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What's News

Business & Finance

- ◆ **Facebook parent** Meta Platforms published instructions encouraging advertisers to use a workaround to avoid paying a 30% service charge to Apple. **B1**
- ◆ **Biden's top economic** adviser outlined the factors that she identified as making it easier to bring down inflation without a big decline in economic activity. **A2**
- ◆ **U.S. stocks benefited** from renewed optimism about the economic outlook, with the S&P 500, Dow and Nasdaq rising 0.6%, 0.9% and 0.3%, respectively. **B11**
- ◆ **VW faced mounting** pressure to pull out of a joint venture in China, as geopolitical tensions collide with business priorities for Germany's largest manufacturers. **B1**
- ◆ **As Boeing labors** through its latest crisis, Airbus is extending its lead over its U.S. rival and threatening to topple the duopoly that has long ruled the industry. **B1**
- ◆ **Multinational carmaker** Stellantis said it would launch a buyback equivalent to \$3.22 billion after posting record sales and after-tax profit in 2023. **B2**
- ◆ **Nike will reduce** its workforce by about 2%, or more than 1,600 people, part of its effort to cut costs by as much as \$2 billion over three years. **B3**
- ◆ **Rod Stewart sold** his song catalog to Iconic Artists Group as the music-rights market draws a flurry of fresh capital. **B3**
- ◆ **Wells Fargo's key** regulator said it closed the 2016 consent order placed on the bank for opening fake accounts, the subject of a yearslong scandal. **B10**

World-Wide

- ◆ **The Israeli military** plans to invade Rafah have exacerbated tensions between Netanyahu's government and the Biden administration, which has grown increasingly frustrated with its attempts to rein in Israel's military campaign. **A1, A6**
- ◆ **Fulton County** District Attorney Fani Willis took the witness stand, sparring with lawyers to rebut allegations that her romantic relationship with another prosecutor should disqualify them both from prosecuting Trump for alleged election interference in Georgia. **A1**
- ◆ **Ukraine's top** military-intelligence officer said Russian invading forces in his country are using thousands of Starlink satellite internet terminals, and that the network has been active in occupied parts of Ukraine for a long time. **A1**
- ◆ **Russia is pursuing** an "antisatellite capability" that represents a serious concern but doesn't present an active threat to Americans' safety, the Biden administration said. **A7**
- ◆ **An informant who** alleged that Biden engaged in a bribery scheme with a foreign national during his vice presidency was arrested on charges of lying to the FBI. **A4**
- ◆ **Putin said he preferred** Biden to Trump in the U.S. election, in the Russian leader's first public comments on the 2024 race. **A4**
- ◆ **Preliminary findings** suggested the deadly shooting at a Super Bowl rally in Kansas City, Mo., was a dispute among individuals and wasn't linked to terrorism or domestic extremism, officials said. **A3**

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Fulton County, Ga., District Attorney Fani Willis, testifying on Thursday, accused defense lawyers in the case of lying about her.

Defiant Trump Prosecutor Gives Rebuttal Over Office Romance

"You're confused, you think I'm on trial," she said in response to questions from defense lawyer Ashleigh Merchant, who has led the push for her disqualification.

By Mariah Timms, Corinne Ramey and James Fanelli

to rebut allegations that her romantic relationship with her deputy should disqualify them from prosecuting Donald Trump for alleged election interference in Georgia. "These people are on trial for trying to steal an election

in 2020. I'm not on trial, no matter how hard you try to put me on trial," she said in response to questions from defense lawyer Ashleigh Merchant, who has led the push for her disqualification. Her plain-spoken responses, sometimes delivered in a defiant tone, were a sign of the wide latitude she was given to respond as she wished, even as the judge cautioned her not to speak over defense attorneys. Also on Thursday, a New York justice ordered Trump's trial related to alleged hush money for a porn star to begin

on March 25, the first of his criminal cases to be tried. In an Atlanta courtroom packed with other lawyers and reporters, Willis faced questions about her relationship with Nathan Wade, the special prosecutor she hired in 2021 to work on the case against the former president and his associates for alleged racketeering. Willis said that defense lawyers seeking to sideline her had made false and offensive allegations about her history with Wade. In testimony that was wide-ranging and combative,

Willis responded to questions from defense attorneys in great detail. She discussed her father's advice to keep several months' worth of emergency cash in the house and her preference for Grey Goose vodka over the wine she and Wade shared on vacations. In August, Trump and 18 co-defendants were indicted on racketeering charges alleging they engaged in a criminal conspiracy to subvert the 2020 presidential election. All defendants pleaded not guilty; four have since taken plea deals. Co-defendant Mike Roman, Please turn to page A4

