

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”. Overnight [Russia](#) hit a residential neighbourhood in Sumy, a northeastern city in Ukraine, killing at least 11 people. Several regions, including Kyiv, around the capital, had been left without power following a major strike over the weekend.

Spirit Airlines filed for bankruptcy. America’s pioneer budget carrier has struggled to compete with larger rivals. As it failed to turn an annual profit since the pandemic, its [financial problems](#) only deepened after a court blocked a planned \$3.8bn merger with

[JetBlue](#), another ultra-cheap airline, in January. Spirit Airlines said it will continue to operate as it restructures its debt.

Israeli strikes on a residential block in Beit Lahiya in northern **Gaza** reportedly killed dozens of Palestinians. Israel's army said it had hit terrorist targets. Separately, a strike on a building in Beirut, Lebanon's capital, was reported to have killed Mohammad Afif, head of media relations for [Hizbullah](#), an Iran-backed militant group.

Shares in **Samsung**, South Korea's biggest company, surged by around 7.5% on Monday, after it said it would buy back about 10trn-won-worth (\$7.2bn) of its equity. Even so, [the firm's](#) share price is still down roughly 27% this year. It is struggling to compete with rivals, such as America's Nvidia and Taiwan's TSMC, in making some cutting-edge chips.

Mr Trump chose **Brendan Carr** to run the **Federal Communications Commission**, America's telecoms regulator. Mr Carr has a distaste for big tech firms, which he thinks stifle free speech. He has also accused some network television channels of anti-Republican bias. Mr Trump says he wants the FCC to [rescind](#) the broadcast licences of ABC and CBS, among others.

America and the Philippines agreed to share more classified military information. The deal, signed by Lloyd Austin, America's defence secretary, and his Filipino counterpart in Manila, boosts ties between the countries as problems escalate in the [South China Sea](#). Mr Trump may be less happy to accommodate the Philippines' strategy of pushing back Chinese expansionism in its home waters.

Figure of the day: 90%, the proportion of American voters who live in counties where Donald Trump's vote share in 2024 increased from 2020. [Read the full story.](#)

Israel continues its campaign in Lebanon



Week by week, the fighting in Lebanon expands. On Sunday Israel carried out a relatively rare air strike near the centre of Beirut, in the neighbourhood of Ras al-Nabaa. It killed Mohammed Afif, the main spokesman for Hizbullah and one of the few officials from the Lebanese militia who still made public appearances after a wave of [Israeli attacks](#) that killed most of the group's leaders. Israeli troops recently pushed about 5km across the border into southern Lebanon, the farthest they have gone since their ground invasion began last month, though they were later pushed back.

On Monday American officials will continue trying to broker a ceasefire deal between the two sides. The latest version calls for Hizbullah to retreat north of the Litani river, around 30km from the border, and for a coalition of foreign powers to help the Lebanese army enforce the deal. Israel seems keen on those terms. It is less clear whether Hizbullah, badly battered as it has been, would agree.

Brazil hosts the G20 summit



The G20 summit begins in [Brazil](#) on Monday. The meeting of leaders from 19 of the world's biggest economies, along with the European Union and African Union, will show America in a diminished light. President Joe Biden's presence will be overshadowed now that Donald Trump, an isolationist, is set to succeed him. Mr Biden will meet Brazil's president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, on the sidelines. Meanwhile Xi Jinping, China's leader, will stay five days in Brazil. He and Lula are expected to sign trade and investment deals to commemorate their countries' 50-year bilateral relationship.

Lula has three objectives for the summit. He wants leaders to agree to a global tax on billionaires; to create an alliance to reduce hunger and poverty; and to reform institutions such as the United Nations to give developing countries more weight. Lula also wants rich countries to [finance green-energy projects in poor countries](#). These already ambitious goals will become harder still with Mr Trump in the White House.

Europe plans for Trump, Part II



Foreign ministers of the European Union's 27 members meet on Monday, with their attention on Ukraine and its prospects after Donald Trump returns to the White House. The bloc will need to work out how to replace American aid to [Ukraine](#), if Mr Trump starts to wind down support. Its members may need to increase defence spending despite tight national budgets. Change is already afoot. EU funding rules will soon allow billions of euros from regional development schemes to go towards making arms.

The changing of the guard in America will also affect the EU's response to other crises. Its governments are divided over Israel's wars in Gaza and Lebanon. The foreign-affairs council will probably be the last chaired by Josep Borrell. His replacement, a former Estonian prime minister, [Kaja Kallas](#), who is expected to take over in December, will probably be less outspoken in criticising Israel. Even if America's president-elect clashes with her over how to defend Ukraine, he may well appreciate that.

A Chinese carmaking upstart reports earnings



Some Chinese tech stocks are looking more attractive by the day. Leading the pack is Xiaomi, a Beijing-based group that started off making software for phones but this year began [selling electric vehicles](#). Its stock price is up by about 45% since September; it made more than 1bn yuan (\$138m) in total sales during a recent shopping promotion. Much of the optimism around the company is focused on its sleek cars. In October it sold more than 20,000 units.

The company may say more about its cars when it releases earnings on Monday. It recently launched a luxury version of its SU7 model that goes for 815,000 yuan (\$114,000) and can accelerate from 0-62mph in 1.97 seconds. That makes it a competitor to top-range models from Tesla, an American firm. HSBC, a bank, expects an SUV model to be released late this year or early in 2025. Both investors and car enthusiasts are excited to learn more.

Sudan's unlikely football success



A catastrophic civil war has devastated ordinary life in [Sudan](#). That includes football, the country's most popular sport. Sudan's professional league was suspended after fighting broke out between the national army and the Rapid Support Forces, a militia, in April 2023. Players and officials fled abroad. Two of Sudan's biggest clubs, Al-Hilal and Al-Merrikh, now play in Mauritania's league as guests; the national football association decamped to Saudi Arabia.

Yet the men's national team has played on—and in style. The Jediane Falcons will qualify for the Africa Cup of Nations, a relatively rare feat for the country, should they draw or win against Angola on Monday. They are on track to reach the World Cup for the first time, too. The players say that the side's experienced Ghanaian manager, Kwesi Appiah, has improved their confidence. They hope to bring some solace at home. Football cannot heal Sudanese pain—but it might, at least, provide something to cheer.

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.

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

**Prediction is very difficult, especially
about the future.**

Niels Bohr