

# Catch up: IT outage causes chaos; Russian court convicts Gershkovich



An **IT outage** caused businesses around the world to grind to a halt after thousands of workers were unable to log on to their computers. The outage has been blamed on an update to software provided by CrowdStrike, an American [cybersecurity](#) firm, which caused problems with [Microsoft's](#) Windows operating system. More than 4,000 flights were grounded around the world; financial services, retailers, and media companies were also affected by the disruption.

[Evan Gershkovich](#), an American reporter who works for the *Wall Street Journal*, [was convicted](#) by a **Russian court** of spying. Mr Gershkovich, who was arrested during a reporting trip to Yekaterinburg in March 2023, was sentenced to serve 16 years in a penal colony. America's State Department described the case as a "fake, sham legal process".

**Joe Biden**, America's president, vowed to return to the campaign trail next week after self-isolating with covid. Meanwhile, more Democrats called on him to [abandon his re-election bid](#); four

congressmen endorsed Kamala Harris, the vice-president, as their preferred candidate. Earlier this week reports emerged that Barack Obama and Nancy Pelosi had joined other high-profile Democrats in privately expressing their concerns about Mr Biden's ability to win in November.

The UN's **International Court of Justice** found that Israel's settlement policies in [Palestinian territories](#), including the West Bank and East Jerusalem, [are in breach of international law](#). The court said that settlement "may indicate an act of annexation" and appears designed "to create irreversible effects on the ground". The court also said that Israel discriminates against Palestinians and that it has failed to "prevent and punish" [violence against Palestinians](#) by settlers.

**Bangladesh's** government imposed a curfew and deployed the army to suppress student protests. The demonstrations, which began a few weeks ago and have grown increasingly violent, decry a policy that reserves government jobs for relatives of people who died fighting for [Bangladesh's](#) independence. Schools and universities have been shut and news programmes taken off air. At least 67 people have died.

The head of **Vietnam's** ruling Communist Party, [Nguyen Phu Trong](#), died aged 80, according to state media. Mr Trong had held the post since 2011. In recent months, he was widely reported to have been suffering from poor health. On Thursday To Lam, Vietnam's president, took over Mr Trong's duties. He will hope to build on Mr Trong's legacy of [rapid economic growth](#).

The **European Union** signed a deal that will help European firms to mine [lithium in Serbia](#). The deal follows a Serbian court's decision to give Rio Tinto, a mining giant, the right to restart its operations in the country. Lithium mining has faced local opposition in Serbia, but the EU is keen to develop nearby supplies of battery-metals to support a homegrown battery industry.

**Word of the Week:** *Hengst*, an Old Germanic word for “stallion”.  
[Read the full story.](#)

*In the run-up to America’s presidential election, we’ve launched [The US in brief](#)—a daily update to help you keep on top of the political stories that matter. [Sign up here](#) to receive it as a newsletter, each weekday, in your inbox.*

# The division of Cyprus



Fifty years ago Turkish paratroopers dropped onto the coast of [Cyprus](#), beginning a military operation that would eventually split the island. Turkey had intervened to protect Turkish-Cypriots from a nationalist Greek coup, following years of violence between the two communities. The north remains in Turkish hands and around 30,000 Turkish troops are based there, in what the Greek side calls an occupation.

The latest addition to Turkey's naval armoury will visit north Cyprus this week as part of the commemorations of 1974. The *TCG Anadolu*, a Turkish-made amphibious assault ship that came into service last year, will lead a parade of 50 ships. Turkey's military presence has risen on the island in recent years: it has opened a drone base there and may build a naval port.

In 2017 UN-backed reunification talks crumbled, and have not been revived. *TCG Anadolu*'s arrival is a reminder that the conflict of 1974 is far from settled.

# Reviving Colombia's economy



Saturday marks Colombia's independence day—and the beginning of a new legislative term in the country. On the economic front, though, there is little to celebrate. Sluggish growth, forecast at 1.5% this year according to BBVA, a bank, is crimping public finances. In June a tax-collection emergency forced the government to cut the budget by 20trn pesos (\$5bn). [Gustavo Petro](#), the left-wing president, blamed the fiscal mess on a court decision to reinstate a deduction in income tax for fossil-fuel companies. That ruling deprived government coffers of 6.7trn pesos over two years and prompted leaders to raise the deficit target to 5.6% of GDP.

Ricardo Bonilla, Colombia's finance minister, is trying to balance the books. Among the proposals he is expected to present soon to Congress is a gradual reduction of the corporate-tax rate, which at 35% is the highest in the OECD. Government spending would be lowered too. The administration is keen to show that it plays by fiscal rules.



## Getting the band back together



Blur are one of the great survivors of the 1990s Britpop movement which they helped define. But by last year its members were largely out of contact. A new documentary, “To The End”, follows their reunion to record a new album and a triumphant run of shows at London’s Wembley Stadium. Dave Rowntree, Blur’s drummer, admits in the film that they were previously never popular enough to fill the venue. “The less we do,” he says, “the bigger we get.”

The documentary paints a touching portrait of a fractious yet enduring friendship—what singer Damon Albarn calls “a brotherhood sustained by our musical relationship”. Alex James, the bassist, became a cheesemaker after leaving Blur, hosting food and music festivals at his Cotswolds farm. Mr Rowntree trained and practised as a lawyer. Yet both performed in the Wembley shows. Blur has become the one reliable constant to which its members return.

# Fizzing in France



This weekend thousands of champagne enthusiasts will head to the south-east of Paris for the Route du Champagne en Fête, an annual tootle through some of France's bubbly-producing villages. This year the festival's route follows the upper valley of the river Seine between Buxeuil and Courteron, in France's Champagne region. Visitors can expect plenty of tastings, outdoor activities and even personalised champagne flutes.

