginning his robot act; a Delhi beggar flashes it through your car's window when you plead that you have no cash.

The codes connect hundreds of millions of people in an instant payment system that has revolutionized Indian commerce.

Billions of mobile app transactions — a volume dwarfing anything in the West — course each month through a homegrown digital network that has made business easier and brought large numbers of Indians into the formal economy.

The scan-and-pay system is one pillar of what the country's prime minister, Narendra Modi, has championed as "digital public infrastructure," with a foundation laid by the government. It has

made daily life more convenient, expanded banking services like credit and savings to millions more Indians, and extended the reach of government programs and tax collection.

With this network, India has shown on a previously unseen scale how rapid technological innovation can have a leapfrog effect for developing nations, spurring economic growth even as physical infrastructure lags. It is a public-private model that India wants to export as it fashions itself as an incubator of ideas that can lift up the world's poorer nations.

"Our digital payments ecosystem has been developed as a free public good," Mr. Modi said on Friday.

Continued on Page A8

Scan-and-Pay Network Accelerates Growth of Economy

Continued on Page A8



Crash in Greece Kills Dozens Combing the wreckage on Wednesday after a passenger train and a freight train collided. Page A4.

Student Loan Case May Determine Reach of Presidential Powers

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR and ADAM LIPTAK

WASHINGTON — One of President Biden's most ambitious proposals — a \$400 billion program to forgive student loan debt for 40 million Americans — could become the latest victim of a legal tug of war with the Supreme Court over the powers of the presidency.

Conservative justices on the court signaled Tuesday that they are deeply skeptical that Mr. Biden has the power to wipe out such a vast amount of student debt. In oral arguments, several justices said they believed a program that costs so much and affects so many people should have been more explicitly approved by Congress.

It was not the first time the

A Ruling Could Curtail Biden's Ambitions

court has suggested that Mr. Biden overstepped his authority, but the case has the potential to curtail Mr. Biden's ambitions just as newly empowered Republicans in

A Break on the Cost of Insulin

Seeking to quiet an outcry about excessive pharmaceutical prices, Eli Lilly said it would cap the monthly out-of-pocket cost of the drug used by diabetes patients at \$35.

Tesla's Low-Key 'Master Plan'

Elon Musk said his car company would build a factory in Mexico and was working on more affordable vehicles. But he did not reveal a new model, disappointing some investors.

Charles M. Blow

OPINION A22-23 PAGE A22

Murdaugh Jury Visits Scene

In a rare move, the panel saw the South Carolina estate where Alex Murdaugh's wife and son were fatally shot. PAGE A19

The Other Migrant Wave

Undocumented immigrants, especially from Mexico, are returning home after years building lives in the U.S. PAGE A13

College Scoring Mark in Peril

Antoine Davis of Detroit Mercy is 25 points shy of Pete Maravich's career record, but he had two more seasons and the 3-pointer at his disposal. PAGE B10

Kingmaker Wins the Throne

Bola Tinubu was declared the winner of Nigeria's presidential election, but the country remains divided. PAGE A6

Schoolgirls Across Iran Fall Sick

Hundreds have been hospitalized in more than 10 cities, and officials suspect they may have been poisoned. PAGE A6

Thursday Styles D1-6

A Most Stylish Editor Margaret Zhang, an Australian-born influencer who was named to Vogue China's top post two years ago, doesn't mind being underestimated. PAGE D5

SUPPORT EBBING FOR KYIV'S FIGHT AS MONEY FLOWS

U.S. TAXPAYER FATIGUE

Proponents Fault Biden for Not Shoring Up Backing at Home

By PETER BAKER

WASHINGTON — When he made his surprise wartime trip to the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv last week, President Biden reassured that country with great confidence: "America is behind you."

But the question that remains unanswered is: For how long? For all of the president's bravado while he was abroad, the politics of Ukraine back home in the United States are shifting noticeably and, for the White House, worryingly. Polls show public support for arming the Ukrainians softening while the two leading Republican presidential candidates are increasingly speaking out against involvement in the war.

While the bipartisan coalition in Congress favoring Ukraine has been strong in the year since Russia's invasion, supporters of more aid fear the centrifugal forces of the emerging presidential contest and growing taxpayer fatigue with shipping tens of billions of dollars overseas may undercut the war effort before it can be defeated. And some of them are frustrated that Mr. Biden has not done more to shore up support.

The evolving dynamics were on full display this week when House Republicans, exercising the power of their new majority, pressed Pentagon officials at two hearings about spending on Ukraine, grilling them about where the money is going and vowing to hold them accountable. Despite Mr. Biden's pledge, the Ukrainian government has grown concerned enough that President Volodymyr Zelensky is trying to set up a telephone call with Speaker Kevin McCarthy to make his country's case.

Overall, public support for Ukraine aid has fallen from 60 percent last May to 48 percent now, according to surveys by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. The share of Americans who think the United States has given too much to Ukraine has grown from 7 percent a year ago to 26 percent in January, according to the Pew Research Center.

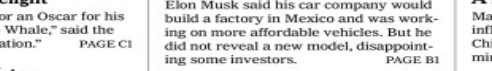
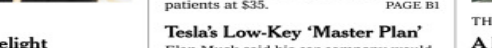
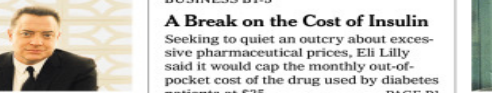
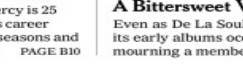
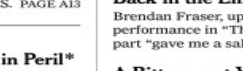
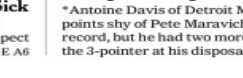
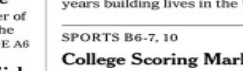
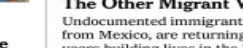
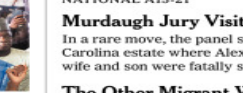
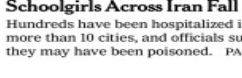
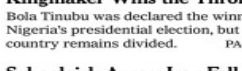
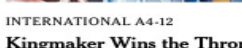
And even supporters make clear their commitment is not without bounds. While 50 percent of those surveyed by Fox News said American support should continue for "as long as it takes to win," 46 percent said the time frame should be limited.

