



TOP STORY • THE GULF

Oil Jumps Above \$114 as Attacks on Saudi Arabia Continue

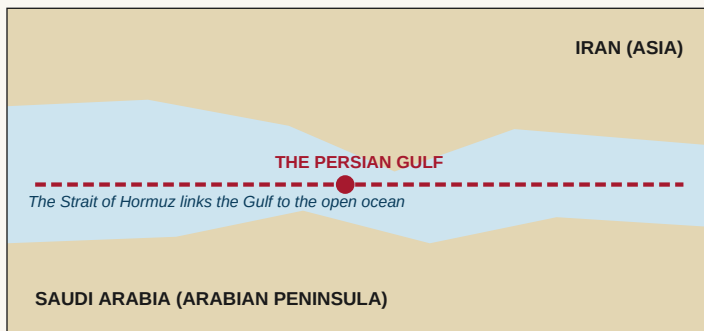
Dearer oil is feeding straight into fuel bills in Britain and Europe.

Written and fact-checked by AI • News Pebbles

Brent crude, the benchmark price for oil traded around the world, rose 3.59% to \$117.20 a barrel on Friday evening, UAE time. Earlier it had traded about 1.1% higher at \$114.5. Brent was on track for a third straight weekly gain. On 19 October it had dipped 2.5% to \$107.16, after nearly \$110 on 16 October, its highest since mid-May.

The cause is a new wave of attacks on Saudi Arabia. Over 48 hours the Houthis, an armed group from Yemen, claimed strikes on the Saudi Defence Ministry headquarters in Riyadh, airports at Dammam and Abha, and an Aramco site in Yanbu. These are Houthi claims. Two people died in attacks at Dammam airport. Saudi Aramco evacuated its Dhahran headquarters, the first such evacuation since the Iran war began in late February.

Ships are at risk too. The UK's maritime trade centre counted 10 attacks on commercial vessels in and near the Strait of Hormuz in the week to 19 October. For Europe the effect is practical: France secured an extra 200,000 tons of diesel a month from the UAE and Bahrain, and UK inflation has been pushed up by fuel.



Attacks on Saudi sites and on ships both affect oil.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Oil is priced on a world market, so trouble in the Gulf shows up in petrol and diesel prices in Britain and across Europe.

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WORLD • RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

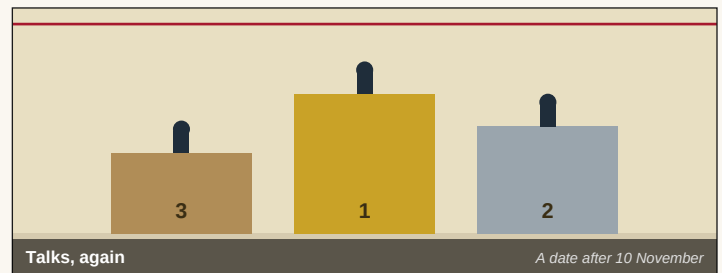
Putin Agrees in Principle to Restart Three-Way Talks

Russia says talks with the US and Ukraine could resume after 10 November.

Russian President Vladimir Putin met US envoy Steve Witkoff in St. Petersburg on 21 October for about three hours. Afterwards the Kremlin's foreign affairs adviser, Yuri Ushakov, said Putin agreed "in principle" to resume three-way talks with the US and Ukraine after 10 November. The talks would focus on a security system for Russia and Ukraine after the war ends.

Earlier rounds in Abu Dhabi and Geneva earlier this year produced little beyond prisoner exchanges. This time Russia freed an American, Stephen Hubbard, a retired teacher, which Witkoff called a goodwill gesture. Ukraine's President Zelenskyy says a freeze in the fighting is the "minimum" Russia must accept, and that only a meeting of leaders can break the impasse.

The war goes on. Russian strikes in Kyiv killed three people and wounded 12. Ukraine launched more than 1,000 drones at Russia in one of its largest attacks of the war, and an oil export terminal in St. Petersburg caught fire. Norway's prime minister, who hosted Witkoff and Zelenskyy in Oslo, said Russia may be looking for diplomatic options. US President Trump pressed Zelenskyy to make a deal and said the US had gotten "absolutely nothing back" from Ukraine.



Earlier rounds were held in Abu Dhabi and Geneva.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Geography: Oslo and St. Petersburg are both Baltic-region cities, while the earlier talks were held in Abu Dhabi and Geneva, neutral places far from the fighting.

