

Catch-up: Russia's "massive" missile attack on Ukraine; Biden's and Xi's final presidential chat



Ukraine said that **Russia** had hit its power infrastructure in a “massive” missile attack. Several regions, including Kyiv, were without power on Sunday morning. Earlier, in a statement ahead of November 19th, the 1,000th day since the Russian invasion, leaders of the G7 group of leading democracies reaffirmed their “commitment to imposing severe costs on Russia”.

Joe Biden and **Xi Jinping** met, probably for the last time as two presidents, at the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation summit in Peru. China’s leader warned of the danger of letting relations with America sour further, a message directed not so much at Mr Biden as the incoming Donald Trump. The presidents also agreed that it should not be left to artificial intelligence to make the **final call** on using a nuclear weapon.

Mr Trump picked **Chris Wright**, an oil boss and climate-change sceptic, as prospective energy secretary. Mr Wright, who is the

chief executive of Liberty Energy, wants America to pump much more oil and gas, a position he shares with the president-elect. He wants to cut red tape in the industry and is likely to push back against [global plans](#) to curb carbon emissions.

Elon Musk, an adviser to Mr Trump, appeared to endorse **Howard Lutnick**, the president-elect's transition manager, as America's next treasury secretary—a [post still to be filled](#). Mr Musk said that, whereas another candidate represented “business as usual”, Mr Lutnick, the boss of Cantor Fitzgerald, a financial-services firm, would “actually enact change”. Mr Trump's other cabinet picks suggest “business as usual” is a disqualifying attribute.

Aslan Bzhania, the president of **Abkhazia**, a Russian-backed [breakaway region](#) in **Georgia**, said he would resign and call elections if protesters vacated the territory's parliament. On Friday opposition activists began large protests against a deal that would allow more Russian investment in Abkhazia, arguing that it would push up property prices and deepen Russia's influence. Mr Bzhania said he would run in any snap election.

Israeli troops penetrated farther into **Lebanon** than at any point since they first entered the country on October 1st, before withdrawing towards the Israeli border. At the same time planes continued pounding an area to the south of Beirut dominated by Hizbullah. Meanwhile the Lebanese health ministry condemned recent airstrikes that have killed nearly two dozen paramedics as “barbaric”.

Man-yi, a **super-typhoon**, reached **the Philippines'** most populous island, Luzon. Hundreds of thousands had been evacuated from the expected path of the sixth big storm to hit the country in a month. The storm was expected to bring damaging winds, power outages, flooding and landslides, but to weaken significantly as it crossed Luzon.

Word of the week: *Taita*, a reverent term meaning “Father”, which embodies the protective presence of Mount Chimborazo, Ecuador’s highest peak. [Read the full story.](#)

Worries about Israel's war-time economy



On Sunday [Israel](#) will release third-quarter GDP figures. They will shed some light on the economic cost of the war, which has displaced workers and hampered investment. The economy grew at an annualised rate of just 0.7% between April and June. The government has spent big to keep the war going. The International Monetary Fund reckons that the budget deficit for 2024 will reach 9% of GDP.

Although Israel's general debt burden is lower than that of many other rich countries, the war has made lenders nervous. Three ratings agencies (Moody's, Fitch, and S&P) downgraded the country's credit rating in 2024. The government has promised fiscal discipline. Israel's parliament will soon vote on a cabinet-approved budget for 2025, which includes tax rises and cuts to non-military spending. The government says it would reduce the deficit by more than half as a share of GDP. With Israel's prospects for stronger growth looking dim, the government may soon have to look for even more drastic spending cuts.

Who will lead the Church of England?



One dark joke told since Justin Welby (pictured) stepped down as Archbishop of Canterbury over a [child-abuse scandal](#) on November 12th was that he had finally united the Church of England: evangelicals and progressives both wanted him to quit. Any unity may be short-lived. Discussions about a successor will begin in earnest this week. The 17-member Crown Nominations Commission will draw up a shortlist. Two-thirds must agree on a candidate, to be confirmed by Britain's prime minister and the king. There is no front-runner.

He (or perhaps, for the first time, she) will inherit a difficult legacy. Participation in Church of England services is falling. Debates over gay marriage continue to divide the faithful within England and to divide the English church from foreign parts of the Anglican Communion, which is more conservative. Many believers think the new archbishop needs to be less of a political manager and more of a theological and moral leader. If so, he or she will probably disappoint one side.

