

Catch up: Israel strikes a Christian-majority town in Lebanon; Nobel prize in economics



An Israeli attack killed at least 21 people in Aitou, a town in northern **Lebanon**, according to the Lebanese Red Cross. It is the first time the Israel Defence Forces has struck a Christian-majority town since beginning its ground operation in Lebanon. Meanwhile the IDF continued to attack southern Lebanon, where it claimed to have killed a [Hizbullah](#) commander. Earlier the **European Union** condemned Israel's attacks on United Nations peacekeepers in southern Lebanon that have injured five people in recent days. Josep Borrell, the EU's foreign-policy chief, said that attacking UN personnel was "completely unacceptable".

The **Nobel prize in economics** was awarded jointly to Simon Johnson, James Robinson and Daron Acemoglu for their research on [global inequality](#). The trio's work has shed light on the link between colonisation and prosperity, and the importance of strong democratic institutions for countries' success. The [Nobel](#)

[committee](#) lauded the researchers for their innovative approach to studying “one of our time’s greatest challenges”.

Oil prices fell by around 2% as traders worried about falling demand. The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries cut its demand forecast for this year and next. Disappointing trade data from China added to the concerns. Although conflict in the Middle East could send oil prices spiralling, a glut of supply [reduces the risk](#) of such a shock.

Singapore’s economy expanded at the fastest pace in more than two years during the third quarter. GDP increased by 4.1% year on year, higher than forecasts of around 3.8%. The export-oriented manufacturing sector grew by 7.5%, compared with a 1.1% decline during the previous quarter. The GDP figures suggest that the [city-state](#) is on track to meet its growth target, of 2-3%, this year.

David Lammy, Britain’s foreign secretary, met the **European Union’s** foreign ministers at a gathering in Luxembourg. It is the first time a British foreign secretary has attended the event in two years. The move is part of the Labour government’s efforts to reset Britain’s relationship with the EU. Mr Lammy is hoping to deepen co-operation with the bloc on security and defence.

India said that it was withdrawing six diplomats from [Canada](#), including Sanjay Kumar Verma, its high commissioner. Canadian officials have reportedly named the diplomats as “persons of interest” in their investigation into the murder of a [Sikh separatist](#) in Canada last year. India said that Canada’s investigation into the diplomats was “baseless” and “completely unacceptable”.

Li Qiang, China’s prime minister, landed in Islamabad, Pakistan’s capital. He will attend a meeting of the [Shanghai Co-operation Organisation](#), a group of several Asian countries that want to build deeper military and economic links with China. Islamabad is under

lockdown to prevent disruption. Two Chinese workers died in a suicide bomb attack last week.

Figure of the day: 6.2m, the number of tonnes of crude steel produced by Ukraine's steel plants in 2023, down from 21.4m in 2021. [Read the full story](#).

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Germany's gloomy economy



The ZEW indicator of economic sentiment in Germany will be published on Tuesday. The **mood is so downbeat** that, after a substantial decline in September, the index is likely to sink even further. On October 9th Robert Habeck, the economy minister, admitted that the economy will probably shrink in 2024 for the second year running. Two days later Volkswagen, Germany's biggest carmaker, reported a 7.1% drop in global deliveries in the third quarter compared with the same period last year.

Next year **Germany's economy** should finally start growing again. The rate of inflation is forecast to continue to slow from 5.9% last year and 2.2% this year to 2% in 2025. In July the government launched a growth programme that included cuts to income and electricity taxes. Its effects, however, are unlikely to be felt in time to help the coalition government win re-election in September.

The battle for America's Senate



Ted Cruz, a Republican senator from Texas, will face his Democratic challenger, Colin Allred, in a debate in Dallas on Tuesday. The state leans Republican but Democrats have been gaining strength there in recent years. Donald Trump is almost certain to win Texas's electoral votes, but Mr Allred [could conceivably defeat Mr Cruz](#).

Up until now, Democrats have pinned their hopes of holding the Senate on defending incumbent senators in deep-red Ohio and Montana. But red-state Democrats have become less common as “ticket splitting”—when voters choose different parties for election to different offices—has declined. With hopes fading in Montana, the Democrats are moving some resources to Florida and Texas. [The Economist's forecast](#) estimates that the Democrats have a 25% chance of holding their Montana seat. In Texas and in Florida their odds of victory are 21% and 20% respectively.

Wall Street braces for loan losses



Bank of America, Citigroup and Goldman Sachs report third-quarter earnings on Tuesday. Investors are more worried about the [consumer banks](#) in that group, BoA and Citigroup, than they are about Goldman, which has a bigger investment-banking business. After a period of high interest rates, many consumers are [struggling to repay credit-card debt](#). That has pushed up provisions for loan losses.

The results of JPMorgan, disclosed last week, bode well for Goldman. JPMorgan's profits fell by 2% year on year because of losses in its credit-card business. But thanks in part to the growth of investment-banking fees and a rise in net interest income, the drop in profits was smaller than expected, sending its share price surging to its highest level in two years. Over the past two years, dealmaking plummeted as economic uncertainty lowered companies' valuations. Now, renewed confidence and interest-rate cuts have sparked a resurgence. That helped JPMorgan, and may boost Goldman, too.

Iran braces for Israel's retaliation



The waiting game continues. Two weeks after [Iran launched 181 ballistic missiles](#) towards Israel, Iranians are bracing for Israel's response. Normally, their political concerns centre on economic mismanagement, the struggle for civil liberties and the mass imprisonment of activists. Now they are worrying about what to do when the bombs start falling.

Fearing an [imminent attack](#) on the capital, Tehran, some have headed farther north. Others are preparing to use their basements as bunkers. Many are carrying on business as usual. But major international airlines have suspended flights, martial music has crept back into state broadcasting and Iranian flags fill the streets. When the prospect of war seemed faint, some Iranians were glad to hear Israel's calls for regime change. Now that the risks feel real, they are more reticent. "We want the regime weak," says a sometime protester, "but not so weak it can't protect us."

Jimi Hendrix's recording studio lives on



“Electric Lady Studios: A Jimi Hendrix Vision”, a film released on streaming platforms on Tuesday, focuses on an unheralded aspect of the rock guitarist’s legacy. Shortly before his death in 1970 [Hendrix](#) spent \$8m (at today’s values) and much of his energy to build a state-of-the-art recording studio in Greenwich Village, New York. It has hosted bands and singers from Stevie Wonder and Led Zeppelin to Beyoncé and Taylor Swift and flourishes to this day.

The heroes of this film are not, however, the musicians, but the engineers, designers, technicians and managers who created a space that was unlike anything else at the time. Their devotion to their crafts shines through. So does their enthusiasm for what Steve Winwood, who collaborated with Hendrix, describes as “a different type of recording”, in a studio built by an artist where creativity is everything. What Hendrix himself might have achieved there can only be imagined. What other musicians have is, happily, a matter of record.

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.

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

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

6.2m

the number of tonnes of crude steel produced by Ukraine's steel plants in 2023, down from 21.4m in 2021.

Read the full story.

**He who has a why to live can bear almost
any how.**

Friedrich Nietzsche