

What's News

Business & Finance

Musk went full-on corporate raider a week into his rolling clash with Twitter, offering a \$43 billion bid for the company and warning he might sell his stake in the service if rebuffed. A1, A6

◆ **The interest rate on the U.S.'s most popular mortgage hit 5% for the first time in more than a decade, extending a sharp rise that has yet to significantly slow the red-hot housing market. A1**

◆ **Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Citigroup and Wells Fargo reported double-digit declines in profit for the first quarter, and they all posted lower revenue. B1, B2**

◆ **U.S. stocks fell, with major indexes posting weekly losses. The S&P 500, Nasdaq and Dow retreated 1.2%, 2.1% and 0.3%, respectively, on Thursday. B9**

◆ **The ECB will continue to lag behind the Federal Reserve in tightening monetary policy despite rising inflation, Lagarde said. A16**

◆ **TSMC signaled that the global semiconductor shortage is likely to continue, with tight production capacity for all types of chips it makes. B1**

◆ **Amazon CEO Jassy said he wants to improve worker safety and make additional progress on reducing the company's carbon footprint. B1**

◆ **Warner Bros. Discovery chief Zaslav told employees that he wants CNN to focus on maximizing its impact, not profitability. B1**

◆ **Peloton will cut prices of its stationary bikes and treadmills and raise monthly subscriptions for online workout classes. B1**

World-Wide

◆ **The flagship of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, the warship Moskva, sank from damage suffered from a fire following what the Ukrainian military said was a cruise-missile attack targeting the vessel. A1, A7-8**

◆ **Russia warned that it could station nuclear forces in and around a Russian enclave in Northern Europe and bolster its military presence there if Finland and Sweden join NATO. A7**

◆ **Florida Gov. DeSantis signed a law banning most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, tightening restrictions in the state ahead of a pivotal Supreme Court case. A3**

◆ **A federal jury convicted El Shafie Elsheikh, a British Islamic State fighter, of being part of a brutal cell that murdered American hostages. A3**

◆ **The Omicron BA.2 variant has dominated new infections in the U.S. for weeks without setting off a major surge so far. A5**

◆ **A booster dose of the Covid-19 vaccine from Pfizer and BioNTech generated a strong immune response in children 5 to 11 years old, the companies said. A5**

◆ **Three more Texas international bridges will get relief from state trucking inspections that have disrupted trade with Mexico, Gov. Abbott said. A2**

◆ **U.S. law enforcement linked the Lazarus Group, an online crime syndicate connected to the North Korean government, to the hack of online game Axie Infinity. B4**

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Elon Musk, speaking Thursday at a TED conference in Vancouver, said he aims to ensure Twitter is 'maximally trusted.'

Musk Offers to Buy Twitter As Company Mulls Poison Pill

Elon Musk went full-on corporate raider a week into his rolling clash with Twitter Inc., vice if rebuffed.

By Rob Copeland, Rebecca Elliott and Cara Lombardo

offering a \$43 billion bid for the company and warning he might sell his stake in the ser-

vice if rebuffed. The Thursday offer was the latest in a will-he-or-won't-he saga between the world's richest man and the social-media service. The offer was at once serious—Mr. Musk disclosed it in a federal filing—and at the same time tinged with humor, as the offer was for \$54.20 per share, a barely veiled mari-

juana reference. Twitter confirmed it had received the offer and said its board would review the proposal. It is also weighing a so-called poison pill, a legal mechanism that would prevent Mr. Musk from increasing his stake in the company significantly, according to a person familiar with the situation.

Investors were unimpressed; Twitter shares fell nearly 2% to \$45.08 per share, indicating skepticism that a deal would happen.

◆ **Musk looks to next frontier after space, car ventures... A6**
◆ **Heard on the Street: Offer gives board a pricey out... B10**

Takeover Bid Faces Many Hurdles

By Liz Hoffman and Cara Lombardo

The richest man in the world should be able to buy anything he wants. But Elon Musk's \$43 billion bid for Twitter Inc. looks like a long shot. Shareholders aren't rally-

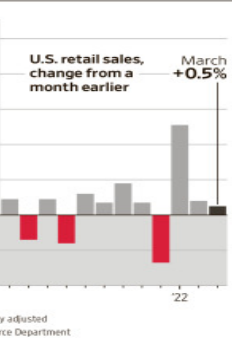
ing behind him. The board is preparing to throw up roadblocks and might put in place a so-called poison pill to block Mr. Musk from acquiring more shares. And it isn't clear that Mr. Musk, despite his vast fortune, can come up with the money. Like everything with the Tesla Inc. chief executive,

crypto enthusiast and Twitter troll, Mr. Musk's \$54.20-a-share offer flouts nearly every norm in the merger playbook. The eccentricity that helped make him a billionaire could now be a liability in the eyes of Twitter's board and the financial backers he'll need.

Mr. Musk said at a TED Talk on Thursday that he is not sure he will actually pull it off, though he said he has "sufficient assets." He has given no indication of how he might pay for the deal. Would-be acquirers—especially uninvited ones—typically show up with the money in hand, or at least a guarantee from a bank that

Retail Spending Rises Again

U.S. retail sales increased in March for the third straight month as consumers confronted the highest inflation in four decades and absorbed record-high gasoline prices. Retail and restaurant spending rose by 0.5% compared with the previous month. A2



Mortgage Rates Climb to 5%, Highest in More Than 10 Years

The interest rate on the U.S.'s most popular mortgage hit 5% for the first time in more than a decade, extending a sharp rise that has yet to significantly slow the red-hot housing market. Interest on the average 30-year fixed-rate mortgage climbed from 4.72% a week ago to its highest level since early 2011, government-mortgage company Freddie Mac said Thursday. Fifteen months ago, mortgage rates were at

all-time lows. The fastest three-month increase in interest rates since 1987 has made the housing market ground zero for the Federal Reserve's efforts to tame inflation. Home buyers, already facing surging house prices, are now contending with a substantial increase in financing expenses, further lifting monthly payments. A year ago, buying the median U.S. home at prevailing rates meant a monthly mortgage bill of about \$1,223 after a 20% down payment, accord-

ing to calculations by George Ratiu, an economist at Realtor.com. At recent rates, such a purchase would require a monthly payment of nearly \$1,700—a 38% increase, he estimated. (News Corp. parent of The Wall Street Journal, operates Realtor.com.) Even compared with searing inflation elsewhere in the economy, that counts as extraordinary price growth. It also strikes at the bedrock of many families' finances, Mr. Ratiu said. "Most Americans

