



The News January 18<sup>th</sup> 6pm© by Noele Bouazouni-Prier

We must expect a Black Thursday. The mobilization against the pension reform promises to be very much followed tomorrow. 200 demonstrations throughout France are planned and a lot of disruptions are expected, in particular in transportation and in schools with 70% of strikers in the elementary schools. The government, through the voice of its spokesperson Olivier Véran, says it is calm, determined and committed to carrying out this reform. In response, the leader of the CGT Philippe Martinez has pleaded for a renewable movement whenever possible.

*UFC que Choisir* denounces the soaring prices of complementary health insurances, with a 7% increase on average. The association asks the government to impose more transparency so that consumers can compare offers. They also call consumers to bring competition into play as they can terminate their contract at any time - the measure that came into force at the end of the year 2020.

An administrative investigation has been opened by the town hall of Paris after three kindergarten children ran away from their school yesterday. At 4 years old, they escaped from their school in the 15th arrondissement, before being stopped by a passer-by a kilometre further. The mayor of the district denounces a series of dysfunctions within the establishment. The teaching team has also been suspended.

Also in Paris: more than 300 migrants were evacuated this morning from the boulevard de la Villette during a police intervention. Most are from Afghanistan. They will be cared for by accommodation structures until their administrative situation is assessed.

In Ukraine, following the crash this morning of a helicopter near Kyiv, authorities now speak of 14 deaths against 18 previously. Among the victims is the Ukrainian Minister of the Interior. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky speaks of a "terrible tragedy" for which the circumstances have yet to be determined. An investigation is underway.

And then the men's handball world championship continues tonight with France – Montenegro. This is the first game of the main round for *les Bleus*, still undefeated since the beginning of the competition. If they win, the French team would take a big step forward towards the quarter finals. The game begins at 6 p.m.