"It's this way with every foreign intervention," said Andy Surabian, a Republican strategist who has advised two outspoken Republican voices against Ukraine aid, Senator J.D. Vance of Ohio and Donald Trump Jr. "In the first

Continued on Page A10

EPIC TANK BATTLE

Russia was routed in a three-week fight for the town of Vuhledar. PAGE A10



The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

M2 V1 X2 V3 V4

Showers 69/44 • Tomorrow: Rain 46/42 B6

Democracy Dies in Darkness

THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2023 • B3

Report: 'Havana syndrome' is not an attack

BY SHANE HARRIS
AND JOHN HUDSON

The mysterious ailment known as "Havana syndrome" did not result from the actions of a foreign adversary, according to an intelligence report that shatters a long-disputed theory that hundreds of U.S. personnel were targeted and sickened by a clandestine enemy wielding energy waves as a weapon.

The new intelligence assessment caps a years-long effort by

Intelligence assessment debunks theory about an enemy energy weapon

the CIA and several other U.S. intelligence agencies to explain why career diplomats, intelligence officers and others serving in U.S. missions around the world experienced what they described as strange and painful

acoustic sensations. The effects of this mysterious trauma shortened careers, racked up large medical bills and in some cases caused severe physical and emotional suffering.

Many of the afflicted personnel say they were the victims of a deliberate attack — possibly at the hands of Russia or another adversarial government — a claim that the report contradicts in nearly every respect, according to two intelligence officials who are familiar with the assess-

ment and described it to The Washington Post.

Seven intelligence agencies participated in the review of approximately 1,000 cases of "anomalous health incidents," the term the government uses to describe a constellation of physical symptoms including ringing in the ears followed by pressure in the head and nausea, headaches and acute discomfort.

Five of those agencies determined it was "very unlikely" that

SEE REPORT ON A4

A showdown before the FBI's Mar-a-Lago raid

BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE DEBATE

DOJ prosecutors' plan seen as too as combative

BY CAROL D. LEONNIG,
DEVILN BARRETT,
PERRY STEIN
AND AARON C. DAVIS

Months of disputes between Justice Department prosecutors and FBI agents over how best to try to recover classified documents from Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago Club and residence led to a tense showdown near the end of July last year, according to four people familiar with the discussions.

Prosecutors argued that new evidence suggested Trump was knowingly concealing secret documents at his Palm Beach, Fla., home and urged the FBI to con-

duct a surprise raid at the property. But two senior FBI officials who would be in charge of leading the search resisted the plan as too combative and proposed instead to seek Trump's permission to search his property, according to the four people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe a sensitive investigation.

Prosecutors ultimately prevailed in that dispute, one of several previously unreported clashes in a tense tug of war between two arms of the Justice Department over how aggressively to pursue a criminal investigation of a former president. The FBI conducted an unprecedented raid on Aug. 8, recovering more than 100 classified items, among them a document describing a foreign government's military defenses, including its nuclear capabilities.

Starting in May, FBI agents in the Washington field office had sought to slow the probe, urging

SEE SEARCH ON A6

Aftermath of Greece train crash: Carnage, a resignation and an arrest



ALEXANDROS AVRAMIDIS/REUTERS

Rescue crews operate at the site of a head-on collision between a passenger train and a freight train in central Greece that left dozens of people dead. The passenger train was traveling from Athens to Thessaloniki when it collided with the cargo train late Tuesday. The country's transportation minister resigned by midafternoon Wednesday, and police said they arrested a 59-year-old station master, who has been charged with "causing mass deaths through negligence" and "causing grievous bodily harm through negligence." **Story, A14**

Remote work in District is 'serious' risk, CFO warns

BY MICHAEL BRICE-SADDLER

A cursory look around D.C.'s downtown corridor illustrates just how hard it was battered by the pandemic. Its sidewalks are frequently barren, the high-rise office buildings lining the streets remain partly empty as many workers opt to stay home, and restaurants that survive on lunchtime and happy-hour traffic are struggling to stay afloat. And the city is about to feel the long-term financial ramifications of these changes, according to recent projections from its chief financial officer.

While sales tax revenue is increasing and the city's tourism industry is recovering — two areas of growth for the District since its pandemic restrictions ended — the city is still reeling

SEE REVENUE ON A4

Seizing on train derailment in Ohio, Republicans go after Buttigieg

DOT and high-profile secretary drawn into unusually personal dispute

BY YASMEEN ABUTALEB,
IAN DUNCAN
AND JUSTINE MCDANIEL

Republicans are seizing on the train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, to ramp up their attacks against Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, saying he is promoting his own agenda at the expense of families who are grappling with a toxic chemical accident in their backyard.

The Transportation Department does not have primary responsibility for the cleanup, and Buttigieg and his supporters are firing back, suggesting the GOP has other motives for its focus on him. The secretary, who sought the presidency in 2020, has taken the unusual step of responding directly to some of his critics, including Sen. Marco Rubio (R-

SEE BUTTIGIEG ON A5



ALLIE VUGRINIC/VIDEATOR/POOL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg at the site of a train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, on Feb. 23. Critics have claimed he has put his own agenda ahead of locals' needs.

East Palestine: White House weighs economic aid for locals. **A8**

Sweeteners for activists in Arctic oil discussions

Alaska approval may be paired with conservation plans, White House says

BY TIMOTHY PUKO

White House officials suggested to environmental groups in recent days that they may pair approval for a controversial Arctic oil project with new conservation measures in Alaska, but have failed to convince activists the idea is an acceptable compromise, according to three people involved in or briefed on the calls.

The high-stakes talks involve what some officials see as one of the most consequential climate decisions of President Biden's term, a multibillion-dollar drilling project called Willow. The

administration can announce a decision within days, and rejecting the project could lock the administration into a costly legal challenge and alienate key Alaska lawmakers in Congress.

The compromise measures under discussion would include a new ban on drilling in the Arctic Ocean off Alaska's North Slope and more habitat protections for other parts of the state, said two of the people familiar with the talks, all of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss confidential communications. They added that administration officials are seriously considering promising, according to those people, just two approved drilling pads, a size so small that officials for ConocoPhillips — the company that has spent nearly five years pursuing federal approval — have suggested it would cause them

SEE ALASKA ON A11

NBA star Morant faces allegations of violence

Police reports say player repeatedly punched teen, threatened mall guard

BY MOLLY HENSLEY-CLANCY

Ja Morant is among the brightest young stars in the NBA, with a new signature Nike shoe, a top-selling jersey and a team, the Memphis Grizzlies, poised for a deep postseason run. But in a string of incidents dating from last summer, Morant and people close to him have been accused of threatening and even violent behavior, according to previously unreported police records obtained by The Washington Post.

