

Russia shrugs off economic sanctions

Stepped-up defense spending and oil sales to China are softening blow

BY DAVID J. LYNCH

Two years after President Biden spoke of dealing the Russian economy “a crushing blow” following the invasion of Ukraine, Russia this year is expected to grow faster than the United States, Germany, France or the United Kingdom.

Fresh U.S. sanctions announced Friday are unlikely to change that reality, given Russia’s resilience amid escalating clashes on the battlefields of global commerce and finance.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has survived U.S. and European efforts to cripple his economy so far by ramping up defense spending and by finding customers and suppliers in Asia to replace the trading partners he lost in the West.

As the war settled into a grinding stalemate, China, which abstained from U.S.-led sanctions on Russia, emerged as Putin’s savior. Chinese officials stepped up purchases of discounted Russian oil while shipping to Russia large quantities of industrial parts, luxury goods and technology products. India also has become an enthusiastic oil buyer.

“This is the first geopolitical crisis without all of the major Asian economies on board. The

SEE RUSSIA ON A14

New penalties: But experts see little effect on Russian revenue. **A14**

Netanyahu surprises with plan for Gaza

Though tough postwar vision isn’t new, act of making it formal is

BY STEVE HENDRIX AND JOHN HUDSON

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday released a proposal for Israel’s indefinite military control of Gaza, reiterating his hard-line stance but still surprising the public by putting it in writing as a concrete postwar plan.

Throughout Israel’s campaign against Hamas in Gaza, Netanyahu had largely refused to address two topics in public questioning: What responsibility does he bear for the security lapses that allowed the militants’ deadly attack on Israeli communities Oct. 7, and who will govern the enclave when the fighting is over?

On the first question, Netanyahu continues to deflect. But he has finally spoken on the second with the one-page proposal, which he presented to his security cabinet late Thursday and released publicly early Friday. His office said the outline is intended to be a starting point for discussions.

The plan’s debut came as a surprise to many in the government

SEE ISRAEL ON A10



PHOTOS BY ERIC THAYER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Pentagon revises book on warfare

Two years of conflict in Ukraine give U.S. military planners a bountiful research opportunity

BY ALEX HORTON IN FORT IRWIN, CALIF.

As the general paced the briefing room, he displayed a piece of lethal technology and detailed the death and chaos it has caused in Ukraine.

Almost 90 Russian soldiers were slain in a single attack in 2022, explained Army Maj. Gen. Curtis Taylor, when Ukrainian forces dropped U.S.-provided rockets on buildings pulsing with electronic signals.

Here in the Mojave Desert, where Taylor oversees simulated war designed to prepare U.S. troops for the real thing, the same behavior abounds, he warned.

Taylor held up his cellphone. “This device,” he said, “is going to get our soldiers killed.”

The U.S. military is undertaking an expansive revision of its approach to war fighting, having largely abandoned the counterinsurgency playbook that was a hallmark of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan to focus instead on preparing for an even larger conflict with more



TOP: A soldier with the 1st Armored Division trains last month at the Army’s National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. **ABOVE:** Army Chief of Staff Randy George, center, tours the center, a patch of desert known to soldiers as “The Box.”

SEE UKRAINE ON A12

The return of land mines: Nations bordering Russia show new interest in an old tool. **A11**

‘Collapse’ looms for wetlands in Louisiana

Scientists: Three-fourths of sites forming natural buffer against hurricanes could be gone by 2070

BY BRADY DENNIS AND CHRIS MOONEY

Rapidly rising seas are wreaking havoc on Louisiana’s coastal wetlands, and could devastate three-quarters of the state’s natural buffer against hurricanes in the coming decades, scientists found in a study published Feb. 15.

The new research documents how a sudden burst of sea level rise over the past 13 years — the type of surge once not expected until later this century — has left the overwhelming majority of the state’s coastal wetland sites in a state of current or expected “drowning,” where the seas are rising faster than wetlands can grow.

