

Catch up: Israel hints at ground invasion of Lebanon; Zelensky addresses the UN



America is reportedly leading a diplomatic effort to [halt mounting hostilities](#) between **Hizbullah** and **Israel** and revive negotiations over the war in **Gaza**. News of the discussions, which apparently include France, Israel and **Lebanon**, arrived shortly after Israel hinted that a ground invasion of Lebanon could come soon. The Israel Defence Forces said that it was calling up and deploying reserves to the north of the country. Herzi Halevi, the chief of staff of the IDF, told troops who were participating in a drill that air strikes targeting Hizbullah were intended “to prepare the area for the possibility of your entry”. Earlier the Lebanese militia fired a ballistic missile at Tel Aviv, Israel’s biggest city, which was intercepted by Israeli air-defence systems. Israeli strikes on Hizbullah have killed more than 550 people in Lebanon.

Volodymyr Zelensky addressed the [UN General Assembly](#), urging world leaders not to seek “an out” and instead to demand a “real, just peace”. [Ukraine’s president](#) warned that some plans for a peace deal could result in a “frozen conflict”, with Russia continuing to

hold parts of Ukrainian territory. On Thursday Mr Zelensky is expected to present a “victory plan” to President Joe Biden.

Vladimir Putin said that Russia had the right to use **nuclear weapons** “in the event of aggression” against his country and Belarus. Russia’s president added that he would consider any assault by a non-nuclear state that had the support of a country with **nuclear powers** to be a “joint attack”. The update to Russia’s nuclear doctrine is one of several **recent such threats** towards Ukraine and the West.

Mexico’s Senate voted in favour of a bill that will bring the country’s **National Guard** under the control of the army. The National Guard—which was created by **Mexico’s outgoing president**, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, in 2019—was ostensibly founded as a civilian police force, but draws many recruits from the armed forces and is commanded by a former general. The reform will formalise the role of the army in Mexican policing.

The co-leaders of **Germany’s Greens** said they would resign in November following the party’s disastrous showing in **state elections** in Brandenburg, Thuringia and Saxony. Omid Nouripour and Ricarda Lang said that the party, which is part of the country’s **governing coalition**, needs “new faces” to take over. Support for the Greens has halved in the past two years amid a **backlash** against environmental policies.

Hurricane Helene gathered force as it approached Florida, where it is expected to make landfall before tearing across a number of states in the American South. The storm will be the **strongest to hit the country** in more than a year. Ron DeSantis, Florida’s governor, warned the residents living on the coast that they should follow local evacuation orders and head to higher ground.

The **European Union’s** member states voted to downgrade the protections given to grey wolves by the Bern Convention, a

wildlife-conservation treaty. The animal's status will change from "strictly protected" to "protected", making it easier for governments to control [wolf populations](#) in rural areas where they have been blamed for killing farm animals. The measure is expected to gain its final approval from EU ministers on Thursday.

Figure of the day: 3%, the proportion of books sold in Britain last year that were marketed as "self-help" books. [Read the full story.](#)

Will Biden buy Ukraine's "victory plan"?



After making a passionate speech at the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, on Thursday Volodymyr Zelensky will meet President Joe Biden. Ukraine's president is seeking support for what he calls his "victory plan". His objectives are clear. Mr Zelensky wants [restrictions lifted](#) on the use of Western long-range missile systems to strike inside Russia, the speeding-up of deliveries of weaponry and a commitment to accelerated membership of NATO.

Mr Zelensky will argue that the coming months will be critical for the outcome of the war. Russian attacks on energy infrastructure mean his country is facing a bleak winter of power cuts. His troops are losing territory in the Donbas region. Mr Zelensky hopes that getting the backing he needs will help him negotiate a ceasefire on relatively favourable terms. The territory Ukraine has grabbed in Russia's Kursk region will also provide crucial leverage. Mr Biden's decision will depend on what legacy he wants to leave.

Macron and Trudeau discuss shared woes



Two long-serving liberal G7 leaders beset by domestic troubles get together on Thursday. Justin Trudeau, Canada's prime minister, and Emmanuel Macron, the French president, will hold meetings in Ottawa and Montreal, two Canadian cities. It is the first bilateral visit by a French president to Canada for a decade. While in Quebec, Mr Macron will also meet François Legault, the province's prime minister, and promote French, the mother tongue.

