

Catch up: America permits Ukraine to use missiles; Russia reacts



President Joe Biden allowed **Ukraine** to [launch strikes inside Russia](#) using American-supplied long-range missiles—a decision America has been reluctant to take for fear of Russian escalation. The policy reversal follows the deployment of [North Korean](#) troops to fight alongside Russians, and comes two months before Donald Trump, America’s president-elect, takes office. Ukraine welcomed the move; **France** and **Germany** backed America’s decision.

Russia responded angrily to America lifting its ban. The Kremlin’s spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, warned of a “whole new spiral of tension”. Later, America’s State Department said [Russia](#) was responsible for escalating the conflict “time and time again”. On Sunday night Russia hit a residential neighbourhood in Sumy, a northeastern city in Ukraine, killing at least 11 people.

Almost 100 trucks carrying **aid to Gaza** were violently looted, according to the UN agency operating them. UNRWA said that the convoy carrying food supplies had been travelling from the southern border crossing at Kerem Shalom when its drivers were

forced to unload supplies at gunpoint. The agency called the incident one of the worst of its kind in the conflict.

Northvolt has consistently missed production and delivery targets since early September, according to leaked internal documents. Sweden's green-tech champion has [overstretched itself](#): it fired a fifth of its global staff earlier this year; it is now cutting back operations at its Skelleftea plant in northern Sweden. It is reportedly considering filing for bankruptcy protection in America.

Spirit Airlines filed for bankruptcy. America's pioneer budget carrier has struggled to compete with larger rivals. It has not made an annual profit since the pandemic. Its [financial problems](#) deepened in January after a court blocked a proposed \$3.8bn merger with [JetBlue](#), another ultra-cheap airline. Spirit Airlines said it will continue to operate as it restructures its debt.

The chief minister of Delhi, **India's** capital, declared a "medical emergency" after **air pollution** hit record levels on Monday. Schools and construction sites were closed; hundreds of flights were delayed. Last week Pakistan's Punjab province declared a health emergency amid toxic smog. Both countries suffer [high levels of pollution](#) each autumn, when around 1m farmers set fire to their stubble fields.

Nearly 40% of adults under 30 years old get their news from **social-media influencers**, according to Pew Research Centre's new study of 10,000 adults and 500 [news influencers in America](#). It found that 77% of creators lacked training or affiliations with journalism. Many interviewed and fundraised for political candidates during America's [presidential elections](#) this year.

Figure of the day: \$2trn, the figure by which Elon Musk wants to cut the federal budget—more than the government's discretionary spending in a year. [Read the full story](#).

Raising the stakes in Ukraine



Both sides in the Ukraine war are raising the stakes. On Sunday President Joe Biden at last lifted [restrictions](#) on Ukraine using Western long-range missiles against military targets in Russia. The decision came immediately after possibly the biggest Russian attack of the war against Ukraine's tottering energy infrastructure.

Ukraine can reportedly use the missiles against Russian and North Korean forces trying to push it out of Kursk, but not where they would be most needed, against the bases channelling weapons and troops into the eastern region of Donbas. Nonetheless, the Kremlin warned that the move adds “oil to the fire”, and deepens American involvement in the conflict.

Meanwhile, news from the front remains [grim](#). Russia is making gains in Donetsk, although its losses are staggering: at least 1,700 dead and wounded each day. Russia seems intent on taking as much territory as possible before Donald Trump becomes president and perhaps tries to bully the protagonists into a ceasefire.

The “Hong Kong 47” are sentenced



On Tuesday a court in Hong Kong hands down sentences in the city’s biggest national-security trial. In May 14 members of the “Hong Kong 47” were [found guilty](#) of subversion because they had held unofficial primaries in 2020 to improve their chances of winning control of the legislature. (Thirty-one defendants pleaded guilty before the trial.) The defendants’ lawyers said that was simply the practice of normal electoral politics.

Sentences are expected to be harsh. Some members of the group, which includes many of the city’s most prominent pro-democracy activists, may be condemned to spend their lives behind bars.

On Wednesday Jimmy Lai, a 76-year-old pro-democracy media tycoon, is expected to testify after the resumption of his national-security trial, which was adjourned in July. For many Hong Kongers, the two trials seem like the stamping out of the embers of the territory’s pro-democracy movement.

What America's Democrats do next



On Tuesday Democrats in the House of Representatives will choose their leader, the first big decision the party has made since it lost the presidency and control of the Senate in this month's elections. The result gives the Republicans a “[trifecta](#)”, control of the White House and both houses of Congress. House Democrats are likely to re-select Hakeem Jeffries, a moderate congressman from New York, to be their leader in the chamber. Chuck Schumer, also from New York will probably remain the Democrats' leader in the Senate when they cede control to the Republicans in January.

Still, the Democrats will [not be powerless](#). Republican majorities in both houses are small, so a handful of moderates could block Donald Trump's initiatives, for example [appointments to his cabinet](#), by voting with Democrats against them. That is scant comfort for a party that fared much worse than it expected to in the elections, even losing the popular vote in the presidential contest. The inquest into what happened is just beginning. It will be [painful](#).

To the tractors! British farmers in revolt



Farmers will rally in London on Tuesday, to [protest](#) against their treatment by Britain's Labour government. Rachel Reeves, the finance minister, is slashing subsidies. And in her budget on October 30th she closed a loophole that had allowed farmers' descendants to inherit large amounts of land and other property without paying tax.

Some very rich people who rarely got mud under their fingernails had bought land to benefit from the loophole. But the new levy, of 20% on property valued above £1m (\$1.3m), will affect many real farmers. In the 2022-23 financial year, 49% of English farms had a net worth of at least £1.5m. More generally, British people seem to dislike inheritance tax, not because they will have to pay it (only one in 20 deaths leads to a bill) but because they think it unfair. Protesting farmers will probably attract more sympathy than the average millionaire.

A wry satire of Hollywood and race



Charles Yu won America's National Book Award in 2020 for his novel, "Interior Chinatown", a satire of Hollywood's treatment of East Asian and Asian-American actors and stories. Hulu, a streaming service, has turned it into a ten-episode series, which premieres on Tuesday. Mr Yu, who was also a screenwriter for HBO's "Westworld", wrote two of the episodes. The protagonist of this detective drama is Willis Wu, who always feels like "a background character in someone else's story". The twist is that he's right.

Willis is a waiter at a restaurant in Chinatown. He idolises and envies his brother who graduated from bit-part roles—in "Generic Asian Man" and "Disgraced Son"—to become a star—in "Kung Fu Guy"—then mysteriously disappeared. Starring the mopey, droll Jimmy O. Yang, with Ronny Chieng as his friend and Chloe Bennet as an actor playing a detective, "Interior Chinatown" offers a surreal, inventive take on Hollywood's [attitudes to race](#).

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. We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

Tuesday: What title is most associated with Prince Philip, the late husband of Queen Elizabeth II?

Monday: Mikhail Bulgakov is best known for which novel, oft cited as a 20th-century classic?

I am trying to do two things: dare to be a radical and not a fool, which is a matter of no small difficulty.

James A. Garfield