

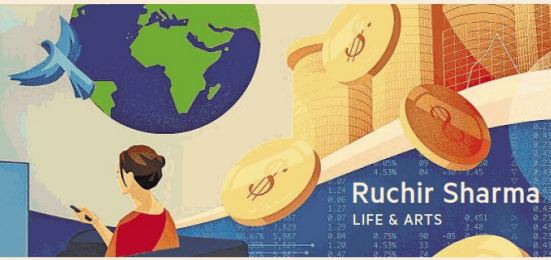
FT Weekend

Asia edition

INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

SATURDAY 7 JANUARY / SUNDAY 8 JANUARY 2023

The 10 trends to understand in 2023



Ruchir Sharma
LIFE & ARTS

The feel-good issue How to style it at the gym HTSI



Emails you should never send Tim Harford LIFE & ARTS



The modern alchemists Furniture designers of 2023 HOUSE & HOME



Reasons for investment cheer Katie Martin THE LONG VIEW



Brighter global outlook fuels stocks

◆ Eurozone inflation in single digits ◆ Jobs data lift soft landing hopes ◆ Rates still set to rise

CHRIS GILES AND GEORGE STEER LONDON
COLBY SMITH — WASHINGTON
Rising economic optimism yesterday buoyed stock markets on both sides of the Atlantic, after eurozone inflation figures and US jobs data fuelled hopes of a soft landing this year.
But economists warned that while a recent big fall in energy prices had bolstered prospects for 2023, underlying inflation would maintain pressure on central banks to raise interest rates further to keep price rises under control.
"Inflation won't be able to sustainably return to the target until this core problem is conquered," said Philip Rish, of consultancy Heteronomics. The head-

line eurozone inflation figures for December, which fell back into single digits, helped European equities have their best opening week of the year since 2009 as investors discarded some of their end-of-year gloom.
Goldman Sachs noted that lower wholesale natural gas prices, in Europe off more than 75 per cent from their peak, would "boost real incomes; help to push down inflation and improve government budgets". It added that a further export boost would come from the end of China's zero-Covid policy.
In the US, the S&P was up almost 2 per cent in mid-afternoon trading after job growth slowed for the fifth consecutive

month and hourly wages grew less than expected, providing some comfort against inflationary pressures. A survey showed that activity in the vast US services sector unexpectedly contracted in December, the first fall since the coronavirus crisis in May 2020.
But the US rate of job growth was faster than expected, at 223,000 for December, while the unemployment rate fell to an all-time low, giving little indication of a downturn in US economic performance that would bring inflation down quickly.
In both the eurozone and the US, the resilient economic data reinforced concerns that central banks would have to



The fall in petrol prices in the eurozone region helped inflation to decline from 10.1 per cent to 9.2 per cent

keep up efforts to bring inflation down to the low levels that preceded last year, despite clear indications that price rises have peaked. Central bankers worry that inflation may stay at about 4-5 per cent rather than falling to its 2 per cent target on both sides of the Atlantic.
Dorothee Rouzet, economist at CII, said the European data point "to a very mild recession, bordering on no recession".
The fall in gas and petrol prices in the eurozone helped the region's inflation descend to a lower-than-expected 9.2 per cent from its previous level of 10.1 per cent.
Markets pages 13 & 14

Putin 'stunt' Kyiv spurns ceasefire call

A girl dressed in Ukrainian traditional costume at an Orthodox Christmas celebration in Lviv, Ukraine, yesterday.
Despite Vladimir Putin ordering a 36-hour ceasefire to observe the religious holiday, fighting continued from both sides yesterday. Kyiv refused to lay down weapons, rejecting the Russian president's order as a stunt by Moscow.
Rather than continuing to shield Russian people from the war, Putin has changed tack in a move that analysts say is preparing them for more sacrifices, including a further mass mobilisation of fighting-age men.
Putin changes the narrative page 3
Moscow diary Life & Arts



Photo: Palamarchuk/Reuters

Southwest meltdown after massive US blizzards will cost carrier up to \$825mn

STEFF CHÁVEZ AND CLAIRE BUSHEY CHICAGO
Southwest Airlines, one of the biggest carriers in the US, expects its profits to be wiped out in the fourth quarter after a December blizzard triggered an operational meltdown.
The pioneer in low-cost aviation was unable to recover operations and expects a net loss for the period after taking a hit of up to \$825mn.
It follows severe winter storms that swept across the US before Christmas leaving thousands of passengers stranded and drawing a rebuke of the airline from the White House.
The fourth-largest airline in the US cancelled more than 16,700 flights in the 10 days to New Year's Eve.
The company said yesterday that it anticipated a "negative impact in the

range of \$725mn to \$825mn" in the fourth quarter from the disruptions.
Around half of that figure is estimated revenue loss, while the rest is related to reimbursing affected customers, giving them airline miles as a "gesture of goodwill" and paying overtime to employees.
The loss is at the high end of expectations, said Savanthy Syth, an analyst at Raymond James.
The figure implies the company lost between \$43,000 and \$50,000 for each cancelled flight — still less than the high-water mark seven years ago at Delta Air Lines when a systemwide outage cost the airline \$65,000 per cancelled flight.
"We believe sentiment and, in turn, shares will continue to be weighed down by the longer term implications of the operations meltdown," she said.
While all US airlines were affected by the "bomb cyclone", a term given to an

explosive storm that intensifies rapidly, most recovered fairly quickly.
Thousands of Southwest flyers, however, spent days sleeping in airports or going to great lengths to find alternative transport.
At the root of the carrier's disruption was its point-to-point flight network. This is where aircraft fly to locations without returning to a central hub — a design that caused flight disruptions to cascade through Southwest's network.
Outdated technology, which struggled to keep track of pilots and flight attendants, exacerbated the problems.
But industry analyst Brett Synder, who runs the website the Cranky Pilot, said he expected few customers to balk at choosing Southwest in the future. Stranded travellers were being "showered with money and points, so that helps get you back on the plane again".



Harry book not expected to dent royals' popularity

Book furor — PAGE 4; FT View — PAGE 8

Australia	AS10000inc GSTJ
Brunei	B\$8.00
China	RMB30
Hong Kong	HK\$45
India	Rup260
Indonesia	Rp48,000
Japan	¥6500inc JCTJ
Korea	₩5,000
Malaysia	RM42.50
Pakistan	Ruppee 450
Philippines	Peso 150
Singapore	S\$70inc GSTJ
Taiwan	NT\$150
Thailand	BTH40
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World Markets

STOCK MARKETS				CURRENCIES				GOVERNMENT BONDS			
	Jan 6	Prev	%chg	Pair	Jan 6	Prev	%chg	Yield (%)	Jan 6	Prev	Chg
S&P 500	3876.92	3808.10	1.81	\$/£	1.060	1.052	0.75	4.29	4.44	-0.15	
Nasdaq Composite	10489.35	10305.24	1.79	\$/€	1.295	1.188	0.91	3.58	3.73	-0.15	
Dow Jones Ind	33325.93	32360.08	2.91	\$/¥	0.860	0.856	0.47	3.70	3.80	-0.08	
FTSE100	1756.77	1727.03	1.14	€/¥	132.420	133.875	-1.10	3.44	3.56	-0.13	
Euro Stoxx 50	4014.68	3969.48	1.39	\$/HK\$	159.519	159.083	0.27	3.47	3.55	-0.08	
FTSE 100	7699.49	7633.45	0.87	\$/INR	0.987	0.986	0.11	3.87	3.90	-0.03	
FTSE All-Share	4210.58	4178.67	0.76	\$/JPY	116.110	115.0	0.95	0.01	0.02	-0.01	
CAC 40	6980.95	6761.50	3.24	\$/KRW	110.0	109.0	0.92	0.50	0.42	0.08	
Xetra Dax	14610.02	14438.21	1.20	\$/BRL	1.60	1.59	0.63	1.50	1.52	-0.02	
Nikkei	25973.85	25820.80	0.59	\$/AUD	1.52	1.51	0.66	2.57	2.64	-0.07	
				\$/NZD	1.60	1.59	0.63				



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INTERNATIONAL



WORLD WEEK IN REVIEW

Netanyahu government proposes sweeping powers over judiciary

Benjamin Netanyahu's headline Israeli government plans to give politicians sweeping powers over the judiciary. The proposals will allow a simple majority in parliament to override High Court decisions while the government would appoint judges.

China under-reports deaths after zero-Covid dropped, claims WHO

The World Health Organization has accused China of under-reporting the deaths and severity of its coronavirus outbreak, in its strongest rebuke yet of Beijing's handling of the pandemic.

Taliban move to block women NGO workers puts millions at risk



The UN is to dispatch its top humanitarian official to Afghanistan amid a clash between the Taliban and international donors over a ban on women working at non-governmental organisations that has put the welfare of millions of Afghans at risk.

Lula tightens Brazil's gun controls and curbs gold mining in Amazon

Brazil's newly elected president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, has moved to sweep away the legacy of predecessor Jair Bolsonaro by tightening gun controls and curbing gold mining in the Amazon rainforest.

Labour market

US jobs growth slows as Fed action bites

Central bank's aggressive interest rate increases damp economic activity

COLBY SMITH — WASHINGTON

US jobs growth slowed for a fifth consecutive month in December after the Federal Reserve's aggressive interest rate rises squeezed economic activity even as the labour market remained historically tight.

In 2022, the number of jobs added has fallen every month since August. Despite the slowing of the pace of jobs growth, the labour market still shows a resilience that will probably compel the Fed to continue raising interest rates this year.

Yesterday, the S&P 500 was up 1.6 per cent in late-morning trading in New York, while the Nasdaq Composite was up 1.4 per cent. The two-year Treasury yield, which is sensitive to changes in interest rate expectations, slid 0.19 percentage points to 4.26 per cent, marking a sharp rise in the price of the debt instrument.

'This is still a very tight labour market'

Veronica Clark, economist

While the worst of the inflation shock appears to have passed, price pressures have taken hold in the services sector of the economy. In an interview with the Financial Times this week, Gita Gopinath, the first deputy managing director at the IMF, urged the Fed to 'stay the course' in terms of tightening, arguing that inflation in the US had not 'turned the corner yet'.

Hawkish stance expected to continue while underlying price pressures remain strong

Yet the slowdown is unlikely to be enough to convince the European Central Bank to stop raising interest rates yet, with markets still pricing in a series of increases over the course of this year.

Why will the falls not convince the ECB to change tack?

While falls in fuel prices, and government subsidies to help businesses and households with higher power bills have cut headline inflation rates, underlying price pressures remain strong.

Eurozone. Monetary policy Inflation fall unlikely to deter ECB on rates

MARTIN ARNOLD — FRANKFURT

Eurozone inflation fell back into single digits in December, with data published yesterday showing the headline rate hitting 9.2 per cent after annual price growth of more than 10 per cent in the previous two months.



Filling up: a driver puts fuel in his car in Barcelona. Spain's core CPI inflation, which excludes food and energy, rose in the year to December.

What does this outlook mean for interest rates?

Last year the ECB responded to soaring inflation by raising interest rates at an unprecedented pace, lifting its deposit rate from minus 0.5 per cent in July to 2 per cent by the end of the year.

Further falls are expected in the coming months, following the decline in energy prices since the start of the year.

Markets still believe ECB will raise rates aggressively



Expectations of level of deposit rate by September 2023 (%)



research at Dutch bank ING, predicted that euro area inflation could even drop back to the ECB's 2 per cent target by the end of this year.

Gemstone battle

Qatari royals fight one another in court over \$10m diamond

Rival members of Qatar's royal family are battling for control of the world's largest cut blue diamond in London's High Court, with one side trying to force a \$10m sale of the 70-carat Idol's Eye gemstone.

declined to comment. Elnass's law firm, Farrer & Co, also declined to comment.

Qatari royals fight one another in court over \$10m diamond

The Indian diamond, whose past owners include a sultan of the Ottoman Empire, is at the centre of a lawsuit filed by Qipco, a conglomerate run by Qatar's big-spending art collector Sheikh Hamad bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

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INTERNATIONAL

Putin changes narrative to brace Russians for long conflict

Cinemas to show documentaries on war while fresh mobilisation possible

BEN HALL AND POLINA IVANOVA

Russian cinemas will open their doors this winter not to offer movie-goers entertaining distraction from the almost year-long war in Ukraine, but precisely the opposite.

President Vladimir Putin this week ordered the defence ministry to provide access so that filmmakers produce documentaries about troops striving to conquer territory in Russia's neighbour. The culture ministry was instructed to organise cinema screenings.

While the documentaries have been commissioned to depict "the heroism of the participants of the special military operation", rather than the brutal reality of Russia's faltering war effort, the decision is a sign of how the Kremlin is adjusting its narrative – notwithstanding its call for a unilateral ceasefire in Ukraine over the orthodox Christmas.

Rather than continue to shield the Russian people from the war and its costs, Putin appears increasingly inclined to expose them to it. It is, say analysts, an inevitable response to what has become a protracted and all-consuming conflict and a way of girding the population for future sacrifices, including a possible further mass mobilisation of fighting-age men.

From the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine last February, Putin took "a clear position that society should be distanced from the war", said Tatiana Stanovaya, senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The president's message was "the war is being handled by professionals. Life

continues in Russia as normal. And he has tried to shield society in all sorts of ways from the problems of war, trying to guarantee to them that the government will handle it on its own", Stanovaya said. "But on the other hand, there's the reality. And it has started to introduce changes to the situation in ways that are outside of Putin's control."

Putin set the tone with a militaristic New Year's eve address to the nation last week, surrounded by grim-faced men and women dressed in army fatigues.

The president always presented himself as the "apostle of balance, the protector of the great equilibrium", said Russian political scientist Ekaterina Schulmann in a radio interview this week. "He always came out and told people that everything's fine, sang them lullabies... communicating to them that tomorrow will be the same as yesterday."

Putin's new year message on the other hand "sent a very evocative picture" that 2023 would be far from normal, Schulmann said.

Hours after his address, Ukrainian guided missiles hit a technical college serving as a temporary barracks for Russian conscripts in Maklivka, a town in occupied eastern Ukraine.

The Kremlin could have tried to cover up the attack, as it did initially following the sinking of its Black Sea flagship, the Moskva, in April. Instead, it confirmed it, saying at first that 65 – and then 89 – of its troops were killed, the highest death toll it has admitted from a single incident since the invasion in February. Some Russian war correspondents and



commentators as well as Kyiv say the number killed was much higher.

In Samara, in central Russia, from where many of dead men were conscripted, local authorities held a rare official memorial attended by grieving families.

Even Yevgeny Prigozhin, head of the Wagner paramilitary group which has sent tens of thousands of men to the front lines in Ukraine, has begun to show elements of candour about the brutal nature of the war.

Over the new year he released a video featuring him in a makeshift morgue where bodies of his dead fighters were stacked high. In another clip, he described how Wagner troops could spend days fighting just to win control over one house in the eastern town of Bakhmut.

His paramilitary group had previously vaunted its achievements in the battle for the frontline city in Donetsk province and compared them favourably with those of regular Russian forces. Russian military bloggers and western analysts said the scale of Russia's losses in the Maklivka attack was so great that it had to manage the story rather than conceal it – placing the blame on local commanders and on mobilised soldiers for unauthorised use of their mobile phones, giving away their position.

