



## TOP STORY • SAUDI ARABIA AND YEMEN

# Houthi Attacks Push Oil Above \$109 a Barrel

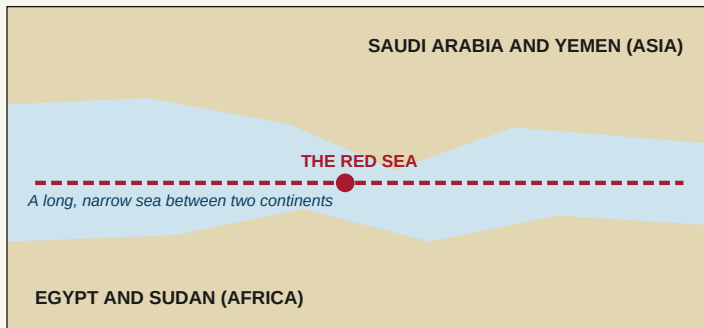
*Saudi Arabia has put off its big investor conference until 2027.*

*Written and fact-checked by AI • News Pebbles*

The Houthis, an armed group from Yemen, have kept attacking Saudi Arabia. On October 10 a strike hit King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. Saudi Arabia says at least 12 people were killed and more than 300 were wounded. A fresh strike the next day killed one person and wounded 11, according to Saudi civil aviation authorities.

Oil markets reacted. After the Houthis claimed attacks on Saudi airports and facilities of the oil giant Aramco, Brent crude rose above \$109 a barrel. UK maritime monitors said two tankers were attacked off the Saudi coast on Friday. Brent is the benchmark price traders use to compare oil worldwide.

Business is adjusting. On Monday Saudi Arabia postponed the Future Investment Initiative conference, due on October 26 to 29, until 2027. In Riyadh, the Kingdom Centre ordered its office staff to work remotely.



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

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Saudi Arabia is a giant oil producer. When its airports and oil sites are attacked, fuel prices can rise for households in India and the United States too.

*New to this story? Catch up with **The story so far** on Read & Play.*

## WORLD • UKRAINE AND RUSSIA

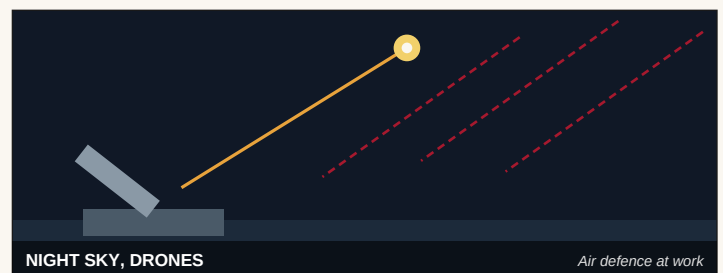
# Ukraine Launches More Than 1,000 Drones at Russia

*An oil terminal in St Petersburg burned; Russia struck Kyiv overnight.*

On Sunday Ukraine launched more than 1,000 drones at Russia, one of its largest air attacks of the war. Strikes set an oil export terminal and a depot ablaze in St Petersburg. Russia's Defence Ministry said it destroyed 1,015 Ukrainian drones over 15 Russian regions, Crimea and the Black Sea.

Russia struck Kyiv overnight. An air strike killed a woman, hit a subway station and damaged a 25-storey apartment building, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said. Three others were injured. Earlier, on Friday, Russian attacks on nine regions had cut power to hundreds of thousands of households.

US President Donald Trump criticised Kyiv's strikes on Russian oil sites. He said US-Ukraine intelligence sharing, which had been blocked for some period of time, had resumed. Trump announced an "energy ceasefire" on October 11 without details; Kyiv says attacks on energy sites continued.



Russia says it shot down 1,015 drones.

## CONNECT THE DOTS

Economics: both sides are hitting each other's oil and power sites, which ties this war to fuel prices, as the attacks near Saudi Arabia do.

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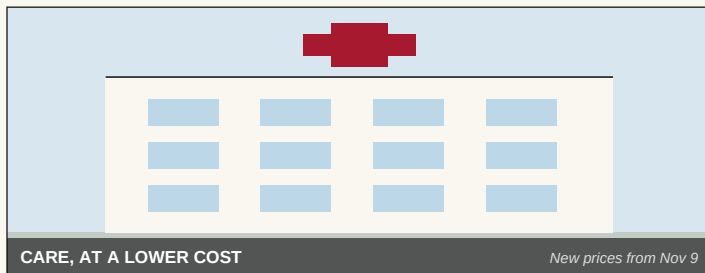
## INDIA • HEALTH

**India Caps Shop Margins on 137 Cancer Drugs***Some prices could fall by up to 70% from November 9.*

India's drug price regulator, the NPPA, has capped trade margins at 30% of the maximum retail price for 137 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs. A trade margin is the amount distributors and shops add to the price they pay. The order is in a Gazette notification dated October 17.