'I Hate Doodle Dogs': Endless Poodle Hybrids Spark Backlash

The popular pets pit owners against people tired of seeing the pooches everywhere

By Sarah E. Needleman

Since adopting an Australian labradoodle a few months ago, Luke Kanies has felt a little sheepish that his new pet, Westley, doesn't align with his nonconformist lifestyle. Mr. Kanies stands out as a tech entrepreneur with pierced ears and a mind-set that comes from growing up on a hippie commune. His four-legged companion vanishes in the hordes of "doodle dogs"—canines that are part poodle and part other breeds—that populate the parks of Portland, Ore. Almost all of them have curly coats and button noses, making Westley far from "unique."

popular, but not this popular," said Mr. Kanies, 46 years old. "It's like showing up at a party wearing the same dress as everybody else." A deluge of doodle dogs that has been in the making for more than a decade turned into a tsunami during the pandemic. Despite typically costing a few thousand dollars apiece, poodle hybrids, which come in more than a dozen varieties, seem to be taking over the dog runs across the country. Their omnipresence, though, has triggered a backlash that has spilled up online and into the real world. The trendy canines have been "I knew they were

You Lease, You Owe, 'Hell or High Water'

Some small businesses leasing equipment find themselves stuck when trouble strikes

By Ruth Simon

Small-business owners often rely on leasing for their process, but it has fueled bitter clashes between owners and leasing companies. The culprit is a provision in most lease and finance contracts that binds owners to make years of monthly payments, no matter what happens to their business and even if the equipment doesn't work or is returned.

The industry calls it the "hell or high water." Nicole Carranza and her husband leased \$59,000 worth of equipment for a restaurant they planned to open in La Habra, Calif., just before the pandemic. After it began, they couldn't finance additional equipment, so they dropped their plan and canceled the order. Only one item had shipped. The vendor returned the money paid for the rest of the equipment to the leasing company, Pawnee Leasing Corp. Pawnee told the Carranzas they still had a lease contract. It said that after a deduction for the returned

INSIDE



JASON GAY
Is it OK to celebrate just making the playoffs? If you're the Timberwolves, yes. A12



MANSSION
The Omaha home where Warren Buffett launched his business empire is for sale. M1



Ruins in Andriivka, a Ukrainian village west of Kyiv, on Thursday. The nation continued to brace for a Russian offensive in the east.

RUSSIAN FLAGSHIP SINKS IN BLACK SEA; E.U. COULD BAN OIL

Ukraine Claims Its Missiles Hit Vessel — Moscow's Global Isolation Grows

By MATINA STEVIS-GRIDNEFF and RICHARD PÉREZ-PEÑA BRUSSELS — Russia's faltering war against Ukraine suffered a pair of setbacks Thursday when the flagship of Russia's Black Sea fleet sank after a catastrophic explosion...

Cities Rethink Traffic Stops By the Police

This article is by David D. Kirkpatrick, Steve Eder and Kim Barker.

Los Angeles is overhauling its traffic policing, aiming to stop pulling over cars — frequently with Black drivers — for trivial infractions like broken taillights or expired tags as a pretext to search for drugs or guns.

Soviet-Era Missiles Now Guard Ukraine's Skies

By ANDREW HIGGINS

DOBRA, Slovakia — Driving back to his village near the Ukrainian border last week, the mayor had to stop to let a train pass and assumed he wouldn't have to wait long. But the flatbed wagons, stacked high with military equipment, just kept coming.

An Air Defense System From Slovakia Adds to the Arms Flow

including the United States, are scrambling to keep the weapons flowing and bulk up the country's defenses. Bolstering Ukraine's long-range air defense capabilities is seen as especially critical.

Ukraine's Skies

ferred Slovakia, a fellow NATO member, a substitute battery of American-made Patriot missiles if it would "donate" its aging S-300 system to Ukraine.

In Russia, a New Iron Curtain Falls on Storied Ballet Stages

By ALEX MARSHALL

AMSTERDAM — Just days after the invasion of Ukraine, Olga Smirnova, one of Russia's most important ballerinas, posted an emotional statement on Telegram, the messaging app.

Smirnova said in a recent interview in Amsterdam, adding that returning would be, "quite frankly, dangerous."

33 Bullets, a Crowded Subway And, Astonishingly, No Deaths

By SARAH MASLIN NIR

Inside the roughly 750 square feet of a subway car on Tuesday morning, a gunman unleashed a hail of bullets, firing at rush-hour commuters at close range — captive victims.

After Toying With Twitter, Musk Now Wants It All

This article is by Mike Isaac, Kate Conger and Lauren Hirsch.

For the past two weeks, Elon Musk has made it clear he wants to own a piece of Twitter. First, he revealed that he bought 9 percent of the company. Then he toyed with joining its board of directors.

Elon Musk's bid for Twitter could change its moderation policies.

Elon Musk's bid for Twitter could change its moderation policies. Musk's bid for Twitter could change its moderation policies.



Elon Musk's bid for Twitter could change its moderation policies.



INTERNATIONAL A4-10 Pulling Away From France Many African countries are increasingly troubled by the ongoing influence of their former colonial power. PAGE A5

NATIONAL A11-17, 20 Road Rage Shootings on Rise Dozens of episodes have been reported in Texas alone amid a pandemic surge in gun purchases and a country increasingly on edge. PAGE A11

BUSINESS B1-6 No Quick Fix for Supply Chain The Biden administration's economic advisers see factors besides the pandemic complicating global trading patterns for years to come. PAGE B3



WEEKEND ARTS C1-16 A Cracking 'American Buffalo' Jesse Green has high praise for a revival of David Mamet's play. Above, Laurence Fishburne and Sam Rockwell. PAGE C1

SPORTS B8-10 It's Jackie Robinson Day The Hall of Fame will announce the start of a two-year project to re-examine the journey of Black players. PAGES B8-9

Eye Rolls Turn to Exhilaration The Europa Conference League, originally dismissed as irrelevant, has won over soccer teams and fans. PAGE B10

An Antarctic Puddle Solved Vast plumes of warm Pacific air probably caused the collapse of two ice shelves, researchers say. PAGE A5

Expanding a Gifted Program Mayor Eric Adams said New York would add seats for kindergartners and third graders and scrap a test. PAGE A20

From Booming to Buying Time A changing environment is testing the business model of the \$15 billion rapid-delivery start-up Goop. PAGE B1

Putting a New Face on Liberty The Italian-born artist Paola Pivi took one of America's most familiar symbols and made it new and strange. PAGE C10

OPINION A18-19 Paul Krugman PAGE A19

OPINION A18-19 Paul Krugman PAGE A19



The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

RE. 11. 12. 13. 14.