Russian nationalists, including Prigozhin, and some Kremlin officials have for months urged Putin to shift to a

front foot: Vladimir Putin delivers his new year message.

Below, people gather to lay flowers in memory of the troops killed at Maklivka in eastern Ukraine.

Yuri Kochetkov/SPK/SPK, Asen Arkanov/AFP/Getty

"total war" footing in order to mobilise the people and the country's vast resources. "Russia has always won any war if that war becomes a people's war," said Sergei Kiriyenko, deputy head of the presidential administration, in October. "We are sure to win this war: the 'hot' [fighting], and economic, and the very psychological, information war waged against us. But this requires that it be a people's war, so that everyone feels involved."

Dara Massicot, an expert on the Russian military at the Rand Corporation think-tank, said the shift in narrative about the war began with the mobilisation of 300,000 men in September. It was a "form of conditioning", she said, that would help to underpin a further mobilisation in the months ahead. "I

'[Putin] always came out and told people that everything's fine, sang them lullabies'

think it's likely they will need another round of mobilisation in 2023 to replace losses from the first and allow for rotations – from what they've said about it, they may try to do it on a smaller rolling basis if they can."

But Stanovaya said Putin was still ambivalent about exposing the Russian public to the war, even though he wanted it to be seen as society's choice and a product of historical process rather than his personal decision.

"He has this desire to share responsibility [for the war] with society, but at the same time not to traumatise it and to keep down anxiety levels as much as it is possible, though these are currently soaring regardless," she said. "Putin is trying to sit on two chairs, but this is becoming harder and harder to do."



China threat

Taiwan plans satellite champion to resist attack

KATHRIN HILLE – TAIPEI

Taiwan is courting investors to help it establish its own satellite communications provider, inspired by the role Elon Musk's Starlink has played in the war in Ukraine, as Taipei ramps up efforts to fortify itself against a potential assault from China.

Taiwan is in preliminary talks with several domestic and international investors to raise funds for the project, which the country's space agency, known as TASA, wants to spin out of an existing satellite division, according to three people familiar with the situation.

"We are going to spin our low-Earth orbit satellite communications project off into a company," said a senior official at TASA. People familiar with the talks said the government wanted to retain a sizeable minority stake in the venture.

The project is part of Taiwan's broader efforts to build communications infrastructure that could survive an attack by China. Beijing claims Taiwan as part of its territory and has made increasing threats over the use of force to bring the country under its control.

"We look at the Russian invasion of Ukraine and how Starlink has been used very successfully," said Audrey Tang, Taiwan's digital minister.

"Our primary concern... is facilitating the societal resilience, to make sure for example that journalists can send videos to... international viewers even during a large-scale disaster," Tang said, adding that the system would also support "telephoning and videoconferencing".

Tang said it would take "a few years" for TASA's planned service to start operating. In the meantime, her ministry is experimenting with non-geostationary satellite receivers in 700 locations around Taiwan to guarantee bandwidth in the event of war or disasters.

Among investors approached for funding was Draper Associates, the Silicon Valley venture capital firm that was an early investor in SpaceX and Tesla, Musk's electric vehicle company. Draper declined to comment. TASA said the plans were not advanced enough to discuss publicly.

Low-Earth orbit (LEO) satellites fly much closer to the ground than geostationary ones, which in the past have mainly been used to provide satellite internet access. LEO systems can drastically reduce delays in relaying data because the signal does not have to travel as far, but stable telecoms services require large constellations of such satellites because they move around in orbit.

Some industry insiders were sceptical about the prospects of a Taiwanese state-backed LEO company competing

in a global market dominated by SpaceX – the only provider with launch capacity – and dozens of start-ups vying for funding.

"At the moment, we have a single player and a very large number of competitors coming into the field, several of which are already struggling financially," said Bill Ray, vice-president at tech research group Gartner, who analyses the space industry.

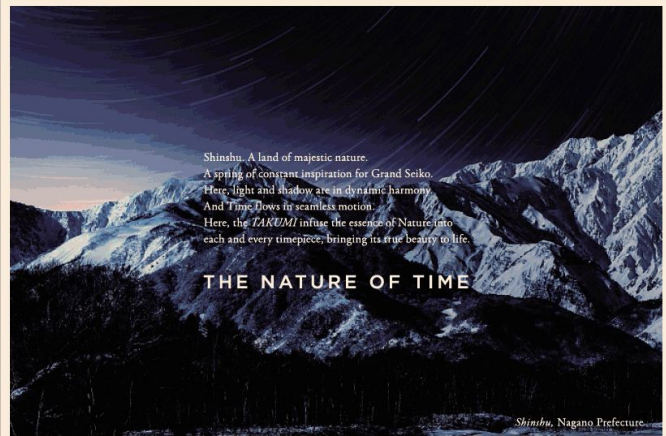
"Eventually, there will be just four or five global providers... How are you going to differentiate yourself?"

Other industry insiders suggested the non-geostationary satellite market was approaching a pivotal moment that could allow several smaller countries to play a role by operating their own constellations.

"Those include Japan, Korea, Australia. And Taiwan is interested in being one of them," said Cheng Wu, general partner at the tech fund of Taiwan, a government-backed venture capital firm. "For [any] country that builds out a [LEO] constellation, it can be used for national security [and] commercial purposes."

Since a LEO constellation needed between 120 and 150 satellites to ensure coverage of a location, countries aspiring to the sector needed to come up with financial support to kick-start a rapid prototyping cycle, Wu added.

TASA is trying to do just that. The agency's LEO project is working with Taiwanese start-ups such as Tron Future Tech and Rapideck to develop specialised phased array antennas and



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INTERNATIONAL

Diplomacy

Moscow seeks to frustrate UN appointment

Russia attempts to block head of environment body after Ukraine report

CAMILLA HODGSON — LONDON

Russia is trying to block the reappointment of the Danish head of the UN's leading environmental agency, following a highly critical report about the impact of the war on Ukraine, according to people familiar with the matter.

Russia has agitated for several months against the reappointment of Inger Andersen, an economist with a long career at the World Bank, as the executive director of the UN Environment Programme, according to two UN sources. The move is seen by diplomats as part of a broader effort by the country

to exert influence on the world stage and undermine the objectives of western nations that have condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Russian representatives penned a so-called non-paper late last year that formally objected to the UN secretary-general António Guterres' intention, shared with member states, to reappoint Andersen, the people said. Her first four-year term is due to end this year.

The Russian mission to the UN said the role had been "monopolised" by the representatives of western countries", in a statement to the Financial Times.

It said UNEP's executive director should be an "honest broker", but Andersen had been "promoting western and, in particular, European environmental priorities and agenda, and politicising this body's decisions".

The president of the UN general assembly will formally propose Andersen's reappointment this year, a resolution that Russia could call for a vote on. A successful vote against her would require the backing of at least the

'Russia have played this game before, pre-Ukraine, but now they are absolutely going for it'

majority of the 193 UN general assembly member states.

In October, UNEP published a report about the devastating consequences for the environment of the war in Ukraine, in response to a request from Kyiv.

"Ukraine, already burdened by a host

of legacy environmental challenges, is now facing a compounded, multi-dimensional environmental crisis," the report concluded. "The country and the region risk being burdened with a toxic legacy long after the conflict ends."

While Russia has lobbied for support for its discussion paper on the UN environmental role, those familiar with the matter said they believed it was unlikely that it would secure sufficient backing to prevent Andersen's reappointment.

But the move is seen as part of attempts by the regime of Vladimir Putin to frustrate western powers. "The Russians are making things difficult for people in different contexts," said one diplomatic source. "This is just another forum."

Another UN diplomat said: "Our assessment is that this is classic Russian

leverage-making... trying to extract a price for lifting their objection.

"This is a narrative they are trying to push at the UN — the west versus the rest," the person added. "They have played this game before, pre-Ukraine, but now they are absolutely going for it."

A third person from an eastern European government said they were aware of the Russian push against Andersen.

The UN secretary-general was resolute about putting forward Andersen for reappointment. "In line with past practice, the secretary-general has informed member states of his intention to reappoint the executive director of UNEP for a second term. The secretariat cannot provide any specific comment on the ongoing consultation process with member states," his spokesperson said. UNEP declined to comment.

Spreading virus

New Chinese mRNA Covid vaccine shows encouraging early results

HANNAH KUCHLER — LONDON

A Chinese vaccine maker has announced positive early results for its messenger RNA jab, as Covid-19 spreads rapidly across a population that has so far been inoculated with more traditional vaccines.

CansinoBio said yesterday that its vaccine had elicited 23 to 29 times more antibodies than an inactivated jab when given as a booster to people who had already received three shots.

The "phase 2b" trial of more than 400 people — which usually comes before a gold standard phase 3 trial — showed positive results against the Omicron variants BA.1 and BA.5.

CansinoBio's mRNA vaccine programme and another by rival Sinopharm are among a handful in China that, if successful, could help the country as it grapples with soaring Covid-19 case rates and hospitalisations. But it could take many months until such a vaccine is approved.

A low uptake of boosters and less effective vaccines have helped the virus to spread quickly as the country abandoned Xi Jinping's zero-Covid policy of strict lockdowns.

China has mainly vaccinated its population with shots from Sinopharm and Sinovac that use a killed virus to teach the immune system to react to a future infection, rather than the genetic code contained in mRNA jabs.

The two homegrown vaccines have not been as effective as the western mRNA vaccines from BioNTech/Pfizer and Moderna, particularly in tackling new variants.

China has not imported the western mRNA vaccines. Moderna refused to hand over to Beijing the core intellectual property behind its vaccine, leading to a collapse in negotiations.

BioNTech signed a deal with Chinese manufacturer Fosun International in 2020 to develop and commercialise its vaccine in China but it is still not available to the Chinese nationals. The German government struck a deal to enable its nationals to get the vaccine in China to get the jab.

CansinoBio already has a Covid-19 vaccine available in China and recommended by the World Health Organization as a safe and effective shot. In November some Chinese cities began to roll out an inhaled version, sending its Hong Kong-listed shares up as much as 70 per cent.

In the trial of its mRNA vaccine, more than half the participants were over 60.

Seven days after vaccinations, participants' neutralising antibodies — which block a virus — were 23 times higher against the BA.5 variant than those who had been given a fourth dose of the same inactivated vaccine they had previously received.



Surging cases: medics take a Covid sufferer to a hospital in Shanghai

US Congress. Republican rebellion

McCarthy gridlock signals trouble ahead for House

Majority leader makes history after coming up short in at least 12 votes for Speaker role

LAUREN FEDOR — WASHINGTON

As a man who knows his political history, Kevin McCarthy will be all too aware that he has earned his place in the annals for all the wrong reasons.

This week the Republican House of Representatives majority leader became the first party chief in a century to fail to be elected Speaker in the initial round of voting.

He solidified his place in the record books by coming up short in at least 12 subsequent votes spread across three days — a tally that was last surpassed in the run-up to the American civil war.

The opening day of Congress on Tuesday was supposed to be one of celebration as lawmakers, many of them with their families, waited to be sworn in as members.

By the end of the week, they were still here after successive rounds of voting failed to deliver McCarthy the Speaker's gavel he has coveted for much of his career, owing to a group of far-right rebels determined to deny him a position that would put him second in line to the presidency.

The gridlock set the stage for chaos in a Washington that has become accustomed to dysfunction and discord in recent years.

Cheers and jeers rang out on the House floor as round after round of ballots were cast, and scrums of reporters chased after McCarthy and his allies as they scrambled to hash out a deal. CSPAN cameras, usually prohibited from filming the wheeling and dealing on the House floor, zoomed in on tense conversations among lawmakers at odds over what to do.

Democrats and Republicans alike said the chaos foreshadowed what could be years of legislative disarray.

"Electing the Speaker is the easy part. Legislating is the hard part," said Doug Heye, a former spokesperson for the Republican National Committee and senior Republican House aide. "The Republicans clearly are having trouble doing the easy part. It should send a very clear signal that doing the hard things will be very difficult."

Many in Washington had expected the pace of lawmaking to slow after last



Ill-fated quest: Republican leader Kevin McCarthy on the House floor during another round of votes in the election for Speaker

Jin Lo/SIPA/EPFL/Shutterstock

November's midterm elections ushered in a new era of divided government. Republicans underperformed expectations but nevertheless eked out a razor-thin majority to take back control of the House, the lower chamber of Congress, while Democrats held on to the Senate, the upper chamber, and of course, have Joe Biden in the White House.

But the historic gridlock over who to select as Speaker has raised fresh concerns on both sides of the aisle that a small group of rebels threatens to block big pieces of "must pass" legislation this year. Front of mind is the debt ceiling, the limit on how much the US government can borrow. Economists have warned that if lawmakers do not vote to raise the limit in the coming months, the government risks defaulting for the first time in US history.

Other big fights could include how to fund the government and avoid a shut-

down, or whether to top up US military assistance to Ukraine.

"Any time that there is any difficult or controversial question that the House takes up, we will see a replay of this whole drama," said Carlos Curbelo, a former Republican congressman from Florida. "That is going to continue eroding the American people's trust and confidence in the institution."

The Republican party is no stranger to strife within its ranks. Many of the same individuals who have opposed McCarthy also caused headaches for Paul Ryan and John Boehner, the two previous Republican Speakers. But many in Washington see the latest schism as a sign of a new level of dysfunction in Congress, fuelled in part by Donald Trump, the former president.

"These dynamics in the House Republicans predated Trump. He just accelerated the process of deterioration

'Electing the Speaker is the easy part. Legislating is the hard part. The Republicans clearly are having trouble doing the easy part'

and decay in the culture of the House Republican conference," said Curbelo, who lost his bid for re-election in 2018. Trump, who remains the only Republican so far to declare his candidacy for president in 2024, attempted to intervene in the Speaker debate in the week when he urged Republican lawmakers to rally around McCarthy. But those overtures fell on deaf ears, with some of his most loyal allies, including Colorado congresswoman Lauren Boebert, publicly telling the president to scrap his support for the California congressman.

Heye said while Trump had proved not to be "personally relevant" to the whip count, the drawn-out debate and party infighting laid bare his lasting influence on some members of the party. "Obviously what is happening here is very Trumpy," Heye said. "We are seeing Trumpism without Trump." Opinion see the FT View page

Book furor

Titillating royal memoir expected to damage Prince Harry more than the monarchy

PETER FOSTER — LONDON

When Prince Harry's tell-all memoir was leaked via a Spanish retailer this week, the California-based royal suffered a speedy backlash back home in Britain.

In a snarky reference to the sometimes painfully candid book's title, *Spare*, the pro-establishment Daily Mail newspaper yesterday carried the front page headline "Oh Spare Us".

The rightwing Daily Express said the prince had "Sold [His] Soul" while the staunchly royalist Sun newspaper quoted former soldiers saying the prince had "betrayed his army colleagues" by revealing the number of Italian fighters he claimed to have killed.

port for leading members of the royal family holding firm in the face of criticism from Harry and wife Meghan — the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

The prince's personal popularity, however, has been on the slide since he embarked on a series of media appearances and interviews last year.