Last summer, in an encounter that has not been previously reported, the head of security at a Memphis mall told police that Morant "threatened" him during an altercation in the parking lot, leaving him alarmed enough that he filed a police report. A member of Morant's group shoved the director in the head, he told police. No arrests were made, records show.

Four days later, Morant repeatedly punched a teenage boy in the head during a pickup basketball game at Morant's house, the boy told police. Morant and his friend struck the 17-year-old so hard they knocked him to the ground and left him with a "large knot" on the side of his head, according to a police report narrative

SEE MORANT ON A2

IN THE NEWS



ALLISON DINNEN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cuts to food stamps The end of a federal pandemic program could complicate grocery shopping for low-income Americans. **A3**

THE NATION
The leader of the federal government's personnel agency is facing scrutiny from lawmakers over two hires found to have a history of sexual misconduct in previous jobs. **A2**

FAA nominee Phillip Washington faced sharp questioning from Senate Republicans who say he is unqualified to lead the aviation agency. **A9**

THE CLIMATE
States and cities are

pushing back against conservative efforts to blacklist banks and financial investors that factor climate risks into their decisions. **A10**

THE WORLD
Last summer's "monster wildfire" in southwestern France is still smoldering after a winter drought. **A12**

A Russian man is facing criminal charges after his daughter drew antiwar art in class, part of the nation's crack-

down on criticism of the war in Ukraine. **A13**

THE ECONOMY
The pay disparity between the genders has barely improved in the past 20 years, with women making 82 percent of men's pay in 2022. **A15**

EH Lilly said it is cutting insulin prices by 70 percent and capping out-of-pocket costs at \$35 a month. **A16**

THE REGION
The fare-free Metrosbus program set to start in July does not have enough money, D.C.'s

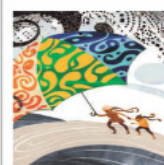
chief finance officer said. **B1**

Maryland officials agreed to pay \$7 million to a man who was beaten and left paralyzed in a notoriously violent state-run jail in 2014. **B1**

The cherry blossoms are expected to reach peak bloom between March 22 and March 25, the National Park Service announced. **B1**

STYLE
Fox News attorneys are arguing that its commentators may have seen the false election claims as plausible. **C1**

INSIDE



LOCAL LIVING
Four myths about peer pressure Parents can help their kids learn how to make healthy choices. **C1**

STYLE
That '90s glow With clothing, designs and American Girl dolls, decade's looks return. **C1**

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WORLD NEWSA12

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The Washington Post / Year 146, No. 5462
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Suspect in hate crime 'was on radar'

Chief Moore says the FBI overlooked the man accused of shooting two Jews.

BY RICHARD WINTON AND LIBOR JANY

A man charged with the hate-motivated shootings of two Jewish men in Los Angeles was on the FBI's radar before the attacks, Los Angeles Police Chief Michel Moore said.

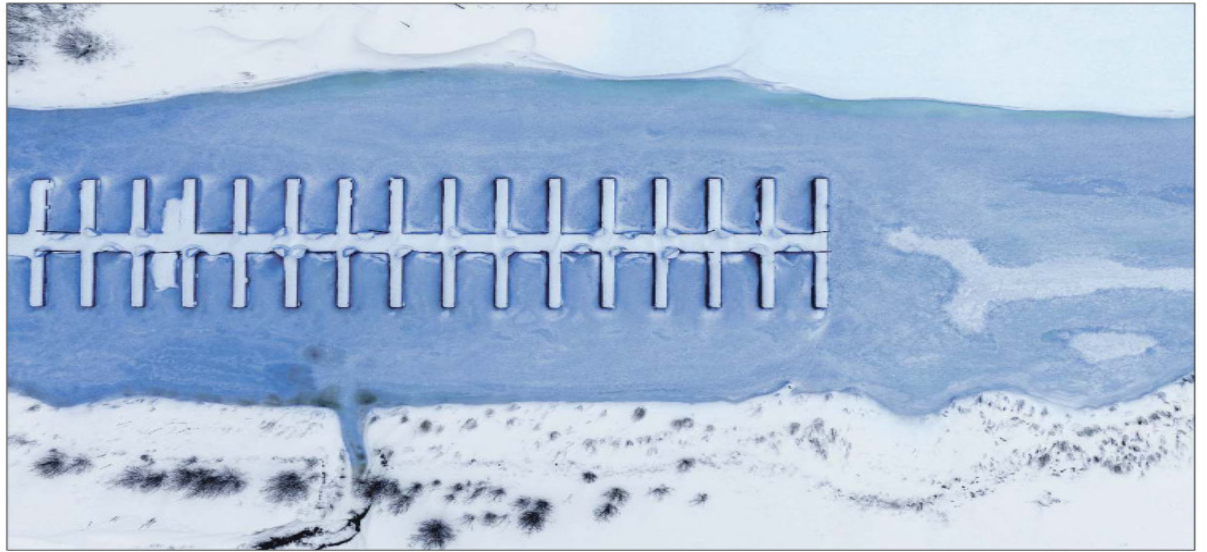
In the year before the shootings, Jaime Tran had been charged with carrying a loaded firearm and was investigated after threatening and racist messages were sent to former dental school classmates, according to court records and interviews.

How Tran slipped through the FBI's threat-tracking system despite suggestions that he posed a considerable, and perhaps deadly, danger remains under investigation by the FBI, said Moore and other officials.

In a departure from local law enforcement leaders' usual reluctance to publicly question the actions of federal agencies, Moore made his remarks at a Los Angeles Police Commission meeting Tuesday.

"He was on the radar, if you will, of our FBI partners in what we call a 'Guardian lead' because of hate-fueled remarks or emails that he was sending to former classmates of a dental school which he was attending," Moore said.

Moore said that Tran, 28, had been the "subject of mental health evaluations [See Suspect, A9]"



A DOCK on frozen Big Bear Lake. Some residents were trapped at homes in the mountain resort town after another week of snow. Photographs by BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

Fresh snow pounds mountain towns



AMBLERLEE BARDEN shovels her driveway in Big Bear Lake. Mounds of snow have made it nearly impossible to get around by car or on foot.

Communities from Lake Tahoe to Lake Arrowhead struggle as crews across state race to clear highways

BY NATHAN SOLIS, GRACE TOOHEY AND SUMMER LIN

Another week of pounding snow has deluged many of California's most popular mountain resorts and communities, from Lake Tahoe to Lake Arrowhead, where residents struggled with shuttered highways and dwindling food supplies.