Partly sunny 71/54 • Tomorrow: Shower 71/45 B8

Democracy Dies in Darkness

FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2022 • B2

Musk moves to take over Twitter

Tesla chief says making platform private will safeguard 'town square'

BY FAIZ SIDDIQUI AND AARON GREGG

Elon Musk has launched a \$43 billion hostile takeover bid for Twitter, the social network that the eccentric billionaire behind Tesla uses as a hobby to connect with his 81 million followers, saying he thinks the platform is essential to the functioning of democracy.

At a TED conference on Thursday, Musk outlined his plan to take Twitter private, saying he sees the platform as a way to foster conversation and potentially even prevent international conflicts. But he acknowledged that if he took ownership he would be blamed for problems, and even before that his bid could fail.

"My strong intuitive sense is that having a public platform that is maximally trusted and broadly inclusive is extremely important to the future of civilization," he said. "I don't care about the economics at all."

The offer to take the company private in a securities filing dated Wednesday for \$54.20 a share marks a major escalation in a weeks-long battle by Musk to gain influence at Twitter, following his acquiring a more than 9 percent stake and flirting with a seat on the board. In the filing, he called it a "best and final offer." If it is not accepted, he added, "I would need to reconsider my position as a shareholder."

Twitter confirmed in a news release Thursday that it had received an "unsolicited, nonbinding proposal" from Musk. "The Twitter Board of Directors will carefully review the proposal to

SEE MUSK ON A15

Blast sinks Russian warship



PAVEL KLUMOK/REUTERS

A residential building destroyed during the Russian siege of Mariupol, where Ukrainian defenders have been losing ground.

STRIKE OR ACCIDENT, SIDES DISPUTE CAUSE

Moscow missile warns U.S., NATO on weapons

BY JOANNA SLATER, DAN LAMOTHE, EMILY RAUHALA AND KAREN DEYOUNG

Russia's premier warship in the Black Sea sustained severe damage and sank on its way back to port early Thursday, a major symbolic blow to Moscow as the invasion of Ukraine entered its eighth week and both sides prepare for a potentially devastating battle over the eastern Donbas region.

The cause of the explosion on the missile cruiser Moskva remains contested, with Russia saying a fire detonated ammunition onboard and forced the crew to evacuate. Ukraine said it struck the Russian vessel with a missile, and a senior U.S. official told The Washington Post on Thursday evening that the ship sank as a result of a Ukrainian attack, but did not confirm what weapon was used.

Earlier in the day, U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan called the damage to the ship a setback for Russia regardless of how it was disabled. Either it was "just incompetence" or "they came under attack," he said at a breakfast. "Neither is a particularly good outcome for them."

The war in Ukraine, which President Biden this week described as genocide, has killed thousands of civilians, forced more than 4.7 million Ukrainians to flee the country and reordered the geopolitical landscape in Europe.

Smaller European nations that also feel threatened by Russia

SEE UKRAINE ON A5

50 days of war: Five ways Russia's invasion has changed the world. **A8**

CIA: Director labels Bucha killings "crimes" and blasts Putin. **A11**

Timely prayer: For Passover, words that recognize refugees. **B1**

For Tunisians, ripple effects come down to a loaf of bread

BY DAVID J. LYNCH

TUNIS — The big man wearing the Volvo Trucks baseball cap refused to take no for an answer when baker Mohamed Lounissi told him he was out of bread.

The last five baguettes resting on the counter belonged to another customer, a woman who had paid for them earlier in the day and would soon be returning to collect her order, Lounissi explained.

The man quickly grew agitated, pointing and reaching across the glass display case. "You have bread, but you don't

want to sell it to me," he complained. "Give me bread or I'm calling the police!"

As Lounissi repeated that the bakery had exhausted its supply, the man pulled out his cellphone and summoned the authorities, a scene captured by the store's security camera and later replayed for a journalist. When a police officer arrived, Lounissi explained the situation to him and the big man eventually stormed off without bread or satisfaction.

"I closed for 10 days because I didn't have supplies and just

SEE TUNISIA ON A17

Poland builds a border wall while welcoming Ukrainians

BY CHICO HARLAN AND PIOTR ZAKOWIECKI

MICHALOWO, POLAND — Her impulse was to welcome people in desperation, so Maria Ancipuk made sure her border town was ready. As immigrants mostly from the Middle East started streaming into Poland last year from Belarus, she lobbied the mayor to offer up two empty town-owned apartments for anybody who might need them. Volunteers changed the wallpaper and renovated the flooring. Ancipuk bought a refrigerator and a television.

Five months later, though, the apartments are empty.

Rather than being welcomed into Polish homes, the vast majority of people crossing from Belarus are being detained or pushed back by Polish authorities.

That stance, in effect just to the north of Poland's border with Ukraine, means two different groups seeking the same thing — refuge — are arriving to find what amounts to two different versions of Europe.

Along one segment of Poland's border, where 2.5 million

SEE POLAND ON A10

Far from Congo, family finds peril in Michigan

Parents mourn their son, fatally shot this month by Grand Rapids police

BY SAM EASTER AND BRITTANY SHAMMAS

GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. — Peter and Dorcas Lyoya thought they had found safe haven in the United States, a world away from the violence in their home country, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

That sense of security was shattered last week, when their oldest son Patrick Lyoya was killed by a police officer in the western Michigan city of Grand Rapids. What began as a traffic stop ended with Lyoya shot in the head, the latest police shooting of an unarmed Black man to shake the nation. He was 26 years old, a father of two.

"I'm surprised and astonished to see that it's here that my son has been killed with a bullet," his

SEE SHOOTING ON A15



SKL PUGLIANO/GETTY IMAGES

Dorcas Lyoya spoke tearfully Thursday about the killing of her son, Patrick Lyoya, by a police officer. "I'm surprised and astonished to see that it's here that my son has been killed with a bullet," she said.

Their harrowing account: 14 months of torment by ISIS

Heated testimony from hostages in lone U.S. trial for one of 'the Beatles'

BY RACHEL WEINER AND JUSTIN JOUVENAL

Syria's civil war was raging in March 2013 when black vehicles cut off an Italian aid worker's car in the north of the country. Masked gunmen forced Federico Motka and a colleague into the trunk of a car and sped off.

"Welcome to Syria, you mutt," Motka recalled one of the captors ominously telling the aid workers in British-accented English, before they were driven to a camp of Islamist militants who were battling the Syrian regime.