Harry, who has given up all official royal duties, has repeatedly aired grievances against senior royals. They include his father, King Charles, and his brother, Prince William, with whom he says in his book he had a physical altercation. As well as criticising his father for not hugging him after the death of his mother Diana, Princess of Wales, the prince made several personal admissions, including using cocaine and losing

nature of the revelations had diminished Harry far more than the institution of the monarchy.

"What is crucial to the monarchy is the conduct of the King, and to a lesser extent his heir, including their disengagement from this family vituperation," said Lacey. "The personal revelations... reflect very poorly on the source of those revelations — which

is how the British public respond to it."

William Shawcross, official biographer of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, said the prince's memoir was "unlike his generous conduct as a brave army officer and sponsor of the Invictus Games" for wounded veterans.

"Constitutional monarchy is at the core of Britain's unique success. It is shocking that Harry and his wife seem

to wish to undermine it so cruelly."

Data from YouGov, the polling company, showed support for the prince and the duchess in the UK dipping last month after the couple strongly criticised Buckingham Palace in a six-part documentary series for the streaming platform Netflix.

Beth Kühnel Mann, a research executive at YouGov, said *Spare* was likely to further reduce the couple's popularity in the UK. "We saw them both take a hit to their popularity in December, so when looking forward to the impact the memoir might have, we shouldn't expect it to be positive," she said.

While approval ratings for senior royals, including the King and the Prince of Wales, slid fractionally after the Netflix

with tabloids, blaming them forounding his mother to her death in 1997.

However, David Yelland, editor of the Sun between 1998 and 2005, said that while the British press and public's support for the royal family was solid, *Spare* still presented serious problems for Buckingham Palace, which has refused to comment on any of the allegations.

"The bigger issue is that Harry, in the atypical terms, has broken the 'fourth wall' and let light into an institution that has survived for centuries in the dark," said Yelland. "The risk to the palace is that the monarchy becomes a soap opera. The more light you shine, the less likely it is to survive."

He said the royal family could not afford to ignore the fact the Netflix doc-





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FT BIG READ. ELECTRIC VEHICLES

While Musk's Twitter antics dominate headlines, his pioneering automaker's future is threatened by slipping demand and intensifying competition. Is this the end of its golden age of growth?

By Richard Waters, Claire Bushey and Peter Campbell

Paul English is the kind of serious Tesla fan who helped make Elon Musk, for a brief period, the richest person in the world.

The Boston-based tech entrepreneur, co-founder of travel website Kayak, bought his first Tesla in 2013, went on to invest in the company three years later and now drives a more recent Model S.

But after witnessing the Tesla's chief executive's behaviour since his acquisition of Twitter late last year – including Musk's brutal treatment of staff as he set about cutting about half the social media company's workforce – English says he is not certain he will buy another Tesla.

Musk "made a massive misjudgment", he says. "Teslas were largely bought by people who like change and new things. That's typically people who are educated, and people who are liberal. Guess what educated, liberal people don't like? Bullies."

Musk's Twitter takeover did not go down well on Wall Street, which feared the chaos and political polarisation it unleashed would tarnish the automaker's brand and distract him at a critical time. A Tesla stock price slide that began in the autumn turned into an avalanche; shares are now 73 per cent below their peak of a little more than a year ago. Musk himself is \$200bn poorer.

But while the drama at Twitter dominates the headlines, a profound change in Tesla's outlook is also under way. A



Tesla's turning point

65%
Tesla's share of EV sales in the US in the first nine months of last year

79%
The automaker's share of the EV market in the US in 2020

resoundingly successful period in which the company's value peaked at nearly \$1.3tn and after-tax profits were projected to hit almost \$13bn in 2022 has rapidly given way to a darker economic picture. The main worry of Tesla's investors has swung from how the company can produce enough cars to meet demand, to where it will find enough customers to justify its sharply rising production.

Growth in new vehicle deliveries slowed to 40 per cent last year from 87 per cent the year before – still a breakneck pace for a large carmaker, but below the 50 per cent annual rate Musk himself has set as the benchmark for the foreseeable future.

With Tesla ramping up production quickly at giant new plants in Texas and Germany, it now has the added problem of finding many more customers, says Philippe Houchois, a global automotive analyst at Jefferies in London. That has left it facing a "perfect storm", he adds, with supply increasing, demand slipping and competition intensifying, all on the brink of what could be a severe downturn for the global auto industry.

That has left Wall Street grasping for clues about the company's prospects at what could be an important turning point. Is this the end of Tesla's golden age of growth – not to mention Musk's charmed life as a revered innovator and champion of a sustainable energy future?

Or, as Tesla's fans claim, will the economic downturn actually boost the company's lead over the rest of the electric vehicle world, bringing Musk a step closer to his goal of dominating a new auto industry founded on EVs?

Survival of the fittest

Although Musk's Twitter diversion has catalysed Wall Street's rethink on Tesla,

"We are going to need an electric vehicle that people can afford and Tesla is in a very good position to do that"

there is little evidence it has had a direct impact on vehicle sales.

Out of "well over 1,000" people who bought Teslas last year from Octopus EV, a specialist electric lease company that operates in the UK and US, only two customers switched to another brand over the Twitter issue, according to chief executive Fiona Howarth.

She adds, though, that it is still notable, given the outsized brand loyalty the company has always enjoyed. A survey by Morning Consult found that between October and November, the share of US adults with a favourable view of Tesla fell by six percentage points. Among Democrats, who are likelier to be EV customers, it fell by 20 points.

Musk could hardly have tarnished his own company's brand at a worse time. Higher inflation and rising interest rates have combined to leave many potential customers worse off, while also increasing the cost of financing a new vehicle. That follows a series of price increases Tesla pushed through during the pandemic, as the cost of materials rose and ample demand presented an opportunity to pad margins.

Higher prices and financing costs have lifted the average monthly car payment in the US by about a quarter over the past two years, to nearly \$700, according to Adam Jonas, an analyst at Morgan Stanley. In a note to investors last month, Jonas warned this would

dent demand for the entire EV sector, while also leaving Tesla facing a "worsening macro backdrop, record high unaffordability, and increasing competition".

The effects are already evident. In the US and China, waiting lists for Tesla's most popular cars, which were running at six months or more early in 2022, have all but disappeared. This week brought news that the company delivered only 405,278 new vehicles to customers in the final three months of last year, well down from the 500,000 that some were hoping for as recently as last September.

Meanwhile, a decade after the launch of the Tesla Model S, competition in the electric car market has finally turned serious. As regulators in Europe and elsewhere prepare to squeeze out petrol car sales completely, global carmakers are increasingly releasing cars designed to have widespread appeal, rather than the early models they merely needed to sell in limited numbers to hit emissions targets.

Volkswagen has poured billions into its own system that underpins models across the VW, Audi and Skoda range, while Hyundai-Kia have launched a series of widely praised models. Ford and General Motors have vowed separately to spend between \$30bn and \$35bn to develop new EVs. Each has unveiled a suite of new models.

Tesla's share of electric vehicle sales in the US slipped to 65 per cent in the first nine months of last year, down from 79 per cent in 2020, according to S&P Global Mobility. By 2025, that figure will be below 20 per cent, S&P predicts. "It's natural they won't maintain this huge market share they have in EVs" as rivals produce more competitive models, says Howarth at Octopus EV.

The scramble for a foothold among so many new entrants is likely to bring a period of competitive turmoil. "It's not going to be easy," says Carlos Tavares, chief executive of Stellantis, which added to the increasingly crowded field of electric pick-up trucks this week with the unveiling of an electric version of its Ram 1500. "The industry is in a Darwinian period."

Bringing down the price of EVs will be key, Tavares says. "Without affordability, the middle classes will not be able to join the club, and then we will not have enough volume impact to protect the planet."

Tesla faces a similar pressure to bring down its costs – and prices – to meet its heady growth targets. After seeing the average selling price of its vehicles drift up to reach \$52,500 in the latest quarter – nearly \$5,000 higher than a year before – finding a way to bring prices down to a true mass-market level could become the key to reaching Musk's

ambitious sales target of 20mn vehicles a year by 2030.

"Musk is constantly repeating that only a narrow section of society can afford the Model S," one big Tesla investor says. "We are going to need an electric vehicle that people can afford and Tesla is in a very good position to do that."

The Tesla chief executive said on a call with Wall Street analysts last year that the company had started to think about how to build a new, lower-priced vehicle, though he did not say how long it might take to become a reality.

Just another carmaker

What Tesla does next will help determine where its share price ultimately ends up. Despite the tumble, it still trades at about 28 times this year's expected earnings – a huge premium to other carmakers.

A more severe re-rating of its shares is likely, says veteran auto executive Bob Lutz, as investors come to realise that it does not enjoy any particular technological advantages to justify valuing it as a high-growth tech company.

Lutz, who once held senior roles at Ford, Chrysler and GM, credits Musk with "single-handedly returning a reputation for excellence in technical innovation to the American car industry".

But with the technology behind electric motors, lithium-ion batteries and control electronics widely available to other carmakers, he argues that Tesla is destined to be seen as just one carmaker among many – with a far more modest stock market valuation to match.

Yet Musk's supporters say this underestimates the more durable advantages that the company has built up in the decade since it launched the Model S.

The many technical advances it has come up with, from the design of its bat-



Hyundai-Kia and other carmakers have launched a series of widely praised electric vehicle models

tery cells and packaging to manufacturing techniques, to casting large sections of its newest models in a single piece to reduce the number of parts, have given it a clear cost advantage, says Pierre Ferragu, an analyst at New Street Research.

Tesla also has an industry-leading gross profit margin, he adds, that gives it a cushion to cut prices to maintain growth. Other automakers with thinner margins on EVs will have to cut back capital investment, he argues, reducing the competition.

If correct, that suggests Tesla could overtake its competitors in a stronger position relative to its competitors, setting it up for the next phase of growth. But for now, the worry that it is facing slower growth and will be forced into cutting into its profits to support sales has spooked Wall Street.

For the believers, there could be no better time to double down. Galileo Russell, a member of Tesla's army of loyal personal investors, says that although he found the Twitter controversy "frustrating", he is planning to add to his Tesla position for the first time in more than three years.

Musk has been underestimated before, he says, and the current soaring on Wall Street is no different. "The media like to think Elon's cancelled and this will ruin Tesla," he says. "But the silent majority still supports him."

Additional reporting by Harriet Agnew

Obituary News anchor who broke the media glass ceiling

Barbara Walters
Journalist
1929-2023

When Barbara Walters, the pioneering television journalist, worked as a co-host on a US morning show, her disapproving male counterpart extracted a bruising condition. Whenever they did an interview together, she wasn't allowed to talk until he had asked the first three questions. "I worked very hard on that fourth question," she remembered decades later.

That skill stood Walters, who has died at age 93, in good stead as she clawed her way to the top of her profession. After her stint as the first American woman to host an evening news show went badly, she became the ABC network's biggest interviewer of politicians, movie stars and other newsmakers, even as her no-holds-barred style and busy love life made her a celebrity in her own right. "Every female broadcast journalist working today owes a debt of gratitude to the O.G., Barbara Walters," wrote

with every US president from Richard Nixon to Barack Obama and got Nixon to admit that he wished he had destroyed the tape recordings that forced his 1974 resignation.

By the 1980s, her penetrating interviews with celebrities were as much part of the Hollywood calendar as the Academy Award shows. She dined with Patrick Swayze shortly before he died of cancer and put Sean Connery on the spot about his claims that it could be reasonable to slap a woman.

But perhaps the most famous example of her ability to land the big fish and then go where others shied away came when she won the first ever interview with Monica Lewinsky. Asking the former White House intern about her decision to keep the DNA evidence of her encounter with then-US president Bill Clinton, Walters said, "What kind of a woman saves a dress?" Nonetheless,

starred in *The View*, a morning show featuring female personalities meeting for a virtual coffee chat. During a tribute to this week to Walters' lasting impact, Joy Behar, a founding panel member, described how she "defied sexism and ageism" by being "the hardest working person" in television. "I asked, 'How come you always get the interview?' She says, 'Because I don't go to the bathroom.'"

Born in Boston in 1929, Barbara Jill Walters was the daughter of a British-born theatre impresario and nightclub owner who ricocheted between great wealth and near poverty in her childhood. Her older sister Jacqueline, who died in 1985, was "developmentally challenged". After graduating from Sarah Lawrence College, Walters worked briefly in publicity before beginning her climb through daytime television at NBC and then winning a five-



Barbara Walters hoped she helped smooth a path for other women

after he was divorced from actress Elizabeth Taylor. Walters was often pictured with her partner of the moment in designer clothes at society events. She also confessed in her 2008 memoir, *Audition*, to a secret affair with Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts.

In her fight to succeed and be taken seriously, Walters refused to play nice or take no for an answer. "I got the reputation of being a pushy cookie," she remembered. But her flamboyant style and strangled pronunciation of some consonants made her a ripe target for parody. The sketch show *Saturday Night Live* featured regular appearances of "Baba Wawer", a blonde bombshell news-woman modelled on Walters.

It wasn't until 2014, at the age of 84, that Walters finally retired from active news gathering. ABC named its New York news headquarters in her honour. At that ceremony, she said, "People ask

The FT View



FINANCIAL TIMES

"Without fear and without favour"

ft.com/opinion

The battering of Brand Windsor

Despite strikes and recession, Britain is gorging on royal feud revelations

Royal courtiers called it "the Marmite jar strategy". The evolution of the Crown's reputation in the 70 years of Queen Elizabeth II's reign was as gradual as the changing shape of the spread's container.

The latest disclosures by Prince Harry and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, have smashed that strategy and tarnished the British royal family's battered image. But their campaign is proving as divisive as the yeast extract spread. In a royal feud made for these politically polarised times, people either love the self-exiled Sussexes or hate them. The loser here is Brand Windsor.

The contents of the Duke of Sussex's tell-all memoir, *Spare*, which include details of the loss of his virginity and a fight with his brother, Prince William,

have leaked all over the royal family this week. The younger prince has overturned historian Walter Bagehot's warning about guarding the royal "mystery". He has not so much "let in daylight upon magic" as ripped back the palace curtains and exposed the monarchy to the blaze of 10,000 Californian suns.

In a week that should have been dominated by the far more serious drama of widespread UK rail strikes, a buckling NHS and the consequences of recession, many in Britain have chosen to gorge on the revelations, as though they were episodes of a real-life *Succession*.

Disgruntled royal siblings might in centuries past have sought to raise an army and march on London. The weapons of this battle are less bloody but just as wounding: Oprah interviews, Netflix series and blockbuster books. Either way, the outcome is regrettable.

The royal family has squandered a one-off opportunity to advance and improve its image. The princes were being groomed as standard bearers of a

more modern approach and in 2018 the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, a marketing triumph, seemed to intend a more inclusive monarchy. Instead, launching allegations of racism, animosity and lack of support, the couple have forced their own demerger from "the Firm", turned their PR skills against the rest of the family, and pursued a celebrity career in the US. It is a discordant prelude to King Charles's coronation in May.

The King will, undoubtedly, remember that less than 30 years ago, his own reputation was at a nadir following an equally divisive media battle with his wife Diana, Princess of Wales (a saga fictionalised in the most recent season of *The Crown*). Silence is the tradition and may well be Buckingham Palace's preferred reaction this time, even if silence has in the past been seen as tacit approval of unacceptable attitudes.

