

# The Washington Post

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Mostly cloudy 84/65 • Tomorrow: Partly sunny, hot 92/73 B8

Democracy Dies in Darkness

THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2022 • B2

## Wall St.'s plummet widens to retailers

Staggering sell-off as weak earnings, soaring costs spook investors

BY TAYLOR TELFORD

Wall Street recoiled Wednesday as Target and other national retailers got swept into a staggering sell-off—slashing more than 1,000 points off the Dow—as rising costs eat into business performance and spark fears of a broader economic downturn.

Market volatility has been closely aligned with the tech giants in recent weeks, but now attention has shifted to retailers as investors consider the myriad ways inflation can strap their businesses, from soaring fuel expenses to swelling payrolls.

Target's shares slumped more than 25 percent after it reported that net profit shrank 52 percent in the first quarter. The retail giant cited supply chain pressures and surging expenses, echoing concerns voiced by rival Walmart, which on Tuesday suffered its worst day of trading in more than three decades after it recorded weaker-than-expected earnings and warned that its customers were paring back amid budgetary pressures.

Other retailers followed suit: Dollar Tree shares swung 14.4 percent lower, while Costco's shares cratered 12.5 percent and Dollar General's fell 11.1 percent.

The Dow Jones industrial average skidded 1,644.52 points, or 3.6 percent, to close at 31,490.07. The S&P 500 index gave up more than

SEE MARKETS ON A17

### PERSPECTIVE

## U.S. women's soccer team had to revolt to win respect

BY SALLY JENKINS

Money is respect. For too long, a U.S. women's soccer player opened a paycheck that told her she was cut-rate merchandise and that her gold medals were cheap.

Finally, the U.S. women's national team members will be properly valued as the national treasures they are. The new "identical compensation" deal for the U.S. soccer teams—negotiated in mutual agreement with their male counterparts—will pay the women equal salaries and World Cup bonuses. It's a revolutionary deal, and that's only fitting because it took a revolt to get here. Don't ever forget how hard it was to win such a basic contract.

SEE JENKINS ON A8

**First of Its Kind:** Team's new deal closes pay gap with the men. **D1**

Sierra Leone is one of the riskiest places on Earth to have a baby. One teen fears repeating her mother's story of dying in childbirth.



MELINA MARYA/THE WASHINGTON POST

Susan Lebbie, seven months pregnant, visits the Kono District home of her traditional birth attendant, who welcomed her and other women who needed help or encouragement. Susan's delivery was deemed high-risk; among other things, she was anemic.

## Where pregnancy is mortal gamble

BY DANIELLE PAQUETTE

**KONO DISTRICT, SIERRA LEONE**—The doctor asked Susan Lebbie to find two units of blood before her due date, but she trudged into the maternity ward with only a pillow, an overnight bag and a cracked phone.

The 17-year-old had called everyone she knew for a donation: her aunt (had a toothache), her uncle (too old), her cousins (too young) and her friends (out of town or also pregnant). Now the deadline

was here, though the contractions hadn't started, just more kicking, and Susan was trailing a nurse past a poster that read: "Every 90 seconds, a pregnant woman dies."

"Susan," the nurse said. "Do you have your blood yet?"

One in 20 women in Sierra Leone die as a result of pregnancy or childbirth, according to the latest United Nations estimate, most often from losing blood. The West African country consistently ranks as one of the deadliest places on

Earth to have a baby. Only South Sudan and Chad count higher mortality rates.

Practically every death is preventable, but a decade of civil war destroyed much of the health system before the deadliest Ebola epidemic on record killed 7 percent of medical workers. Almost a third of the health budget comes from foreign aid, and the top donor plans to halt funding for a program that doctors say is critical to saving lives.

Chronic blood shortages add to the

SEE CHILDBIRTH ON A14

## Urgency mounts for Justice Dept.'s Buffalo probe

Federal leaders pledge a hate-crime investigation to combat racist violence

BY DAVID NAKAMURA

The day after a gunman killed 10 Black people in a Buffalo grocery store, Damon Hewitt's phone rang. On the line was Attorney General Merrick Garland.

Garland was contacting civil rights leaders to reinforce his pledge that the Justice Department would pursue a hate-crime investigation. Hewitt, the president of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, did not mince words: What is needed to combat domestic extremism and racist violence, he told Garland, is a Marshall Plan-style approach to galvanize federal attention and resources.

"To what degree is the federal apparatus able to and interested in protecting Black people?" Hewitt said in an interview, recounting his conversation from Sunday. "This is, once again, a test."

Investigators from the FBI, **SEE BUFFALO ON A9**



HEATHER FRANKS/ORTH FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

### No beginning, or end, in sight

Jamaar Carrier hugs his 9-year-old daughter, Jamya, as he becomes emotional Tuesday during a vigil for the victims of Saturday's shooting in Buffalo. This past weekend, which saw multiple mass shootings, reverberated because so many were injured and killed with such targeted hate. **The Critique, A2**

## Trump returns to 2020 refrain

HE URGES OZ TO 'DECLARE VICTORY'

Ex-president baselessly attacks mail ballots in Pa.

BY COLBY ITKOWITZ

Former president Donald Trump on Wednesday moved to baselessly discredit the too-close-to-call Republican Senate primary in Pennsylvania, urging his endorsed candidate, Mehmet Oz, to "declare victory" over opponent David McCormick before all the votes are counted in a contest with far-reaching implications.

State election officials continued tallying ballots, including thousands submitted by mail, with Oz leading McCormick by just one-tenth of a percentage point—well within the threshold for an automatic recount. There was no evidence of any wrongdoing in the process, which is a normal part of every election.

Trump's comments set off alarm among some Republicans and Democrats in the state. His words echoed his conduct after the 2020 election, but this time he

SEE PRIMARIES ON A7

## An election denier may take Pa.'s top office

GOP nominee Mastriano would play central role in managing 2024 vote

BY ROSALIND S. HELDERMAN, ISAAC ARNSDORF AND JOSH DAWEY

As a Pennsylvania state senator and gubernatorial candidate, Doug Mastriano railed against the rampant fraud that he believes was responsible for Donald Trump's 2020 defeat.

He vowed to decertify voting machines in counties where he suspects the result was rigged.

And he asserted that the Republican-controlled legislature should have the right to take control of the all-important choice over which presidential electors to send to Washington.

As governor, Mastriano would have the opportunity not just to speak, but to act. The Trump-endorsed 58-year-old, who won the Republican nomination for governor on Tuesday, would gain significant influence over the administration of the battleground

SEE MASTRIANO ON A6