This was the beginning of 14 months of torment for Motka and other foreigners held by a group that would soon be known worldwide as the Islamic State. In

Alexandria federal court, Motka testified that he grew up to fear the British-accented man and two others from England the most. Captives dubbed them "the Beatles."

During the only U.S. trial for a member of the infamous terror cell named after the British rock group, Motka and other hostages have offered searing testimony about their captivity. El Shafie Elsheikh was convicted Thursday for his role in the kidnapping and deaths of four Americans — journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff and aid workers Peter Kassig and Kayla Mueller.

In the eight years since the Islamic State horrified people around the world by beheading humanitarians and reporters on camera, many of the witnesses have shared their stories in books and media interviews. But this month's trial was the first time

SEE HOSTAGES ON A4

Convicted: British ISIS militant guilty in killing of hostages. **A4**

IN THE NEWS



THE NATION
The Republican-led Kentucky legislature passed one of the most restrictive abortion laws in the nation, overriding Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear's veto. **A2**
The man accused of shooting 10 people aboard a Brooklyn subway train appeared in court and was ordered held without bail. **A3**

THE WORLD
South Korean President-elect Yoon Suk-yeol said his country

must take on a larger role in the world and become a stronger ally to the United States. **A7**
Marine Le Pen tested the limits of trying to portray herself as a more moderate politician in the French presidential election. **A13**
THE ECONOMY
Mortgage rates swelled above 5 percent for the first time in more than a decade, an unexpectedly rapid ascent that could usher new uncertainty into an

inflation-dogged economy. **A14**

House lawmakers launched an investigation into the efficacy and security of the identity verification contractor ID.me. **A14**

THE REGION
Amtrak is moving to seize control of Union Station through eminent domain to pursue repairs and concurrent expansion. **B1**
This week marks 50 years of obsessing, mourning and fawning over the National Zoo's giant pandas. **B1**
The private consor-

tium managing Maryland's Purple Line project has signed a \$2.3 billion contract with a new construction team to complete the long-delayed light-rail line. **B1**
A 15-year-old who was shot to death this week just steps from his new home in Columbia Heights had encountered tensions in the D.C. neighborhood, his family said. **B1**
Two dogs were taken during separate armed robberies in D.C., coming as the city faces a 30 percent rise in violent crime this year. **B3**

INSIDE



WEEKEND
Panda party
A guide to celebrating 50 years of giant pandas at the National Zoo. **A19**
STYLE
Amy's boycott
The popular organic food company is accused of mistreating workers. **C1**

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COMICSA19
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TELEVISIONB6
WORLD NEWSA6

CONTENT © 2022
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A devastating toll Through child marriage or paid adoption, Afghan girls are bearing the brunt of the Taliban's economic crisis. **A6**

Auditor faults state on corrupt lawyers

Long-awaited report says the bar failed to rein in attorneys with problematic records.

BY MATT HAMILTON

The State Bar of California has failed to effectively discipline corrupt attorneys, allowing lawyers to repeatedly violate professional standards and harm members of the public, according to a long-awaited audit of the agency released Thursday.

The audit of the State Bar was ordered last year by the Legislature in the wake of a Los Angeles Times investigation that documented how the now-disgraced attorney Tom Girardi cultivated close relationships with the agency and kept an unblemished law license despite over 100 lawsuits against him or his firm — with many alleging misappropriation of client money.

After the State Bar acknowledged its “mistakes” in handling complaints against Girardi that spanned four decades, the Legislature mandated the public examination of the attorney discipline system.

The audit concluded that the State Bar failed to properly investigate some attorneys even as complaints poured in, relied on confidential warning letters and other nonpublic methods that did little to deter misconduct, and has not dealt

[See Audit, A12]

Musk’s unlikely bid to buy Twitter

Wall Street appears skeptical of Tesla CEO’s well-hyped \$43-billion proposal.

BY RUSS MITCHELL, BRIAN CONTRERAS AND SAMANTHA MASUNAGA

It was a classic Elon Musk move: announce a new offering that would radically transform the technology landscape, flog it online and in social media posts, only for it to turn out that the offering in question was nowhere close to market-ready.

Only this time, it wasn’t a self-driving taxi or domestic robot or electric truck the world’s richest man was touting. It was a plan to buy Twitter, Musk’s favorite megaphone and time-waster and, according to him, a public square of vital importance to democracy.

Early Thursday, the Tesla and SpaceX chief executive notified the Securities and Exchange Commission of a bid to buy all of Twitter for \$54.20 a share, or \$43 billion. “Twitter needs to be transformed as a private company,” he wrote in a letter. [See Musk, A9]

The politicization of social media

Elon Musk’s offer to buy Twitter raises concerns over how he would handle content. **BUSINESS, A8**



A WOMAN trains as a member of Ukraine’s Territorial Defense Forces, the nation’s reserve unit. Besides joining the reserves, civilians have aided the war effort by delivering supplies, donating food and more. **EFREM LUKATSKY Associated Press**

Helping any way they can

As civilians step up, even peeling potatoes is heroic

BY KATE LINTHICUM

More than 4.6 million people have fled Ukraine since Russia invaded on Feb. 24, sparking the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. They have traveled on buses and trains, folded their dearest possessions into suitcases. They have crossed into foreign lands, their futures unknown.

But millions more have stayed to help defend their country. Some have taken up arms, but others are helping in different ways. There is the teacher who now peels potatoes in a soup kitchen. The DJ staffing emergency call lines who says she keeps “a small room in my brain” to hold all the pain she has heard. There are psychologists trying to help people process trauma in real time and students risking their

[See Civilians, A4]



SVITLANA DOROSHENKO kisses her boy Maxim as Ihor Doroshenko, her father, watches the news in their Odessa apartment. They can’t afford to flee. **CAROLYN COLE Los Angeles Times**

Ed Buck gets 30 years for fatal drug and sex crimes

BY MATTHEW ORMSETH

Ed Buck, once a fixture of West Hollywood’s political scene, was sentenced Thursday to 30 years in prison for drug and sex crimes that included providing lethal doses of methamphetamine to two men.

To the outside world, Buck was a champion of causes such as fur bans and AIDS awareness, and a

donor to Democratic officeholders.

But behind the walls of his Laurel Avenue apartment was a nightmare. For nearly a decade, the wealthy, white Buck lured young Black men at the lowest points in their lives — homeless, addicted, resorting to subsistence-level sex work — into what he called “party and play” sessions.