Crews across the state worked desperately to clear roadways as more snow fell overnight amid a blizzard warning that had been in place since Monday. Record-breaking snowfall forced Yo-

semitic National Park to close, and emergency officials pleaded with people to stay home and avoid the roads. The deteriorating situation spurred Gov. Gavin Newsom to declare a state of emergency in 13 counties.

The Sierra was particularly hard hit, with all the major roads to Lake Tahoe closed and reports of at least one 200-yard-wide avalanche.

Some had no choice but to stay put.

Many residents remained trapped in their homes in the San Bernardino Mountains on Wednesday. [See Snow, A7]

COLUMN ONE

These icons are turning 100 and still look fabulous

Hollywood sign. Coliseum. Biltmore Hotel. Angelus Temple. 1923 gave birth to them all.

By Patt Morrison

Los Angeles, you're gonna need a bigger cake.

So many singular L.A. landmarks and institutions made their debuts in the year 1923 that celebrating those centennials really means something larger and more profound in the L.A. origins story than simply lighting up a few hundred candles.

The year 1923 amounted to a civic "Big Bang," a pinpoint event whose reverberations reach us today.

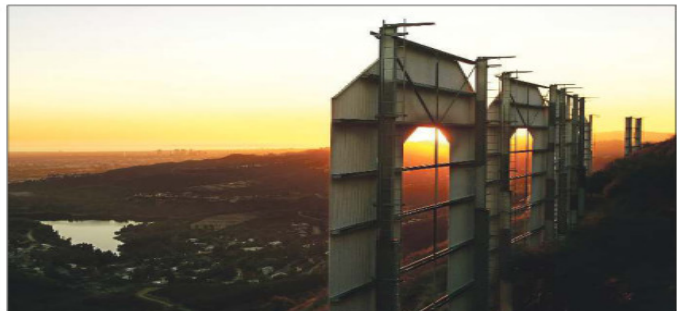
To the first and the best known: Let's sing the birthday song to the Hollywood sign, built as a massive, ultimately ransackable advertisement that became as unmistakably L.A. as the Eiffel Tower is for Paris and the Statue of Liberty is for New York.

Some among the others: The Disney Brothers Cartoon Studio in East Hollywood set up shop, the nucleus of an aesthetic, a technique, an insanely rich international empire of imagination.

The Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum opened in 1923, a hometown project that assumed international renown, a venue for one, then two, and now soon to be three Olympic Games.

The gilded and marbled Beaux-Arts Biltmore Hotel rose that year to lord over Pershing Square like a glamorous Vanderbilt debutante; its own legend holds that the Black Dahlia drank perhaps her last drink here, and that the fan-besieged Beatles arrived perforce by helicopter, landing on the roof.

Up in Echo Park. [See 1923, A12]



DAVID MCNEW Getty Images

WHAT is now the Hollywood sign began life in 1923 as the Hollywoodland sign advertising a real estate development. It's now a symbol of L.A.



RYAN LIM AP/Getty Images

AT A recent arms fair in the Mideast, the offerings from Ukraine included an electronic warfare system.

Russia's big boost to business of war

Conflict in Ukraine has energized global arms trade as demand soars for weapons.

By NABIH BULOZ

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — There's always an element of the surreal at arms fairs. You catch it in the chipper tone of salespeople hawking new instruments of destruction; in the euphemisms — "defense" instead of "warfare," "weapons platforms" rather than "guns" — sprinkled

throughout glossy brochures; in the mini-lesson given by a jovial ex-soldier on best practices for operating an antitank missile system.

Now, there's the added frisson of Europe's biggest terrestrial armed conflict in decades — namely, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has made one thing clear: Nothing invigorates the business of war like a war.

The combat in Ukraine, now in its second year, has jacked the global arms trade, fueling a new appetite for materiel not just in Moscow and Kyiv but also

[See Weapons, A4]

Shasta dumps voting machines

By JESSICA GARRISON

SACRAMENTO — Swept up in unproven voter fraud claims, the Shasta County Board of Supervisors has upended the county's election process, canceling its contract with Dominion Voting Systems and opting this week to pursue, among other options, the possibility of counting votes by hand.

Supervisor Kevin Crye, part of a newly empowered hard-right majority on the board, also announced at Tuesday's board meeting that he had been in touch with MyPillow Chief Executive Mike Lindell, a prominent pro-Trump election conspiracy theorist, about supporting a pilot voting system in the rural Northern California county.

On the same day, in another Republican-controlled county 400 miles south, Kern County supervisors narrowly voted to keep Dominion as the county's voting system, but not be-

[See Shasta, A7]

'Havana syndrome' not linked to foes U.S. intelligence agencies find no evidence any adversary was behind hundreds of cases. **NATION, A5**

Trim back LAPD duties, union says Officers group is ready to let others do unarmed jobs. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Drugmaker will cut insulin prices The list cost for some Eli Lilly products will drop 70%. **BUSINESS, A8**

Weather Sunny and warmer. L.A. Basin: 61/42. **B6**

Printed with soy inks on partially recycled paper.





CIENCIA La Península, refugio de los humanos en la glaciación **P.24**



PORTUGAL Una juez paraliza el complejo turístico de Sandra Ortega **P.41**

El Gobierno presiona contra la salida de Ferrovial a Países Bajos

Calviño carga contra la empresa y expresa su "rechazo" a la deslocalización

CARLOSE. CUÉ / MARÍA FERNÁNDEZ
Madrid / Vigo

Máxima tensión por la salida de una de las grandes compañías españolas a un territorio de la UE de baja fiscalidad. El Gobierno cargó ayer contra el anuncio de Ferrovial, multinacional de la construcción y las infraestructu-

ras, de que trasladará su matriz a Países Bajos. La vicepresidenta Nadia Calviño llamó a Rafael del Pino, presidente de la compañía, para expresar "el rechazo a esta decisión". En el Ejecutivo sentó especialmente mal el argumento de la compañía de que en Países Bajos tendrá mayor "seguridad ju-

rídica". Las fuentes consultadas aseguran que el Ejecutivo estudia medidas de presión que se añaden a las duras críticas políticas: el Gobierno, en contra del argumentario de la empresa, cree que la fiscalidad es la razón principal de ese cambio, por lo que Hacienda escrutará todo el proceso de

deslocalización; se evaluará, además, la posibilidad de explorar el mínimo resquicio legal que supondría poder demostrar que la sede holandesa sea más ficticia que real. El PP culpó a Sánchez de la salida y avisó del riesgo de "efecto contagio". **PÁGINAS 38 y 39**