A test for Senegal's president



Citizens in Senegal vote in legislative elections on Sunday. This is the first electoral test for Pastef, the party of [Bassirou Diomaye Faye](#), who won a presidential election in March. Pastef is competing against the party of the former president, Macky Sall. His coalition held 82 of the 165 seats in the outgoing parliament.

The party of the president usually commands a majority in Senegalese parliaments, but Pastef may suffer as a result of Mr Faye's shaky start in office. His government has responded inadequately to flooding in the north east, high youth unemployment and a [looming debt crisis](#). But some high-level defections have splintered Mr. Sall's alliance. Analysts say that Pastef has a good chance of winning. A victory would be a much-needed boost for Mr Faye's far-reaching policy plans to make Senegal less reliant on foreign governments like France's.

An under-fuelled Texan drama



“Yellowstone” was once America’s most-watched television show. But viewers hated the final season of Taylor Sheridan’s [drama about ranchers in Montana](#), which premiered earlier this month. Some are irked at how the story ditched its protagonist, played by Kevin Costner, who left the franchise to write, direct and star in a series of Western films.

Mr Sheridan may hope to win back fans with “Landman”, which premieres on Paramount+ on Sunday. The writer-director has swapped Montana for Texas and ranchers for oilmen, but kept the cowboy hats and country soundtrack. This time the anti-hero is played by Billy Bob Thornton (pictured, left), a fixer who works for an oil tycoon. But other members of the cast, which includes Demi Moore and Jon Hamm, have only minor appearances in the first episodes. “Landman” often feels like a crude imitation of its Montanan forebear—and a one-man show to boot. It will probably satisfy only Mr Sheridan’s most devoted admirers.

Parkour jumps to the next level



“Banlieue 13” (“District 13”) is an action film from 2004 with one distinctive feature: its protagonist is played by a gymnast. [David Belle](#) is widely considered to be the inventor of parkour, a pursuit that requires athletes to get through obstacle courses, usually laid out in cities, using just their bodies and the surrounding environment. Mr Belle popularised the discipline by performing daring moves in urban settings. In “Banlieue 13”, these became action-movie chases.

Although Mr Belle views parkour as a tool for self-development, it has become a competitive sport. The International Gymnastics Federation hosts its second parkour world championships this weekend in Kitakyushu, Japan. It splits the discipline into freestyle, in which competitors are judged on the creativity and skill of their routines, and speed events. Fans will be watching Sweden’s Miranda Tibbling (pictured), Parkour’s potential breakout star, who is returning from injury to defend her championship title in the women’s speed event.

Weekly crossword



Our crossword has two sets of clues, one for seasoned cruciverbalists and the other for less experienced solvers. Both give the same answers, all of which feature in articles in this week's edition of *The Economist*:

Cryptic clues

- 1 down The sheep get confused and take over the Pentagon (4,7)
- 1 across Do plan to reorganise a country (6)
- 2 across Near the core of humanity's home (5)
- 3 across Arrogance I brush aside (6)

Factual clues

- 1 down Recovering neocon, concerned about trans-lesbian black female dominance (4, 7)
- 1 across One of three Catholic countries with many Trump-voting descendants (6)
- 2 across Where, according to Macron, Trump is the most important man (5)

3 across What Mike Waltz thinks America showed in Afghanistan and Iraq (6)

Email all four answers, along with your home city and country, by 9am GMT on Monday to crossword@economist.com. We will pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners in next week's edition.

The winners of this week's quiz



Thank you to everyone who took part in this week's quiz. The winners, chosen at random, were:

Marcelo Birenbaum, Montevideo, Uruguay

Daniel Kehoe, Tokyo, Japan

Corina Roeder, Oslo, Norway

They all gave the correct answers of: *El Cid*, *the Iron Cross*, *the ox*, *Long Island* and *the rain*. The theme is words ending in bow: elbow, crossbow, oxbow, longbow and rainbow.

The questions were:

Monday: The life of which mediaeval Spanish warrior was made into a 1961 film, starring Charlton Heston?

Tuesday: Which medal was the award for bravery in the German army from 1871 to 1945?

Wednesday: Which bovine creature features in the Chinese zodiac?

Thursday: Which is the largest island in the contiguous USA?

Friday: What meteorological feature did Adele set fire to and Prince describe as purple?

Taita

*A reverent term meaning “Father”, which embodies the protective presence of Mount Chimborazo, Ecuador’s highest peak.
Read the full story.*

Inflation is the one form of taxation that can be imposed without legislation.

Milton Friedman