Behind the formal words, both leaders have an unspoken shared agenda. They once embodied youth and novelty, and are seeking to hold the liberal centre. Faced with populism on the right (in [Canada](#)) and on both the left and hard right (in [France](#)), Mr Trudeau and Mr Macron are unpopular leaders in charge of shaky governments. France's failure to ratify a trade deal between Canada and the European Union may still grate in Ottawa, but they will have plenty to share when it comes to their respective political troubles at home.

Russia's energy firms look for new partners



Russian Energy Week, an annual conference, begins on Thursday in Moscow. For years the companies attending did business in the West: Gazprom, a state-owned Russian firm, was once the European Union's biggest gas supplier. But since the war in Ukraine began, their focus has shifted to redirecting their exports to countries that are more sympathetic to the Kremlin.

Their success has been mixed so far. Chinese and Indian refiners are [guzzling shipments of crude](#) that Western buyers spurn. But Gazprom is struggling to [turn a profit](#): the pipelines to China that it needs to replace its exports to Europe will take years to build. Novatek, Russia's largest producer of liquefied natural gas, is crippled by sanctions.

Vladimir Putin, Russia's president, has said that energy ministers from the BRICS—a [bloc](#) consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—will gather on the sidelines of the conference. Energy companies will be hoping that the meetings yield more than just talk.

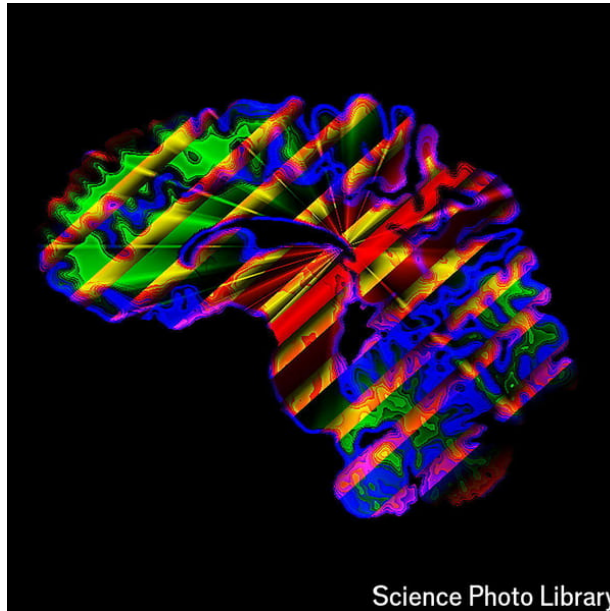
Australia and China renew economic talks



Jim Chalmers, Australia's treasurer (as the country's finance minister is known), meets his Chinese counterpart in Beijing on Thursday. Mr Chalmers is the first treasurer to visit China since 2017, when relations started to sour. A deal promoting bilateral economic co-operation was suspended in 2021. But its renewal in June was the latest sign of what Australia's centre-left Labor government calls a "stabilisation" of the relationship.

China has lifted almost all the [trading restrictions](#) it imposed on Australian goods in a diplomatic quarrel in 2020. Mr Chalmers will campaign for the only remaining ban, on lobster, to be removed. China, meanwhile, may raise concerns about Australia's increasingly strict rules on foreign investment. The Labor government has blocked Chinese investments in critical-mineral companies and is overhauling foreign-investment laws to bolster "economic security", as Mr Chalmers puts it. Trade between the two countries has boomed despite the tensions, but on security the pair remain deeply divided.

A new hope for schizophrenia



On Thursday America's Food and Drug Administration will evaluate KarXT, a novel antipsychotic treatment for schizophrenia developed by Karuna Therapeutics, a lab owned by Bristol Myers Squibb. If approved, it would be the first new drug for schizophrenia in decades. The distressing disorder afflicts about 24m people globally and reduces life expectancy by up to 15 years

KarXT works by targeting "muscarinic" receptors in the brain, altering the release of dopamine. This approach offers relief to patients without the severe side effects of existing treatments, which often leave them listless and prone to rapid weight gain. That would allow patients to live more independent lives. It would also help health services deal with some of the challenges associated with schizophrenia. Strained budgets have left many countries, including [America](#), with a severe shortage of psychiatric beds. The hope is that this novel drug will reduce the need for psychiatric care and mental health professionals.

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.

Thursday: Which cricket trophy is the subject of a regular battle between England and Australia?

Wednesday: Which Australian comedy star has appeared in films such as “Pitch Perfect” and “JoJo Rabbit”?

3%

the proportion of books sold in Britain last year that were marketed as “self-help” books.

Read the full story

**It is easier to make a saint out of a
libertine than out of a prig.**

George Santayana