EDITORIAL EN LA **PÁGINA 30**



Algunos vagones destruidos por el accidente de ayer cerca de Larisa, en el centro de Grecia. / GIANNIS PAPANIKOS (AP/LAPRESSE)

Al menos 38 muertos en el choque frontal de dos trenes en Grecia

Dimite el ministro de Transportes entre críticas por el estado de la red ferroviaria

H. ARBIDE AZA / A. LITSARDAKIS
Lesbos / Evangelismos
El peor accidente ferroviario de la historia de Grecia causó ayer al menos 38 muertos y decenas de heridos. Un convoy con 346 pasajeros y 20 tripulantes, que viajaba de Atenas a Tesalónica, chocó frontalmente con uno de mercan-

cías cerca de Larisa, en el centro del país. Según los primeros informes, el tren de pasajeros tomó el carril equivocado. El ministro de Transportes, Kostas Karamanlis, dimitió en medio de críticas por el estado de la red ferroviaria en un país sometido a ajustes tras el rescate de 2010. **PÁGINAS 2 y 3**

Los sindicatos exigen subir los salarios un 13,8% hasta 2024

CC OO y UGT proponen ligar los aumentos al beneficio empresarial

EMILIO SÁNCHEZ HIDALGO, Madrid
Los sindicatos CC OO y UGT se proponen lograr en los convenios un aumento salarial del 13,8%, que empezaría con un alza del 5% correspondiente al pasado año, un 4,5% en 2023 y un 3,75% en 2024. Además, plantean que las cláusulas de revisión, que permiten compensar la inflación real, se vinculen también al margen de beneficios de las compañías, según un documento conjunto difundido ayer. La CBDE dijo que estudiará la propuesta "con detenimiento" y se abrió a ligar los sueldos a los beneficios. **PÁGINA 42**

La Fiscalía recurre cientos de rebajas de penas por el 'solo sí es sí'

REYES RINCÓN, Madrid
Los fiscales han presentado "cientos" de impugnaciones contra revisiones de penas a agresores sexuales por la ley del solo sí es sí. Solo en Madrid se han recurrido 62 decisiones de la Audiencia Provincial. Aunque los tribunales han bajado penas en unos 700 casos, el fiscal general, Álvaro García Ortiz, lo rechazó cuando la pena impuesta entra en las horquillas de la nueva ley. **PÁGINA 18**

El general del 'caso Mediador' guardaba 61.110 euros en una caja de zapatos

G. VEGA / Ó. LÓPEZ-FONSECA
Las Palmas / Madrid
El general retirado de la Guardia Civil Francisco Espinosa Navas —considerado uno de los cabezallas de la trama corrupta del caso Mediador junto al exdiputado socialista José Bernardo Fuentes— atesoraba en su domicilio 61.110 euros ocultos en una caja de zapatos, según el auto de la jueza que lo envió a prisión. **PÁGINAS 14 a 16**

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Otra estrella para Boca

Benedetto dio un show

Le sacó mucha ventaja a Patronato en la final de la Supercopa. El delantero hizo todos los goles en el 3-0. P.34

Grecia y su peor tragedia ferroviaria: 38 muertos

Chocaron dos trenes y culpan a la "infraestructura obsoleta". P.18

Tema del día • Tono confrontativo y reivindicación del kirchnerismo

Fernández atacó a la Corte y dijo que estamos "sustancialmente mejor"

El Presidente habló dos horas en su cuarto discurso de apertura de sesiones del Congreso. Se describió como moderado frente a sus adversarios del kir-

chnerismo duro, pero abrazó el discurso de Cristina Kirchner sobre el lawfare, criticó al periodismo diciendo que los medios esconden las buenas noti-

cias sobre el Gobierno y atacó a la Corte Suprema con una virulencia con pocos precedentes. Acusó al Tribunal de "tomar por asalto" al Consejo de la Magis-

tratura y castigó a los jueces por la cautela que ordenó restituir los fondos que le quitó la Nación a la Ciudad de Buenos Aires. P.3

Presencia simbólica

Rosatti y Rosenkrantz fueron al Congreso para representar a los jueces.

Conflicto abierto

La oposición advierte que si no hay consensos no habrá sesiones.

Del Editor

Héctor Gambini

El último discurso de un presidente en su burbuja



JUANO TESONE

LA CRISIS ENERGÉTICA

Un gigantesco apagón afectó a 20 millones de personas en medio de la ola de calor

Un incendio de pastizales bajo una línea que lleva electricidad entre Campana y General Rodríguez provocó una cascada de desperfectos en el sistema eléctrico que dejó sin energía a seis millones de hogares en todo el país durante varias horas. Fue el segundo apagón más extenso de la historia luego del que ocurrió en 2019 y quedaron desconecta-

TARDE DE INFIERNO

36°

fue la temperatura a las 16 en CABA, cuando comenzó el corte.

das del sistema integrado la central atómica de Atucha I y Central Puerto. En

medio de la ola de calor que afectó a todo el Centro y el Norte del país, miles de industrias, comercios y hogares quedaron paralizados. Las zonas más afectadas fueron la Capital Federal y el Conurbano, la provincia de Buenos Aires, Córdoba y Mendoza. El episodio muestra la fragilidad del sistema en momentos de alta demanda. P.26

Análisis

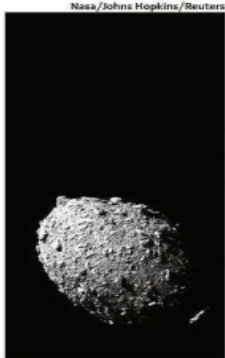
Martín Bidegaray

Un incendio puso en jaque todo el sistema

ciência B5
Com uma colisão, Nasa desviou trajetória de um asteroide em 2022

ilustrada C1 e C4
Estreia o suspense 'Desaparecida', que se passa em telas de computador

turismo C10
Parque da Nintendo na Califórnia recria universo do Mario Bros em atrações



O asteroide antes de ser atingido pela sonda da Nasa

Petrobras anuncia lucro de R\$ 188 bi, recorde no país

Alta em 2022 foi de 76%; governo quer atrasar votação de MP sobre combustíveis

Beneficiada pela alta das cotações internacionais do petróleo e com margens maiores na venda de combustíveis, a Petrobras anunciou ontem que fechou 2022 com o maior lucro anual já obtido por uma empresa brasileira: R\$ 188,3 bilhões, 76,6% superior ao de 2021.

Com a marca histórica, a estatal teria de distribuir mais R\$ 35,8 bilhões em dividendos, mas a nova gestão propôs a retenção de R\$ 6,5 bilhões em uma reserva estatutária, que será avaliada em assembleia. As quantias destinadas a acionistas são alvo de críticas do PT.

