

Catch up: Hamas confirms Sinwar's death; blackout in Cuba



Hamas confirmed Israel's [killing of its leader](#), **Yahya Sinwar**, but vowed that his death would strengthen the group's resolve. Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister, said the fighting would not stop as his forces stepped up its assault on Gaza. The Israel Defence Forces also announced it was sending more reserves to northern Israel as its offensive in neighbouring Lebanon continues.

The entire population of **Cuba**, around 10m people, lost electricity after the country's power grid shut down. The energy minister blamed a power-plant failure. Earlier, officials had shut down schools and non-essential businesses in a bid to save energy. Dated generators and a lack of fuel have made power cuts a [frequent occurrence](#).

President Joe Biden urged the West to [continue supporting Ukraine](#) ahead of a "tough winter". Mr Biden's remarks came before a meeting with Olaf Scholz, his German counterpart. Separately, the *Financial Times* reported that America will provide up to \$20bn to

Ukraine as part of a G7 loan worth \$50bn. Details of the package, which was announced in June, have been subject to intense negotiations.

American **stockmarkets** posted a sixth consecutive week of gains. Both the S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average closed on record highs on Friday. Markets were buoyed by the performance of tech firms. Shares in Netflix jumped by 11% after the streaming service reported better-than-expected quarterly earnings. The price of gold also rose.

A court in Rome ruled that 12 migrants taken to a detention centre in **Albania** must be moved to **Italy**, because their countries of origin were not safe to return to. Italian vessels had [delivered them this week](#) to the Albanian site—the first time an EU country processed asylum claims in a third country. Italy vowed to appeal against the ruling.

The area of land in **Colombia** dedicated to growing coca, the raw ingredient for **cocaine**, increased by 10% in 2023. According to a new UN report, the 253,000 hectares planted with the crop had the potential to produce 2,644 tonnes of cocaine. Gustavo Petro, the country's president, has shifted his government's focus from halting coca cultivation to stopping [cocaine production](#) and shipments.

Ahead of **America's** [presidential election](#) next month early-voter turnout in Georgia surpassed a record 1m since opening on Tuesday. In 2020 Joe Biden became the first Democrat to win the state since 1992—by a razor-thin margin. As Kamala Harris's campaign struggles to limit the loss of [black voters](#) in the [swing state](#), that achievement lies on a knife's edge.

Word of the week: *Aotearoa*, the Maori word for New Zealand, and the name of one of just a handful of ships in the country's navy. [Read the full story.](#)

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After Sinwar's death



Hope for a ceasefire in Gaza has been revived. This week Yahya Sinwar, [Hamas's leader](#) and the architect of the October 7th attack on Israel, [was killed](#) in a firefight with an Israeli patrol near Rafah. Mr Sinwar's death and the broader decimation of Hamas's military wing offers a chance for negotiators to reach a deal that would release 101 Israeli hostages (around half of whom are presumed dead) and end the war in Gaza, which has killed more than 40,000 people.

Joe Biden, America's president, spies "the opportunity for a 'day after' in Gaza without Hamas in power". The Israeli government has meanwhile contacted the mediators who had been handling ceasefire talks. Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister, has so far not mentioned a deal but said that those who release hostages would be let out alive. A route to end the war is in sight. But, as Mr Biden acknowledged, "much work remains before us."

Turning out Hispanic voters in Nevada

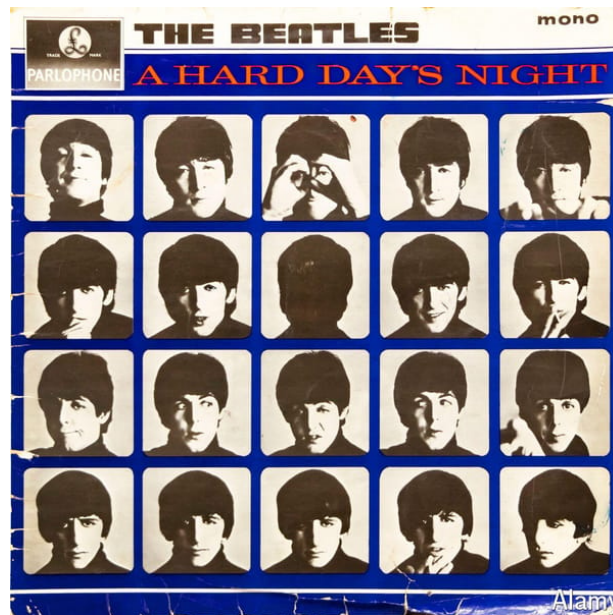


The American presidential campaign is the longest in the Western world. American voters also have one of the widest windows of time to cast their ballots. On Saturday Nevada will become the latest [swing state](#) to begin early in-person voting.

[Hispanic voters](#) make up more than a fifth of the Silver State's electorate. Democrats have traditionally been able to count on strong support among ethnic-minority voters. Though a majority of the Latino electorate—which is growing remarkably fast—prefers Democrats, Mr Trump is gaining popularity. [The Economist's forecast model](#) shows Ms Harris leading her Republican rival by less than one percentage point in Nevada.

Turnout could make the difference. Over half of Nevada's Latino electorate voted in the 2020 election, a rate that is relatively strong among Hispanic voters in swing states but trails that of white voters. Nevada publishes a partisan breakdown of early ballot turnout. Both campaigns will be parsing the data.