“We [can] treat the past decade or so like a really large-scale natural experiment, trying to evaluate how the natural system responds to such a high rate of sea level rise,” said Guandong Li, the lead author of a group of scientists at

SEE WETLANDS ON A7



RICKY CARIOTI/THE WASHINGTON POST

An aerial view of a marsh site in Buras, La., in April 2023. A new study documents how most of the state’s coastal wetlands are “drowning” as sea levels rise faster than they can grow.

In GOP, words of support for IVF

SENATE HOPEFULS, TRUMP SPEAK OUT

Ala. ruling puts fresh spotlight on losing issue

BY MAEGAN VAZQUEZ

Former president Donald Trump and Republican candidates in key Senate races voiced support for in vitro fertilization treatment Friday, distancing themselves from a recent Alabama Supreme Court ruling that has again highlighted the electoral challenge Republicans face over their stances on abortion and other reproductive rights.

The Alabama court’s decision last week — that frozen embryos should be considered children and that people can be held liable for destroying them — initially was met largely with silence from Republican officeholders and candidates. But many Republican politicians have since sought to distance themselves from the ruling and embrace IVF procedures, which have been utilized by thousands of families in the United States.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* ruling in 2022, which overturned the federal right to an abortion, Republicans have struggled to find a winning

SEE IVF ON A4

Trump: In Wisconsin, a fundraising arm may face charges. **A6**

Nonprofits hit it big with claims about covid

Tax records show influx of donations that enabled groups to extend reach

BY LAUREN WEBER

Four major nonprofits that rose to prominence during the coronavirus pandemic by capitalizing on the spread of medical misinformation collectively gained more than \$118 million between 2020 and 2022, enabling the organizations to deepen their influence in statehouses, courtrooms and communities across the country, a Washington Post analysis of tax records shows.

Children’s Health Defense, an anti-vaccine group founded by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., received \$23.5 million in contributions, grants and other revenue in 2022 alone — eight times what it collected the year before the pandemic began — allowing it to expand its state-based lobbying operations to cover half the country. Another influential anti-vaccine group, Informed Consent Action Network, nearly quadrupled its revenue during that time to about \$13.4 million in 2022, giving it the resources to finance lawsuits seeking to roll back vaccine re-

SEE NONPROFITS ON A8

Measles: Florida’s surgeon general defies experts amid outbreak. **A2**

IN THE NEWS

Illegal crossings decline Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) takes credit for a 76 percent drop in entries at the state’s southern border last month, but U.S. officials cite other factors. **A3**

Virginia budget clash Competing House and Senate bills snubbed the governor’s tax goals and highlighted divisions over an arena. **B1**

THE NATION
A study adds to evidence linking air pollution to cognitive decline. **A6**
Donald Trump’s lawyers revealed cellphone data they say contradicts testimony by prosecutors in Georgia. **A7**

THE WORLD
After China recalled its pandas, some of the goodwill ambassadors may be returning. **A9**
For Russia’s political prisoners, Alexei Navalny’s death is a frightening reminder. **A11**

THE ECONOMY
The NRA and its former CEO, Wayne LaPierre, were found liable in a New York case accusing them of lavish spending on extravagant perks. **A3**
Waymo, which wants to expand its 24/7 robotaxi service in California, has had cars hit a cyclist and a gate this month. **A13**

THE REGION
A prominent pathologist resigned from Johns Hopkins Hospital during an inquiry into allegations that he bullied colleagues. **B1**
A resident of a senior living facility was sentenced to life in the 2021 murders of two women who worked there. **B1**

STYLE
The District’s public radio station WAMU shut down its DCist local news website and announced layoffs. **C1**
SPORTS
D.C. United opens its Major League Soccer campaign at home tonight, and expectations are, to be kind, low. **D1**

BUSINESS NEWS.....A13
COMICS.....C5
OPINION PAGES.....A15
OBITUARIES.....B4
TELEVISION.....C3
WORLD NEWS.....A9

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0 170628 211001 3