Amid squalor that belied his reputation as a man who

had achieved great wealth at a young age, Buck plied the men with drugs and then sexually assaulted them while they were unconscious or immobile. In two cases, he injected his victims with fatal amounts of methamphetamine.

A jury convicted Buck last year of a host of felonies, including distributing methamphetamine resulting in death and enticement to

[See Buck, A12]

Feinstein pushes back on criticism

California’s senior senator, 88, faces new questions about her ability to fulfill job responsibilities. **PERSPECTIVES, A2**

School vaccine mandate delayed

Newsom pauses state requirement for academic year, while lawmaker says he’ll drop his bill. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Weather
Foggy, then sunny.
L.A. Basin: 71/54. **B6**



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

OPENING ACT

The Dodgers, led by Walker Buehler, mount a rally to beat the Reds 9-3 in the home opener. **SPORTS, D1**



MAYOR GARCETTI used the backdrop of the 6th Street Bridge for his speech on the state of L.A. **GARY CORONADO Los Angeles Times**

Garcetti stresses safety in address

Mayor, in his final State of the City speech, focuses on crime, sanitation.

BY DAKOTA SMITH AND JULIA WICK

Mayor Eric Garcetti vowed in his final State of the City speech Thursday to ensure that Los Angeles is clean and safe, an acknowledgment of the uptick in violent crime and the unsanitary and bleak conditions on the streets that have dogged his last year at City Hall.

In his yearly address, the mayor announced plans to hire hundreds of sanitation workers, including Angelenos who have been incarcerated or unhouseed, and said the city would spend an additional \$1 billion on

homelessness in the coming fiscal year.

His proposed budget, to be released next week, will also “bring about a safer city,” said Garcetti, who didn’t specify how much he would set aside for the Police Department, which typically consumes the largest share of “unrestricted” city revenue. A trend that angers groups who want spending reduced.

“We need to ensure that this is the safest and the cleanest city that it can be,” Garcetti said during a speech delivered from the under-construction 6th Street Bridge near Boyle Heights.

After nearly a decade as mayor, Garcetti made his last State of the City address facing an uncertain future. Nominated to serve as the ambassador to India, [See Garcetti, A9]





EDUCACIÓN La tasa de repetidores se reduce a la mitad en un curso

P22

BABELIA Cristina Peri Rossi, el amor como una droga

GUERRA EN EUROPA. DÍA 51

Rusia elevará la amenaza nuclear si Finlandia y Suecia entran en la OTAN

Medvédev asegura que desplegará armas cerca de los países nórdicos

C. TORRALBA / M. V. GÓMEZ
Madrid / Bruselas
Rusia elevó este jueves su amenaza a Occidente. El vicepresidente del Consejo de Seguridad ruso, Dmitri Medvédev, aseguró que

Moscú desplegará armas nucleares cerca de los países nórdicos si Finlandia y Suecia se adhieren a la OTAN, tal y como han dado a entender en los últimos días. "No habrá nada más que hablar sobre cualquier estatus no nuclear de la región del [mar] Báltico, el equilibrio deberá ser restablecido", señaló, mientras Lituania respondía que el Ejército ruso dispone ya de este tipo de armamento en Kaliningrado, un enclave ruso entre Polonia y el territorio lituano. La adhesión supondría además, dijo Medvédev, el despliegue de más tropas rusas en la zona.

Las amenazas del Kremlin a Suecia y Finlandia han sido constantes desde finales de 2021. Pese a no pertenecer a la OTAN, su colaboración con la Alianza ha aumentado en los últimos años y desde que Putin invadió Ucrania los ministros de Exteriores y Defensa han participado en todas las citas del grupo trasatlántico. Su secretario general, Jens Stoltenberg, ha dado a entender que recibirán a los nórdicos rápido y con los brazos abiertos. **PÁGINAS 2 Y 3**

El BCE pondrá fin en verano a la adquisición de deuda, por la inflación

LLUÍS PELLICER, Madrid
El Banco Central Europeo anunció este jueves que pondrá fin a la compra de deuda en verano por la fuerte inflación, agravada por la guerra en Ucrania. El Eurobanco deja atrás el programa con el que en los últimos años ha impulsado una expansión monetaria sin precedentes y acerca la subida de los tipos de interés. **PÁGINA 39**

EDITORIAL EN LA PÁGINA 10

El Reino Unido mandará a los migrantes del Canal a Ruanda

EL PAÍS, en internet

La edición impresa de EL PAÍS no se publica mañana, Sábado Santo, salvo en Cataluña y Baleares. Esa edición estará disponible en la aplicación de EL PAÍS para suscriptores y en Kiosko y Más. Los lectores encontrarán información actualizada en elpais.com durante las 24 horas.

Engaños y descontrol en las compras del 'caso Medina'

La adjudicación se realizó sin explicar si la oferta era la más cara o la más barata y sin decir que Luceño y su socio eran intermediarios

JOSÉ MANUEL ROMERO, Madrid
La investigación de la Fiscalía Anticorrupción ha destapado el descontrol que reinó en el Ayuntamiento de Madrid en la compra de material sanitario en marzo de 2020 a los comisionistas Alberto Luceño y Luis Medina, que cometieron una presunta estafa de 11 millones de euros. El consejo

de administración de su Empresa de Servicios Funerarios, con flexibilidad para pagar la mitad de la operación por adelantado, se reunió el día 24 de madrugada a través de un chat, según el sumario del caso. La coordinadora de Presupuestos, Elena Collado, les contó que se trataba de adquirir un millón de mascarillas a 6,6 euros

la unidad. No explicó si era la oferta más barata o más cara ni dijo que la operación, finalmente apoyada por todos los grupos como la de test rápidos y guantes, se hacía a través de Luceño y Medina. "En el contrato de las mascarillas me llevé el 44,85% y en la otra operación un 49,91%", explicó Luceño al fiscal. **PÁGINAS 14 Y 15**



AFICIONADOS ALEMANES TOMAN EL CAMP NOU EN LA DERROTA DEL BARÇA. El Barcelona fue ayer eliminado de la Liga Europa al caer (2-3) ante el Eintracht de Fráncfort. Unos 30.000 hinchas alemanes viajaron a la capital catalana y en el Camp Nou se vivió un ambiente enrarecido ante la masiva presencia de seguidores rivales, lo que provocó una enorme polémica. / E. FONTOBERTA (EFE) **PÁGINAS 31 Y 32**

Cotización de Twitter en Bolsa



Fuente: Yahoo Finance.

