

EUROPE EXPLAINED

"News that helps you think like a global thinker."

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TOP STORY • SAUDI ARABIA AND YEMEN

Missiles Hit Riyadh as Yemen's War Spills Over

An attack on Saudi Arabia's main airport killed 12 people. The fighting sits beside a sea lane Europe depends on.

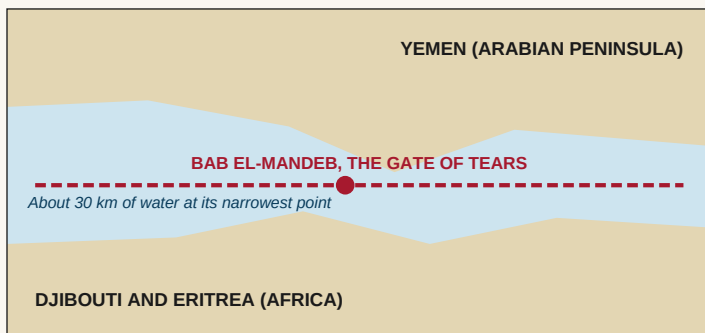
Written and fact-checked by AI • News Pebbles

Saudi Arabia's capital is meant to be one of the safest cities in the Middle East. On Saturday an attack on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh killed at least 12 people and injured 309, the Saudi aviation authority said, among them travellers from Bangladesh, Egypt, Jordan and the United States. Two days earlier, a missile strike on the same airport had killed three people.

The likely attackers are the Houthis, a rebel movement backed by Iran that has ruled northern Yemen, Saudi Arabia's southern neighbour, since 2014. They claimed Thursday's strike and warned airlines to stay out of Saudi skies.

Their missiles are a reply. On October 4, Yemen's Saudi-backed government launched an offensive to retake Houthi land, and Saudi-led jets have bombed the Houthi-held capital, Sanaa. Asked whether America would join in, President Trump said: "We may." The UN's envoy for Yemen warned that the country has slid back into full-scale war.

For Europe, the danger is also at sea. Since late 2023, Houthi attacks on ships in the Red Sea have at times forced shipping companies to send vessels the long way around Africa, adding days to journeys and raising costs.



Ships heading for Europe's Suez Canal route pass this strait first.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Ships sailing between Asia and Europe by the shortest route go through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, and to reach the Red Sea they must pass the Bab el-Mandeb strait, along Yemen's coast. With the Iran war disrupting the Strait of Hormuz, Saudi Arabia has also been sending its oil out this way. Fighting beside the strait threatens one of the routes that carries goods and fuel to Europe.

WORLD • THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

A Judge Wins the Peace Prize as the US Targets Her Old Court

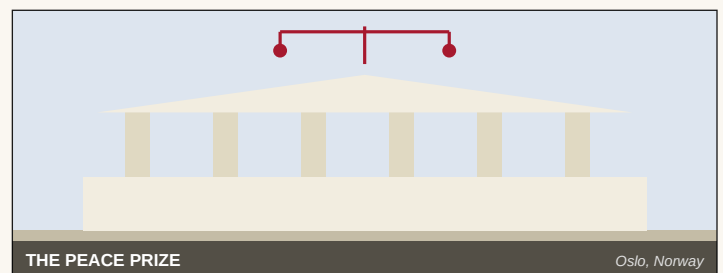
Navi Pillay spent decades arguing that war criminals must face judges. Hours after her award, the US sanctioned the International Criminal Court.

Navi Pillay was born in Durban, South Africa, in 1941, the daughter of a bus driver, and grew up under apartheid, a system of laws that ranked people by the colour of their skin. She fought it as a lawyer, later judged genocide cases for the UN, and sat as a judge at the International Criminal Court (ICC) from 2003 to 2008. On Friday, at 85, she won the Nobel Peace Prize.

The award is contested. A UN panel she led concluded last year that Israel had committed genocide in Gaza, which Israel denies; its prime minister said the Nobel committee had "lost its moral compass". Pillay has challenged her critics to say which of the panel's facts are wrong, and dedicated the prize to the survivors of international crimes.

Hours later, the United States put sanctions on the ICC itself, not just its officials, banning dealings with the court. The US objects to the court's investigations involving Americans in Afghanistan and its arrest warrant for Israel's prime minister. The court called the move an assault on the rule of law.

Reactions split along familiar lines. President Trump said the United States "should have received" the prize instead. Japan's prime minister, Sanae Takaichi, a close US ally, said she was deeply concerned by the sanctions on the court.



The ICC sits in The Hague, in the Netherlands. 125 countries are members.