Antes do anúncio, Fernando Haddad (Fazenda) disse que os lucros das petrolíferas "são exorbitantes", em defesa da taxa de 9,2% sobre as exportações de óleo — medida apresentada com a reatuação dos combustíveis para compensar a tributação menor ao consumidor.

Sob temor de uma derrota, aliados do presidente Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (PT) consideram atrasar ou mesmo evitar que a medida provisória para a retomada da cobrança de tributos federais sobre gasolina e etanol seja votada no Congresso. Mercado A17 e A18



Emmanuel Fernández/Clarín

APAGÃO EM VÁRIAS REGIÕES DA ARGENTINA ATINGE CERCA DE 40% DA POPULAÇÃO

Clientes escolhem bebidas em mercado às escuras em Buenos Aires; incêndio em linha de transmissão perto da capital foi apontado como causa Mundo A16

Jairo Malta
O trabalho escravo permanece nas entranhas brasileiras
opinião A2

Escravidados no RS relataram levar surras e choques elétricos

Trabalhadores resgatados de regime análogo à escravidão em Bento Gonçalves (RS) contaram em depoimentos às autoridades que também houve episódios de violência com uso de spray de pimenta e mordidas. Mercado A21

TCU apura ação ilegal do Fisco contra desafetos de Bolsonaro

O Tribunal de Contas da União investiga acesso sem motivo legal, em 2019, de dados fiscais sigilosos de rivais do então presidente da República. Caso pode levar à demissão do servidor que chefiava inteligência da Receita. Política A4

EDITORIAL A2 Vitória parcial

Lula acertou no essencial ao retomar a taxa de gasolina. A vitória, no entanto, foi manchada por uma medida abilolada que revela o quanto ideias arcaicas e temerárias encontram abrigo no governo.

Gestão Lula cria condições para a corrupção, diz Moro

O ex-ministro Sergio Moro vê riscos caso ocorra flexibilização da Lei das Estatais, que classifica de "reação ao loteamento exacerbado que foi constatado na Lava Jato". Em entrevista à Folha, nega elo com o ex-presidente Jair Bolsonaro e defende o juiz Marcelo Bretas. Política A12

SP estuda 5 áreas para alojar vítimas da chuva no litoral

O Governo de SP avalia cinco áreas indicadas pela Prefeitura de São Sebastião para construir moradias aos desalojados pela chuva no litoral norte. Os terrenos ficam no bairro da Topolândia, no centro da cidade, na Vila Sahy, que teve mais vítimas, e em Maresias. Cotidiano B3

Governista é eleito presidente da Nigéria
Bola Tinubu, 70, substituirá Muhammadu Buhari. Com apenas 37% dos votos, ele terá de superar a desconfiança do eleitorado e uma grave crise econômica no país mais populoso da África. A14

Órgão veta uso de animais em testes de cosméticos

ciência B5

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Declarado vencedor nas eleições presidenciais da Nigéria, Bola Tinubu discursa após resultado em Abuja. Esa Alexander/Reuters

Divulgar vacinação de ex-presidente fere lei, afirma Saúde

Política A6

'Machosfera' evita até sexo por crer em opressão feminina

Movimentos que se dizem oprimidos por suposto excesso de leis que priorizam mulheres, como no divórcio e guarda dos filhos, recomendam até celibato como protesto. A "machosfera" emergiu após Thiago Schutz, "coach de masculinidade", ameaçar a atriz Livia La Gatto. Cotidiano B4

EDITORIAL A2

Longe das encostas
Acerca de verticalização no litoral norte de SP.

LE FIGARO

lefigaro.fr

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



JUST FONTAINE
TREIZE BUTS
POUR L'ÉTERNITÉ
PAGE 10

LE FIGARO LITTÉRAIRE
LA « PLÉIADE » : DANS LES COULISSES
D'UNE COLLECTION DE LÉGENDE
NOTRE SUPPLÉMENT



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Bola Tinubu prend
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Jean Alesi : « Quand
vous conduisez une
Ferrari, vous devez
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**FIGARO OUI
FIGARO NON**

**Réponses à la question
de mercredi :**
Jean Castex ferait-il
un bon candidat
à l'élection présidentielle
de 2027 ?

OUI 23% NON 77%
TOTAL DE VOTANTS : 203 008

**Votez aujourd'hui
sur lefigaro.fr**
Faut-il rendre le service
national obligatoire pour
les lycéens ?

PICTURE ALLIANCE/DPA/BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

La culture dans le viseur des nouveaux censeurs

De Roald Dahl à Ian Fleming, de Jane Austen à Disney, les œuvres des auteurs disparus sont aujourd'hui retouchées et affadies pour complaire aux diktats d'un nouvel ordre moral.

La révélation de la réécriture des œuvres pour enfants de l'écrivain britannique Roald Dahl a provoqué un tollé mondial. En cause, l'action des « sensitivity readers », chargés de traquer des termes pouvant être « offensants » à

l'égard de minorités. Une vaste opération de toilettage a donc été orchestrée. De Jane Austen à Ian Fleming, aucun auteur disparu n'est désormais à l'abri de ce genre de pratiques. Pas même les dessins animés classiques, qui

chez Disney se parent d'avertissements avant diffusion pour pointer « l'influence néfaste » de certains de leurs contenus. Morale et gros sous : derrière ce mouvement se cache aussi une affaire financière. Après la réécriture des li-

vres de l'auteur de *Charlie et la chocolaterie*, ses ayants droit ont vendu un catalogue d'œuvres désormais plus « convenables » à la plateforme Netflix. Il s'agit aussi de ripoliner pour plaire au plus grand nombre d'acheteurs.

⇒ QUAND LA WALT DISNEY COMPANY TRAQUE LES « REPRÉSENTATIONS NÉGATIVES »

⇒ FRANCK NEVEU : « LEUR OBJECTIF EST D'ARRIVER À UNE PENSÉE UNIQUE »

PAGES 28, 29 ET L'EDITORIAL



Le ballon chinois abattu par les États-Unis a ravivé la tension entre Washington et Pékin. Théâtres principaux de cette confrontation, les océans Indien et Pacifique sont désormais réunis dans un même ensemble stratégique. PAGES 4 ET 5

Dans le Pacifique, les États-Unis se préparent à un affrontement avec la Chine

Gérard Larcher : « Le Sénat ira au bout du débat sur les retraites »

Alors que l'examen de la réforme des retraites débute ce jeudi au Sénat, le président LR de la Chambre haute assure au *Figaro* qu'il fera preuve de « responsabilité » après l'échec des débats à l'Assemblée. Gérard Larcher défend aussi les modifications apportées par les sénateurs LR, concernant notamment les mères de famille et les seniors, tout en défendant le nécessaire équilibre budgétaire du système. PAGES 2 ET 3

EDITORIAL par Étienne de Montety edemontety@lefigaro.fr

Cachez ces mots...