EL PAÍS

Elon Musk se lanza por sorpresa a por Twitter

El hombre más rico del mundo ofrece 43.400 millones de dólares por la compañía

ÁLVARO SÁNCHEZ, Madrid
Elon Musk, el hombre más rico del mundo, dueño de la compañía aeroespacial SpaceX y consejero delegado del fabricante de vehículos eléctricos Tesla, quiere ser dueño de su propia red social. Este jueves ofreció por

sorpresas 43.400 millones de dólares (casi 40.000 millones de euros) —a razón de 51,4 dólares por acción— para comprar Twitter, que tiene 217 millones de usuarios diarios: está dispuesto a pagar unos 185 euros por cada uno de esos usuarios. **PÁGINA 37**

Por qué quiere comprar la red social J. Pérez Colomé P38

Esporte B6
Ídolo colombiano
Campeão mundial no Corinthians, Rincón morre aos 55 após sofrer acidente



Rincón após ganhar Mundial, em 2000, no Maracanã

Ilustrada C4
Série 'Pachinko' mostra racismo pouco conhecido

Guia C7
Lojas em SP têm ar de fantásticas fábricas de chocolate

Morte de policiais atinge menor índice em 30 anos

PM de São Paulo registra queda recorde de agentes assassinados em serviço

A Polícia Militar de São Paulo registrou durante o ano passado o menor número de agentes mortos em serviço desde que esses dados começaram a ser contabilizados, há 31 anos.

Quatro policiais morreram em 2021, um em confronto e três deles em acidentes de trânsito durante deslocamentos com viaturas.

Em 2020, foram 18 policiais assassinados no trabalho, sendo 10 em confrontos com criminosos. A PM tem um contingente de 82 mil agentes. Segundo os números obtidos pela Folha, foi a primeira vez desde 1991 que o número de mortes de PMs fica na casa de um dígito. O pior índice registrado é de 1999, com 42 vítimas.

Normalmente, há mais mortes de policiais quando estão de folga — e fazem bicos ou reagem, por exemplo, a um assalto — do que no horário de trabalho.

A queda nos assassinatos coincide com a implantação das câmeras corporais, o "Olho Vivo", medida adotada pela corporação para reduzir a letalidade policial.

Para o diretor-presidente do Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, Renato Sérgio de Lima, além das câmeras corporais, a ação do comando é fundamental para reduzir o número de vítimas. "Quando o comando segura, reduz os confrontos."

Em 2021, a PM registrou 891 confrontos, contra 1.124 no ano anterior. **cotidiano B1**

Coelho assume a Petrobras e elogia política de preços

O presidente da Petrobras, José Mauro Coelho, defendeu, ao tomar posse, ser "necessária" para o país a prática de preços de mercado de combustíveis, criticada pela oposição e por integrantes do governo. A medida, diz, cria um "ambiente de negócios competitivo". **Mercado A14**

Hélio Schwartsman
Bolsonaro quer agora devastar a historiografia

Opinião A2

Pastores suspeitos no MEC foram ao Planalto 35 vezes

Os pastores Arilton Moura e Gilmar Santos, apontados como pivôs do escândalo do balcão de negócios do MEC, estiveram 35 vezes no Palácio do Planalto desde o começo do governo Bolsonaro. As informações foram divulgadas pelo governo após recusa em fornecer dados. **Política A8**



Marlene Bergamo/Folhapress

AOS GRITOS, ALCKMIN EXALTA LULA EM EVENTO SINDICAL

Em discurso para representantes de centrais em São Paulo, ex-governador definiu o ex-presidente como 'o maior líder popular deste país' **Política A6**

Elon Musk faz proposta para comprar Twitter por US\$ 43 bi **A20**

WhatsApp lança grupos com milhares depois da eleição **A7**

Criadores não ficarão reféns da rede, diz chefe do Instagram **A19**

Náufragos são salvos no PA com texto em garrafa
Tripulantes foram resgatados pela Marinha após passarem 17 dias isolados em uma ilha e lançarem bilhete em garrafa no mar. **B5**

EDITORIAIS A2

Nas sombras
Acerca de visitas dos pastores do MEC ao Planalto.

PM mais segura
Sobre impacto potencial das câmeras grava-tudo.

ATMOSFERA

São Paulo hoje
19°
13°
0h 6h 12h 18h 24h



Lázaro Ribeiro/Museu da Memória de Goiás

GOIÁS RETOMA PROCISSÃO DO FOGARÉU E RELEMBRA VÍTIMAS DA COVID

Fieis com tochas em Goiás (GO); patrimônio imaterial do estado, celebração de 277 anos voltou às ruas na Semana Santa após dois anos de pausa por causa da pandemia, com um minuto de silêncio pelos que morreram com a doença **Cotidiano B4**

Moskva, principal navio russo de guerra, afunda

O principal navio de guerra da Rússia no mar Negro, o Moskva, símbolo do poder naval do país, afundou ontem. Os ucranianos afirmam que a embarcação foi atingida por um míssil; os russos dizem que houve um incêndio depois da explosão de munição transportada no navio. **Mundo A9**

A pandemia em 14. abr

Dados das 20h

População vacinada no Brasil
1º ciclo vacinal completo (dose única ou 2ª dose) **75,7%**

Óbitos

Média móvel **Em 24 h**

117 -45,1%*

Total **661.855**

*Variação em relação a 14 dias



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À PARIS LES LEÇONS
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PRÉSIDENTIELLE
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FIGARO OUI FIGARO NON

Réponses à la question de jeudi :
Êtes-vous favorable au rétablissement du septennat ?

NON 47% OUI 53%

TOTAL DE VOTANTS : 199676

Votez aujourd'hui sur lefigaro.fr
Êtes-vous favorable à l'introduction de la proportionnelle aux législatives après 2022 ?

ILLUSTRATION FABIEN CLAIREFOND ; RICK BOWMER/AP

Les institutions s'imposent dans le duel Macron-Le Pen

Proportionnelle, référendum, retour au septennat, convention citoyenne, RIC: les deux candidats rivalisent d'imagination pour séduire les Français et tenter de refonder la démocratie.

Depuis qu'ils sont arrivés en tête du premier tour, marqué par un haut niveau d'abstention (26,3 %), Emmanuel Macron et Marine Le Pen confrontent leur vision des institutions. Ravivant ainsi le vieux débat entre tenants de

la démocratie directe et partisans de la démocratie représentative. Proportionnelle intégrale, éventuel retour au septennat et participation citoyenne pour le président, référendum, RIC et proportionnelle pour Marine Le Pen.

