Catch up: Iran launches missiles at Israel

Binyamin Netanyahu, **Israel's** prime minister, said that **Iran** "will pay" after it fired around 200 missiles towards Israel. Iran said the barrage was retaliation for the assassinations of leaders of Hizbullah and Hamas. America's national security adviser said that the attack was "defeated" with American help, and that there were so far no reports of deaths in Israel. One Palestinian man was reportedly killed in the West Bank. Earlier at least six people were killed and nine injured in a shooting attack in Jaffa; Israeli police said that two gunmen had been "neutralised".

Oil prices briefly spiked by as much as 5%, or $75.40 a barrel, following Iran's missile attack on Israel. Brent crude, the global benchmark, closed the day at $73.56 a barrel, a 2.6% rise compared with the previous day. Iran exports roughly 1.7m barrels a day; the country is a member of OPEC, a group of oil producers.

Mark Rutte took office as the new secretary-general of NATO. The 57-year-old was the prime minister of the Netherlands for almost 14 years and was one of Europe's longest-serving democratic leaders. He is tasked with steering the alliance through

several difficulties—including the war in Ukraine and a potential Trump administration.

France's prime minister, Michel Barnier, delayed a target to bring the country's budget deficit within the EU's limit of 3% of GDP. France's could exceed 6% this year. Mr Barnier said the country would reach the target by 2029 instead of 2027. He has plans to cut spending and raise taxes, but the latter is causing tensions with conservative lawmakers who want to maintain pro-business policies.

At least 45 people died after two ships carrying **migrants** sank off the coast of **Djibouti**, according to the UN. Over 300 people were on the boats, which left from **Yemen** along the so-called Eastern Corridor. The route, from the Horn of Africa to the Arabian peninsula, is popular and deadly; migrants are fleeing from violence and seeking economic opportunity in the Gulf.

More than 20 children and three teachers died after a school bus in **Thailand** caught fire. The vehicle's tyre exploded, causing it to hit a road barrier and burst into flames. The transport minister said the bus was powered by "extremely risky" compressed natural gas. The government has vowed to take care of medical expenses and compensation.

Police in **South Korea** arrested a **North Korean** defector for stealing a village bus and attempting to cross the militarised border. The man had careened down the Unification Bridge before crashing into a barricade. He had reportedly been trying to return to North Korea after living for more than ten years south of the border.

Figure of the day: 3,500, the age of the world's oldest preserved cheese, which was found in the western Chinese region of Xinjiang. Read the full story.

Macron pushes for EU autonomy in Germany

Emmanuel Macron takes a break from domestic troubles on Wednesday when he makes a day trip to Berlin, Germany's capital. The French president will speak at the Berlin Global Dialogue, a talkfest on world affairs. He will defend his call for greater European strategic autonomy, his pet project to give the continent a louder voice amid great-power competition and international crises.

Mr Macron will also hold talks with Germany's Olaf Scholz, another European leader beleaguered by political discontent and coalition tensions. After a successful state visit by the French president to Germany in May, strains have returned to Franco-German relations. The French government's budget deficit is heading for over 6% in 2024, putting its fiscal credibility at risk. Germany is already sceptical. It will not be in any mood to back France's calls for more joint European borrowing or a bigger European Union budget as long as the country cannot get its own finances in order.

Russia’s economic resilience

Russia’s economy, subject to unprecedented Western sanctions, has repeatedly defied the doomsayers. While consumer confidence across most of the rich world is in the doldrums, in Russia it is reaching all-time highs. Growth in real wages is strong. Figures released on Wednesday are expected to show that the economy continues to perform strongly. Economists believe that monthly GDP grew by around 3% year on year in August.

