

## Catch up: Netanyahu defends his operation in Gaza; Harris vows to protect US Steel



**Binyamin Netanyahu**, Israel's prime minister, defended his country's war in Gaza, and his refusal to agree to a ceasefire, in a defiant press conference. It was his first public appearance since **Israel** recovered the bodies of six captives in Gaza over the weekend. [Mr Netanyahu](#) asked the families for their forgiveness and said that Hamas would pay a "heavy price". On Monday a general strike began as anger mounted over the government's inability to secure the release of hostages held by Hamas. Shopping malls, universities and government ministries stopped working.

**Britain** said it would suspend some arms-export licences to **Israel** over its suspected breaches of international humanitarian law. David Lammy, Britain's foreign secretary, said that Israel "could do more" to get aid to civilians in Gaza. Separately, America said Yemen's Houthis struck two oil tankers in the Red Sea in "reckless acts of terrorism". The Iran-backed group has launched more than 70 attacks since [the war](#) in Gaza began.

**Kamala Harris** said **US Steel** should remain “American owned” during a visit to Pittsburgh, the company’s home. Her remarks will disappoint Nippon Steel, the Japanese company which hopes to [acquire its rival](#) for \$15bn. Ms Harris is courting workers on her campaign trail through Michigan and Pennsylvania. Donald Trump has also opposed the deal.

A court in **Venezuela** issued an arrest warrant for Edmundo González. Mr González claims, legitimately, that he defeated President Nicolás Maduro in [the presidential election](#) in July. Since stealing the election, Mr Maduro has cracked down on dissent. Mr González, who is in hiding, has been charged with “usurpation”, conspiracy and sabotage.

**EDF**, France’s state-owned **nuclear** company, said it would finally start operations at its Flamanville reactor. If the launch is successful, the reactor is expected to be connected to the grid before the end of the year. Flamanville cost €13.2bn (\$14.6bn) to build and ran 12 years behind schedule. EDF said it had learnt valuable lessons for future projects.

**Vladimir Putin** landed in **Mongolia** for his first visit to a member of the International Criminal Court since it issued an arrest warrant for him over his alleged responsibility for war crimes in Ukraine. Russia’s president is set to meet Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh, his Mongolian counterpart, on Tuesday. Mongolia has maintained a neutral stance on the [Russia-Ukraine](#) conflict. It relies on its neighbour for fuel and electricity.

**Cathay Pacific Airways** said it would inspect all of its [Airbus](#) A350 jets after an engine component failed mid-flight. The airline cancelled at least 48 flights until the end of Tuesday. Shares in Rolls-Royce, the company that manufactures engines for A350 planes, fell by more than 6% on the news.

**Fact of the day:** 40%, the estimated average fall in price of stationary lithium batteries per kilowatt-hour of storage between 2019 and 2023. [Read the full story.](#)

## A pivotal moment for Israel



The repatriation of six bodies of Israeli hostages from Gaza on Saturday could be a pivotal moment for Israelis. The hostages had survived for nearly 11 months since being abducted by [Hamas](#) on October 7th. Forensic evidence indicated they had been murdered shortly before Israeli forces arrived.

This has fuelled protests against the government of Binyamin Netanyahu, who has refused to accept one of Hamas's main conditions for a [ceasefire and hostage-release deal](#): a withdrawal of Israeli forces from the border corridor between Gaza and Egypt. Such a deal may have saved the hostages' lives. The news unleashed the largest wave of demonstrations in Israel since the war began, with more than 100,000 protestors blocking main roads in Tel Aviv and other cities. Trade unions held a one-day general strike on Monday. For now, Mr Netanyahu is not budging. He told a cabinet meeting that he is sticking by the "strategic decision" to hold the border corridor.

# Panama's crackdown on illegal migration



On Tuesday Panama will deport 70 Indian nationals on a flight funded by America's government. Since taking power in July, José Raúl Mulino, the president, has promised to crack down on illegal migration through the [Darién Gap](#), the jungle on the southern border with Colombia. In the past two weeks five deportation flights have departed to Colombia and Ecuador. Many deportees have criminal records, according to migration officials. Mr Mulino says Chinese nationals will be next.

Last year over 520,000 migrants crossed the gap into Panama: 25,565 came from China and 3,736 from India. Mr Mulino's tough stance appears to be having some effect. In the first eight months of the year numbers fell by 27% compared with 2023, declining more sharply since he took office. But there is no plan in place to deport Venezuelan migrants, who make up almost two-thirds of entrants. Migration from that country could surge again after [President Nicolás Maduro's](#) recent theft of an election and subsequent crackdown.



## How will Harris advertise?



With Labor Day over, the sprint to the American presidential election in November begins. Kamala Harris's campaign will look to put its best foot forward with a massive advertising blitz, starting on Tuesday. It intends to spend \$170m on television spots in battleground states and a further \$200m on streaming platforms like YouTube and Spotify. According to the campaign, it will be the biggest such spend by "any political organisation ever".

[Ms Harris](#) certainly has the cash. She has raised over \$500m since becoming the Democratic Party's candidate in August. But in terms of spending she is still playing catch-up with Donald Trump. His campaign and its allies have forked out more than Democrats in four of seven swing states. Still, not all of that money has been well spent. The campaign has reportedly been buying advertisements around Mr Trump's home in Mar-a-Lago to keep the boss happy, despite the fact that Florida is not in play this [election](#).

# Heathrow workers on strike



Hundreds of Border Force officers at [Heathrow airport](#), Europe's busiest, will end their four-day strike on Tuesday. But disruption is due to continue. Following the industrial action—which protested against the introduction of “inflexible” new work rotas—650 members of the Public and Commercial Services Union will refuse to work overtime or perform extra tasks until September 22nd. Britain's Home Office said it will try to “minimise disruption where possible”.

The dispute is the latest in a series of setbacks for the air-travel industry, which has struggled to handle a post-pandemic surge in demand. Heathrow has just two runways, compared with four at Paris's Charles de Gaulle and at Frankfurt, and six at Amsterdam's Schiphol. Yet bosses forecast a record 82.4m passengers this year, up from 80.9m in 2019. Simple fixes such as a new baggage system and improvements to security lanes will help boost capacity, but calls for another strip of tarmac will probably grow.

# Time's up for luxury watches



The Hong Kong Watch and Clock Fair kicked off on Tuesday. Manufacturers will show new products in the hope that buzz and higher sales will follow. In recent years that has run like clockwork. But now something might jam.

The pandemic saw a huge boom in luxury watches, as buyers felt flush from low interest rates and a thriving stockmarket. Watch prices rose by 27% between 2020 and 2022, according to BCG, a consultancy. But the market has since plummeted. Swiss watch exports dropped to 12.3bn Swiss francs (\$14.5bn) in the first six months of 2024, 3.2% lower than in the same period last year.

That is largely down to an economic slowdown in [China](#), a big luxury market. Demand in China and Hong Kong fell by 21.6% and 19.9% respectively in July. The Watch and Clock Fair may struggle to make buyers tick.



## 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](mailto:QuizEspresso@economist.com). We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

**Tuesday:** Who starred as Axel Foley in the Beverly Hills Cop film series?

**Monday:** Gene Cernan and Harrison Schmitt were the last two people to do what?

**40%**

*The estimated average fall in price of stationary lithium batteries per kilowatt-hour of storage between 2019 and 2023.*

*Read the full story.*

**Form follows function.**

*Louis Sullivan*