Dans les deux camps, le constat est partagé : élections après élections, sondages après sondages, les Français expriment leur besoin d'une « refondation démocratique ». Une majorité d'entre eux (57 %) estiment que la démoc-

ratie ne fonctionne pas bien, selon un récent baromètre de la confiance politique réalisé par le Cevipof. Une étude qui pousse les candidats à innover dans un domaine pourtant souvent perçu comme technique et compliqué.

→ PARTICIPATION CITOYENNE, SEPTENNAT : LES PISTES DU PRÉSIDENT-CANDIDAT
→ RÉVOLUTION RÉFÉRENDUAIRE, RIC, LE BIG BANG PROMIS PAR MARINE LE PEN
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Cinquante jours d'enfer: les visages de la guerre en Ukraine

Divisée avant l'offensive russe, lancée le 24 février, une nation s'est forgée dans la lutte pour sa survie. Les Ukrainiens résistent, chacun à leur façon, aux assauts et bombardements meurtriers de l'ennemi. PAGE 11

VERONIQUE DE VAILLIERE / LE FIGARO

ÉDITORIAL par Vincent Trémolet de Villers vtremolet@lefigaro.fr

Urgence institutionnelle

Les jours de mélancolie politique, quand les polémiques minuscules et les indignations surjouées se disputent les bandeaux des chaînes d'info, quand la patrouille des castors « fait barrage », quand des étudiants, en pleine guerre d'Ukraine, bloquent leurs facs en chantant *L'Internationale*, quand sont entraînés à terre des militants venus perturber meetings ou conférences de presse, il arrive que l'on s'interroge sur les effets du suffrage universel direct. Rend-il fou? Rend-il bête? En vérité, l'élection présidentielle n'est pour rien dans cette dérive. Mais, à force de lui donner un rôle central, total, définitif, elle concentre une fois tous les cinq ans toute l'énergie politique des citoyens. Ensuite viennent des législatives de confirmation, où le gagnant gagne tout et le perdant est nu. Puis des élections intermédiaires et locales qui, avant l'âge de la retraite, ne déplacent plus personne. La frustration qui en découle est telle que, en 2017 comme en 2022, le rendez-vous des urnes oppose non plus deux projets antagonistes mais deux visions contraires de la démocratie. La première, celle d'Emmanuel Macron, s'articule autour du suffrage, des traités européens, des principes et des jurisprudences des différentes cours; la

seconde, celle de Marine Le Pen, fait primer, sur cette subtile construction politique et juridique, la volonté populaire dont les référendums à répétition seraient l'expression la plus pure. En schématisant, les premiers se méfient du peuple, trop imprévisible, et tempèrent sa souveraineté par la force du droit, la sagesse de l'État et les vertus de l'expertise. Les seconds, au risque de la démagogie, veulent étendre indéfiniment son pouvoir, qui'ils considèrent confisqué par des élites « hors-sol », et forcément défallantes. Dans la querelle institutionnelle entre les deux candidats apparaît, de façon caricaturale, la crise démocratique qui traverse tout l'Occident. Une représentation nationale qui représenterait véritablement les électeurs serait un premier point d'apaisement. Le PS et LR regroupent 130 députés, le RN et LFI n'en ont même pas 30! C'est en restaurant le minimum vital de l'équilibre démocratique (proportionnelle, nouveau rythme électoral, pratique raisonnable du référendum) que l'on fera décroître le vote tribunitien. ■

Une crise démocratique qui traverse tout l'Occident

Elon Musk prêt à déboursier 43 milliards pour s'offrir Twitter

Le fantasme Elon Musk a mis sur la table 43 milliards de dollars pour racheter Twitter. Entré au capital du réseau social ces dernières semaines, le patron de Tesla et de SpaceX juge que l'entreprise californienne ne respecte pas suffisamment la liberté d'expression. « Twitter a un potentiel extraordinaire. Je vais le libérer », écrit-il ce jeudi au conseil d'administration, qui va examiner son offre. Il n'est pas exclu qu'un géant de la tech surenchérisse... PAGES 22 ET 23

AUDEMARS PIGUET
Le Brassus



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50th anniversary

Award-winning author's fairy tales give readers world of imagination LIFE, PAGE 16

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Germany to double renewable power capacity in 8 years WORLD, PAGE 10



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FRIDAY, April 15, 2022

Xi: Build world-class spaceport

President tours Wenchang launch facility in Hainan

By ZHAO LEI
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President Xi Jinping has called on the Wenchang Space Launch Center in the southern island province of Hainan to build itself into a world-class spaceport.

Xi made the remark on Tuesday afternoon as he visited the launch complex, the newest and southernmost of its kind in China.

Inside Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, said that the Wenchang center must uphold a spirit of hard work and perseverance, research the latest developments in the global space field and the strategic needs of China's space industry, strengthen its sense of mission and responsibility, take the lead in innovation and comprehensively boost its space launch capabilities.

He stressed that the facility is tasked with servicing China's new-generation, heavy-lift carrier rockets and it plays a significant role in the country's deep-space exploration endeavors, making it quite unique in the nation's space sector.

The president said the center should make full plans and preparations for upcoming launch missions, which will deploy multiple spacecraft in orbit to complete China's Tiangong space station. It should strive to make all these missions successful and make new achievements to welcome the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, which is scheduled to be held later this year.

Accompanied by General Zhang Youda, a vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, and several other high-ranking military officers,



President Xi Jinping inspects the launching tower and other facilities at the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in Hainan province on Tuesday. He extended his greetings to all the staff stationed at the site. LI GANG / XINHUA

Xi inspected launch towers and other infrastructure and listened to a report about the center's condition and development plan and the preparatory work for upcoming missions.

According to a report on China Central Television, Xi was given a guided tour of the assembly and testing halls of the Tianzhou 4 cargo spacecraft and the Long March 7 carrier rocket that will take the cargo craft into space.

Through this tour, Xi has completed his inspections of all of China's space launch facilities.

In February 2013, he visited the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region, which was his first inspection of a Chinese space launch base following his election as general secretary of the CPC Central Committee.

In June 2017, he inspected the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in Shanxi province, and he visited the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan province in February 2018.

After years of selection and discussion, the central government decided to build a launch site in Wenchang,

Hainan province, in 2007. Construction work started in September 2009 and was completed in October 2014. The first launch at the facility took place in June 2016 with the debut of the Long March 7 rocket.

Covering about 12 square kilometers, the equivalent of 1,700 soccer fields, the center is tasked with launching heavyweight satellites, deep-space probes, and components of the Tiangong space station.

