

Catch up: Israel bombs Beirut; The Netherlands offers help to Ukraine



Israel continued to bombard Beirut, **Lebanon's** capital, overnight. On Saturday Hamas said that an airstrike on a refugee camp in northern **Lebanon** had killed Saeed Atallah Ali, one of the group's commanders. Israel claims to have struck some 2,000 Hizbullah targets in southern Lebanon, though this has not prevented the Iran-backed militants firing back. Elsewhere Israeli forces struck a mosque in Deir al-Balah, a town in northern Gaza, killing at least 19 people according to Palestinian authorities.

Ruben Brekelmans, the Dutch defence minister, pledged €400m (\$440m) towards the development of **Ukraine's** drone programme while visiting Kyiv. He also promised more F-16 fighter jets in the coming months. The commitment comes at a crucial time—efforts to repel the Russian invasion have stalled and the war has become one of attrition, **causing fatigue among Ukrainians and their allies.**

Fewer than 28% of **Tunisians** bothered to go to the polls for Sunday's **presidential election**. That is hardly surprising. Kais Saied, the incumbent, ran virtually unopposed. Only two other

contenders actually made the ballot, and one was then locked up for 12 years. Since his election in 2019 Mr Saied has become [increasingly autocratic](#), consolidating power in the presidency while allowing the economy to atrophy.

Sue Gray quit as chief of staff to **Keir Starmer**, Britain's prime minister. The former civil servant, who had been criticised for being ineffective, will be succeeded by Morgan McSweeney, one of the architects of the Labour Party's election victory in July. The two reportedly had a fraught relationship. [Sir Keir](#) also announced a number of other changes to his staff.

Oliver Blume, **Volkswagen's** boss, warned that the tariffs on **Chinese electric vehicles** approved by the EU on Friday could [endanger](#) the German auto industry in an interview with *Bild am Sonntag*, a German newspaper. He predicted China would retaliate, exposing homegrown firms to "significant disadvantages" in the Chinese market. Germany, which exports cars to China and has several factories there, voted against the measure.

Vietnam's GDP grew by 7.4% in the three months to the end of September compared with the same period a year earlier. Analysts had expected growth of only 6.1%, fettered by the effects of Typhoon Yagi, which caused factory activity to contract for the first time in five months. Vietnam's [strong growth](#) was supported by high levels of foreign investment and export demand.

Rwanda will trial a vaccine designed to combat the **Marburg virus disease** after having declared an outbreak on September 27th. The disease, which has no approved treatment and can be fatal in up to 88% of cases depending on the strain and how infections are managed, has killed 12 people so far. The Rwandan government has recorded 46 confirmed cases.

Saudi Arabia increased the official selling price of crude for buyers in Asia, according to Bloomberg. **Oil prices** surged by more

than 8% last week, marking the biggest weekly gain in nearly two years. Traders are worried that if Israel targets Iran's oil facilities, Iran and its proxies could retaliate by disrupting the region's energy infrastructure.

Figure of the day: 140,000, the number of neurons in a fruit fly's brain. [Read the full story.](#)

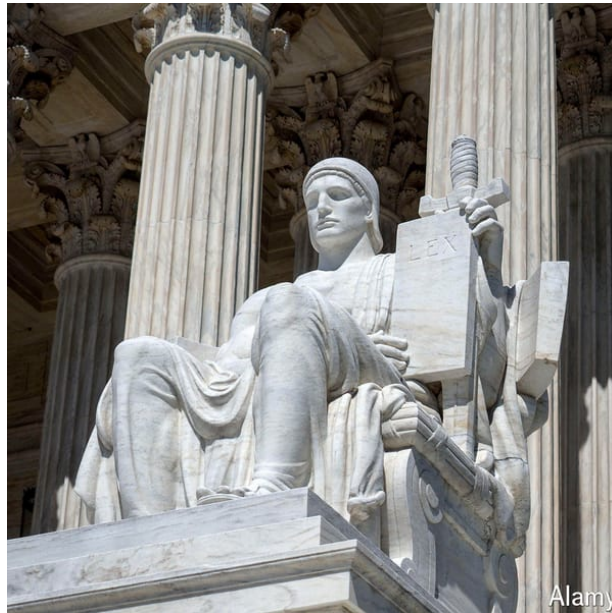
What's next for the war in Gaza?



