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TOP STORY • SAUDI ARABIA AND YEMEN

Houthi Missiles Hit Aden; Riyadh's Airport Stays Suspended

*Saudi Arabia says 12 died in the October 10 attack on Riyadh airport;
Trump urges Riyadh to accept Israeli help.*

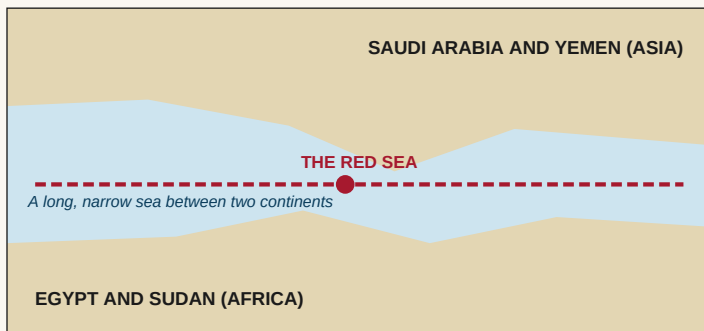
Written and fact-checked by AI · News Pebbles

The Houthis, who control Sanaa, have attacked Saudi Arabia since Yemen's civil war reignited in July. On October 10 a strike hit King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. Saudi Arabia says 12 people were killed and 300 wounded. The airport remains suspended through October 17; Jeddah and Dammam are operating with delays.

The fighting is also inside Yemen. On October 15 Houthi missiles hit the Al-Maashiq presidential palace in Aden, the interim capital; Yemen's health minister said five people were killed and 16 wounded. The UN Security Council issued a presidential statement condemning the Houthi attacks, which Saudi Arabia welcomed, citing Resolution 2216 (2015).

The Saudi-led coalition says it intercepted a ballistic missile aimed at Yanbu, two cruise missiles over the Red Sea and drones over several regions, and destroyed Houthi storage sites in Sanaa, Saada and Amran. Saudi Arabia accuses Iran of encouraging the Houthis; Iran denies it and offers to mediate.

On October 16 Trump said Israel "has been very helpful to Saudi Arabia" and that Saudi-Israeli normalisation could be back on the table. Riyadh has said it will normalise only with a clear path to Palestinian statehood. Indian carriers have paused Saudi flights: Air India until October 20 and IndiGo until October 24.



Saudi Arabia and Yemen sit on the eastern shore of the Red Sea.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Airports and sea lanes carry people, aid and trade, so a widening war between a Gulf power and Yemen's Houthis disrupts travel, including for Indians in the Gulf, far beyond the fighting.

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WORLD • EUROPE AND UKRAINE

EU Leaders Back Ukraine; Zelenskyy Asks for 70 Billion Euros More

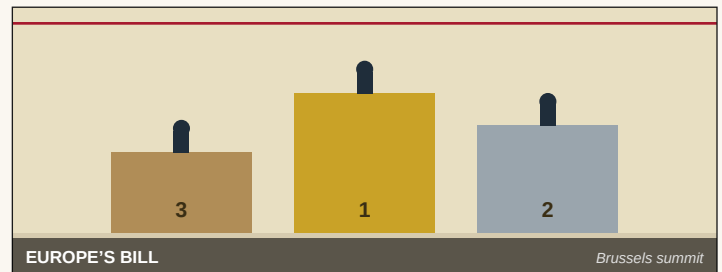
The Brussels summit also failed to settle the EU's 2028–2034 budget.

At a two-day summit in Brussels ending October 16, EU leaders kept sanctions on Russia and backed Ukraine. President Zelenskyy said the war will cost Ukraine 155 billion euros next year and asked for an extra 70 billion euros. The EU has already agreed a 90 billion euro loan covering 2026 and 2027, and the Commission was asked to propose how to close the gap.

Zelenskyy is in a dispute with Washington. Trump announced an energy truce the weekend before the summit; Zelenskyy abandoned it on October 15, saying Russia had not honoured it, and Trump called that "a disgrace." Trump has also suspended sanctions on Russian oil products under a diesel deal with Putin, which Zelenskyy says puts more money in Putin's pocket.