Agatha Christie retirée, Roald Dahl réécrit, un vent mauvais souffle sur l'édition. En cause : des mots jugés infamants, « nègre », mais aussi « gros » ou même « sécrétaire », en clair toute description tenue pour dépréciative. Chez les éditeurs, des « sensitivity readers » chargés de ménager le lecteur accomplissent une étrange besogne au nom de l'« inclusivité ». Que leur importe que le principe même du conte soit de forcer le trait pour instruire le jeune lecteur. Roald Dahl, maître du genre, pratiquait la caricature et l'outrance burlesque pour faire rire. « *Castigat ridendo mores* » (« il corrige les mœurs en riant »), telle était la devise de la commedia dell'arte. Cette plaisante pédagogie est inacceptable pour une certaine mentalité moderne. Il y a un siècle, on aurait appelé cette folle pratique de la censure. Aujourd'hui, on en fait une œuvre de bienfaisance : il s'agirait de préserver les esprits fragiles. Tout est jugé à l'aune de la sensibilité contemporaine dans ce qu'elle a d'excessif et de ridicule. Le respect de l'œuvre originale n'est évidemment pas l'affaire de ces parangons de bons sentiments. L'anachronisme consistant à

dissocier l'œuvre du contexte socioculturel où elle fut écrite ne leur fait pas peur. Coupons, réécrivons. Pour eux, la littérature doit être un manuel d'éducation citoyenne. Le réel est-il complexe, déplaisant, blessant ? Cachez-le, lui et les mots pour le décrire, je ne saurais les voir... Hier lady Agatha, Conrad et son *Nègre du Narcisse*, rebaptisé *Les Enfants de la mer*. Aujourd'hui Dahl et Ian Fleming passés au lami-noir de la « sensibilité », au risque d'en ressortir « propres » et insipides. La littérature a moins pour but d'édifier que d'explorer les recoins de la nature humaine. Certains sont magnifiques, d'autres bien inquiétants, formant un portrait contrasté de l'homme, mais c'est ainsi : les grands romans agissent comme un miroir pour le lecteur. Abrasifs, grinçants, peut-être brutaux, mais tellement plus instructifs qu'un chef-d'œuvre remanié par des « lecteurs » demeurés au stade de *Oui-Oui au pays des jouets*. ■



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In a new light
Dedicated craftsman makes palace lanterns, preserves tradition **LIFE, PAGE 17**

Overseas firms reaffirm faith in mainland
BUSINESS, PAGE 13



Biased mentality
US House panel's 'tough stance' on China may escalate tensions
WORLD, PAGE 10

CHINADAILY

THURSDAY, March 2, 2023

中国日报

chinadaily.com.cn RMB ¥2

Xi: Peace talks key to end crisis

Solutions to resolve Russia-Ukraine conflict discussed with Lukashenko

By CAO DESHENG
caodesheng@chinadaily.com.cn

President Xi Jinping called on Wednesday for a political settlement of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, urging relevant countries to stop their attempts to politicize the global economy and make earnest efforts to contribute to a cease-fire and peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Xi made the remarks in talks in Beijing with visiting Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, who started a three-day state visit to China on Tuesday.

The two presidents pledged to strengthen bilateral cooperation in a wide range of fields and exchanged views on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.

They signed a joint statement on further developing the all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Belarus, and witnessed the signing of an array of bilateral cooperation documents in the fields of the economy and trade, industry, agriculture, customs, science and technology, health, tourism, sports and subnational-level collaboration.

Regarding the Ukraine crisis, Xi said that China's position on the issue is consistent and clear, with facilitating peace talks at its core.

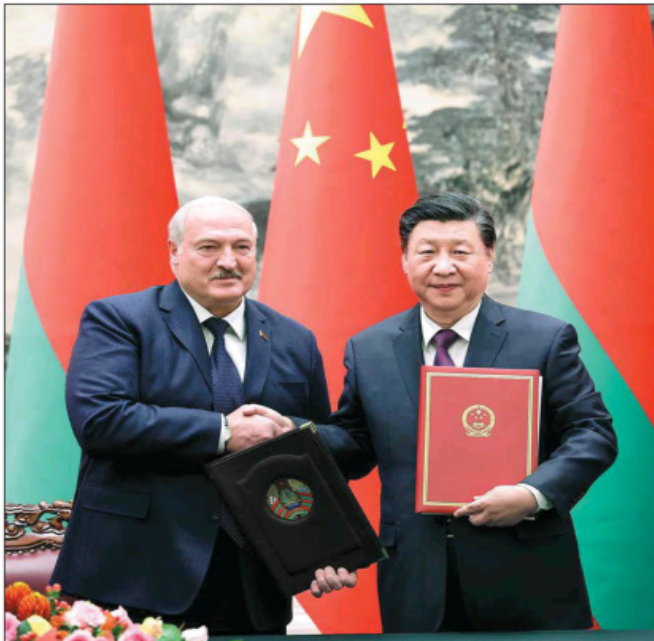
He stressed the need to adhere to a political settlement of the crisis, abandon the Cold War mentality, respect the legitimate security concerns of all countries, and strive to build a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture in Europe.

Relevant countries should stop politicizing the global economy and using it as a tool, and instead do something that is conducive to ceasing hostilities and help find a peaceful resolution of the crisis, Xi said.

On Friday, China issued a 12-point position paper on the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

Lukashenko said that his country totally agrees with and supports China's position and a proposed political settlement of the Ukraine crisis, which are significant to resolving the crisis.

On bilateral ties, Xi said that against the backdrop of increasing instability and uncertainties in the international landscape, China stands ready to work with Belarus to advance the high-level, healthy



President Xi Jinping shakes hands with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Wednesday after they signed a joint statement on further developing the all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership. FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY

and stable development of the countries' relations.

China-Belarus friendship is unbreakable, and the two countries should constantly enhance political mutual trust and treat each other as a true friend and good partner, he said.

Xi appreciated Belarus' firm support for China's position on the Taiwan question as well as issues concerning the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and human rights.

