

Catch up: Israel moves deeper into Lebanon; oil prices surge



Israel bombed southern **Beirut** in an attack targeting Hashem Safieddine, a possible new leader of **Hizbullah**, according to reports in [Israeli](#) media. Last week Israeli air strikes killed Hassan Nasrallah, who had led the Iran-backed militant group since 1992. Israel also bombed central Beirut and ordered residents in more than 20 towns in southern Lebanon to evacuate. Meanwhile, in the West Bank, [Palestinian](#) officials said Israeli attacks killed at least 18 people in the Tulkarem refugee camp.

Oil prices posted their biggest one-day rise in almost a year, surging by more than 5%. Earlier **President Joe Biden** suggested that American officials were “discussing” whether to support an Israeli attack on **Iran’s** oil facilities. Separately, **Libya** resumed oil production almost two months after [halting operations](#), which could help stabilise global oil markets.

Dockworkers agreed to immediately end a [three-day strike](#) at 36 **American ports** along the east and Gulf coasts. The International Longshoremen’s Association, the dockers’ union, said it had

reached a tentative agreement with the United States Maritime Alliance, which represents terminals and carriers. Details were not disclosed. The union had previously rejected a pay rise of 50% over six years.

Volodymyr Zelensky, [Ukraine's](#) president, criticised his country's western partners for “dragging out” the delivery of **long-range weapons**. Mr Zelensky was speaking in Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, at a joint press conference with Mark Rutte, the new head of NATO. Mr Rutte, on his first trip as secretary-general of the alliance, said that he wanted to make it “crystal clear” that “NATO stands with Ukraine”.

The **European Commission** sued **Hungary** over a controversial law it passed last year in the name of protecting its national sovereignty. Critics compare the measure, which criminalises some groups that take foreign money, to a Russian law requiring NGOs that receive funding from abroad to register as “foreign agents”. The bloc argues that the measure infringes EU law.

David Lammy, Britain's foreign secretary, landed in Dublin. His visit to Ireland—the first for a British foreign secretary since 2017—is part of the government's plan to [reset ties](#) between Britain and Europe. Mr Lammy also wants to co-operate with Ireland in areas like tackling climate change. He met Ireland's deputy prime minister, Micheál Martin, and other senior officials.

A leaked excerpt from **Melania Trump's** upcoming memoir revealed that she supports **abortion** access. The former first lady—whose husband helped usher in the [end of *Roe v Wade*](#), which had established a federal right to abortion—reiterated her views in a video on Thursday. Donald Trump has said that he would veto a national abortion ban if re-elected. Most Americans support some [access to the procedure](#).

Figure of the day: \$1trn, the amount of external debt that governments in the global south have not reported to the World Bank since 1970. [Read the full story.](#)

America's job market in focus



America's jobs report for September, released on Friday, will reverberate through global markets. Investors are trying to work out how aggressively the [Federal Reserve](#) will cut interest rates. Now that inflation is receding, the crucial variable is the job market. The economy probably added 150,000 jobs last month, according to the median forecast, while the unemployment rate may have remained at 4.2%. In that scenario the Fed will probably cut interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point at its next meeting in November, smaller than its half-point cut in September.

Data released earlier this week painted a mixed picture. The number of Americans quitting their jobs slumped to its lowest since the summer of 2020, a sign of potential weakening in hiring prospects. But a separate survey registered an unexpected uptick in private-sector hiring last month. If there are cracks in the American labour market, they appear to be mild for now.

The EU votes on Chinese EV tariffs



On Friday the European Union votes on whether to sign tariffs of up to 45% on Chinese-made electric vehicles into law for five years. The [European Commission](#) has accused China of unfairly subsidising its EV industry. It fears that cheaper imports pose a threat to European carmakers.

The measure will pass unless 15 countries representing 65% of the bloc's people vote against it. France, Greece, Italy and Poland, with 39% of the population, will be in favour, according to Reuters. Germany has been a particularly vocal opponent. It exports plenty of cars to China, and several of its largest carmakers also have factories there.

As for Chinese carmakers, higher duties may temporarily slow their progress and give Europeans the opportunity to catch up. But the tariff barrier is unlikely to prevent them from capturing market share. Having set prices in Europe a little lower than for competing European models, they have scope to cut them further.