Ukraine Says Russia Is Using Starlink In Big Way

By James Marson and Thomas Grove

KYIV—Ukraine's top military-intelligence officer said Russian invading forces in his country are using thousands of Starlink satellite internet terminals, and that the network has been active in occupied parts of Ukraine for a long time. Lt. Gen. Kyrylo Budanov's comments in an interview suggest that Russia is starting to acquire Starlink terminals, made by Elon Musk's SpaceX, at a scale that could cut into a major Ukrainian battlefield advantage. Ukraine's government said last year that around 42,000 terminals are used by the military, hospitals, businesses and aid organizations. Starlink, which is more secure than cell or radio signals, is considered so vital to Ukrainian operations that the Pentagon struck a deal with SpaceX last year to help fund access for Kyiv's forces. Up to now, Russian forces have had no similarly secure communications system. A spokesman for SpaceX didn't respond to a request for comment. Musk previously said SpaceX wasn't selling to Russia. "To the best of our knowledge, no Starlinks have been sold directly or indirectly to Russia," he wrote on his social-media platform X on Sunday. Neither Musk nor Starlink has responded directly to questions about whether the devices could be obtained in other countries and used in Please turn to page A7

◆ **Kremlin lures** Cubans to fight in Ukraine..... A7

TOMORROW



WSJ. MAGAZINE

KAIA GERBER

China Revives Socialist Ideas To Fix Its Real-Estate Crisis

Xi Jinping aims to put the state back in charge of the property market, part of a push to rein in the private sector

By Lingling Wei and Stella Yifan Xie

China's massive property market is crumbling. Xi Jinping wants to revive socialist ideas about housing and put the state back in charge. Home prices across China are falling, developers have gone bust and people are doubting whether real estate will ever be a viable investment again. The meltdown is dragging down growth and spooking investors worldwide. Under the new strategy, the Communist Party would take over a larger share of the market, which for years has been dominated by the private sector. Underpinning it are two

major programs, according to policy advisers involved in the discussions and recent government announcements. One involves the state buying up distressed private-market projects and converting them into homes that the government would rent out or, in some cases, sell. The other calls for the state itself to build more subsidized housing for low- and middle-income families. The goal, the policy advisers say, is to increase the share of housing built by the state for low-cost rental or sale under restricted conditions to at least 30% of China's housing stock, from 5% or so today. The plans line up with Xi's broader push in Please turn to page A9

Migrant Influx Brings Economic Growth

By Paul Kiernan

WASHINGTON—The influx of millions of unauthorized migrants in recent years has sparked a political firestorm that has paralyzed Congress and consumed election campaigns. But it also has a benefit: a bigger, faster-growing economy. The precise scale of that

economic boost was laid out in the Congressional Budget Office's latest long-term budget and economic outlook, released Feb. 7. It estimates the labor force will be larger by 1.7 million potential workers in 2024 and 5.2 million more—about 3%—in 2033 than the nonpartisan agency expected one year ago. Gross

domestic product—the value of all goods and services produced in a year—should be 2.1% larger. Because those extra workers will be paying taxes and generating economic activity that also yields tax revenue, the federal deficit should be smaller at 6.4% of GDP in 2033, rather than 7.3% as pro-

jected last year. "More workers means more output, and that in turn leads to additional tax revenue," CBO Director Phillip Swagel said. But a bigger economy doesn't necessarily equate to a better economy. The latest group of migrants differs from Please turn to page A2

Your Cat Up a Tree? Climbers Branch Out, Swing to the Rescue

Feline-specialists fill in for fire departments; 'Ralphie...let me help you, buddy'

By Betsy McKay

Ralphie had gotten himself into a hairy spot, out on a limb. His family was desperate to reach him, but couldn't. Why not? Ralphie is a cat. The gray shorthair in Richfield, Ohio had discovered that climbing up a tree was easy,

yet now he was unable to get down. His family spent days chasing their tails, looking for help. Finally, they found Duane Hook, a tree climber who specializes in the high-tech fixing of feline misadventure. Please turn to page A9

U.S. retail sales, change from a month earlier

Month	Change (%)
Jan 2023	3.5
Feb 2023	-1.2
Mar 2023	0.5
Apr 2023	0.2
May 2023	0.8
Jun 2023	0.5
Jul 2023	0.8
Aug 2023	0.5
Sep 2023	0.2
Oct 2023	0.5
Nov 2023	0.2
Dec 2023	0.5
Jan 2024	-0.8

January -0.8%

Retail Sales Shrink

U.S. retail sales fell a seasonally adjusted 0.8% in January compared with a month earlier. The larger-than-expected decline came after a strong round of holiday shopping in December, which was revised to a 0.4% gain. **A2**