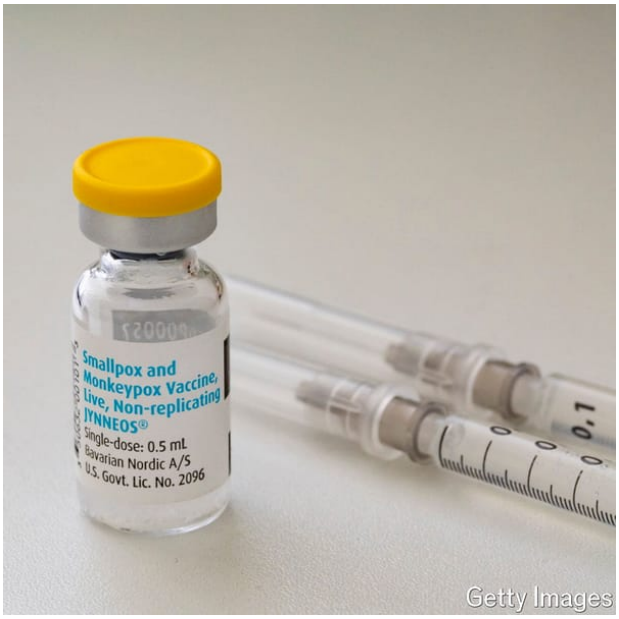
Fiscal stimulus is mostly responsible for the boom. Vladimir Putin, the president, is spending a large chunk of the savings he made during the 2010s. Meanwhile, oil exports are bringing in much-needed foreign currency. Help from Russia’s allies is also helping to keep the economy alive. China, India and other non-Western countries are supplying Russia with much-needed imports. Some real-time indicators suggest that the economy is slowing, though not by much. The world’s most sanctioned economy continues to march on.

Will Eric Adams resign?

Eric Adams, New York City's mayor, is due back in court on Wednesday, a week after he was indicted on five federal charges, including bribery. He has pleaded not guilty and his lawyers have filed a motion to dismiss the charges. So far, he is resisting calls to resign. But many New Yorkers are worried about his ability to lead the city while preparing his case.

There are two mechanisms to force him out of office. Kathy Hochul, New York's governor, has the authority to remove him via a rarely used law. Franklin Roosevelt is the only governor to have exercised this power, when he initiated proceedings against Jimmy Walker, a former mayor, who was accused of bribery. Mr Walker resigned before he was removed. A second option, which has never been used, would be for certain high-ranking elected municipal officials to form an 'inability committee' under the city charter. The city's public advocate would then become mayor until a special election is held.

Congo fast-tracks an mpox vaccine roll-out



On Wednesday the Democratic Republic of Congo will start its mpox vaccination campaign, almost a week earlier than previously planned. The highly contagious disease is spreading rapidly across the country. In August the World Health Organisation declared the outbreak a global health emergency. The immunisation campaign is expected to last ten days, and will focus on groups that are most at risk, such as front-line health workers.

But the programme may not be enough to contain the outbreak. Cris Kacita, who is heading the rollout, says that the 265,000 doses received from America and the EU are insufficient– although more doses are on the way. Transporting doses at low temperatures to remote areas is a logistical nightmare. The biggest challenge may be vaccine hesitancy. Only 56% of the population has heard of mpox, and efforts to fight conspiracy theories are hampered by the remoteness of communities and limited phone access.

A breakthrough in panda conservation

Giant pandas are rightly held up as a conservation success story. In 2016 the species' endangered status was downgraded from "critically endangered" to "vulnerable". However, giant pandas are not out of the woods yet. The world's remaining wild population is fragmented into 33 isolated groups, so inbreeding has become a problem.

But now researchers writing in *Science Advances*, a scientific journal, have made some welcome advances in panda conservation. They were able to generate pluripotent stem cells, capable of forming new animal tissue, from giant pandas. The scientists scraped skin cells from two animals in Chengdu, a city in western China, and reprogrammed them. These could now be induced to turn into cells of any other type—even sperm or eggs. The cells will allow researchers to study panda diseases without bothering them; and perhaps, one day, to help make baby pandas.

Daily Quiz

We will serve you a new question each day this week. On Friday your challenge is to give us all five answers and, as important, tell us the connecting theme. Email your responses (and include mention of your home city and country) by 1700 BST on Friday to QuizEspresso@economist.com. We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

Tuesday: Which Ivan Turgenev novel involves many debates between the characters about the nature of nihilism?

Wednesday: What do the Olympic rings represent?

3,500

The age of the world's oldest preserved cheese, which was found in the western Chinese region of Xinjiang.
Read the full story.

Discipline for me has always been the foundation which leaves me free to fly.

Julie Andrews