He said that both countries should support each other in pursuing a development path of their own choice and in upholding their own core interests, and oppose external interference in domestic affairs to safeguard both countries' sovereign and political security.

Xi called for expanding economic and trade cooperation between the two countries and promoting the building of the China-Belarus Industrial Park.

China appreciates Belarus supporting the Global Development Initiative and Global Security Initiative, and is willing to strengthen coordination and cooperation with Belarus within the multilateral framework, including the United Nations, to jointly cope with global challenges, he added.

Lukashenko said Belarus will always stand with China and firmly supports China in safeguarding its core interests.

He commended China's important role in upholding world peace, saying Belarus is ready to boost coordination with China on major international and regional affairs

and work together to promote regional and global security and stability.

Before the official talks, Xi held a grand welcoming ceremony for Lukashenko at the Great Hall of the People.

Lukashenko's visit comes as China works toward economic recovery after the country's top leadership announced on Feb 16 a "major, decisive victory" in the fight against COVID-19. It also takes place at a time of increased tensions between the West and Russia and the West and Belarus over the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Lukashenko also met on Wednesday with Premier Li Keqiang and Li Zhanshu, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the nation's top legislature.

General secretary sets out new vision for Party schools

By XU WEI
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Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, underlined on Wednesday the unwavering original mission for Party schools to cultivate talent for and contribute wisdom to the CPC, as he set out a new vision for the institutions' development in the new era.

Xi delivered the remarks at a celebration in Beijing marking the 90th founding anniversary of the Party School of the CPC Central Committee — the Party's highest education institution — and the opening ceremony of the institution's 2023 spring semester.

The celebration was also attended by Cai Qi and Ding Xuexiang, members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee — and presided over by Chen Xi, president of the school.

Xi, who is also Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission, urged the institutions to hold high the banner of the Party, carry forward its will and mission, and serve the overall work of the Party and State.

He urged Party schools to cultivate officials tailored to the needs of the CPC and contribute opinions and suggestions on the major issues that are of concern to the Party.

The unique value of Party schools lies in the cultivation of talent for the CPC, and these institutions must make proactive contributions to the cultivation of leading officials who are capable of shouldering the responsibility of national rejuvenation, Xi said.

He underscored theoretical accomplishment as the core part of the comprehensive quality of officials.

For officials, the more firmly they grasp Marxism, the stronger their political judgment, understanding and implementation of it will be, and the more proactive they will become in observing the current situation, planning development and preventing and defusing risks, he explained.

Xi called Party schools "melting pots" that can build up the Party consciousness of officials, saying that these institutions must guide officials to keep improving their level of thinking and morality and develop the correct outlook toward power and what it means to perform well and maintain the political character of communists.

The institutions must step up efforts to foster the fighting spirit and capacity of officials and help them enhance their abilities in preventing risks, tackling difficulties, responding to challenges and resisting pressures, he said.

The general secretary urged Party schools to excel in theoretical research and to come up with solutions, saying that the institutions must provide high-quality research outcomes to help with the decision-making of the Party and government.

As a key frontier of the ideological work of the CPC, Party schools must publicize the propositions of the CPC and refute various fallacies and heresies in a targeted manner and remain proactive in publicizing the Party's innovative theories, he said.

Xi called on Party schools to abide by the strictest political, academic, teaching and management standards, and serve as a deterrent against misconduct, a melting pot to build up Party consciousness and a bellwether in terms of exercising strict governance of the Party.

It is important for Party schools at various levels to maintain the highest standards of training for their students, he said.

Xi, who served as the president of the Party School of the CPC Central Committee from November 2007 to December 2012, attaches great importance to the role of the institution in cultivating talent for officials.

Since he was elected general secretary of the CPC Central Committee in 2012, Xi has on 10 occasions addressed the opening of study sessions for officials at the provincial and ministerial levels hosted by the institution, and addressed another six sessions for young and middle-aged officials.

Nation maintains solid momentum for growth

By OUYANG SHIJIA
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China's economic activity, including in both the manufacturing and services sectors, expanded for a second straight month in February, offering the latest snapshot of China's solid growth momentum amid signs of recovery.

Officials and analysts said the broad-based improvement in both sectors points to a gradual normalization of activities and the accelerated resumption of work and production, as China, gradually shakes off the COVID-19 impact and is on track for a steady recovery despite global headwinds.

Their comments came as data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed on Wednesday that the purchasing managers index for China's manufacturing sector, which measures activity at factories, surged to 52.6 in February from 50.1 in January. The reading was well above the 50-point mark that separates growth from contraction, marking a new high since April 2012.

China's nonmanufacturing PMI, which tracks activity in the services and construction sectors, rose to 52.3 in February from 51.4 in January.

See **Outlook**, page 3

STABLE ECONOMIC POLICIES LIKELY TO REMAIN

Rebound to be consolidated amid external challenges, experts say

By ZHOU LANXU, ZHANG YUE and OUYANG SHIJIA

China is expected to maintain stable macroeconomic policies this year with optimized structural support to strengthen its economic rebound amid lingering external challenges, according to economists and policy advisers.

With the annual two sessions approaching, markets are closely watching how the nation will calibrate its fiscal and monetary policies when the country's top legislature and top political advisory body meet.

Headline policy targets such as annual GDP growth, the fiscal deficit, inflation and employment will be



unveiled at the meetings, which come at a critical juncture as China pursues high-quality development.

Achieving stable, sustainable economic growth will be vital for the nation this year.

In October, the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China determined that the coming five years will be crucial for getting the country's efforts to build a modern socialist country in all respects off to a good start.

See **Economy**, page 2

Train collision



Police and emergency crew members look for survivors on Wednesday in the wreckage of a rail car following a head-on collision between a passenger train and a freight train near the town of Tempe in Greece late on Tuesday. The accident left at least 36 people dead and 85 injured. The death toll is expected to rise, officials said. SAKIS MITROUDIS / AFP See **story**, page 10

国内统一编号: CN11-0091 国际标准编号: ISSN0253-9543 邮发代号: 1-3

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Rural minors addicted to cellphones, report finds

By ZOU SHUO in Beijing and ZHOU LIHUA in Wuhan

Mobile phone addiction has become an acute problem among "left-behind children" in China's rural areas, according to a recent research report, which recommends the inclusion of cellphone management courses in school curriculums to teach students how dependency on the gadget

can be harmful for them. "Left-behind children" is a general term used to refer to rural minors whose parents work in urban areas, and they are looked after by their grandparents or other relatives.

See **Outlook**, page 3

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Comment, page 9