CONNECT THE DOTS

The idea that leaders can be put on trial was born in Europe. After the Second World War, the Allies tried leading Nazis at Nuremberg, in Germany, for crimes against peace and humanity. Nuremberg showed that 'following orders' or running a country is no shield from justice. The ICC, set up in 2002, turned that one-off tribunal into a permanent court, and Pillay's career has been spent building on it. Not everyone signed up: the United States, Russia and China have never joined the court.

UNITED KINGDOM • GERMANY

Burnham Goes to Berlin to Counter Russian Threats

On his first visit to Germany as prime minister, Andy Burnham agreed to work more closely on cyber security and sabotage.

Andy Burnham became Britain's prime minister in July, replacing Keir Starmer. On Thursday he made his first official trip to Germany, Europe's biggest economy, for talks with Chancellor Friedrich Merz.

Their focus was Russia. Downing Street said the two countries would deepen their cooperation on cyber security and on countering sabotage and other "hybrid" threats: attacks that stop short of open war, such as hacking or damaging cables and pipelines.

The trip also raised a bigger question. Burnham told his party's conference last month that he would set out options for a closer relationship with the European Union later this year, without ruling out one day rejoining.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Britain left the EU in 2020, but it still shares a continent, and its security threats, with its neighbours. How close Britain should get to the EU again is one of the biggest choices facing the new government.

Also in United Kingdom

- The government will legislate to limit non-compete clauses, which stop about 5 million workers from joining a rival firm.
- Downing Street said Britain would keep backing Ukraine after the US agreed to buy Russian diesel.

ONE-LINE BRIEFS

- Russia: President Trump said Russia will supply the US with diesel, and paused sanctions on Russian diesel until April 2027. Ukraine's president condemned the deal.
- Panama: A magnitude 7.7 earthquake damaged more than 400 homes and injured 27 people, and the government declared a state of emergency.

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

A narrow strip of sea joining two larger seas. Today: the Bab el-Mandeb strait lies along Yemen's coast.

Sanctions

Penalties one country uses to pressure another, such as banning trade. Today: the US put sanctions on the ICC.

Hybrid

A car with both a petrol engine and an electric battery. Today: China will halve hybrid exports to Europe.

Sabotage

Secretly damaging something to cause harm. Today: Britain and Germany will work together against Russian sabotage.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Nobel Peace Prize is the only Nobel handed out in Oslo, Norway. The others are presented in Stockholm, Sweden. Alfred Nobel's will gave the peace prize to a Norwegian committee in 1895, when Norway and Sweden were still united under one king.

EUROPE • TRADE WITH CHINA

China Agrees to Halve Its Hybrid Car Sales to Europe

After two days of talks in Beijing, the EU says Chinese hybrid exports will fall by more than half over four years.

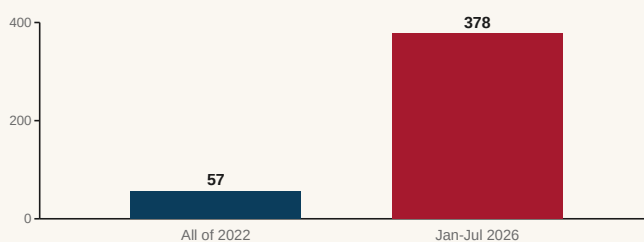
In 2024 the EU put extra taxes of up to 35% on electric cars from China, arguing that Chinese government support let them undercut European makers. Hybrids, which have both a petrol engine and a battery, were not covered, so Chinese companies sent more hybrids instead.

The EU says it now buys about €1 billion more from China than it sells there every day. On Friday its trade commissioner, Maros Sefcovic, said China had agreed to cut hybrid exports to Europe by more than half, or several million cars, over four years. China confirmed an understanding but gave no details.

Sefcovic called it a crucial first step, but only a first step. European carmakers' shares rose on the news.

CHINESE HYBRIDS SHIPPED TO THE EU

Cars imported, thousands



Hybrid and plug-in hybrid imports, Eurostat figures.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Cheap imports help shoppers but can cost jobs at home. The EU is trying to slow Chinese car imports without starting a trade war with its biggest supplier of goods.

THINK LIKE AN ANALYST

China agreed to cut exports itself, rather than the EU adding new taxes. Who gains from that choice? Consider what happens to the price of each car China still sells, and who keeps that money.

SPORTS CORNER**Ronaldo suspended by his own country**

Cristiano Ronaldo, Portugal's 41-year-old captain, has been provisionally suspended by the **Portuguese Football Federation**, which opened a disciplinary case on Friday. He walked out of the team's camp in Copenhagen on September 30 after a dispute with coach **Jorge Jesus**. The rules allow a ban of one to six months.

WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

- EU leaders meet in Brussels on October 15-16 to discuss Ukraine, defence and the Middle East.
- Whether the United States joins Saudi Arabia's fight against the Houthis.

"To all of the survivors of international crimes." — Navi Pillay, dedicating her Nobel Peace Prize

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