New prices take effect on November 9. Reductions are expected to reach up to 70%, but actual savings depend on each medicine's existing price and distribution margins. The list includes targeted therapies and immunotherapies such as pembrolizumab and nivolumab.

The government estimates the move could save cancer patients around Rs 2,500 crore a year. A 2019 pilot capped margins on 42 anti-cancer drugs at 30%, and afterwards the prices of 526 brands were reduced by up to 90%.

**WHY THIS MATTERS**

Cancer treatment can take a large share of a family's income, so lower retail prices could make it easier to afford.

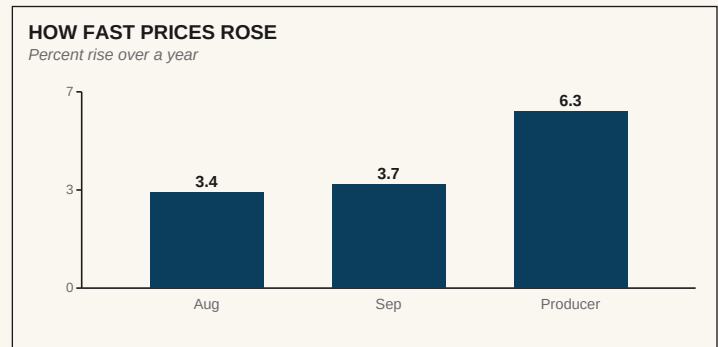
## UNITED STATES • PRICES

**US Prices Rose 3.7% in a Year as Petrol Costs Weigh on Voters***Midterm elections are on November 3.*

Consumer prices in the United States rose 0.6% in September and 3.7% over the year, up from 3.4% in August, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Producer prices, which track what businesses pay, were 6.3% higher than a year earlier.

Fuel is a major reason. Gasoline costs \$4.29 a gallon and global oil is about \$107 a barrel, U.S. News reports. CNN says attacks on tankers and oil sites have pushed up oil and diesel prices, and Moody's Analytics estimates the Iran war adds \$2,000 in costs for the average household.

That puts pressure on candidates before the midterms, when Americans choose members of Congress. U.S. News reports President Trump's approval among US adults is at a record low of 33%. The White House has blamed the previous administration and, Newsweek reports, argues fuel prices will fall quickly when the conflict ends.



*Aug and Sep: consumer prices. Producer: what businesses pay. Source: BLS, via CNN.*

**WHY THIS MATTERS**

Prices touch every household budget, and how people feel about them can shape how they vote.

**THINK LIKE AN ANALYST**

Why might businesses' costs rise faster than shop prices? Who should voters blame when prices rise, and why? What evidence would test the White House claim that fuel prices will fall quickly?

## SCIENCE &amp; TECH • ASTRONOMY

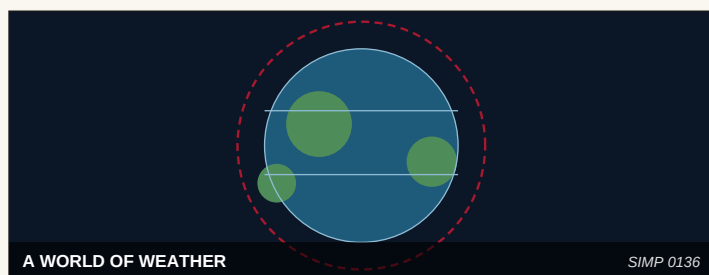
## Webb Finds Orderly Weather on a World 20 Light-Years Away

*Three weather states appear to rotate in and out of view.*

Astronomers using the James Webb Space Telescope studied SIMP 0136, a brown dwarf about 20 light-years away. A brown dwarf is an object between a planet and a star in size. The study, led by Trinity College Dublin, was published in *Astronomy & Astrophysics*.

They found its weather is more orderly than it looks. Most of the variation tracks just two things: temperature and the vertical arrangement of clouds. Together they make three recurring states that rotate in and out of view as the object spins: hot under thin clouds, cooler under thin clouds, and cooler still under thicker, higher clouds.