Champagne has long been a global symbol of decadence and celebration, yet wine collectors have not always taken it so seriously. There are signs [that is changing](#). Sales of the tippie reached record highs between 2021 and 2023. And last month Paris Sotheby's held the world's first champagne-only auction, raising almost €1.4m (\$1.5m). All of this is good news for the festival's revellers, who have a chance to get their hands on rare bottles from small vintners at local prices. *Santé!*

## Weekend profile: Usha Vance, the wife of Donald Trump's VP pick



Before [J.D. Vance](#), the Republican [vice-presidential candidate](#), introduced himself to America in a 37-minute prime-time address at the Republican National Convention, millions briefly heard from his wife, Usha Chilukuri Vance. “When J.D. met me, he approached our differences with curiosity and enthusiasm,” she said. “He wanted to know everything about me, where I came from, what my life had been like.”

Ms Vance, 38 years old, had a distinctly different upbringing from her husband. While Mr Vance was raised in a socially dysfunctional white working-class family in Ohio, Ms Vance grew up comfortably middle-class in a diverse suburb of San Diego, California. Her parents, Indian immigrants who moved to San Diego in the 1970s, remain in southern California and teach molecular biology and engineering.

Ms Vance’s life is a stellar example of what most immigrants to America would hope for their children. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Yale and won a prestigious Gates Fellowship at

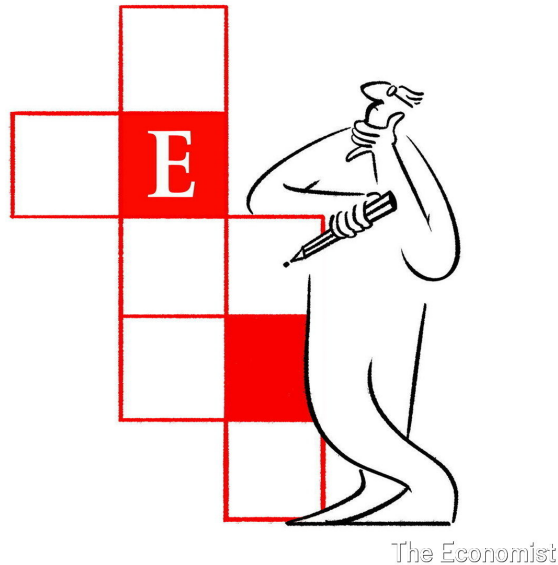


Cambridge University in England. She then studied at Yale Law School, where she met Mr Vance, a Marine Corps veteran and graduate of Ohio State University. The Vances are parents to three young children—Ewan, Vivek and Mirabel.

Until recently Ms Vance has maintained a less public profile than her husband. She appears to have moved to the right alongside him. Ms Vance, now a Republican, was registered as a Democrat a decade ago. After Yale, Ms Vance clerked for John Roberts, the chief justice of the Supreme Court. She had previously clerked for another now-justice, Brett Kavanaugh, when he was an appeals-court justice. She also worked as a lawyer at a distinguished law firm, but left her position shortly after her husband was announced as [Donald Trump's](#) vice-presidential pick.

As a politician Mr Vance has embraced a more pugnacious and populist vein of conservatism than the sort he had when he first came to national attention in 2016. The youngest vice-presidential pick in decades has also grown some facial hair in recent years. His wife insists that he is still very much the same man she met at Yale long ago. “Except,” she joked, “for that beard.”

# Weekly crossword



Our crossword has two sets of clues, one for seasoned cruciverbalists and the other for less experienced solvers. Both give the same answers, all of which feature in articles in this week's edition of *The Economist*.

Email all four answers, along with your home city and country, by 9am GMT on Monday to [crossword@economist.com](mailto:crossword@economist.com). We will pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners in next week's edition.

## Cryptic clues

*1 down* Designing buildings to have curved structure—one with pronounced tactile quality (12)

*1 across* Portion of lamb an insult for mega-rich family (6)

*2 across* Sat back to embrace former lover in a state (5)

*3 across* Duo messed with sex, leading to departure (6)

## **Factual clues**

*1 down* Of which modernism is an increasingly unpopular style—for people and penguins alike (12)

*1 across* A dynasty known for throwing incredibly lavish weddings (6)

*2 across* Where Ted Cruz is a senator (5)

*3 across* What some are expecting from Hong Kong because of its new national-security legislation (6)

## The winners of this week's quiz



*The Economist*

Thank you to everyone who took part in this week's quiz. The winners, chosen at random, were:

**Mike Carter**, San Diego, CA, United States

**Peter Lynch**, Santiago, Chile

**Ailsa Green**, Choma, Zambia

They all gave the correct answers of The Cherry Orchard, Zero Dark Thirty, vanilla, classics and diets. The theme is that they are all, or have been, types of Coke: cherry, zero, vanilla, classic and diet

The questions were:

**Monday:** Which Chekhov play, the last he wrote, focuses on the estate of the Ranevskaya family?

**Tuesday:** Which 2012 film concerns the hunt for Osama bin Laden?

**Wednesday:** Which bean, often used for flavouring, is best known for its Madagascar variety?

**Thursday:** The 2,000 guineas, 1,000 guineas, the Oaks, the Derby

and the St Leger Stakes are given what title in the English horse racing calendar?

**Friday:** Paleo, Atkins and South Beach are all types of what?



# Hengst

*An Old Germanic word for “stallion”.  
Read the full story.*

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**Love is like a friendship caught on fire.**

*Bruce Lee*