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**tell me WHY**

**MIGRAINES ARE NOT JUST HEADACHES**  
**Dr Ahmed Shatila, Neurology Consultant, explains to podcast host Maria Botros**

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Markets rise as rate-cut fever grips investors

NEW YORK

Most stocks rose worldwide amid higher hopes among traders of a bigger interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve today.

The broad US market index, the S&P 500, and the 30-stock Dow both hit fresh all-time highs yesterday in early trading. Also, the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index jumped 0.8 per cent.

Earlier in the day, both Europe's Stoxx 600 and UK's FTSE advanced on optimism for a big Fed cut, with most Asian markets, i.e. Hong Kong, Sydney, Singapore, Manila, Mumbai, Bangkok and Jakarta, up.

First cut since 2020

The US Fed began a two-day interest rate meeting that is all-but-certain to end with its first cut since March 2020. The rate decision will be stated today.

A rate cut of any size, be it a small cut of a quarter of a percentage point, or an aggressive half point reduction, would support consumers, who are feeling the pinch of interest rates at a 23-year high, lowering the cost of borrowing on everything from mortgages to car loans.

While a larger cut would do more to push down the cost of borrowing, it also runs the risk of reigniting inflation, according to KPMG chief economist Diane Swonk.

—Agencies

**SEE ALSO P8, P9**

# 9 dead, 2,800 hurt as Hezbollah pagers explode across Lebanon

IRAN'S AMBASSADOR AMONG WOUNDED IN BLASTS BLAMED ON ISRAEL

BEIRUT

Hundreds of pagers used by Hezbollah members exploded across Lebanon yesterday, killing at least nine people and wounding 2,800, including Tehran's ambassador in Beirut in blasts the Iran-backed militant group blamed on Israel.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on the blasts, which came just hours after Israel announced it was broadening the aims of the war sparked by Hamas's October 7 attacks to include its fight against Hezbollah along its border with Lebanon.

Children among dead

Among the dead were the son of a Hezbollah lawmaker and the 10-year-old daughter of a member of the group.

The girl was killed when her father's pager exploded as she was standing beside him, her family and a source close to Hezbollah said.

Hezbollah blamed Israel for the blasts and warned it would be punished.

"We hold the Israeli enemy fully responsible for this criminal aggression," the group said in a statement, adding that Israel "will certainly receive its just punishment for this sinful aggression".

Health Minister Firass Abiad said 2,800 people had been injured by exploding pagers "more than 200 of them critically".

Iranian state television re-



Ambulances are surrounded by people at the entrance of the American University of Beirut Medical Centre yesterday, after explosions hit several Hezbollah strongholds around Lebanon.

**200**  
among those wounded in the explosions are in critical condition

ported that Tehran's ambassador in Beirut Mojtaba Amani suffered "superficial" injuries in one of the explosions.

**Several strongholds hit**

The afternoon blasts hit several Hezbollah strongholds across

Lebanon, in the first such incident since the group began trading near-daily fire with Israel in support of ally Hamas.

"Hundreds of Hezbollah members were injured by the simultaneous explosion of their pagers" in the group's strongholds in Beirut's southern suburbs, in south Lebanon and in the eastern Bekaa Valley, a Hezbollah source said, requesting anonymity.

AFP journalists saw dozens of wounded being rushed to hospital in Beirut and in the south, where dozens of ambulances rushed between the cit-

ies of Tyre and Sidon in both directions.

Earlier yesterday, Israel announced it was broadening the aims of the war sparked by the Hamas attacks to include its fight against Hezbollah along its border with Lebanon.

"The political-security cabinet updated the goals of the war this evening, so that they include the following section: the safe return of the residents of the north to their homes," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

—AFP

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