



## The News

**February 7<sup>th</sup>, 9am** ©

*by Sarah Heath*

Debates on pension reform began yesterday before the National Assembly in a very tense atmosphere. There were tough discussions between the opposition and the government, so tough that the session even had to be suspended for a short period. MPs from Nupes and the National Rally pushed hard as the executive tried at all costs to convince parties on this reform including the Minister of Public Accounts, Gabriel Attal.

Pension reform is also being strongly contested outside the Assembly as a new day of protests is planned for today. Demonstrations are scheduled in the four corners of France. The SNCF foresees a very disrupted day on the railways with an average of 3 TER out of 10. It is the same thing at airports: 20% of flights at Orly are cancelled.

The ground shook again this morning in Turkey in a 5.6 earthquake that was reported in the centre of the country. Since yesterday, this series of earthquakes has caused enormous damage across the country but also in Syria and the result is more than 4,300 people dead and thousands injured. Many countries, including France, will send immediate aid. Pope Francis says he is saddened and sends a message of support to the people in the area. Turkish President Erdogan has declared 7 days of national mourning.

Six months after being stabbed in the United States, British writer Salman Rushdie has released his new novel, "Victory City" which arrives in bookstores today. Still suffering from post-traumatic stress since the attack that almost cost him his life on August 12th in New York, the writer says he has trouble working and has decided not to promote his new novel.

And finally to weather news where the Pyrénées-Orientales was placed this morning under an orange alert for snow and ice.