Having spun off the Sussexes, the palace could stand back and let them take the celebrity low road. Time might heal

Prince Harry has ripped back the palace curtains and exposed the monarchy to the blaze of 10,000 Californian suns

the core royals' reputation, as it did for that of King Charles and Camilla, now Queen Consort.

Inevitably, this approach means Charles III may become the second King in 250 years to lose America, where the Duke and Duchess of Sussex have reinforced their support. In the UK, however, only disgraced prince Andrew is a less popular member of the royals, according to polling before the latest news. But there is a generational divide to consider and a future in which a more modern, inclusive royal family would have better reflected the image of the nation. The pressure is then on Prince William and Catherine, Princess of Wales, to burnish the family's appeal to a younger audience.

It is easy to forget that the Firm is a family, with a family's dysfunction. The difference is that feuding within this dynasty has wider consequences for an institution that is still adapting to a new sovereign and finding its way in a post-Elizabethan era.

Opinion US politics

Ferment of change lurks in Republican chaos

Rory Griffin FT.com



Oren Cass



The spectacle of a US House of Representatives in disarray, unable to elect a Speaker, should be a common one. In every Congress, both the Republican and Democratic delegations harbour a range of characters who can exercise more power and garner more headlines by playing spoiler at the outset than they ever will in the normal course of House business. No candidate for Speaker could distribute enough favours to entice everyone into line.

So how does a combative and attention-craving gaggle of politicians ever unite to provide the absolute majority a Speaker needs? As the conservative sociologist Robert Nisbet famously observed, "People do not come together in significant and lasting associations merely to be together. They come together to do something

Tax cuts no longer unify. When House leader Kevin McCarthy produced a pocket-sized "Commitment to America" before the midterms, it made no mention of tax cuts. Comically, after Senate leader Mitch McConnell refused to put forward any mid-term agenda, senator Rick Scott published "An 11 Point Plan to Rescue America" with only one tax provision: a tax increase for most households. In response to widespread outrage, he republished the plan (with the "11" on the cover literally crossed out and a "12" inserted) that now had a 12th point, "cutting taxes", which included no new tax cuts.

Free trade? Maybe, maybe not. Deregulate, of course, except when proposing more regulation of technology, new drug price controls, stronger antitrust enforcement and aggressive industrial policy. Restrict immigration, or else may expand it.

Admittedly, this may not sound so promising. But chaos is unavoidable in the necessary process of demolishing an outdated consensus and developing a new one. The best analogy comes from science. Thomas Kuhn famously introduced the concept of a "paradigm shift" in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Scientists and philosophers once believed that scientific knowledge advanced steadily through incremental progress. Kuhn showed that the process was one of long static periods of "normal science", during which researchers worked mostly to validate their existing paradigm, punctuated by bursts of disruption when an old paradigm failed and a new one emerged.

Likewise in politics, innovative ideas harden into dogma around which politicians and economists build their careers, warding off the heresy of new thinking until they render themselves so irrelevant to contemporary challenges that a crisis occurs, then chaos and then a better framework. The trailblazing agenda that the Reagan revolution brought to Washington in the 1980s, itself a paradigm shift, had devolved into stale dogma by the 2010s.

For a glimpse at the new paradigm, look to those who offer solutions, such as senator Marco Rubio. Kicked off the new year with an essay in *The American Conservative* on "rebuilt" the Republican party into a multi-ethnic, working-class coalition". He calls for "putting Wall Street in its place" and "reorienting our economic relationship with China", and discusses plans to "bring critical industries

No candidate for Speaker could distribute enough favours to entice everyone into line

that cannot easily be done in individual isolation." Anyone can create a controversy. But only a united caucus can exercise its collective political power to achieve substantive ends.

Politicians who have dedicated their lives to attaining power within a political party generally do so in part for the sake of the power, but also because they want their party to succeed and bring about the kind of change to which they are ideologically committed. These commonly held interests are what make political parties work and allow a legislature to function.

The problem for the current Republican party is that it seems not to have anything it wants to do. In 2020, it declined even to write a platform for its convention. In 2022, it struggled to offer any positive agenda. For many members, the incentive to collaborate and compromise is gone, because it would be in service to nothing.

Letters

Beware a world run by children of plutocrats and politicians

In "We are living in an era shaped by professors' kids" (Spectrum, Life & Arts, December 24) Simon Kuper argues that the children of professors have an exclusive path to power: they grow up in a house where ideas are taken seriously; education happens at the kitchen table and their intellectual overconfidence parachutes them into positions of power. However, as professors continue to slide down the class and salary ladder, he writes, their

children will become the offspring of an increasingly angry lumpen-intelligentsia, brewing on the next revolution.

But will they? Pathways to power are not just built on ideas, knowledge and confidence. They are also the result of wealth, secure incomes and networks of authoritative people. These offer some a head start in life, while placing others at a competitive disadvantage. Without

economic, cultural and social inheritances, one simply has less opportunities to do well in life.

As academic salaries are dropping and the cost of living is rising, the professors' children will simply have little room to plan for a revolution. Those who are next in line to run the world will rather be the offspring of the Elon Musks and Donald Trumps of this world: they will have the cumulative advantage of inherited wealth,

networks of power and all the benefits that come with it, including access to selective universities and the top jobs.

A bigger question therefore is what our world will look like when these privileged kids run our world rather than those who were raised by the intelligentsia to think and discuss ideas and ideologies, however impractical these may be.

Melanie Ehren Leiden, The Netherlands

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Why digital terrestrial TV is key to national resilience

Lex argues the merits of digital terrestrial television as a greener distribution of the TV signal than the internet ("Carbon counter: linear TV repeats are greener than buzzy Netflix premieres", December 24). There's another, little-discussed, reason for maintaining DTT dissemination through aerials beyond the 2030s — when it might be switched off to free up the spectrum for other uses.

We've learned a lot about the shape of future conflicts over the past year. We've already seen an undersea gas pipeline blown up. International infrastructure has become a credible target. What if the internet were compromised by the destruction of the satellites and the cables it depends upon? In a time of crisis how would a government get its crucial messages out (think Covid and lockdown)? There's a powerful argument for maintaining alternative means of distribution. Chiefly, DTT for TV and FM for radio. It's a matter of national resilience and it would be a foolish government or regulator which ignored this.

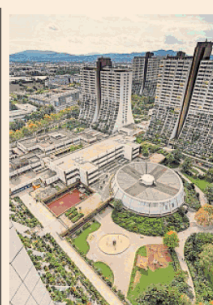
The director-general of the BBC, Tim Davie, is rightly preparing the corporation for the internet age. But he should also be arguing for the maintenance of DTT. Neatly this combines technology with resilience with the enduring value of the BBC's trusted news services.

Sir Peter Bazalgette
Chair, ITV, 2016-2022
London W2, UK

Who needs miners' strikes, IRA bombs, and race riots?

I was saddened to read (Obituaries, December 17) that Lord Young and his family changed their mind about emigrating to the US in 1974 after saying just one day. The "riot outside their Boston hotel [that] convinced them that life in Britain would be better" was undoubtedly part of the "busing" crisis resulting from the desegregation of Boston public schools.

I experienced these disturbances first-hand since that was the year I emigrated from England to begin graduate studies in Boston. Nearly 50 years later, I'm still here. Suppose the Young family had chosen to cross the Charles River to Cambridge, or head farther afield into the heartland of America. In that case, they might have realised these riots were isolated and localised. As it is, on returning to Britain and joining the Thatcher government, he would have been exposed to the civil unrest and very



'Ups and downs': Alt Erlaa Towers in Vienna, designed by Harry Gluck

Leave rates to the market, not fumbling central banks

John Plender in his column "Central banks take top spot on year's list of horror stories" (The Long View, FT Weekend, December 24) correctly observes that central banks suffered a major reputational hit last year. Central bankers deserved that hit, though, for once again these financial seers have responded far too slowly to rising inflation.

But rather than repeatedly criticising central bankers' failed interest-rate manipulations, the time has come to rely on market forces to set interest rates across the entire yield curve. Markets often err in pricing goods and services, and credit is a service, but markets are much quicker to correct pricing errors and to respond to changing economic conditions than fumbling central bank bureaucrats, who suffer no personal losses when they err.

Hopefully, the current bout of interest rate mispricing will finally trigger that overdue examination.

Bert Ely
Founder, Ely & Company
Alexandria, VA, US

Your article unleashed a yearning for the mountains

I've never seen anything like Olivo Barbieri's stunning, exciting and captivating alpine imagery ("Three falls in the Alps", Spectrum, December 24).

I sat in the sunshine to devour his photographs and Xenia Minder's story which, from the first word, transported me back to the all too little time I had once spent climbing in the Alps. Everything about this moving and

Glorious corrective strikes a chord with this reader

At New Year, when all too many of us are being exhorted to "find our passion", Nadia Beard's "Notes in the key of life" (Life & Arts, December 31) was a glorious corrective. This beautifully written piece conveyed a wild adventure, coupled with more sound advice than you will find in many self-help books. Forget the received wisdom (work out your values; reflect on what lights you up; embrace acceptance, etc., etc.). Instead just fold back the cover on a Bösendorfer piano and play. Then Bam! Audition for a conservatoire in Georgia. As Beard writes: "Our passions are what make up our inner life, a place of consolation where things of meaning are stored... whenever we want or need them."

name Mattiland
Executive Coach, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, UK

Milton Keynes pioneered ideas of urban liveability

John Betjeman's suburban dream explored in "Finding Metro-land" (House & Home, November 12) strikes at the core of what is urban liveability. As land-use planner in the 1967 master plan team for Milton Keynes, we were faced with exactly this question of what residential densities, plot ratios and building footprint would last for 25 or 50 years into the future.

Fast growing China is struggling with the need to design its new cities as sponges to accommodate extreme weather as a result of climate change, especially overheating and flooding, and this is exactly what "metro-land", with its green infrastructure, is about.

The idea is not popular with city managers and developers who aim to squeeze the maximum profit from sites, nor image makers of the "ideal city" of skyscrapers and high rise living. Increasing deregulation of the planning system flies in the face of the need for more considered investigation and design control if we are to create liveable communities for generations to come.

Steve Osgood
Bath, Somerset, UK

The contraptions aesthetes prefer to keep out of sight

Through 2022 I have been impressed with the ability of the people profiled in your column "The Aesthetes" to live without either television or computer — at least based on the pictures of their favourite rooms ("Lily Cole on growing up in fashion and giving back to the

Chicago jewellery store staff call time on a scandal

Jeff Maysh ("The case of the missing watches", Spectrum, December 24) in his article on the grey market for Rolex watches, is justified in sneering at "Crook County" which is indeed "mired in corruption", as is the entire north-west county/chicago area and state of Illinois.

Nevertheless, it is ordinary residents, namely the jewellery store employees — European origin "ethnics" with "dese, dem, dese" accents — who had the courage to blow the whistle, at great personal cost, on the corrupt practices related to the sale of Rolex watches. And our courts system is taking their case seriously. This exposed did not happen in "sophisticated" New York, Los Angeles or London.

Joshua Teller
Chicago, IL, US

Living in Vienna, it's the hinterland you appreciate

Thanks to Kirsty Lang for her enthusiastic article on Vienna in *House & Home* (December 31). Danke für die Blumen, as we say in German. It's an even more flattering portrayal when contrasted with London's rental crisis.

It's worth mentioning that Vienna has rent controls on prewar buildings and strict rules on fixed-term rentals, so if London really wanted to do something about it, just copy that.

Vienna's transformation started with a single building — the "UNO City" — in the 1970s when chancellor Bruno Kreisky lured the UN to move some offices there. But communal housing was not always a rosy success story. Developments such as

Grossfeldsiedlung and Rennbahnweg and even the most iconic — Harry Gluck's Alt Erlaa Towers — were often criticised and had their ups and downs.

But the true beauty of living in Vienna is the landscape's diversity — the Viennese Woods up to the pre-Alps in the west, the start of the Hungarian plains in the south-east, and Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary within an hour's drive.

Harald Strindl
Vienna, Austria

Corrections

● It would take 10mn new \$8 Twitter subscriptions to cover the social media group's debt interest payments, not 100mn as incorrectly stated in an article on December 31.

● An incorrect picture was used to illustrate a property in Yorkshire on page 6 of *House and Home* in today's edition.

Opinion

Cheer up. Prospects for 2023 are better than you think

ECONOMICS

Chris Giles



Surveys of economists at the end of 2022 in the US, eurozone and the UK have been unremittingly bleak, stuffed with predictions of recession, higher unemployment and continued inflationary problems.

The evidence suggests 2023 economic performance won't be as bad as most economists are saying. We are likely to end the year richer, more secure and more content than at the start.

There is no doubt the global backdrop for 2023 is difficult. Households and companies have weathered a pandemic, inflation, record energy costs and a food price crisis over the past three years.

The IMF's latest forecasts from October, for example, predicted global growth falling from 3.2 per cent in 2022 to 2.7 per cent in 2023. This underpinned Georgieva's comment that this year would be "tougher than the year we leave behind".

Translated into economic activity that occurs solely within the year in question – aligning with most people's expectation of a forecast – the story changes completely.

The IMF is far from alone in presenting headline growth forecasts that its own officials find difficult to articulate.

These failures in translating numerical forecasts into a compelling, accurate narrative should concern us. They create an unnecessarily gloomy outlook, which has self-fulfilling properties.

2023. But few Financial Times readers will fail to have noticed a second problem with these forecasts: they are severely out of date.

Failures in translating numerical forecasts into a compelling narrative should concern us

made in the autumn and based on financial market expectations for future natural gas prices at the time.

Current market expectations are for prices to be about half that level. The easing of the energy crisis is an un-

loyed boost to the European economic outlook. Lower energy prices will improve projections for incomes, growth and public finances while lowering headline inflation.

The second change in assumptions must take account of China ending its zero-Covid policy. The virus is generating misery for many, but the deregulation is likely to prove positive for both Chinese and global economic prospects later this year.

India's devastating Delta variant wave in spring 2021 led to a greater than 8 per cent drop in gross domestic product in the second quarter of that year, followed by an equivalent rise in the third quarter and another 5 per cent gain in the fourth quarter.

We should, of course, not get carried

away on a wave of optimism. Even as inflation falls, fights between workers, companies and taxpayers over the accumulated losses from the economic crises of recent years can linger.

But uncertainties of this nature are an ongoing fact of life. As we start the year we can say the following with some confidence. Nearly all current forecasts suggest growth in the world economy is likely to improve in 2023 and future forecasts will be more optimistic still.

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She will face even greater challenges in her second term as environment minister. By Bryan Harris and Michael Pooler

Marina Silva hails from a part of Brazil so remote that even Brazilians say it is not real. *O Acre não existe* – Acre doesn't exist – goes the bon mot, a playful nod to the isolation of the sweltering Amazonian state, which more than a few have struggled to find on a map.

But it was this densely forested sliver of Brazil, hanging off the nation's north-western frontier, that forged Marina (as she is universally known) into an environmentalist. It was here she began a lifetime of green activism that is now reaching a peak with her appointment to what is one of the world's most consequential jobs.

This week the 64-year-old daughter of impoverished rubber tappers was sworn in for another stint as Brazil's environment minister under the new leftwing government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. During her first term in office from 2003 to 2008, Marina was hailed for her unflinching devotion to forest communities and an almost fanatical focus on reducing deforestation, even as her methods riled powerful farming interests. Today she faces the same mission, but with much greater urgency.