On the EU budget, the Commission proposed nearly 2 trillion euros for 2028–2034. The Irish presidency's compromise would cut about 141 billion euros, but Euronews reports it is dead. Costa is expected to present a compromise before a special summit on November 26.

Elsewhere on the summit agenda, leaders asked the Commission for a toolbox of trade defences against China, including quotas and tariffs. The EU's trade deficit with China is about 360 billion euros, and Chinese exports to the EU rose 25% over the past year. Russian strikes killed three people in Kharkiv and left hundreds of thousands without power.



Leaders asked the Commission how to fill the gap.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Ukraine's funding is now tied to wider EU budget fights: six fiscally conservative states want a smaller budget while 17 "Friends of Cohesion" want to protect farm and regional funds.

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INDIA • NEW DELHI

Supreme Court Seeks Election Commission's Reply on Voter-List Revision

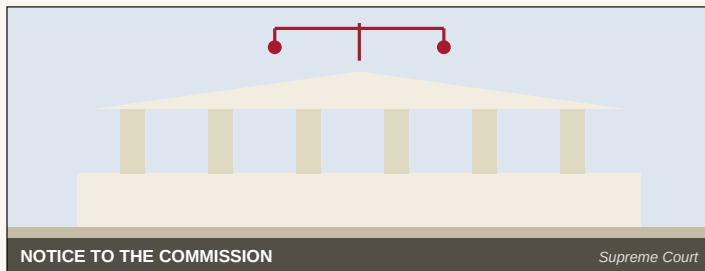
Thirteen opposition leaders challenge the Special Intensive Revision.

On October 15 a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi issued notice to the Election Commission, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi. It tagged the petition with cases already pending. Rahul Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge and other INDIA bloc leaders, 13 in all, filed it on October 12. Gandhi is Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Kharge holds the same role in the Rajya Sabha. Other named petitioners include Akhilesh Yadav, Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, Supriya Sule and Sanjay Raut. The Supreme Court registry registered the petition on October 13, after initial defects were cured.

The petition says the Chief Election Commissioner used the Commission's collective powers on his own during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR). It challenges electors being excluded without notice or hearing and invokes Articles 14, 21 and 326 of the Constitution. The unrest followed a late-September Indian Express investigation alleging that the other two commissioners' objections were disregarded.

The Election Commission denies violations and says voters removed in error can register again. On May 27 the Supreme Court upheld the SIR's validity in an earlier case; the petitioners say they do not seek to reopen it. The court also agreed to consider separate petitions on police conduct and detentions during the Delhi protests.

The petition asks the court to call for the Commission's files, minutes and notings, and challenges changes to the statutory Form 6 and the ECINET and ERONET databases. After lawyers mentioned Rahul Gandhi's march to the court, the bench remarked that "Nobody can browbeat judiciary."



The court tagged the petition with pending cases.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Voter lists decide who can vote, and Article 326 guarantees adult suffrage, so the court's scrutiny of how lists change goes to the basis of elections.

POLITICS & CIVICS • UNITED STATES

Congress Tries to Block Trump's Russian Diesel Deal

Twelve senators from both parties urged him to cancel it; a House bill faces a likely veto.

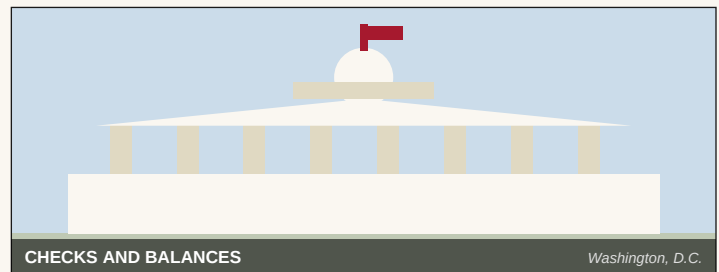
On October 9 President Trump announced a deal to let Russian diesel reach world markets by easing sanctions. Senators say it would let the US import about 2.2 million tons over two months. Six Republican and six Democratic senators, including McConnell, Cornyn, Collins, Murkowski and Tillis, wrote to him urging him to rescind it.

On October 16 a group of House Democrats and one Republican filed a bill to block the deal. To become law it would have to pass Congress and survive a presidential veto, which is the president's power to reject a bill. Republican leaders have not joined the effort, and Congress is away until after the midterms.