Six decades of “A Hard Day’s Night”



On Saturday [The Beatles](#) will mark the 60th anniversary of “A Hard Day’s Night” with a special reissue of the album. That it ties in with Britain’s National Album Day—the theme of which is “great British groups”—is fitting. The band’s third album (and first [film soundtrack](#)) sold more than 4m copies after its release in 1964 and is considered to be one of their finest works.

It also changed the way albums were made. Albums used to be quick cash-ins for stars, sprinkling their hit singles between cover versions of familiar tunes. “A Hard Day’s Night”, however, contained entirely original compositions.

With its experimental recording techniques, inventive chords and adoption of George Harrison’s 12-string electric guitar, the album defined a sound that would both dominate the decade’s pop music and direct the evolution of rock ‘n’ roll. Six decades on, The Beatles’ reputation as cultural giants has been cemented.

Celebrating India's classical music



This year's Darbar Festival, one of the biggest celebrations of [Indian classical music](#) outside the subcontinent, warms up with an educational course at the Barbican Centre in London on Saturday. The opening performances next week, and the acts that follow, will feature ancient musical forms that are unique to the Indian tradition. They will highlight the rhythmic cycles or musical "phrases" known as *talas*, which range from 3 to 128 beats in length. Another focus will be classical *ragas*, melodic frameworks within which musicians improvise.

The Darbar Festival has come a long way since it was founded in Leicester, a British city with a big Indian diaspora. It hosts master performers alongside new talent. Their repertoire stretches from Hindustani and Carnatic classics to modern interpretations and features a full range of traditional instruments, from the sitar to the classical flute. Now in its 19th year, the Darbar Festival continues to win new audiences for Indian music.

Weekend profile: Maia Sandu, Moldova's defiantly pro-EU president



Maia Sandu, Moldova's president since 2020, has emerged as one of the most widely admired leaders in post-Soviet eastern Europe. If, as expected, she wins the first round of a [presidential election](#) on Sunday and prevails in a run-off on November 3rd, she will strengthen her reputation as a rare reformer. A referendum on whether Moldova's constitution should be changed to enshrine its intention to [join the European Union](#)—she is urging a yes vote—may be even more crucial for the country's geopolitical future. Good results for her would set back Vladimir Putin in his campaign to recapture a dominant role in countries previously under Russia's sway.

At first glance the diminutive, unflashy, 52-year-old Ms Sandu seems an unlikely standard-bearer for taking on the pugilistic Mr Putin. Moldova's population, shrinking through mass emigration, is thought to be around 2.5m. It has a tiny 6,000-strong army. If Russia were to take over Ukraine, most Moldovans assume that their country would be rapidly rolled over too.

For nearly 30 years after the fall of the Soviet Union Moldova was ruled mainly by a clique of pro-Russian, corrupt wheeler-dealers. They enriched a circle of oligarchs while most people were left to struggle—a situation that Ms Sandu has been determined to reverse.

In 2012 she became Moldova's minister of education following a two-year stint at the World Bank. Her new salary was one fifteenth of what she earned in Washington. Soon she was up against corruption, solidifying her reputation for single-mindedness and honesty. In 2016 she formed her own liberal, free-market political party and was narrowly defeated for the presidency before [winning it](#) against a Kremlin-approved candidate in 2020. Her party went on to win a landslide victory in a general election the next year.

Initially she espoused cautiously pragmatic relations with Russia, but [sharply switched](#) to a wholesale pro-EU policy when Mr Putin ordered his full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Her stance prompted over a million refugees to flow through Moldova, where about 100,000 have remained.

Following covid-19 and a rise in gas and electricity prices, the government's popularity may have dipped. If her party does not repeat its landslide triumph of 2021 but still wins most seats, it may need to form a coalition government, possibly including parties more amenable to Russia. That would test her skills anew.

Ms Sandu presents herself as [the antithesis of her presidential predecessors](#). She says her favourite book is “A Fish in the Water” by Mario Vargas Llosa, a liberal-minded Nobel prizewinner who failed in a bid to become Peru's president. So far Ms Sandu, despite Russia's best efforts, has been no loser.

This week's crossword



Our crossword is designed for experienced cruciverbalists and newcomers alike. Both sets of clues give the same answers, all of which feature in articles in this week's edition of *The Economist*:

Cryptic clues

1 down City's casinos awash with old French money (3,9)

1 across Land is paradise after extremes of sorrow (6)

2 across Amid scandal, go rescue an American politician (2,4)

3 across Position of spoiled aloofness (6)

Factual clues

1 down American city that recently announced it would close several schools (3,9)

1 across A country whose NATO membership bid was held up by Turkey (6)

2 across A favourite Democratic candidate of Pamela Churchill's
(2,4)

3 across What Justin Trudeau assumed in 2015 (6)

Email all four answers by 9am BST on Monday to crossword@economist.com, along with your home city and country. 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:

Bill Frenke, Oakville, Canada

Ffinlo Shakya, London, Britain

Andrej Galogaža, Zagreb, Croatia.

They all gave the correct answers of 49, 25, 144, 36 and nine. The theme is square numbers.

The questions were:

Monday: Joe Biden is the 46th president. How many vice presidents have there been?

Tuesday: What is the minimum age to be a member of the US Congress?

Wednesday: How many US open tennis championships have there been?

Thursday: How many inches are in a yard?

Friday: How many US states have double letters in their names?

Aotearoa

The Maori word for New Zealand, and the name of one of just a handful of ships in the country's navy.

Read the full story.

No wise man ever wished to be younger.

Jonathan Swift