Deforestation in the Amazon rainforest has soared in recent years. Estimates suggest an area the size of 3,000 football pitches is razed every day, dramatically undercutting the rainforest's role as a carbon sink for global emissions.

"Things have changed and the picture is much worse than it was in 2003," Marina told the FT last year. "The [previous] Bolsonaro government didn't just weaken [environment] management, it didn't just cut budgets, it also empowered the sectors which are damaging for indigenous people and gave a lot of economic power to the most backward elements in agribusiness."

Growing up in rural Acre, Marina witnessed first-hand the devastation that accompanies deforestation. When a bulldozing crew arrived to construct a highway near her hamlet when she was 14, they brought an epidemic of measles and malaria. Soon two of her younger sisters were dead. Then a cousin and an uncle. Her mother died months later.

"I know what it is to starve. I had to share an egg with seven other siblings, with a little flour, salt and bits of chopped onion. I remember asking my mother and father, 'aren't you going to eat?' And my mother replied, 'we are not hungry.' And a child believed that," she recalled.

After contracting hepatitis, the adolescent Marina moved to Rio Branco, the state capital, where nuns taught her to read and write. Working as a maid, she funded her education and studied



Person in the News | Marina Silva

Fearless campaigner for Brazil's rainforest

for the environment into politics, winning local elections and becoming the then-youngest ever federal senator at 36. When Lula set up his first government in 2003, there was only one choice for environment minister.

"The fight against deforestation is something very personal for Marina. She is a religious person, and being minister and implementing a strong environmental policy is more than a job for her. It is a calling," said Raoni Rajão of the Federal University of Minas Gerais.

Short and slight in frame, Marina appears almost frail after a lifetime of rainforest ailments including five bouts of malaria, three of hepatitis, one of leishmaniasis and a dose of mercury

ing Amazonian deforestation by as much as 70 per cent. Her administrative and financial initiatives included new management of public forests, the creation of a forest service and a biodiversity institute and several funds for the maintenance of the Amazon.

However, her unyielding manner

'Silva becomes huge when she speaks her mind, refusing to be intimidated by powerful men'

offended agricultural and mining inter-

ests, before unsuccessfully contesting the presidency three times. Now she is back. She joined Lula's election campaign last year on condition that he toughen his environmental promises. Pledges to achieve "net zero deforestation" – meaning forest loss could be offset by other measures – now simply read "zero deforestation".

Despite having Lula's full-throated support, Marina faces an enormous challenge. The Amazon's myriad criminal enterprises have become more savvy and technologically advanced. She also takes over an enforcement apparatus gutted by budget cuts.

Yet her resolve remains fierce. "Destroying the Amazon is destroying

China's collective memory of Covid must be preserved

ASIA

Yuan Yang



What is our collective memory of 2022? NetEase, China's online entertainment giant, posed this question at the beginning of its summary of the year.

The six-minute clip included dozens of viral social media videos, often filmed by accidental witnesses to unfolding tragedies. A woman needing chemotherapy in a locked-down Shanghai begs for transport; a six-year-old boy pulls his grandmother on a wheelbarrow to take a compulsory Covid test; a truck driver, stranded by lockdowns and unable to reach his sick parents, kneels in the road, crying.

Other clips show economic hardships borne by migrant workers – a delivery driver's insulated takeaway box opens to reveal a toddler sleeping inside. The first half of the video closes on the fire in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang in north-western China, which sparked nationwide protests against the zero-Covid policy.

In a vast country with greatly varied experiences of the pandemic, the crowdsourced compilation felt a fitting way of covering a breadth of stories. Lockdowns were applied with varying degrees of discipline between different cities and within them. But across China, common emotions emerged: anxiety, helplessness, frustration – and uncertainty as to what might come next.

NetEase's compilation was swiftly censored, as was Voices of April, a six-minute compilation of Shanghai residents' audio recordings during the intense two-month lockdown that left some households running out of food and medication. Southern Weekly's tribute to the year, more literary and less visceral, survived: "We saw the 'two stripes' [of a positive Covid test] in our friends' social media feeds, and we saw ibuprofen being passed among neighbours..."

These accounts live on in various online archives, from platforms like the China Digital Times to citizen journalists who preserve censored material. Fang Kecheng, who studies China's social media discourse at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, writes that "archiving... is the power of the powerless, the political action of the weak".

How a tragedy is remembered is highly contested, because it brings up the question of who to hold to account, whose memories are prioritised, and whose are ignored.

It also takes a long time to settle. Almost six years on from the Grenfell Tower fire in London, an inquiry has yet to submit its final report; meanwhile, the inquiry into the UK government's response to Covid is just getting started.

Journalism, art and literature are

markers of a collective memory, and that is why they are so heavily controlled by authoritarian governments. Yet acts of remembrance, of holding the true range of human emotion up to the light, are necessary to build a future.

Maintaining collective memory is a step towards collective processing, to satisfy the human need to create meaning and narrative.

The American psychologist Jack Saul, who had children in primary school near the Twin Towers during the September 11 2001 attacks in New York, writes about collective recovery from trauma.

"A collective trauma really needs a collective response and a collective voice, too," Saul said in an interview after the attacks. "That process of collective response in the community is a very important part of the recovery process itself."

Communities are also strengthened when individuals can find resonance in one another's experiences. The power of group-based therapy, said one Shanghai-based psychologist, is that individuals "situate their own emotions in the context of other people. I'm in pain, and so is she – I'm anxious, and so is he."

In a 2007 paper, psychologist Stevan Hobfoll identified five principles for psychological and social responses to mass traumas that are still referred to in disaster response best practice guidelines: promoting a sense of safety, calm-

Acts of remembrance, of holding the range of human emotion up to the light, are necessary to build a future

ing, a sense of self-efficacy and community efficacy, connectedness and, finally, hope.

Many Chinese communities that have weathered severe lockdowns together have emerged with much greater interconnectedness. "The lockdowns increased volunteering on campus, and made people more thankful for their community volunteers," said one student at Tsinghua University in Beijing, whose campus went through rounds of lockdowns.

"We relied on our residential compound, we bought groceries together, shared rice. After the reopening, some people said they missed that feeling of sticking together," said the Shanghai-based psychologist. Such bonds, she added, will lessen as people return to their normal lives, but traces remain – the grocery-distribution chat group, for example, is now used to share second-hand furniture.

The zero-Covid policy may be over, but the worst is not. As China heads into its deadliest Covid wave yet, and the rest of the world struggles through the long-lasting impact of the pandemic, let us keep our collective memory, with all of its shadows, alive.

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Companies & Markets

FINANCIAL TIMES



Life changer Pharma partnership that led to a breast cancer drug breakthrough — PAGE 12

Tech titans retreat Wall Street's heaviest hitters remain under pressure — PAGE 13

Samsung's profits dive 69% as semiconductor demand falls

◆ Customers cut spending ◆ Oversupply issues weigh ◆ Pressure on margins



Handset setback: the South Korean manufacturer said smartphone revenues fell against a backdrop of 'prolonged macro issues' — Seungchon Cho/Bloomberg

SONG JUNG-A — SEOUL

Samsung Electronics' operating profit slid nearly 70 per cent in the fourth quarter to an eight-year low, according to its preliminary numbers, highlighting how a slowing global economy is crushing demand for semiconductors and electronics products.

The world's largest producer of memory chips, smartphones and televisions said customers were clearing their inventories and the decline in demand for its chips and their fall in price were greater than expected.

Consumer interest in its handsets also waned. "Smartphone sales and revenue decreased due to weak demand resulting from prolonged macro issues," it said.

The South Korean company said its operating profit dropped 69 per cent to Won4.3tn (\$3.4bn) over the past three months, from Won13.87tn a year earlier. It marked the company's worst profit decline since the third quarter of 2014 and fell short of a Won5.9tn estimate by Refinitiv.

Sales were likely to have declined 9 per cent to Won70tn, the company said.

Analysts say Samsung has been contributing to the current supply glut with its increased spending on chip manufacturing, as it pursues a strategy of investing in a downturn to gain market share.

Oversupply problems have been exacerbated by US sanctions on chip exports to China and iPhone production delays at Foxconn's Chinese plant due to an outbreak of Covid-19.

Apple is Samsung's smartphone rival but also a big customer for its chips and displays.

Analysts expect the memory downturn to worsen in the current quarter before a recovery in the second half.

"Memory chip inventories are likely to peak in the second quarter but Dram and NAND chip prices are likely to rebound in the second half," said Kim Dong-won, an analyst at KB Securities.

Memory-chip makers, including Micron Technology, Kioxia Holdings and SK Hynix, are slashing their capital expenditure to adjust to the oversupply,

as higher interest rates and cost of living increases damp global tech demand, following a two-year boom during the coronavirus pandemic.

Chip sales in South Korea dropped nearly 30 per cent in December from a year earlier — a fifth consecutive monthly drop and a reversal from when manufacturers ramped up output to

'We think Samsung is likely to modify its 2023 capex strategy to a more dovish stance'

record levels to meet the pandemic-era surge in demand.

US chipmaker Micron has said it does not expect a recovery until the second half of this year and in December announced a 10 per cent cut in its workforce, as it expects to remain in the red this year.

SK Hynix said in October it would halve its capital expenditure this year. But Samsung is not considering an

output cut and began production in July at its new domestic chip factory in Pyeongtaek, one of the world's largest semiconductor production facilities. The company increased memory output by about 10 per cent in the fourth quarter, according to eBest Investment & Securities.

However, the deepening decline has sparked speculation that Samsung may have to cut capex after all, with analysts warning its strategy could lead to the company's first quarterly chip losses since the global financial crisis.

"We think Samsung is likely to modify its 2023 capex strategy to a more dovish stance and refrain from a capex increase," Peter Lee, an analyst at Citigroup, said in a recent report, noting that NAND flash memory chip prices were approaching the company's production cost, meaning manufacturing would no longer be profitable.

"Without production cuts, it is inevitable that its memory division will suffer losses in the second quarter," Kim Yang-jae, an analyst at Daol Investment & Securities, said in a note.

Shell factors in \$2.4bn hit from windfall taxes

NATHALIE THOMAS — EDINBURGH

Shell expects a hit of almost \$2.4bn as result of windfall levies in the EU and UK for 2022, implying it will pay UK tax for the first time since 2017.

The oil major said yesterday that it expected earnings to be hit by \$2bn in the fourth quarter because of changes introduced in the EU and the UK since September to capture some of the windfall profits oil and gas companies have made from high commodity prices.

This would be on top of a \$360mn impact already disclosed to investors in its third-quarter results in October, bringing the total accounting hit arising from EU and UK windfall taxes in 2022 to nearly \$2.4bn.

However, the company clarified that the amount it pays out to EU and UK authorities would be different because it could use historic losses and investment allowances to reduce its tax bill.

Shell said the \$2bn impact would be reported as "identified items" in its fourth-quarter accounts, due out on February 2, and so would not affect its adjusted profits for the period. It would also have a "limited" cash impact on the quarter given the expected timing of payments, the company said.

Shell did not break down how much of the liability was due to the UK's windfall tax, known as the energy profits levy, and how much was from the EU's so-called solidarity contribution, both of

which are designed to ease the pain for hard-pressed consumers.

Nevertheless, the disclosure, made in a fourth-quarter trading update yesterday, implies the oil company will pay tax in the UK for the first time in five years. In recent years the company has received tax refunds on investments made in the UK North Sea, and on decommissioning activities, which have been higher than any tax owed.

Shell's former chief executive Ben van Beurden in October appeared to invite governments to raise windfall taxes,

Shell said part of what it pays to the EU and UK would be offset by historic losses and allowances



arguing the industry should "embrace" levies to support households bearing the brunt of high commodity prices.

The UK in November raised its energy profits levy, initially introduced in May by then chancellor Rishi Sunak, by 10 percentage points, taking the aggregate headline tax rate on oil and gas producers to 75 per cent.

The European Commission expects to raise a total of €25bn from the bloc's solidarity contribution, introduced in September, but the policy is facing a legal challenge from US oil major ExxonMobil.

Technology

Chatbot group OpenAI tries to raise capital at \$30bn valuation

TABBY KINDER — SAN FRANCISCO
JAMES FONTANELLA-KHIAN — NEW YORK

OpenAI, the developer behind artificial intelligence bot ChatGPT, is in discussions to raise capital at a valuation of almost \$30bn, according to two people familiar with the matter, as venture capitalists rush to profit from the viral technology.

The San Francisco-based company is talking to investment groups, including Peter Thiel's Founders Fund, to carry out a tender offer of existing shares, in which investors would purchase new OpenAI shares from current shareholders, including employees.

A deal would mark a surge in its valuation from about \$20bn in 2021, when it was valued during a secondary share sale. Such a rise would make it outlier in Silicon Valley as technology companies have braced themselves for big cuts to their values and investors have pulled back from new deals.

The discussions were first reported by the Wall Street Journal. Founders Fund declined to comment. OpenAI did not respond to a request for comment.

The talks come less than a month after OpenAI released the newest form of its GPT-3.5 software. The chatbot, which can converse with users through text and images, quickly went viral and surpassed 1mn users in five days.

One person with knowledge of the matter warned that discussions about an OpenAI tender offer were continuing and the value of the potential deal had not been finalised.

A number of tech start-ups have been forced into aggressive cost-cutting measures in recent months amid a stock market rout and a funding crunch.

In the last three months of 2022, the value of venture capital acquisition deals dropped to \$763mn, the first time it has been under \$1bn in more than a decade, according to PitchBook.

OpenAI was co-founded in 2015 by Big Tech figures — including Tesla boss Elon Musk, PayPal co-founder Thiel and investor Sam Altman — to develop "safe" AI.

In 2019, Microsoft invested \$1bn in OpenAI as part of an agreement to jointly develop new technologies. See **The Top Line and Lex**

Financials. Takeover target

StanChart under pressure to restore revenue growth and double-digit profitability

Gulf suitor walked away but lender must raise its game if it wants to stay independent

STEPHEN MORRIS AND EMMA DUNKLEY LONDON

When Bill Winters was quizzed about the perennial takeover rumours around Standard Chartered in 2021, he said his bank was a "complex beast" and he did not feel vulnerable as a target.

But the chief executive invited any prospective buyer to "give it a go and explain to our shareholders why they are better off in combination than they are sticking with us alone. Be my guest."

First Abu Dhabi Bank almost accepted the invitation. Last year, the lender hired Citi and Moelis to explore potential takeovers or investments, with the UK lender their prime target.

pressure on Winters to swiftly restore revenue growth and double-digit profitability if he wants to keep the bank independent. Since he took over, the stock has dropped by a third, leaving StanChart as one of Europe's most undervalued banks. It is worth only £20bn and trades at a 60 per cent discount to the book value of its net assets, around half that of many Asia-Pacific-based peers.

For long-suffering shareholders sitting on big paper losses, a serious bid would be hard to ignore. But getting a deal over the line might prove even more difficult. "I understand why it should be attractive as an acquisition. [It] gives the acquirer a great footprint across geographies," said Hugh Young, chair of Abrdn asset management Asia, a top-15 shareholder. Falling sterling has made the lender even cheaper for an acquirer.

