

## The News February 21<sup>st</sup> 12am© by Noele Bouazouni-Prier



"We are going to reach our goals", said Vladimir Putin this morning to take stock of the situation in Russia and the conflict with Ukraine. The Russian President accuses Kiev of having started this war, and says Russia will use force to end the conflict and eliminate I quote, "the neo-Nazi threat" speaking of the Ukrainian regime of Volodymy Zelensky. "On the battlefield, it is impossible to beat Russia" he added. The head of the Kremlin also accuses Western countries of being anti-Russian.

Also in the news today, Emmanuel Macron was this morning at the market of Rungis in the south of Paris. The President got up at dawn to be as close as possible to those who work early. On site, the Head of State defended his pension reform, assuring that it is a necessary reform to finance pensions.

This is a very rare situation at the circuit court: The appeal trial of Nicolas Zepeda was suspended this morning in Vesoul. The lawyer of the suspect who is accused of the murder of Narumi, his ex-girlfriend, has decided to no longer defend his client. The 32-year-old Chilean national was to be retried for the murder of the 21-year-old Japanese student, who has been missing since December 2016 near Besançon and whose body was never found. In first instance he had been sentenced to 28 years in prison.

Nearly half of French people are overweight or obese. These are the results of an Inserm study. In more detail, obesity affects 17% of the population - a figure which has increased these past years, and which particularly concerns 18- to 24-year-olds.

And this is unheard of since 2020: Metropolitan France has not experienced any real rain for 31 days today. A sad record. The country is suffering from a concerning drought which is impacting the recovery of groundwater.

And then soccer with the round of 16 Champions League first leg tonight. Liverpool-Real Madrid and Frankfurt-Naples begin at 9 p.m.