The biggest advantage of the facility is its low latitude — only 19

degrees north of the equator, which enables rockets to save considerable fuel and to carry heavier payloads, compared with launchers from the other three centers in China.

So far, the Wenchang center has serviced 16 launch missions. It is the only launch facility in China capable of launching Long March 5-series rockets, the biggest and most powerful in the country's rocket fleet.

China's Chang'e 5 lunar probe, the Tianwen 1 Mars explorer and the Tiangong space station's core module were all launched from the facility.

RIGHT TRACK

PBOC to deploy tools to support real economy

By ZHOU LANXU and LI XIANG

The People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, said on Thursday it will use multiple monetary tools to step up support for the real economy and reduce corporate financing costs.

Economic experts said they expect the PBOC to launch high-profile easing measures, including a cut in the reserve requirement ratio this week at the earliest, while the possibility of a near-term interest rate reduction exists.

"The PBOC will punctually and flexibly use multiple monetary tools, improve the functioning of monetary policy on both the aggregate and structural fronts, and beef up support for the real economy," said Ruan Jianhong, a spokeswoman for the central bank.

With policy assistance, the country's credit growth is expected to be steady and facilitate economic recovery, Ruan said, adding that China's long-term economic fundamentals remain solid despite resurgent cases of COVID-19 and a rise in external uncertainties.

Ruan made the remarks at a news conference on Thursday after the State Council, China's Cabinet, decided at an executive meeting on Wednesday to lower the reserve requirement ratio at an appropriate time.

The RRR refers to the proportion of money that lenders must hold as reserves. China last cut the RRR in December by 0.5 percentage point, sending the weighted average RRR to 8.4 percent.

Sun Guofeng, head of the PBOC's monetary policy department, said the RRR cut will be part of the central bank's stepped-up efforts to reduce financing costs in the real economy and strengthen financial assistance to sectors hit hard by COVID-19, such as small and micro enterprises and self-employed businesses.

Sun added that the PBOC will also launch two targeted re-lending facilities at an early date to boost technological innovation and inclusive elderly care services.

See **PBOC**, page 3

Shanghai boosts care for elderly, critically ill

By CAO CHEN and ZHOU WENTING in Shanghai

Shanghai has bolstered caregiving services for the elderly who live alone, patients with critical illnesses, people with disabilities, and low-income families during the latest wave of COVID-19 infections.

Civil affairs authorities in the city collected information about elderly people in need of help and carried out care campaigns to share with them local prevention and control policies and offer psychological counseling.

At the Taichen community in Jiading district, for example, the neighborhood committee has been offering elderly people who live by themselves free fresh food.

"My husband and I have trouble using smartphones to purchase food online. The committee helps us order food and donates daily necessities to us. We're grateful," said a resident surnamed Gu.

The service is also available in other regions, including the Xujiahui subdistrict where a team of 15 couriers collect take-away meals from local canteens and deliver them to elderly individuals.

Jiahui Health, which is responsible for nucleic acid tests in Xuhui's Hongmei subdistrict, said medical workers proactively provided services to more than 900 elderly residents and other vulnerable people at their doorstep.



Patients who have recovered from COVID-19 leave the National Exhibition and Convention Center, the largest makeshift hospital in Shanghai, on Thursday. LAI XINLIN / JEFANG DAILY

"Each of the 27 workers in the team climbed at least 80 floors each day of the testing in these neighborhoods without lifts to help the groups in need," said Lyu Yubo, a doctor from the hospital's imaging department.

In-house services are available for elderly people with chronic diseases living alone or those who require assistance with daily personal care.

The Shanghai Disabled Persons' Federation has also connected with disabled individuals to determine their needs. Such individuals can contact a hotline for counseling.

Official data shows that local rescue management stations have taken care of nearly 1,900 people who have poor living conditions due to the outbreak. Some 640 million yuan (\$100.5 million) in social assistance funds was distributed in March to over 170,000 residents struggling financially due to COVID-19, according to the Shanghai Civil Affairs Bureau.

For those suffering from severe diseases, such as cancer or mental illness, the Shanghai Red Cross Society

has raised funds to help with their essential needs.

The Shanghai Health Commission said the city currently has nine people with severe COVID-19 infections, including eight aged between 70 and 93. All receive medical treatment with additional healthcare at designated hospitals, said Wu Qianyu, a primary inspector with the commission.

"All of the elderly COVID patients have serious underlying diseases," she said, adding that none has received a COVID-19 vaccine shot.

Shanghai registered 27,719 locally transmitted infections, including 2,573 confirmed cases, on Wednesday. The daily number of newly reported infections in the city has surpassed 20,000 for six consecutive days.

Contact the writers at caochen@chinadaily.com.cn

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CHINESE DEVELOP THEIR TASTE FOR SCOTCH WHISKY

Demand rising, especially among younger generation

By WANG MINGJIE in London
wangmingjie@mail.chinadaily.com

Chinese consumers' evolving taste for high-end spirits has pushed their spending on Scotch whisky to a record high over the past two years despite disruption to the trade caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Latest figures from the Scotch Whisky Association show that since 2019, the Chinese mainland has recorded the strongest growth for whisky produced in Scotland, with the total value of this market last year reaching 198 million pounds (\$258 million), a rise of 123 percent compared with two years ago.

Global exports of Scotch grew to 4.51 billion pounds last year, with the mainland one of the key emerging markets contributing to growth. The Chinese market rose



by nearly 85 percent in 2021 alone, making it the fifth-largest export market by value, according to the association.

Graeme Littlejohn, the association's director of strategy and communications, said, "Some markets, such as China, have gone against the grain and demonstrated strong growth in spite of COVID-19."

"In recent years, China has seen a shift toward premium products, with Scotch whisky among them. Single malt Scotch now makes up over 60 percent of exports to this market, which may explain the strong growth seen during the pandemic."

See **Whisky**, page 2



INSIDE
Wu vows to keep La Liga dream alive
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Genetic resource rules to have wide impact

By ZHANG ZHIHAO
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China's new rules in the pipeline on human genetic resources will clarify jurisdictions of regulatory bodies and enhance supervision related to biopharmaceutical research, and will

have a lasting impact on international cooperation regarding the nation's biomaterials, experts said.

Last month, the Ministry of Science and Technology released the draft implementation rules for human genetic resources management. The proposal, now in its pub-

lic consultation phase, will be a major addition to China's regulation of human genetic resources following the adoption of the Biosecurity Law and the Data Security Law, both of which took effect last year.

See **Genetics**, page 3