"The timing of the interest from the

Saudi National Bank recently agreed to buy a 9.9 per cent stake in Credit Suisse to stabilise the lender after a series of crises. Qatari funds also own large chunks of Credit Suisse and Barclays in the UK.

StanChart, which declined to comment for this article, is no stranger to the rumour mill. In 2014 and 2015 alone, ANZ, JPMorgan, Santander and ScotiaBank were linked with deals, attracted by its hard-to-replicate network.

In 2018, the FT reported that the Barclays board ran the rule over its peer and StanChart's rival HSBC has always maintained an interest. If it were ever put up for sale, even if just as a defensive measure, senior executives there say.

The most important investor for any buyer to court is Singapore's state-owned fund Temasek, which owns 16.4 per cent of the stock. It first bought into the bank in 2006 when the shares

and is worth \$66bn, almost three times StanChart's market cap.

Winters inherited a bank in crisis and always faced a multi-year challenge. He said he spent his first years at the bank digging through "fertiliser" to uncover the valuable businesses buried by billions of losses from risky emerging market loans, necessitating 15,000 job cuts and a \$5.1bn capital injection in 2015.

The CEO oversaw a cultural overhaul at the lender, which had been fined billions of dollars for dodging US sanctions on Iran and suffered from ethics violations and allegations of harassment even in its top ranks.



Financial performance was slow to recover, with revenues and profits falling far below the levels seen in the previous five years as ties with risky clients were cut and compliance standards tightened. "Winters gave the business a heart attack when he took over, clamped down on risk too hard, and if you do that you change the psychology, making people too fearful of risk and growth," said a top-10 shareholder.

The stock has improved as rates rise, widening margins. Another boost has been China's decision to end its "zero-Covid" policy that had hampered Hong Kong, where it makes 22 per cent of revenues. Underlying income increased 10 per cent to \$12.5bn and pre-tax profit 17 per cent to \$3.2bn in the first nine months of 2022, with the bank generating a 10.1 per cent return on equity, up from 6 per cent in 2021. It has also returned \$1.4bn to shareholders via div-

Complications included its revenues being "highly exposed" to the vagaries of interest rates and "a lack of scale" in retail banking outside Hong Kong, in particular Singapore, India, South Korea and China, Coombs said.

Any buyer would have to secure approval from a host of regulators. The bank is also one of the main lenders, alongside HSBC, caught in the stand-off between the US, the UK and China over trade and the crackdown on Hong Kong.

"A possible offer for Standard Chartered puts a floor under a share price that is already attractively valued as Hong Kong and China reopen," said Guy de Blonay, at Jupiter, the bank's seventh largest investor. "In my opinion, the complexity of the deal may have been behind [FAB's] change of mind."

If no bid materialises, the bank will have to prove it can restore long-term profitability itself.

COMPANIES & MARKETS

We can learn to embrace Google's advert crowding

The Top Line
Elaine Moore



Google Search was once one of the wonders of the online world. Its clean, organised pages of results filtered the otherwise unmanageable slog of information on the internet. That was until it became cluttered with adverts. Now the world's biggest search engine is less encyclopedia, more Yellow Pages.

Look up a search term that can also be a product — asthma inhalers, for example — and you will need to scroll past up to four large adverts before reaching non-sponsored results. Search for clothing and the entire first page will be companies hoping to make a sale. Even non-ad results can look like wrong answers, with links full of buzzwords so Google gives them a higher ranking.

Google and its parent company Alphabet are caught in the conundrum that faces all businesses reliant on digital ads. Put ads up high and watch as revenues rise while user experience falls. In the last set of quarterly results,

paid Google Search revenue was 2 per cent better than expected. But there has been a noticeable rise in complaints. In November, the Freakonomics podcast called the search engine a set of cheap tricks. A few months earlier, The Atlantic magazine asked whether it was dying. Moaning about a free service may seem fruitless. Google Search is part of a trillion-dollar company powered by digital advertising. Never mind the moonshot ideas such as storing electricity in salt, Google advertising accounted for almost four-fifths of Alphabet's revenue last quarter.

The company says that its goal is always to provide "ads that are useful". It points out that not every search result has ads, either. But advert crowding would be more palatable if the basic service was noticeably improving at the same pace. Google's example of one enhancement is the fact that search results come with more images now. Of course, this just so

happens to be good for advertisers too. Other improvements have been slower to appear. Content behind paywalls is still not marked as such, for example. Nor is it possible to search for words spoken in a video without a transcript — though a trial is under way in India. When it launched in the late 1990s, Google Search was one of many search engines. But Larry Page and Sergey Brin's PageRank algorithm, which organised websites by the number of times they were linked to other pages, meant their search engine was best at bringing up relevant results. It quickly became the most popular.

In theory, users would up sticks and go elsewhere if the service was in decline. But Google Search has no real competitors. When did you last use Microsoft search engine Bing or DuckDuckGo? The prevalence of Google's Chrome browser and the fact that it pays Apple to be the default search engine give it a huge advantage. DuckDuckGo also claims Google's

Just as we discovered how to use key words in online searches, we may start using Google Search for purchases

rivals struggle because they cannot crawl, or visit, the same number of sites looking for links.

Will anything change? There is a serious, albeit slow-moving, challenge from antitrust officials targeting Google's promotion of its own services. A more immediate threat could come from OpenAI's chatbot ChatGPT. There are reports that Microsoft, which invests in OpenAI, will use it so Bing can reply to queries with answers instead of links to websites. But Google's own AI investment may neutralise this threat.

In the meantime, we will have to adapt to the prevalence of ads, just as we learnt to use key words when searching online, we may start using Google Search for purchases rather than fact finding. The change could be positive. Outsourcing knowledge to one tech group never made much sense.

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See Lex

Interview. Björn Rosengren

Chief seeks growth path for slimmer ABB

Swedish boss breaks down centralised Swiss group and jettisons non-core businesses

SYLVIA PFEIFER — LONDON

Björn Rosengren took the reins at ABB in March 2020 with a mandate to shake up the Swiss industrial group after years of underperformance.

Events — a global pandemic, production shutdowns in key markets and an economic downturn — may have proved an additional challenge but have done little to slow him down.

Almost three years on, the 63-year-old Swede has unpicked ABB's highly centralised corporate structure and parted with most, if not all, non-core businesses. ABB's four strategic divisions — electrification, motion, process automation and robotics — have been split into 20 autonomous businesses.

Along the way, ABB's head office has shrunk from 18,000 to just 800 people. Some 7,000 of the original 18,000 have gone to work directly for the different business units. The company employs about 100,000 people in more than 100 countries.

Rosengren's guiding principle is accountability. After a career spent whipping other industrial companies into shape, including Swedish engineer Sandvik, before landing at ABB, Rosengren said "people like accountability".

Accountability, he said, is key, crediting it as one of the factors behind the success of private equity groups. People there are "incentivised, meaning that if they make a success of the company, their future will be bright, at least financially". Today, ABB similarly incentivises people and gives full accountability.

Each of the businesses has its own management team and is responsible for its own costs. Each also has its own strategic mandate and, within that, needs to deliver first on stability, then profitability and then growth.

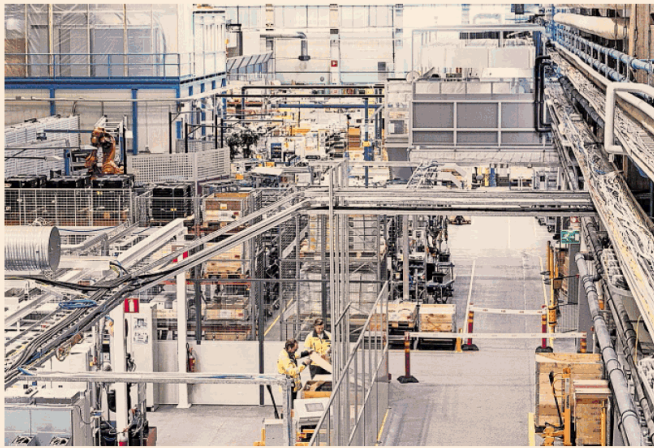
Performance is monitored closely, with a scorecard system that contains about 15 key ratios. Comparisons of current and past performance are critical in order to gauge the direction of each business and whether it is healthy, said Rosengren.

He is unapologetic if the approach entails shedding underperforming businesses or parting with heritage.

"People like to work for successful companies. I think that's more important than heritage", he added.

His method, he insisted, had begun to pay off. When he started, just 30 per cent of the businesses were in their third "growth stage". Today, 70 per cent are growing.

Despite his focus on decentralisation,



Focus on accountability: the ABB Drives production site in Helsinki. Below, chief executive Björn Rosengren has unpicked the Swiss conglomerate's centralised structure

'People like to work for successful companies. I think that's more important than heritage'

Björn Rosengren



Rosengren says there are reasons to keep the units together as one group within ABB: all have the same purpose, which he defines as enabling a "sustainable and energy efficient future with technology leadership in electrification and automation".

There is also collaboration between the businesses — but only if it makes sense, either by adding value to customers or by being more cost-efficient.

Andrew Wilson, equity analyst at JPMorgan who has a "neutral" rating on the company's stock, said Rosengren deserved credit for making a "tangible improvement in the way ABB is run".

"People underestimated his ability to repeat the same playbook he used at Sandvik at ABB, a bigger and more complex beast where others had tried and failed before."

ABB's balance sheet is in better shape but more remains to be done, including the disposal of the company's power conversion unit, acquired as part of a \$2.6bn deal for General Electric's industrial solutions business in 2018 and which helps companies run infrastructure more efficiently. A sales process is under way.

An original plan to float its electric vehicle charging business last summer was postponed due to the wider market rout. ABB in November raised about \$2.2bn (€2.1bn) from selling an 8 per cent stake. The private placement gave the business an equity value of \$2.2bn to \$2.5bn, with investors expecting a surge in demand for charging points.

ABB's financial performance has also begun to improve, although third-quarter income, announced in October, was hit by a non-operational provision in connection with a legacy project in South Africa.

Investors say a key target this year is hitting a margin of at least 15 per cent on operational earnings before interest tax and amortisation — one year ahead of plan.

Rosengren also points to a strong order intake, increasing 4 per cent on a reported basis and 16 per cent on a comparable basis from last year to \$8.19bn in the third quarter.

"I think the most important [thing] is that we have to stay with 15 per cent over a business cycle, meaning that we should also be able to deliver over 15 per cent in the downturn," said Rosengren, stressing that conditions look more challenging next year.

Cevian Capital, which bought into the stock in 2015 and had been agitating for a new strategy, said it is happy with the results so far.

Robert Schuchna, a partner at Cevian, said Rosengren had "successfully deconglomerated" ABB in how it is organised and run. The result was a company that is "significantly more dynamic, competitive and profitable".

"The 15 per cent margin is a big improvement but, in our view, the company can and will become more profitable," added Schuchna.

On the growth front, ABB has set a revenue growth target of 4 to 7 per cent in constant currency terms through the

economic cycle. "The bit where the jury is still out is: can you sustainably match the peer group growth rates over the long term?" said JPMorgan's Wilson.

Some of the company's growth will come through acquisitions, notably small to medium-sized ones to help divisions strengthen their market positions. Rosengren said ABB had a "huge pipeline" of such deals and expected to do five to 10 a year.

William Mackie, head of capital goods research at Kepler Cheuvreux, said 2022 had been the "year in which the company has done all the housekeeping, including decentralising, cleaning up legacy contracts and selling everything apart from the power conversion business".

The coming year, he added, would be "all about driving for growth".

For Rosengren, one of the main challenges on the horizon is the rising political tensions between different parts of the world. However, ABB's strategy to be local in most of the countries in which it operates should provide some protection.

He is also worried about the rising regulatory push associated with Europe's push towards a greener economy, which contrasts sharply with America's strategy of offering incentives to companies to invest.

Europe's politicians are aware of the need to act. But the question is: will the different member states agree on something? "I am European and I would like to see a healthy Europe in the future," Rosengren said.

BUSINESS WEEK IN REVIEW

Wealth's ill health

● Wealth managers are grappling with one of their worst years in a century, with high inflation and a sell-off in stocks and bonds having hammered returns. The threat of stubbornly higher inflation presents a challenge to preserving wealth in real terms that has not been faced in decades, while the pain in markets over the past 12 months has undermined conventional wisdom about balancing portfolios between equities and fixed income.

● ExxonMobil and Chevron are expected to rake in almost \$100bn in combined profits from 2022 as they capitalise on surging fossil fuel prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The profit bonanza is seen by the oil majors as vindication after the companies resisted pressure from activists and some shareholders to pivot from their core oil and gas businesses and slash emissions.



● The headlong growth of cloud computing has reached a watershed as cost-conscious customers and economic pressure combine to cool the market. "There's huge pressure from customers to reduce their costs," said Barry Briggs, a former Microsoft executive.

● The war in Ukraine and extreme weather events have driven up the cost of reinsurance by as much as

It is set to be a pivotal year for the video media industry, which has been hit by economic woes and a costly shift to streaming

200 per cent in January renewals, according to a report, threatening to raise premiums and reduce what insurers are willing to cover. January 1 is the vital policy renewal date for reinsurers, which share losses with primary insurers and have a vital role in what can be insured and at what price.

● One of the largest endowments in the US is making a \$4bn investment in Blackstone's private real estate investment trust, in a move intended to shore up confidence in a \$69bn fund that put limits on investor withdrawals last year after suffering heavy redemptions. The University of California's endowment, which manages more than \$150bn of assets, said on Tuesday that it would make the investment in the Blackstone Real Estate Income Trust, or Breit, at its current net asset value.

● A decade-long spending boom on original television programmes is expected to slow to a crawl

\$100bn
Estimated 2022 combined profits at ExxonMobil and Chevron

€75mn
Penalty for H2O over investments in debt linked to Windhorst

Travel & leisure

F1 gambles on Las Vegas Grand Prix to bring home a \$500mn jackpot

SAMUEL AGINI

The US owners of Formula One are betting that the return of the sport to Las Vegas for the first time in four decades will generate \$500mn in revenues, as they press ahead with an expensive effort to conquer America.

Las Vegas will host a race in November for the first time since 1982, making it the third US city to be added to F1's circuit.

years ago, Liberty Media has built the sport's online marketing and profited from a tie-up with Netflix. The streaming platform's *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* documentary series has been credited with increasing interest in F1 by showcasing the drama of racing and highlighting the personalities of the sport.

"What we did is basically change completely, opening up a new way of communicating," F1 chief Stefano Domenicali said.

demic derailed the sport for the better part of two years.

The \$500mn target for Vegas was revealed in investor documents and confirmed by Liberty Media. The racing series generates revenues from broadcast deals, sponsorships and fees paid by promoters who sell tickets to race events. F1 also has a hospitality business called the Paddock Club.

Dutch beer brand Heineken is the title



A Red Bull F1 car at the Las Vegas Strip launch party in November

Liberty Media acquired 39 acres of land for \$240mn and expects to spend a similar sum on building the pit and 3.8-mile circuit. Construction of the paddock is already under way.

The decision to acquire the land is a break with the usual practice in which a local promoter carries some of the risks attached to staging the event.