The patterns persisted across more than a dozen rotations. One report notes the three states come from a single rotation, so they may mark the most extreme patches Webb happened to catch rather than the full range.



*Three weather states rotate in and out of view.*

### WHY THIS MATTERS

It shows how astronomers can read the weather of a world far too distant to see as more than a dot.

## ECONOMY • INDIA

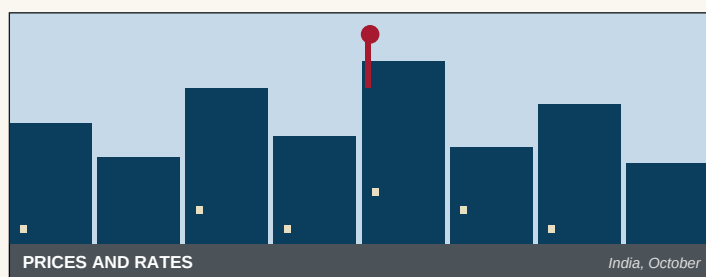
## India's Prices Rise 5.54% in a Year After a Rate Rise

*The central bank raised its key rate for the first time since 2023.*

India's consumer prices rose 5.54% in September from a year earlier, the highest since late 2024, Bloomberg reports. In August the rise was a revised 4.83%.

On October 7 the Reserve Bank of India raised its repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.50%, its first rise since 2023. The repo rate is the rate at which the central bank lends to banks. The RBI also raised its growth estimate by 40 basis points to 7.1%.

Raising the rate makes borrowing dearer, which can slow spending and ease price rises. Prices are also rising abroad: in the United States, consumer prices rose 3.7% in the year to September.



*Prices rose 5.54% in a year to September.*

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Higher prices and higher loan rates both change what families spend and what they can borrow.

### ONE-LINE BRIEFS

- France: about 550,000 people marched on Saturday over living costs, and curfews now cover parts of Paris and northern towns.
- United States: NPR reports that more than \$15 billion has been raised to influence the 2026 midterms.
- United Kingdom: Prime Minister Andy Burnham visited Aberfan before the 60th anniversary of the disaster on 21 October.
- Football: Brighton beat Crystal Palace 5-0 and Arsenal won 1-0 at Nottingham Forest.

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### VOCABULARY BUILDER

## Words that unlock today's news

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### Repo rate

The rate at which a central bank lends money to banks. Today: the RBI raised it to 5.50%.

### Producer prices

What businesses pay for the goods and services they make and sell. Today: they were 6.3% higher in the US than a year earlier.

### Trade margin

The extra amount distributors and shops add to what they pay for a product. Today: India capped it at 30% for 137 cancer drugs.

### Curfew

A rule that people must stay off the streets at certain hours. Today: parts of Paris and four other French towns are under curfew.

### DID YOU KNOW?

One crore is 10 million, so the Rs 2,500 crore that cancer patients could save each year is 25 billion rupees.

### EXPLAINER

## What is a repo rate?

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A central bank is the bank that looks after a country's money system. One of its main tools is the repo rate, the rate at which it lends to commercial banks.

When the repo rate goes up, borrowing generally gets more expensive for banks and, in turn, for families and firms. That tends to slow spending. Today the RBI's rate is 5.50%, after a rise of 25 basis points on October 7. A basis point is one hundredth of a percentage point.

### QUIZ

## Five questions on this issue

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1. What did Brent crude rise above?  
(a) \$79 (b) \$109 (c) \$209 (d) \$309
2. About how many drones did Ukraine launch at Russia?  
(a) Over 100 (b) Over 500 (c) Over 1,000 (d) Over 10,000
3. What is the cap on trade margins for the 137 cancer drugs?  
(a) 3% (b) 13% (c) 30% (d) 70%
4. How much did US consumer prices rise over the year to September?  
(a) 0.6% (b) 3.7% (c) 6.3% (d) 11.39%
5. What did the RBI raise its repo rate to?  
(a) 4.50% (b) 5.50% (c) 6.50% (d) 7.50%

**Answers.** 1 (b): \$109. 2 (c): over 1,000. 3 (c): 30%. 4 (b): 3.7%. 5 (b): 5.50%.

### DISCUSS

## Discuss it

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How can an attack on one country's airports change prices in another country?

Should medicine prices be capped by governments? Give each side's best argument.

Why might raising interest rates slow price rises, and who might it hurt?

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*"Asking who pays, and who decides, is the start of understanding."*

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