

## Catch up: Restraining Israel and Hizbullah; Telegram condemns boss's arrest



**America** said it was working to stop the conflict between Israel and Hizbullah escalating. On Sunday the Iran-backed militant group fired [hundreds of rockets](#) towards Israel—a [long-awaited retaliation](#) for Israel's killing of a top Hizbullah commander in Lebanon last month. Israel conducted heavy air strikes on southern Lebanon, which it claimed foiled Hizbullah's plans for a bigger assault. Hamas, which welcomed Hizbullah's attack, rejected Israel's conditions for a ceasefire on Sunday.

**Telegram** said that its boss, Pavel Durov, “has nothing to hide” after his “absurd” arrest near Paris. The Franco-Russian billionaire is accused of failing to take action against harmful behaviour by users of the [encrypted messaging app](#). Russian lawmakers also condemned the move. Vladislav Davankov, a deputy chair of Russia's lower house of parliament, said the arrest “could have political motives”. Telegram insists it abides by EU laws.

A law giving workers the “right to disconnect” came into force in **Australia**. Most employees now have legal protection if they refuse to be contacted outside of work hours. The law will apply to small businesses from August 2025, while those above the high-income threshold of A\$175,000 (\$119,000) are exempt. The Australia Institute’s Centre for Work found Australians spent 5.4 hours per week on average working unpaid and overtime in 2023.

**China** warned America to “immediately stop its wrong practices”, after the State Department placed 42 Chinese companies under **sanction** for [helping Russia’s war](#) in Ukraine. China’s Ministry of Commerce said it would “resolutely safeguard” its firms’ interests. On Friday America added a total of 105 mostly Chinese and Russian companies to its “entity list”, which makes doing business with America [nearly impossible](#).

**Kamala Harris’s** presidential campaign has raised more than half a billion dollars. America’s vice-president officially became the Democrats’ [presidential candidate](#) at the party’s [convention](#) last week. Donors approved. They contributed \$82m during convention week, bringing to \$540m the total Ms Harris has raised since she replaced Joe Biden as the party’s standard-bearer a month ago.

**German prosecutors** said a 26-year-old Syrian asylum-seeker is the suspected perpetrator of a knife rampage that killed three people and injured eight in Solingen, a western city, on Friday. He is thought to be a member of Islamic State. The far-right [Alternative for Germany](#) party accused the governing coalition and the centre-right opposition of failing to secure the country’s borders. The suspect turned himself in and admitted to the crime late on Saturday.

Researchers at Edinburgh University and Dundee University were granted approval to use artificial intelligence to analyse 1.6m CT and MRI brain scans in the hope of developing [a tool to predict dementia](#). They will compare the scans, which were taken between

2008 and 2018, with medical records. The number of people living with dementia worldwide is expected to nearly triple to 153m by 2050.

**Figure of the day:** Four. The number of years by which the average Australian will outlive the average American. [Read the full story.](#)

# Germany's economy gets sized up



Olaf Scholz, Germany's chancellor, faces elections next year. He may well be getting nervous about how the economy will affect them. Germany has barely grown since 2019. Preliminary figures (which will be finalised on Tuesday) suggest that GDP declined by 0.1% in the three months to July. [Europe's largest economy](#) is also feeling the economic slowdown in China, its largest trading partner. German exports to that country dropped by 14% in May compared with the same month last year, according to Destatis, a statistics agency.

Company bosses are in low spirits. Last month the business-climate index published by the Institute for Economic Research (Ifo) declined to 87 points, from 88.6 in June. The figure for July, out on Monday, may show another drop.

On Wednesday, GfK, a market researcher, will publish its consumer-confidence barometer. Here at least there has been some good news. The index reached a two-year high in August. But some analysts suspect that was just a temporary boost from the European Football Championships, which took place in Germany.

# Pacific leaders meet in Tonga



The leaders of 18 Pacific states, including Australia and New Zealand, convene in Tonga from Monday for the annual meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum, the region's main diplomatic grouping. The UN secretary-general, António Guterres, will also attend. Climate change is top of the agenda. Low-lying Pacific nations have felt some of the worst effects of global warming. They fear that rising sea levels could either [sink their islands](#) or make them uninhabitable. They are trying to raise cash for a "Pacific-owned" fund to invest in adaptation projects.

Australia, the region's biggest aid donor, has pledged A\$100m (\$67m) to the facility. It is also striking security agreements with Pacific islands to counter China's growing influence, which it exercises partly by deploying police to some islands. The Australian prime minister, Anthony Albanese, is seeking to establish an Australian training base for Pacific-region police. Crime and drug-smuggling are growing problems across the area. But Australia also worries about preserving its position as the "security partner of choice".



# Nigeria's economy turns a corner



Africa's most populous country is suffering from the painful effects of [ambitious economic reforms](#) enacted over the past year. The removal of a subsidy on petrol, and two devaluations of the naira, which fell by 70% against the dollar, pushed up inflation. The annual headline rate reached a 28-year high of 34.2% in June.

But Nigeria's economy could finally be at a turning point. Analysts expect that GDP figures published on Monday will show that growth ticked up in the second quarter. The currency appears to have stabilised and inflation has dipped for the first time in 19 months. The temporary removal of tariffs on crop imports is expected to slow food-price rises. A new refinery, which is expected to begin processing Nigeria's oil this year, should reduce its dependence on imports of fuel and further ease pressure on the naira. But optimism has yet to permeate the business sector: a recent central-bank survey showed that the currency and high interest rates remain big concerns.

# Trudeau's troubling numbers



On Monday Justin Trudeau will gather his ministers for a three-day retreat in Halifax in Nova Scotia. It has been one year since Canada's prime minister overhauled his cabinet in an effort to close a ten-point polling gap with his Conservative rivals. Mr Trudeau's Liberal Party is now 17 points behind.

Many Liberals think that [Mr Trudeau's time](#) is up. First elected in 2015, he is now the longest-serving leader in the G7. But in that time house prices grew by 60% and the Bank of Canada's prime interest rate has more than doubled. A poll conducted in mid-August by Abacus Data shows that 59% of Canadians have a negative impression of their leader—up from 50% last year. The inflation rate at least is settling back into the desired 2-3% range. But, when they vote next year, many Canadians will still be feeling raw from the past three years of dramatic price rises.

# US Open tie-breaker



There are few records left for Novak Djokovic to break. The 37-year-old tennis star has accumulated \$184m in tour [prize money](#)—\$50m more than Rafael Nadal, the next-highest winner. He has won every Grand Slam, many times over. This month he added Olympic gold to his tally. If he wins the US Open, which begins on Monday at Flushing Meadows in New York, he could make history again. Mr Djokovic currently shares the record for having won the most Grand Slam singles titles (24) with Margaret Court, an Australian. The Serbian hopes to surpass her in New York.

He will face tough competition. [Other favourites](#) in the US Open are reigning French Open and [Wimbledon](#) champion Carlos Alcaraz of Spain; the Australian Open champion, Jannik Sinner of Italy; and Daniil Medvedev of Russia, who has reached at least the semis in four of the last five Slams. The last time Mr Djokovic [failed to win](#) a Grand Slam in a calendar year was in 2017. He will want to continue that streak.



## Daily quiz



*The Economist*

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](mailto:QuizEspresso@economist.com). We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

**Monday:** Which heiress was kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Army in 1974?

## Four

*The number of years by which the average Australian will outlive the average American.*

*Read the full story.*

**Not all of us can do great things. But we  
can do small things with great love.**

*Mother Teresa*