The Constitution lets Congress override a veto, but only with a two-thirds vote in both the House and the Senate. That is a high bar when the parties disagree, which is why opponents of the diesel deal need Republican votes as well as Democratic ones. The senators' letter, sent on October 13, said the deal "should be rescinded." The bipartisan signers show that unease is not limited to one party.

This is how checks and balances work in practice: Congress can write laws limiting a president's action, but the president can refuse to sign them. Midterm elections three weeks away, with fuel prices a political drag for Republicans, add pressure.

Reaction has been international. The European Council expressed regret over the US decision to temporarily lift sanctions on Russian diesel, and Ukraine's president says the deal puts more money in Putin's pocket. Bloomberg describes the bill's chances of passing as poor, since passing it would be difficult.



Twelve senators signed the letter.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The case tests how far Congress can restrain a president on sanctions, which are tools of foreign policy.

ECONOMY • INDIA

India's Wholesale Inflation Rises to 11.39%*Fuel and power prices led the rise in September.*

India's wholesale price inflation rose to 11.39% in September from 9.92% in August, according to provisional government data. The wholesale price index (WPI) tracks prices of goods traded in bulk, before they reach shops.

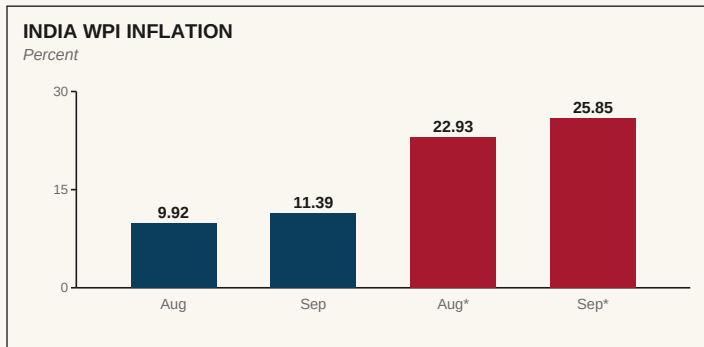
Fuel and power inflation reached 25.85%, up from 22.93% in August. Crude petroleum and natural gas inflation jumped to 57.32% from 34.41%. Food inflation was 8.66% and manufactured-product inflation 9.76%.

These are year-on-year figures: food inflation of 8.66% means bulk food prices were 8.66% higher than a year earlier, and the same reading applies to fuel and power. A price index follows the cost of a fixed group of goods over time, so it shows direction and speed rather than the price of any one item. Because the data are provisional, the numbers may change when the government publishes final figures.

Fuel and power was the sharpest contributor, but food and manufactured products also rose. All three major components of the index showed higher inflation than a year earlier.

The September figure is provisional and may be revised. The data cover September only: Brent crude has since closed at \$109.86 a barrel on October 16, its highest level since May.

Wholesale prices can feed through to retail prices, which is why the index is watched.



*Fuel and power. Source: Business Standard, provisional data.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Higher input costs raise what businesses pay, and can reach household budgets and interest-rate decisions.

THINK LIKE AN ANALYST

Why might fuel and power prices move more than food prices? What could policymakers do if wholesale inflation keeps rising?

SCIENCE & TECH • ASTRONOMY

Webb Studies an Ancient Galaxy Cluster With an Unusually Dense Core*XLSSC 122 lies about 10.4 billion light-years away.*

A galaxy cluster is a huge group of galaxies held together by gravity. Using NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, astronomers studied XLSSC 122, about 10.4 billion light-years from Earth. It is the most distant known cluster showing strong gravitational lensing, the bending of light by mass, according to the Caltech IPAC release.

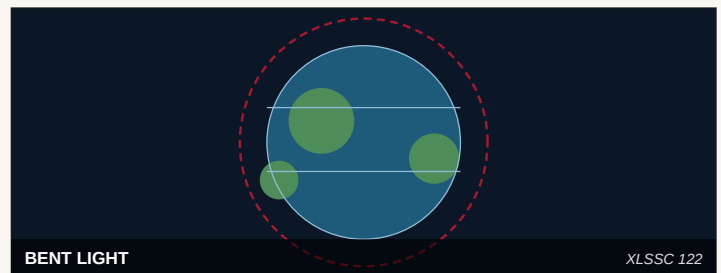
The cluster was found in 2014 in a survey by ESA's XMM-Newton X-ray spacecraft. Its lensing arcs were first seen by Webb, not Hubble. The team reports an unusually dense concentration of mass at its centre, which is at odds with standard cosmological models.

