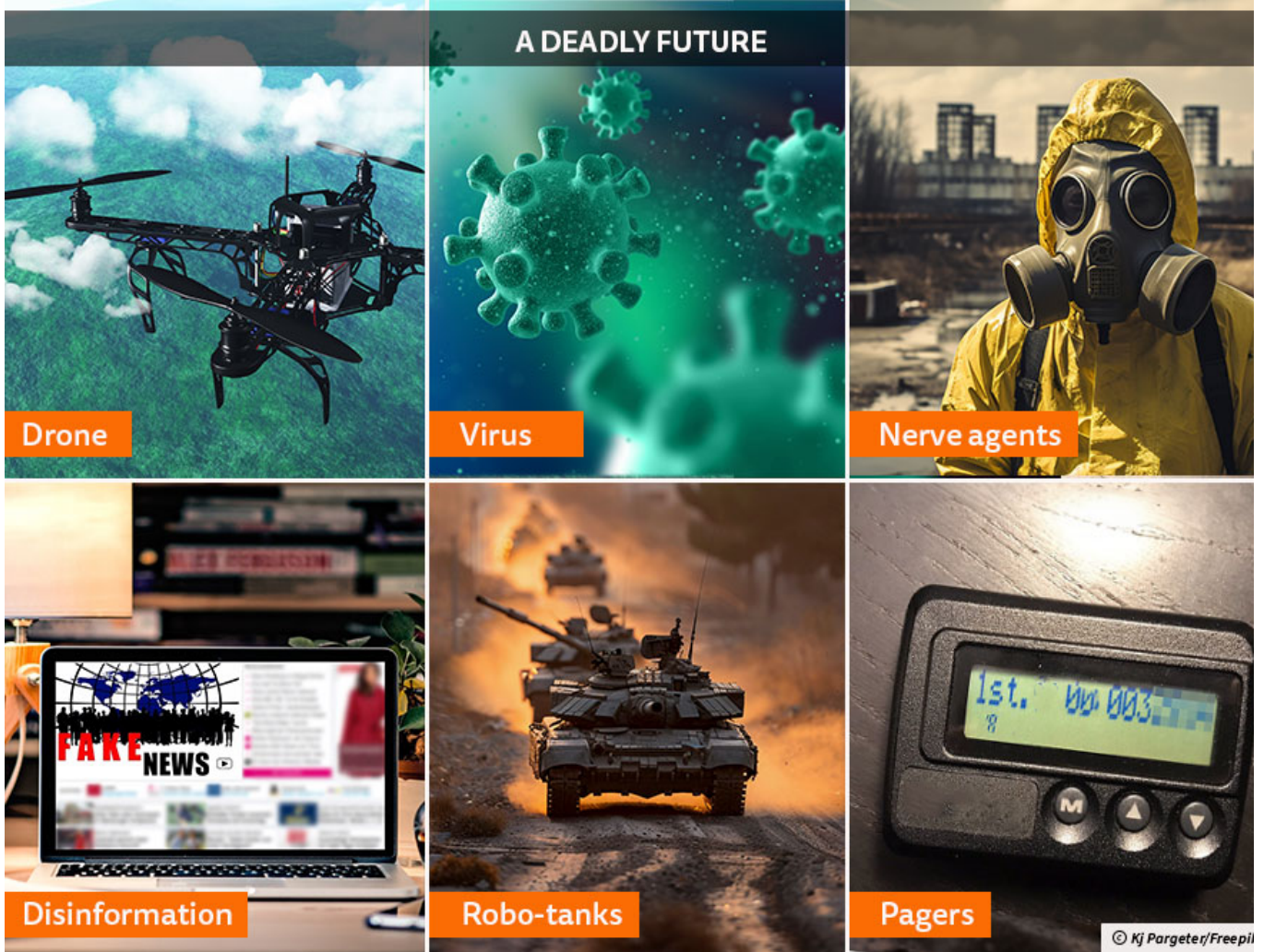


# Exploding devices, drones and viruses

[theday.co.uk/exploding-devices-drones-and-viruses-4](https://theday.co.uk/exploding-devices-drones-and-viruses-4) 18 September 2024



**Horror:** Hospitals in Lebanon have performed hundreds of surgeries on people's faces since Tuesday. A doctor told the BBC he has removed more eyes than in his entire 25-year career.

**Should high-tech weapons be banned? Surprise attacks in Lebanon have caused mayhem and revived the debate about which technologies are allowed in war.**

## What's happening?

A man was in a supermarket on Tuesday choosing plums from a tray of fruit. Suddenly, the blue bag on his shoulder exploded, throwing him to the ground.

This event took place in Lebanon on Tuesday afternoon. Thousands were injured after **paggers** exploded in pockets, bags and hands across the country.

The next day, exploding **walkie-talkies** injured hundreds of people, killing at least 20, in the same Middle Eastern country.

## Find out more

Most commentators think Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, was responsible for both lots of attacks.

The devices belonged to members of Hezbollah, a Lebanese political party which has a long-standing conflict with Israel.

In Ukraine, technology is also changing the nature of war. Drones are becoming a vital part of the conflict with Russia, and soldiers on both sides are relying increasingly on AI to find, track and target enemy fighters.

Those in favour of AI believe it will increase safety for soldiers and improve decision-making. But many fear the fact that AI has no moral concerns and that its algorithms may even be unlawful.

## Should high-tech weapons be banned?

### Some say

Yes! AI technology replaces human responsibility with a machine that lacks moral judgement.

### Others think

No! New technologies reduce human error and keep humans away from the most dangerous battlefield tasks.

## Some people say

*"The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting."*

Sun Tzu (544 – 496 BC), Chinese general and philosopher

## Six steps to discovery

### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** - Have you been paying attention to the wars in the Middle East or Ukraine? How do you respond when you see footage on the news or social media?

### 2. Wonder

*What do you think?*

**What questions do you have?** - For example: What other forms of new technology are changing the way that war is fought?

**3. Investigate**

**What are the facts?** - How many people have been injured in total in Lebanon, from how many devices?

**4. Construct**

**What is your point of view?** - In 50 years the majority of wars might be fought by machines. Find out what you can about the weapons of the future.

**5. Express**

**What do others believe?** - Who is to blame if a machine commits a war crime? In groups, think of how you might answer this question and punish the person or country responsible.

**6. Reflect**

**What might happen next?** - Imagine that you run an AI company and a weapons manufacturer wants to use your technology. Come up with a list of questions to ask to decide before you decide to allow them.

## Glossary

**Pagers** - A small piece electronic device that was carried or worn, pre-mobile phones, which vibrated or made a noise to tell you that someone wanted you to phone them.

**Walkie-talkies** - Portable radios for sending and receiving messages.