Monday is the first anniversary of the October 7th attack, in which Hamas militants crossed over from Gaza into Israel and killed over 1,100 people, taking a further 251 hostage. Israel will mark the occasion with sombre memorial events—and high-level meetings to determine how the war with Iran will proceed.

On October 6th two Israeli brigades encircled Jabalia, just to the north of devastated Gaza City, where Hamas has re-established a presence after being driven out by the Israel Defence Forces. To the north, troops destroyed tunnels in Lebanon used by Hizbullah, an Iran-backed militia, to fire on Israeli border communities. But foremost on the mind of Israel's leaders is retaliation against Iran for the 181 ballistic missiles launched towards Israel on October 1st. Potential targets include Iranian nuclear sites and oil infrastructure. The war has already become a regional conflict. The scale of Israel's vengeance will determine how much further it will escalate.

SCOTUS's new session starts



America's Supreme Court justices return from their summer holiday on Monday. The new term brings a slate of contentious cases, even as ethics scandals, internal leaks and weak public support have led to mounting calls for reform.

Regulations of ghost guns—untraceable weapons assembled from kits—are on deck for October 8th. The next day brings the question of whether Oklahoma must put Richard Glossip to death despite no longer wanting to because, as officials acknowledge, prosecutors withheld critical evidence during his trial. Rules policing water pollution face a challenge—from left-wing San Francisco, of all places—the following week.

Vape flavours that appeal to children, proof-of-age laws to gain access to online pornography and bans on medical care for transgender children are on the docket, too. And in the coming weeks, the justices could also be embroiled in election disputes—particularly if Donald Trump seeks to overturn another loss at the ballot box. That would put them under greater scrutiny than ever.

The Maldives mends ties with India



Mohammed Muizzu, the president of the Maldives, will meet Narendra Modi, India's prime minister, for talks in Delhi on Monday. Mr Muizzu was elected in November on a promise to reorient the archipelago away from India and strengthen ties with China. He kept his word to begin with. After the election Mr Muizzu travelled to China before India, breaking a long-standing custom, and has signed a defence co-operation deal with China. Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives have withdrawn.

But Mr Muizzu appears to have changed tack. This is his second visit to India since taking office, having attended Mr Modi's swearing-in ceremony in June. His government is again courting Indian tourists, many of whom have opted to holiday elsewhere amid rising diplomatic tensions. During his trip, Mr Muizzu is expected to seek a bailout from India in order to avoid a default. He seems to have realised, belatedly, that two big friends are better than one.

The Gulf's tourism-infrastructure boom



Gulf economies want to move away from fossil fuels. Their sheikhs and princes have ploughed billions into infrastructure, hoping to attract travellers and their appetite for swanky restaurants and hotels. When Abu Dhabi National Hotels, an operator of high-end global hotel chains, lists its catering arm on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange on Monday, oil-rich rulers will get some idea of whether their strategy is working. The IPO could potentially raise \$300-400m.

Global firms certainly see an opportunity. IHG, another hotel operator, announced it will open the “tallest all-hotel tower in the world” in Dubai next year. Marriott International, an American hotelier, plans to open 40 hotels in Saudi Arabia. Fitch Ratings, a rating agency, expects the tourism sector’s contribution to the GDP of the Gulf Cooperation Council, a group of six countries, to increase from \$130bn to more than \$340bn. That would be equivalent to more than 10% of regional GDP.

Fighting tooth and nail over fluoride



Since 1945 governments have added fluoride to drinking water to improve dental health. The immediate effect was impressive: children had, on average, two fewer decayed teeth than before. But a new meta-study says that water-fluoridation schemes may be getting long in the tooth.

The review analysed 157 different studies and found that the fluoride in toothpaste in high-income countries was now doing most of the work fluoridated water used to. Its benefit has been chipped away to just a quarter of a tooth.

That will give critics of fluoridation reason to smile. They argue that too much of the chemical can be poisonous and that it is best applied topically. Proponents counter that fluoridation is cheap and that the water reaches parts of the tooth that brushing does not. The study may give policymakers considering the cost and feasibility of new fluoridation schemes something to chew on as the partisans gnash their teeth.

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.

Monday: Which 1991 film featured Patrick Swayze as the leader of a group of surfers who were also bank robbers?

140,000

*The number of neurons in a fruit fly's brain.
Read the full story.*

Everything suggests a beyond.

Isabella Bird