Admission to the Vegas GP will cost \$500 for three days, with prices rising to

this year as loss-making streaming platforms moderate budgets. Analysts expect 2023 to be a pivotal year for the video media industry, which has been hammered by the deteriorating economy and an expensive transition from traditional television to streaming.

● French regulators this week imposed a record €75mn fine on asset manager H2O and banned chief

COMPANIES & MARKETS

AstraZeneca pharma tie-up brings breast cancer drug breakthrough

Treatment pioneered by Japanese partner Daiichi Sankyo has started extending lives of patients

HANNAH KUCHLER — LONDON

It is not often that a drug gets a standing ovation. When Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca announced results for their breast cancer treatment Enhertu, oncologists stood up to applaud.

"It was a goosebump moment, sending shivers down my spine," said Susan Galbraith, who leads oncology research and development at AstraZeneca.

Ken Keller, chief executive of AstraZeneca's Japanese partner on the drug, deliberately stood apart from his team at the American Society of Clinical Oncology meeting to see the mood of the crowd. "People had basically tears of joy in their eyes," he said.

But the man who had brought the two groups together — pioneering oncologist José Baselga — did not live to witness the drug's reception. He died in 2021 aged 61 from a rare brain disease.

One in eight women will get breast cancer in their lifetime — and Enhertu has the potential to change treatment for half of them. David Fredrickson, executive vice president of the oncology business at AstraZeneca, said the drug "blows up the swim lanes" that previously defined the treatment of breast cancer. For a large group of patients, he said, it could be "one of the most important medicines ever".

Enhertu was first approved in the US in 2019 for a subset of patients with cancer that has high levels of a protein called HER2. About 15 to 20 per cent of breast cancers are HER2-positive but last June a trial showed that the drug could double the time patients can live without their cancer progressing, even if they have low levels of this protein. About a fifth of the participants with metastatic cancer — usually seen as incurable — had complete responses: scans could not detect their tumours.

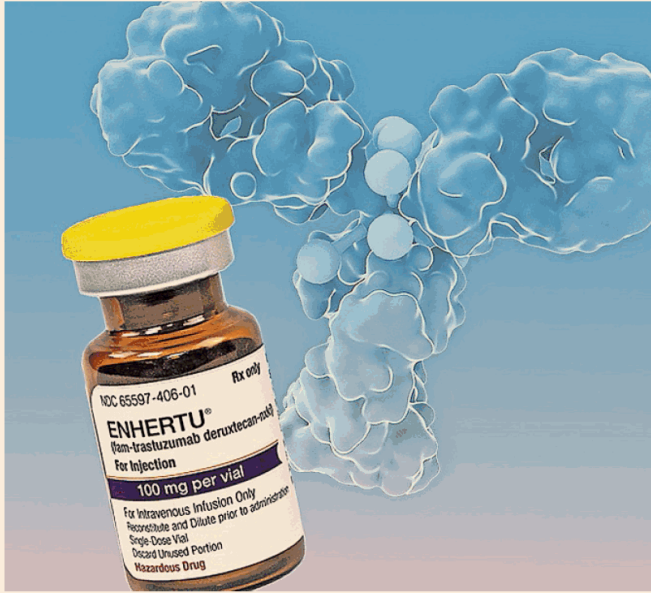
The drug has transformed Daiichi Sankyo into an oncology company. And it is further proof that AstraZeneca, a leader in the field, knows when to pounce: its unorthodox move to raise \$5.5bn on the public markets to help pay for the \$6.9bn deal to develop and sell the drug looks set to more than pay off. Analysts are forecasting about \$10bn a year in Enhertu sales at their peak.

In 2005, Daiichi merged with Sankyo, bringing together chemists from the former and biologists from the latter who would go on to create Enhertu.

The drug builds on a history of targeting the HER2 protein which dates back to Roche's launch of Herceptin in 1998. As with Herceptin, scientists used an artificial antibody to hook on to the HER2 protein on a cancer cell. But they improved on current treatments by creating a strong link to a more powerful molecule that breaks down enzymes and kills cancer cells.

When they tried it in mice, they could see it worked better than the market leader, Roche's Kadcyla. But Daiichi had never made a cancer drug. "In the end, science won the day back then," said Ken Takeshita, global head of R&D at Daiichi. "It was courageous for this company to say, we're going to steer away from being a cardiovascular company."

Keller wished he could say that he knew how promising the drug was at that point. By about 2015, the



Enhertu: sales of the drug are forecast to hit \$10bn at their peak, and AstraZeneca and Daiichi Sankyo are looking at wider applications. Below, Susan Galbraith, head of oncology R&D at AstraZeneca FT Magazine

technology started to look "pretty spectacular". "But there's a lot of drugs that look spectacular in animal studies," he said.

He was more convinced after the first study in humans: a hard-to-treat population that had tried several other drugs. "At that point, almost nothing works. And we were seeing the tumour shrink dramatically," he said.

Keller credits chief executive of the time, George Nakayama, with making two big bets: focusing on Enhertu, and working with AstraZeneca.

Baselga joined AstraZeneca in early 2019 as head of oncology research and development. He resigned as physician-in-chief at New York's Memorial Sloan Kettering cancer centre because of a failure to disclose payments from healthcare companies, which the American Association for Cancer Research later concluded was "inadvertent".

But while there, he had led the phase 2 trial for Enhertu, seeing how it helped patients. In his first week at AstraZeneca, he pushed the idea AstraZeneca should have a partnership with Daiichi.

Fredrickson said Baselga's extensive experience studying breast cancer meant he and AstraZeneca CEO Pascal Soriot sat up and listened. Soriot had already built AstraZeneca into an oncology powerhouse, producing blockbuster drugs such as Tagrisso and Lynparza. "José really gave us the conviction that this was a medicine that AstraZeneca needed to be a part of," Fredrickson said.

Daiichi split the rights 50/50 with AstraZeneca, outside of Japan, in return for AstraZeneca conduct-

ing further trials. Michael Leuchten, an analyst at UBS, said it was a "very, very clever deal". "What did AstraZeneca see that others missed?" he asked.

For Daiichi, AstraZeneca offered oncology expertise and money. To make the most of Enhertu's potential, they are planning 40 trials, one of the largest programmes in the industry. They are asking huge unanswered questions: does Enhertu work in earlier stages of breast cancer? It has already been approved for some types of other cancers such as gastric and lung, where HER2 shows up, but how many more could it tackle?

"We have so many potential cancers that we can study and sometimes it's a bit challenging to find all the people and all the resources," Takeshita said.

The biggest opportunity is early-stage breast cancer. The earlier cancer is treated the better, so it could make an even bigger difference earlier.

Nick Turner, an academic consultant medical oncologist at the UK's Institute for Cancer Research, who specialises in breast cancer but was not involved in the Enhertu trials, said it was very likely in future that oncologists would prescribe Enhertu instead of the previous standard medicine, Kadcyla.

"We'll then be on the way to really curing the substantial majority of patients with early-stage HER2-positive breast cancer," Turner said.

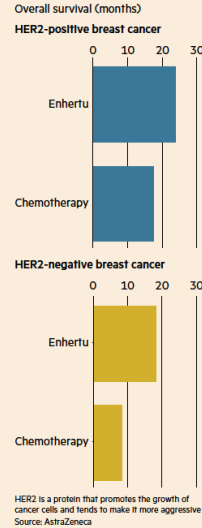
Roche said Kadcyla would still be an important option for patients, with its record of safety and efficacy, and the company is exploring using it in combination with another of its cancer drugs.

However, Enhertu has significant side effects. Patients often have the same side effects well known from chemo-

'[Telling oncologists about the results] was a goosebump moment, sending shivers down my spine'

'At some point, this product gets so big, you can't spend it fast enough in terms of investment'

Late-stage trial shows Enhertu can improve life expectancy



HER2 is a protein that promotes the growth of cancer cells and needs to be made it more aggressive Source: AstraZeneca

therapy — such as sickness and hair loss — and there is a much smaller risk of developing a serious lung condition.

Daiichi is also creating other drugs based on the same platform as Enhertu, one of which is also part of a partnership with AstraZeneca. Gareth Powell, head of healthcare at specialist fund manager Polar Capital, said Enhertu has helped take AstraZeneca to a "whole new level in terms of growth potential" — and when sales take off, would ultimately boost margins at Daiichi.

"At some point, this product gets so big, you can't spend it fast enough in terms of investment," he said.

Analysts at Credit Suisse said if all of the treatments based on the platform that combines antibodies with a molecule to kill cancer cells in the pipeline were successful, it could add up to an opportunity as big as Merck's blockbuster oncology drug Keytruda, which hit \$17.2bn in sales in 2021.

For patients, Enhertu promises time.

Emma Fisher was diagnosed with breast cancer aged 35, and two years later, it spread. The average lifespan of someone with secondary breast cancer is two to five years. Fisher's private health insurance paid for the drug, but she testified to the UK's National Institute of Clinical Excellence to try to persuade authorities to pay for it for everyone on the NHS. NICE now covers the drug for many patients with HER2-positive breast cancer, and will consider it for cancers with low levels of HER2 in 2023.

"Twelve months is a phenomenally long amount of time. It might not sound like a huge amount of time to somebody who doesn't have incurable cancer. But for somebody with incurable cancer, an extra 12 months is everything," she said.

Mining

Lucara chief seeks EU ban on Russian diamonds

HARRY DEMPSEY AND ABBY WALLACE LONDON

Mining company Lucara Diamond has called on the EU to impose sanctions on Russian diamonds after the bloc reversed plans to hit gemstone exports late last year.

Eira Thomas, chief executive of the Canadian mining group that operates mainly in Botswana, told the Financial Times that her personal view was that diamonds of Russian origin "should be sanctioned".

The EU in October considered a ban on imports from Russian diamond producer Alrosa — in which Moscow owns a one-third stake — as part of its eighth package of sanctions but the measure was cut at the eleventh hour despite the bloc going to great lengths to hit other extractive industries, such as oil.

Resistance from Antwerp, the centre of the world diamond trade through which 86 per cent of the world's stones pass, has been perceived as the key reason for the EU's U-turn.

Official Belgian statistics showed the country still imported €676mn of Russian diamonds in the second quarter of 2022, which then slipped to €154mn in the three months to the end of September — a quarter of the historical average.

The Antwerp World Diamond Centre has claimed that 10,000 direct and indirect jobs would be lost if sanctions were introduced and warned that the United Arab Emirates and India were waiting in the wings to snatch business. "Sanctions would give a \$40bn industry away to countries that are best friends of [Russian president Vladimir] Putin's regime at the moment," said Tom Neys, spokesperson for the trade body.

Despite this, Belgium's prime minister Alexander De Croo has publicly insisted his country would not block a ban on Russian rough diamonds.

The US has placed sanctions on Alrosa, the world's largest diamond producer with a 30 per cent global market share, and banned the import of Russian rough diamonds but still allows for gems to be imported if they have been substantially transformed elsewhere.

About 90 per cent of the world's diamonds go to India where they are cut and polished, in effect turning them into "Indian" diamonds in the eyes of US authorities. Indian banks have been allowed to open special accounts to trade with Russia in rupees, according to local media reports.

The EU in December finalised a ninth round of Russian sanctions but one diplomat involved said: "[Diamonds are] not in the sanction package so we don't really speak about it. In the council meetings but the sector is reflecting on how to take into account the international geopolitical context in its activities."

The diamond industry has been pushed earlier than other miners to prove the provenance of its products.

The focus on "blood diamonds" from Africa led to the establishment of the Kimberley Process in 2003 to certify that diamonds did not fuel conflict.

Jewellery companies including Tiffany, Richemont and Signet have pledged not to source diamonds of Russian origin even if they were transformed outside the country. Additional reporting by Alice Hancock in Brussels



Scoreboard

Inside the business of sport

Scoreboard is the new FT newsletter on the business of sport, bringing you unmissable stories and analysis on global dealmaking and corporate growth in a multi-billion dollar entertainment industry.

COMPANIES & MARKETS

Equities. Concentration fears

Dominance of Wall Street behemoths poses risks



S&P 500's high-flyers shed \$4.9tn last year and some are continuing to slide in 2023

JENNIFER HUGHES — NEW YORK

Losses in heavy-hitting US tech stocks have extended in to the early days of 2023 with warnings of much more pain to come for market titans, including electric-car maker Tesla.

The 10 biggest stocks by market capitalisation in the benchmark S&P 500 at the index's peak in early 2022, including Tesla, Apple and Microsoft, lost a combined \$4.9tn last year.

So far in the new year, these companies' market capitalisation had shrunk a further \$230bn by lunchtime in New York yesterday.

The clutch of mega-caps dominates Wall Street equities, with the top 10 stocks accounting for about 30 per cent of the S&P 500 near the peak of the bull market at the end of 2021.

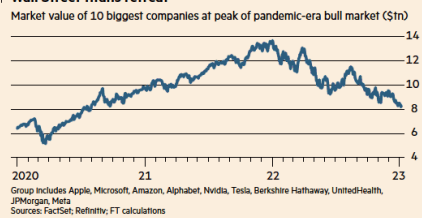
Now this pullback hints at a market where such intense concentration will start to fade away.

"There's been some de-concentration but it's very minor compared with what has built up," said Tatjana Puhani, deputy chief investment officer at TOBAM, a Paris-based asset manager. "We are at the beginning of this, we're not yet near the end."

On average over the past two decades, the biggest 10 stocks account for about a fifth of the S&P 500 and the largest five, 13 per cent. But the concentration has intensified.

At the peak in 2020, the top five accounted for 22 per cent. By December last year, it had eased somewhat but the

Wall Street titans retreat



big five — Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Google parent Alphabet and Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway — still made up 17 per cent, according to Bloomberg.

The decline in some of these stocks has exceeded the drop in the broader market by a large margin.

The S&P 500 dropped 19 per cent in 2022. Meanwhile, Tesla lost nearly two-thirds of its value last year and fell out of the index's top 10. It has fallen a further 10 per cent this year.

The dominance of mega-cap stocks became self-reinforcing when they swept higher in the wake of the global Covid outbreak.

Index-tracking funds were in forced to buy them to stay in line with broader market gauges. But that works in reverse now that big names are suffering from a range of problems.

Savita Subramanian, head of US equity and quantitative strategy at Bank of America, noted that many fund managers had come late to the mega-cap trend because they had been

reluctant to risk so much on such a small group of companies.

"Last year was a stockpicker's market," she said, noting that three-fifths of the S&P 500 did better than the index itself, leaving it to be dragged to its worst loss in 14 years by its biggest components.

"There could still be more pain in the mega-caps as we haven't seen a selling frenzy among active managers," she added.

Periods of concentration are not new — they built up in other boom times, such as the dotcom bubble that burst in 2000 and the "fifty fifty" of household names made famous in the late 1960s.

The current one, however, is more extreme still, with valuations outside the market behemoths far smaller than in previous clustering peaks.

In 2000, it took 253 of the S&P 500's smaller members to match the size of its top five, calculates Puhani. Today, it takes 456.

Others frame the concentration issue as part of the broader battle between

High mark: Apple is one of the big five stocks that make up 17 per cent of Wall Street's S&P 500 index

Wang Zhao/AP/REUTERS

fast-growing and typically expensive stocks and less flashy stocks coveted for their consistent profits and dividends, collectively known as "value".