Dark matter is about five times more abundant than ordinary matter. The findings appear in three papers in the Astrophysical Journal Letters, with ScienceDaily reporting them on October 13.

The light we see left the cluster in "cosmic noon", about 10 billion years ago, when star formation was up to 100 times the present-day rate. Weak lensing and X-ray and radio data indicate that the cluster is still merging.

The team also reports the earliest known detection of intracluster light, the diffuse glow from stars between galaxies. Its shape matches the dark matter distribution near the core. Kyle Finner of IPAC led the first paper. Researchers hope to find dozens or hundreds of similar early clusters in wide-area surveys.

The three papers are by Finner (first author, strong lensing), Zachary Scofield (weak lensing and the merger) and Hyungjin Joo (intracluster light). The work was also presented at the 248th American Astronomical Society meeting.



Webb saw lensing arcs Hubble missed.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Peer-reviewed papers test whether models of dark matter and early galaxy growth hold up; a cluster that does not fit them tells scientists where the models need work.

ONE-LINE BRIEFS

- Oil: Brent crude closed Friday at \$109.86 a barrel, its highest settle since May.
- Markets: Tech stocks lost more than \$1 trillion in value on October 16 as oil rose.
- United Kingdom: Prime Minister Burnham offered Scotland a deal to move power to its regions.
- Italy: Italy extended its temporary border controls by a week to match Spain's, which expire on October 22.

VOCABULARY BUILDER**Words that unlock today's news****Veto**

A president's power to reject a bill passed by the legislature. Today: A bill to block the diesel deal would likely face a Trump veto.

Gravitational lensing

The bending of light by the mass of galaxies or clusters. Today: Webb saw lensing arcs around the cluster XLSSC 122.

Wholesale price index

A measure of price changes of goods traded in bulk. Today: India's index rose 11.39% in September.

Sanctions

Penalties one country puts on another, such as trade limits. Today: EU leaders kept sanctions on Russia.

DID YOU KNOW?

A barrel of oil holds 42 US gallons, about 159 litres, which is why prices such as Brent's \$109.86 are quoted per barrel.

EXPLAINER**How does a presidential veto work?**

In the United States, a bill becomes law after passing both the House and the Senate and being signed by the president. The president can instead veto it, sending it back to Congress.

Congress can override a veto only if two-thirds of both the House and the Senate vote to do so. That is why a bill opposed by the president, such as the one on the diesel deal, faces a hard road.

QUIZ**Eight questions on this issue**

1. Which Yemeni city's presidential palace was hit by Houthi missiles on October 15?

(a) Aden (b) Sanaa (c) Mecca

2. How much extra money did Zelenskyy ask the EU for next year?

(a) 7 billion euros (b) 70 billion euros (c) 700 billion euros

3. What did the Supreme Court issue on October 15 in the voter-list case?

(a) A notice (b) A ban (c) A new voter list

4. How many senators signed the letter urging Trump to rescind the diesel deal?

(a) 6 (b) 12 (c) 100

5. What was India's wholesale inflation in September?

(a) 9.92% (b) 11.39% (c) 25.85%

6. Which telescope studied galaxy cluster XLSSC 122?

(a) Hubble (b) James Webb (c) Kepler

7. Where did Prime Minister Burnham offer Scotland more regional powers?

(a) Lanarkshire (b) Brussels (c) Dublin

8. What was Brent crude's Friday close?

(a) \$99.86 (b) \$109.86 (c) \$119.86

Answers. 1 (a). 2 (b). 3 (a). 4 (b). 5 (b). 6 (b). 7 (a). 8 (b).

TOMORROW'S WATCHLIST

- Whether Riyadh's airport reopens and the Houthi attacks stop.
- What Costa proposes before the November 26 EU summit.
- How the Election Commission answers the Supreme Court's notice.

You are not just reading the news — you are learning to think about it. See you tomorrow.