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UNITED KINGDOM • ECONOMY

UK Prices Rise 3.5% in a Year as Fuel Costs Climb

The Bank of England meets on 5 November, a week after the Autumn Budget.

Inflation is the rate at which prices rise. UK inflation was 3.5% in the 12 months to September, up from 3.1% in August. Economists had expected 3.4%.

The Office for National Statistics, which compiles the figures, said motor fuels recorded their fastest annual rise in four years. That links back to the Gulf: oil prices have risen sharply since the Iran war began in late February.

The Bank of England's base rate, the interest rate that guides what banks charge, is 3.75%. Its next meeting is on 5 November, and economists increasingly expect a rise before the end of the year. In the Commons the opposition argued government borrowing was driving inflation, while the government pointed to instability in the Middle East.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Higher prices shrink what families can buy, and a higher base rate raises the cost of mortgages and loans.

Also in United Kingdom

- Aberfan: the King, Queen and Prince of Wales marked 60 years since the disaster, which killed 144 people, including 116 children.
- Commons: ministers and the opposition clashed over what is driving inflation.

ONE-LINE BRIEFS

- Science: NASA's Perseverance rover has driven 28.10 miles on Mars, passing the 28.06 miles Opportunity drove.
- Health: a trial of a personalised mRNA vaccine given with Keytruda cut the risk of melanoma returning by 42%, according to reports.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

Words that unlock today's news

Snap election

An election called earlier than expected. Today: Spain's prime minister has called one for November.

Base rate

The Bank of England's main interest rate, which guides what banks charge. Today: it stands at 3.75%.

Trade union

A group that speaks for workers. Today: France's CGT union joined the school students' protests.

Benchmark

A standard price others are measured against. Today: Brent crude is the benchmark for oil.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sri Lanka's 430-8 against England is the second-highest successful chase in one-day international history. The record is South Africa's 435 against Australia in Johannesburg in 2006.

EUROPE • PROTESTS

Protests Over Living Costs and Schools Spread Across Europe

From France to Albania, students and workers say prices and public services are failing them.

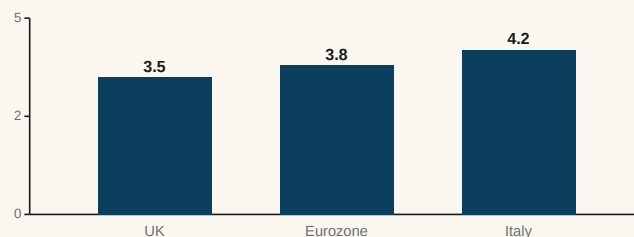
Rising fuel costs, unhappiness with schools, weaker public services and a housing crisis have fuelled protests across Europe this autumn, according to the Associated Press. In France, high school students held blockades for more than three weeks, asking for more resources for understaffed, run-down schools. The CGT union then joined.

Weekend unrest in France led to 2,400 arrests and looting in Paris, Marseille, Lyon and Bordeaux. President Macron condemned the violence and blamed far-left activists. In Italy, peaceful marches were followed by riots in Turin, Bologna and Milan. Italy's inflation was 4.2% in September. In Spain, housing protests and a teachers' strike led Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez to call a snap election for November.

In Albania, students joined the "Flamingo" movement in Tirana, which wants Prime Minister Edi Rama to resign and an end to corruption. Serbia holds a parliamentary election on 25 October after nearly two years of student-led anti-corruption protests.

HOW FAST PRICES ROSE

Percent rise over one year, September



Sources: ONS via QNC News; AP.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When prices and rents rise faster than pay, people turn to the streets, and governments face pressure to act.

THINK LIKE AN ANALYST

Why might students, unions and renters protest together? Why might a government find it hard to answer protests about living costs?

SPORTS CORNER

CRICKET: SRI LANKA CHASE 430 TO BEAT ENGLAND

Sri Lanka beat England by two wickets with one ball to spare in Rawalpindi on Thursday. England made 429-4, with **Harry Brook** scoring 202 off 116 balls, the fastest ODI double century. Sri Lanka replied with 430-8, and **Janith Liyanage** hit the winning six.

WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

- Whether Brent stays above \$110 a barrel.
- Serbia's parliamentary election on 25 October.

"A price is a message. Ask what it is telling you." — The Editor

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