

Catch up: Hizbullah and Israel exchange fire; Ukraine and Russia swap prisoners



Hizbullah, an Iran-backed militant group based in Lebanon, fired hundreds of rockets towards **Israel**. The group said the strikes were retaliation for Israel's killing of a top Hizbullah commander in Beirut, Lebanon's capital, last month. Earlier, Israel's army said it had launched attacks on [Hizbullah](#) targets in Lebanon as a "self-defence act". Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister, is convening a urgent meeting of his security cabinet. Israel declared a 48-hour state of emergency.

Ukraine and **Russia** carried out a large prisoner swap, with each side releasing 115 soldiers. The United Arab Emirates brokered the exchange, the seventh since Russia's full-scale invasion began in 2022. Ukraine is thought to have released men captured during its daring incursion into [Russia's Kursk region](#), now in its third week. Volodymyr Zelensky, the president, vowed to keep attacking targets inside Russia.

Ishiba Shigeru, a former defence minister, joined the race to succeed Kishida Fumio as **Japan's** prime minister. Mr Kishida said

he would step down as the leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party earlier this month. The contest to replace him is [unusually open](#), though Mr Ishiba is thought to be popular with the public. The LDP makes its choice on September 27th.

Police in **Germany** arrested a third person in connection with a knife attack that killed three people and injured eight more in Solingen, a western city. Earlier investigators detained a 15-year-old on suspicion of having prior knowledge of the attack. The motive is unclear, though officials did not rule out terrorism. On Saturday Islamic State, a terrorist group, claimed responsibility for the attack without providing evidence for the claim.

Robert F. Kennedy junior joined Donald Trump on stage at a rally in Arizona after dropping his independent presidential campaign and endorsing Mr Trump. “Don’t you want a president that’s going to make America healthy again?” said [Mr Kennedy](#), an environmental lawyer and anti-vaccine activist. His candidacy “inspired millions and millions of Americans”, claimed Mr Trump. Mr Kennedy’s withdrawal is unlikely to affect [America’s presidential race](#) dramatically.

America’s justice department and eight states sued **RealPage**, a software company that it says sells an algorithm to landlords that helps them unlawfully co-ordinate price increases. The lawsuit alleges that the firm uses nonpublic data, shared by landlords, to provide daily pricing recommendations. It accuses RealPage, which said it would contest the allegations, of curbing competition and maintaining an illegal monopoly in its own field.

Italian authorities launched a manslaughter investigation after the sinking of a superyacht off Sicily killed seven people, including [Mike Lynch](#), a British tech entrepreneur. The *Bayesian* was initially thought to have been struck by a “[waterspout](#)”—a type of tornado. But officials now suspect a “downburst”, in which wind gusts

rapidly towards the ground. Investigators will assess how crew members escaped and the speed of the rescue.

Word of the week: Kidulting, experiences that let adults act like children. [Read the full story.](#)

Suffering in Gaza



The “safe zone” keeps shrinking. On Wednesday and Thursday the Israeli army told Palestinians, yet again, to flee parts of [Gaza](#) where it planned to conduct raids. It has issued 13 such evacuation orders this month alone. Several of them have sliced off parts of the so-called humanitarian area on Gaza’s coast, which is meant to be safe from Israeli incursion. It has shrunk from 50 square kilometres in July to 41 today.

Conditions are [miserable](#). Around 80% of Gaza’s 2.3m people are now huddled on just 11% of its land, making the zone one of the most densely populated places on earth. Hundreds of arrivals trickle in each day. Medical care is scarce. Last week the Palestinian health minister confirmed the first case of polio in Gaza, in a ten-month-old baby who could not be vaccinated. The UN is now trying to organise vaccines for hundreds of thousands of children—but in a war zone, even that will be difficult.

Paris commemorates its liberation



This week [Paris](#) has commemorated its liberation from Nazi occupation, the 80th anniversary of which falls on Sunday. The soundtrack to the celebrations has included Spanish fanfares. The first Allied unit to enter the French capital was a company known as “La Nueve”, made up mostly of exiled Spanish Republicans commanded by a French officer. Another highlight of the programme has been an outdoor showing of a documentary about the liberation’s last living witnesses at the city’s Hotel de Ville.