Many Wall Street juggernauts fell in to the first category and rallied massively in 2020 and 2021 when ultra-low borrowing costs sent traders in search of returns.

That trend reversed sharply in 2022 when central banks ratcheted up interest rates and, so far in 2023, many of these shares are continuing to fall.

"It's very reminiscent of the bursting of the tech bubble when people saw tech stocks cratering — and then they cratered again, and again," said Rob Arnott of Research Affiliates, an asset manager.

The S&P 500 and its forebears have produced back-to-back calendar-year losses only four times in a history stretching back to 1928 but one of those periods followed the dotcom bubble — where the benchmark fell for three straight years.

Arnott pointed to Tesla as an example of still-high valuations among mega-caps that suggest more selling to come.

In spite of its fall last year, the electric vehicle giant still has a market capitalisation of about \$350bn or 21 times its forecast earnings. By contrast, \$225bn Toyota Motors, the world's largest car producer, is valued at eight times its expected profits.

"Value has underperformed [until recently] not because companies were doing badly but because they were falling out of favour and getting cheaper," he said. "I look at this as being two years into a five to seven-year span of value winning — and that just takes us back to historical norms."

Asset management

Hedge fund managers shy away from launches as trading comes under strain

LAURENCE FLETCHER

Launches of hedge funds have dropped to their lowest level since the 2008 financial crisis as some managers struggle to make money in falling markets and huge firms such as Millennium and Citadel hoover up traders who once might have branched out on their own.

Launches globally fell to 71 in the third quarter of last year, the latest data available show, down from 132 in the third quarter of 2021, according to data group HFR.

That marked the lowest level since the final three months of 2008 when just 56 new funds were spawned during the depths of the financial meltdown.

"The months after stressed periods, such as the global financial crisis and the stressed market that the end of

for much of the \$3.8tn hedge fund industry with many traders struggling to cope with sharp falls in equity and bond markets last year, triggered by a sharp pick-up in inflation and steep interest rate rises.

Early numbers from HFR show hedge funds lost 4.4 per cent on average last year with equity managers including some of the Tiger Cubs — funds that can

"The months after stressed periods have made it a difficult period to launch a new hedge fund"

trace their origins back to Julian Robertson's Tiger Management — being hit hard by the major sell-off in highly valued technology stocks.

Crypto

Digital asset exchange Huobi to cut fifth of its staff

CHAN HO-HIM AND HUDSON LOCKETT HONG KONG

Crypto exchange Huobi Global has revealed plans to lay off hundreds of employees — amounting to about a fifth of its workforce — following last year's implosion of competitor FTX.

Huobi, which is one of the world's most prominent digital asset companies and was founded in China, said the job cut came as a result of the "bear market" in crypto and it would seek to maintain a "very lean team".

Describing the lay-offs as "personnel optimisation", the company said the move was aiming "to implement the brand strategy, optimise the structure [and] improve efficiency".

Huobi is the third big crypto player this week to announce lay-offs after a painful 2022 in which several big businesses collapsed and the value of tokens such as bitcoin tumbled.

Silvergate, a crypto-focused US bank, said on Thursday that it would shed about 40 per cent of its staff while digital asset lender Genesis was cutting 50 per cent of its employees.

Justin Sun, Huobi Global's advisory board member and a Chinese crypto entrepreneur, told the Financial Times that the job cuts would begin as early as

"We are gradually reducing our concentration in Asia although the region will remain important"

next month and that "most" of the lay-offs would happen in Asia.

"We are gradually reducing our concentration in Asia although the region will remain an important market," he said.

The announcement came at a time of rising concerns about trading platforms such as Huobi and industry leader Binance after the implosion last year of Sam Bankman-Fried's FTX empire.

Huobi's in-house token called "HT" has dropped 1.0 per cent since Wednesday and about 25 per cent over the past month, according to data provider CryptoCompare.

Sun, also founder of crypto blockchain Tron, said he was not concerned about the risks of a big jolt of withdrawals at Huobi, such as the one that ultimately pushed FTX over the edge, and said the exchange could handle clients cashing in tokens.

"We are not in financial trouble," Sun said in a voice message, explaining that the company's current performance "does not match" its operational objectives due to redundancy and market deterioration, adding that it was "mostly done" with the reduction plans.

Huobi is ranked the world's 16th-largest crypto exchange based on daily trading volume with a 24-hour trading volume of about \$340m — about 4 per cent of Binance's volume — according to CoinMarketCap.

The platform was number two globally but slipped after China's ban on crypto transactions in 2021, hammering its biggest market.

Commodities

Investors fret over Lula's ambitions for Brazil's state-controlled groups

BRYAN HARRIS AND MICHAEL POOLER SÃO PAULO

Shares in several of Brazil's large state-controlled companies, including Petrobras and Banco do Brasil, have endured a week of swings as investors worry that the new administration of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva will take a more interventionist approach.

Petrobras, Latin America's largest energy group, at one point plunged more than 10 per cent on the São Paulo stock exchange after Lula used one of his first decrees as president to end plans for the privatisation of the \$60bn oil and gas producer.

The move followed Lula's nomination of Jean Paul Prates, a senator in his Workers' party, to be the next chief executive of Petrobras.

Prates has backed Lula's calls for the

growth and innovation, such as Petrobras, will play a fundamental role in this new cycle."

The declaration sent shares in state-controlled Banco do Brasil down by more than 6 per cent in the first two trading sessions of the year, before they regained ground later in the week.

There was also a drop in listed insurer Caixa Seguridade, an arm of publicly owned lender Caixa Econômica Federal.

"Investors are concerned about Lula's control over state-owned enterprises [and whether he] will use them to

implement social policy at the expense of economic efficiency, and ultimately hurt their profitability," said Jared Loti, a portfolio manager at William Blair Investment Management.

Since Lula's narrow election victory over rightwing incumbent Jair Bolsonaro in October, the local Bovespa equity index has fallen 9 per cent.

Luiz Fernando Figueiredo, a former central bank director and founder of hedge fund Mauá Capital, said the chance of cheap credit being expanded was "very high" and this could result in "chicken flight growth", referring to bursts of growth that are followed by a decline.

Rio de Janeiro-headquartered Petrobras, in which the Brazilian state has a controlling stake, is a likely battleground between Lula and investors. Lula has pledged to alter the com-



COMPANIES & MARKETS

On Wall Street Rate-setters mustn't seek perfect economic landing



Claire Jones



Evidence is mounting that many of the drivers of last year's dramatic rise in inflation are dissipating. European gas prices are now at levels last seen before Russia's invasion of Ukraine in late February. The cost of shipping a 40ft steel box from Shanghai to Long Beach has crashed from about \$8,300 this time last year to \$1,500. Used car prices have gone into reverse, even in the UK where they once commanded a higher value than new ones.

demand to get inflation back down to the levels seen a few years ago. Whether rate-setters will match their tough talk with bumper rate rises will depend on what the US Federal Reserve does next. If 2022 taught us anything, it was that the Fed is the unseen hook upon which the decisions of the rest of the world's rate-setters hang.

They could spark bouts of financial turmoil that make the gilt market panic of last year look like a blip

Central bankers did not collaborate formally in 2022. But they may as well have done. When Fed chair Jay Powell started to raise interest rates last spring, the European Central Bank was still in wait-and-see mode and the Bank of England was plumping for the modest quarter-point rate rises that central bankers (and their watchers) tend to

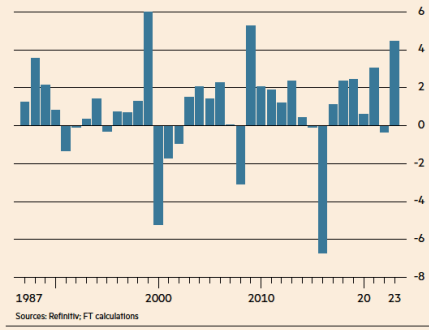
proves not dangerous but a blessing for the rest of the world, should it ease pressure on Powell to raise rates. The big risk for 2023 is that rate-setters become so paranoid about losing face that they put their money where their mouth is and don't just talk tough but impose multiple larger rate rises. Rapid increases in borrowing costs would almost certainly push economies into recession. They could also spark bouts of financial turmoil that make the gilt market panic of last autumn look like a blip.

The day in the markets

What you need to know

- Wall Street stocks rise after data show slowing US jobs growth
Treasures rally as investors weigh implications for Fed's inflation fight
Europe's equities make gains amid signs of slowing price rises in region

European stocks make strongest start to the year in a decade



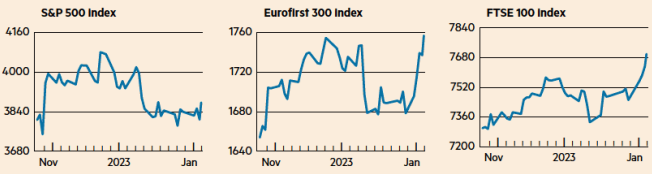
Wall Street stocks climbed and Treasuries rallied yesterday after a report showed that the US economy added fewer jobs in December than in the previous month. The US blue-chip S&P 500 index rose 1.6 per cent in choppy trading while the tech-focused Nasdaq Composite gained 1.5 per cent, erasing earlier losses.

The moves in Europe's stocks came as the flash index of consumer prices in the eurozone fell to 9.2 per cent for December from 10.1 per cent in November. Data this week showed price pressures eased more than expected in Germany, France and Spain, reducing pressure on the European Central Bank to maintain its aggressive inflation stance.

Markets update

Table with columns for Stocks, Currency, Govt. bonds, and World Index, Commods. Includes data for S&P 500, Eurofirst 300, Nikkei 225, FTSE100, Shanghai Comp, Bovespa, etc.

Main equity markets



Biggest movers

Table listing biggest movers in US, Eurozone, and UK markets, including Costco Wholesale, Salpem, Anglo American, etc.



We hope you enjoyed today's HTSI, the first edition of our award winning magazine for this year, free with FT Weekend on selected dates.

UPCOMING 2023 ISSUES

Table listing upcoming 2023 issues by month (January to December) and theme (e.g., Women's Fashion, Arts, Design).

Wall Street

World Wrestling Entertainment surged on news that its former chair, Vince McMahon, who retired last year amid sexual misconduct allegations, was returning to the media company's board.

Europe

Norway's Nel rose sharply on news that one of its subsidiaries had signed a letter of intent with energy group HH2E for two 60MW electrolyser plants in Germany.

London

Screen technology developer Nanoco, which was suing Samsung over alleged intellectual property infringement, surged on announcing that it had reached a no-fault settlement with the South Korean multinational.

MARKET DATA

WORLD MARKETS AT A GLANCE



Table of stock market movements over the last 30 days, categorized by region (Americas, Europe, Asia) and index (S&P 500, Nikkei 225, Hang Seng, etc.).

STOCK MARKET: BIGGEST MOVERS

Table listing the biggest movers in the stock market, including company names, sectors, and percentage changes.

CURRENCIES

Table showing currency exchange rates for major currencies like the Dollar, Euro, Pound, and Yen.

FTSE ACTUARIES SHARE INDICES

Table of FTSE Actuaries Share Indices, including various pension and insurance-related indices.

FT 30 INDEX

Table of the FT 30 Index, showing the top 30 performing stocks.

FT WILLIAMS 5000 INDEX SERIES

Table of the FT Williams 5000 Index Series, tracking performance across different sectors.

FTSE GLOBAL EQUITY INDEX SERIES

Table of FTSE Global Equity Index Series, providing a global overview of equity market performance.

FTSE 100 SUMMARY

Table of the FTSE 100 Summary, detailing key metrics for the UK's largest companies.

UK STOCK MARKET TRADING DATA

Table of UK Stock Market Trading Data, including volume and value for various sectors.

Disclaimer and additional information regarding the data provided, including contact details for Morningstar.



MARKET DATA

FT500: THE WORLD'S LARGEST COMPANIES

Table with columns: Stock, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists major companies like ANZ Bank, BHP Group, ASX, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists major companies like Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists major companies like Google, Facebook, Tesla, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists major companies like Nike, McDonald's, Coca-Cola, etc.

Table with columns: Stock, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists major companies like Microsoft, Amazon, Google, etc.

FT 500: TOP 20

Table with columns: Company, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists top 20 companies by market cap.

FT 500: BOTTOM 20

Table with columns: Company, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists bottom 20 companies by market cap.

BONDS: HIGH-YIELD & EMERGING MARKET

Table with columns: Bond, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists high-yield and emerging market bonds.

BONDS: GLOBAL INVESTMENT GRADE

Table with columns: Bond, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists global investment grade bonds.

GILTS: UK CASH MARKET

Table with columns: Gilt, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists UK cash market gilts.

INTEREST RATES: OFFICIAL

Table with columns: Country, Rate, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists official interest rates for various countries.

BOND INDICES

Table with columns: Index, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists various bond indices.

VOLATILITY INDICES

Table with columns: Index, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists volatility indices like VIX, etc.

GILTS: UK FTSE ACTUARIES INDICES

Table with columns: Index, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists UK FTSE actuaries indices.

COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Commodity, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists various commodities like oil, gold, etc.

INTEREST RATES: MARKET

Table with columns: Instrument, Rate, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists market interest rates for various instruments.

MARKET INDEXES

Table with columns: Index, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists major market indices like FTSE 100, S&P 500, etc.

BONDS: BENCHMARK GOVERNMENT

Table with columns: Bond, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists benchmark government bonds.

GILTS: UK FTSE ACTUARIES INDICES

Table with columns: Index, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists UK FTSE actuaries indices.

COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Commodity, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists various commodities like oil, gold, etc.

Market data provided by FT.com. All indices shown are unadjusted. Companies are shown in brackets after the index name.

COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Commodity, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists various commodities like oil, gold, etc.

BONDS: INDEX-LINKED

Table with columns: Bond, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists index-linked bonds.

BONDS: BENCHMARK GOVERNMENT

Table with columns: Bond, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists benchmark government bonds.

GILTS: UK FTSE ACTUARIES INDICES

Table with columns: Index, Price, Change, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Mkt Cap. Lists UK FTSE actuaries indices.

COMMODITIES

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Equity Research from Morningstar. Make confident investment decisions powered by independent global research and consistent methodology across our qualitative and quantitative universes.

FINANCIAL TIMES SHARE SERVICE

Main Market

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, %Chg, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Div. Includes Aerospace & Defence, Automobiles & Parts, Banks, Chemicals, Consumer Goods, Energy, Financial Services, Health Care, Industrial, IT & Telecom, Media, Mining, Pharmaceuticals & Biotech, Retail, Technology, and Utilities.

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AIM

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, %Chg, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Div. Includes Aerospace & Defence, Automobiles & Parts, Banks, Chemicals, Consumer Goods, Energy, Financial Services, Health Care, Industrial, IT & Telecom, Media, Mining, Pharmaceuticals & Biotech, Retail, Technology, and Utilities.

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, %Chg, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Div. Includes Aerospace & Defence, Automobiles & Parts, Banks, Chemicals, Consumer Goods, Energy, Financial Services, Health Care, Industrial, IT & Telecom, Media, Mining, Pharmaceuticals & Biotech, Retail, Technology, and Utilities.

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Investment Companies

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, %Chg, High, Low, YTD, P/E, Div. Includes various investment funds and companies.

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