Iran's waning power



When an Israeli bomb killed Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hizbullah, last week it also decapitated a fearsome militia and dealt a blow to Iran's "axis of resistance", a constellation of proxy forces. His funeral is rumoured to be held on Friday. Since then, Iran has fired directly on Israel. But it appeared to fail in its objectives of hitting two air-force bases and a military-intelligence facility. Most of the missiles were intercepted and destroyed mid-air.

Iran is ending this year [weaker than it began](#). Although it has warned Israel against hitting back, Israel's retaliation will probably be of a far greater magnitude. And the proxies that are its first line of defence are struggling. Hamas is markedly weaker after a year of war in Gaza; the Houthis' income has been cut along with the flow of goods from Hodeida, Yemen's main port. As Iran mourns Nasrallah, it also mourns the depletion of its power.

Europe rules on the rights of Afghan women



On Friday the European Court of Justice will rule whether Afghan women can be given refugee status solely on the basis of their gender and country of origin. Sweden, Finland and Denmark already grant it status automatically. But in other European countries applications are considered case by case.

Three years after America's withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Taliban is removing **every shred of freedom from women**. A new set of consolidated religious laws published last month made matters worse. Women may not raise their voices or recite the Koran in public. They may not look at any man other than their relatives, and must cover their faces fully.

Even before the latest laws, women were banned from attending secondary schools, universities, parks and female-only spaces such as beauty salons. They cannot work in most professions. The situation has left Afghan women desperate; many are searching for ways to leave. The ECJ's ruling could make freedom easier to find.

Coldplay's new album



Young women have often held the pop charts. (This summer has been dominated by artists like Taylor Swift, [Charli XCX](#) and Sabrina Carpenter.) All-male bands, though capable of filling stadiums, often lag behind them in record sales. Coldplay have managed to sell both tickets and records in vast numbers. On Friday they release “Moon Music”, their tenth studio album, while still on tour for “Music Of The Spheres”, its bestselling predecessor.

The secret to Coldplay’s success lies partly in their ability to adapt to new musical trends. The British band have moved away from the sometimes dour indie rock of their early albums for more upbeat pop and electronic tunes. They’ve also collaborated with newer popular artists like Burna Boy and Little Simz.

Coldplay have also expanded their reach beyond Europe and America, tapping into new audiences. The “Music Of The Spheres” tour, which has sold over 10m tickets, includes stops in Abu Dhabi, Mumbai, Seoul and Hong Kong.

Daily Quiz



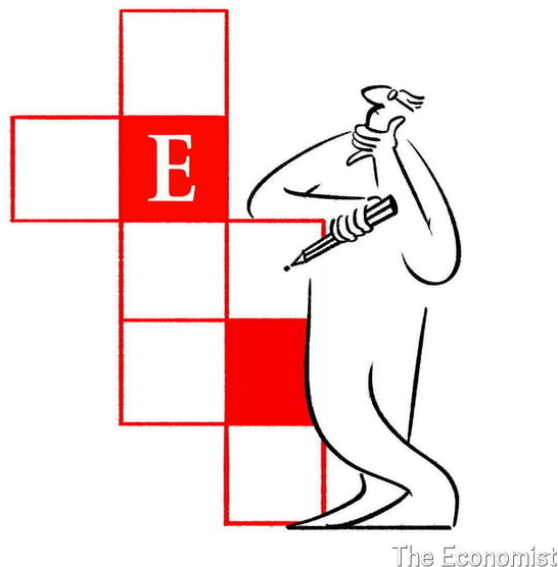
The Economist

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 US national monument was originally dedicated on October 28th, 1886?

Friday: Which proposed constitutional amendment was approved by Congress in the early 1970s but fell short of getting the required number of states to ratify it?

The winners of last week's crossword



Thank you to everyone who took part in our weekly crossword, published in the weekend edition of Espresso. The winners, chosen at random, were:

Christine Reiter, Alexandria, Virginia, America

Alan W Makin, Oxford, Britain

Kobchai Kingchatchaval, Bangkok, Thailand

They all gave the correct answers of [appendicitis](#), [Alaska](#), [Dubai](#) and [Saxony](#). Check back tomorrow for this week's crossword.

\$1trn

The amount of external debt that governments in the global south have not reported to the World Bank since 1970.

Read the full story.

**The true secret of happiness lies in taking
a genuine interest in all the details of daily
life.**

William Morris