It was there that Charles de Gaulle delivered a triumphant speech praising “eternal France” after the surrender of the German commander (who had been persuaded to disobey Adolf Hitler’s orders to blow up the city). The festivities will help Parisians sustain [the buzz](#) they enjoyed during this summer’s [Olympic games](#). So will the Paralympics, scheduled to begin on Wednesday. The Paralympic flame will arrive in the city on Sunday to mark the end of the liberation commemorations.

Fighting coastal erosion with electricity



The legend goes that Canute, a Viking-English king, once ordered the tide to stop coming in to demonstrate to his courtiers that he was not as omnipotent as they might have wished. A millennium later, the waves still crash inexorably—to the dismay of those trying to slow [coastal erosion](#). Seawalls can be built and soil reinforced with cement, but the sea soon swallows it all up.

Undeterred, scientists have turned to nature itself for inspiration. Molluscs like clams and mussels build their shells from minerals dissolved in seawater, in a process called electrodeposition. Researchers writing in *Communications Earth & Environment*, a journal, believe that electrodeposition can be harnessed to fight erosion. They found that zapping sand with electricity forms a rock-like material, as the minerals form a natural cement between grains. They estimate the process to cost between \$3 and \$6 to protect a cubic metre of coastline. For the 40% of the world's population who dwell in coastal areas, that may seem like a bargain.

Burning Man fizzles



Since its foundation in 1986, Burning Man has morphed from a desert Woodstock into an Instagrammable destination for well-heeled hippies and bohemian tech billionaires. But for the first time since 2010 tickets remain unsold for the week-long festival of art, music and drug-fuelled debauchery in the Nevada desert, which begins on Sunday. “Burners” were expected to pay \$575 for passes, but some are being offloaded on the secondary market for less than half that.

This year’s iteration bears the theme “Curiouser & Curiouser”, celebrating “puzzles without answers”. But Burning Man’s [decline in popularity](#) is not entirely a mystery, particularly since similar events, like Coachella, a music festival in California, have also struggled to sell out. Extreme weather has plagued Burning Man in recent years, and may be dissuading people from committing to a week outdoors. In an uncertain economy, the steep cost of attendance—not just the entrance ticket but travel and accommodation too—may also be dampening the fire.

Europe's biggest carnival



This weekend the Notting Hill district of London holds Europe's biggest street festival. At least a million are expected to attend the celebrations, which first started in the 1960s, and are rooted in the capital's Caribbean communities. A fixture of the August bank holiday, the carnival has long been a feast for the senses. Floats make their way through bustling crowds, the masquerade dancers a blur of sequins and feathers. It is the last chance of the summer to drink rum and Jamaican lager, be deafened by the rhythms of the steel bands and the giant sound systems, and stuff yourself with jerk chicken, curry goat and roti.

For commentators it is also a chance to posture on the state of [British multiculturalism](#). At its best it is a celebration of Afro-Caribbean culture, of smiling police officers dancing with carnival revellers. At its worst, a nasty mix of stabbings and boarded-up shops. Carnival is whatever Londoners want it to be.

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 Dead veterans abandoned somewhere hot and dry (6,6)

1 across Food-maker caught by dishonest levy (6)

2 across Bend with involuntary movement for the far north (6)

3 across Transit terminal empty without party (6)

Factual clues

1 down Where Burning Man is held (6,6)

1 across The world's biggest food company (6)

2 across What most of the world's peat is found on the fringes of
(6)

3 across What more Indians now do than ever before (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



The Economist

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

Sverre Prytz, Zürich, Switzerland

Pawel Karolczak, Cleveland, Tennessee, America

Thanasis Poulakidas, Athens, Greece

They all gave the correct answers of Middlemarch, The Fly, a feather, visible light and bantam. The theme is weight categories in boxing: middleweight, flyweight, featherweight, lightweight, and bantamweight.

The questions were:

Monday: Which George Eliot novel partly concerns the unhappy marriage of Dorothea Brooke and Edward Casaubon?

Tuesday: Which 1986 horror film was advertised with the tagline "Be Afraid. Be Very Afraid"?

Wednesday: The barbule, calamus and rachis are all elements of which animal body part?

Thursday: Electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength of between 400 and 700 nanometres is generally known as what?

Friday: What common name for small species of fowl, such as chicken or duck, is derived from an Indonesian seaport?

Kidulting

*Experiences that let adults act like children.
Read the full story.*

Writing is nothing more than a guided dream.

Jorge Luis Borges