

Catch up: Trump's electronics exemption; British steel in trouble



America continued its [tariffs walkback](#) by exempting electronic parts and devices, including phones and computers, from its new levies on Chinese goods. Donald Trump has roiled markets for days and worried America's tech giants, who make many of their [products in China](#). Earlier this week he paused "reciprocal" tariffs on most countries to 10%, while raising it on China to 145%.

Britain passed an emergency law giving the government control of a [steel plant](#) in Lincolnshire, in the East Midlands, to prevent its imminent closure. The plant's Chinese owners, Jingye Group, had said that its blast furnaces were financially unsustainable; it rejected a £500m (\$650m) rescue in March. British officials said that nationalising the plant was a probable next step.

America and Iran began talks about the **Iranian nuclear program** in Oman, according to an online post by Esmail Baghaei, a spokesman for Iran's foreign ministry. On March 30th Mr Trump threatened to bomb Iran, which is alarmingly close to developing

the nuclear bomb, if it did not [agree to a deal](#). Iran said it would give the talks a “genuine chance” despite the threats.

Extreme winds and heavy rains battered northern **China**, leading to the cancellation of more than 800 flights and disrupting trains. Gusts in Beijing, the capital, reached their highest recorded speed in half a century, at roughly 150km per hour. State television warned that if those weighing less than 50kg do not stay indoors, they could be “easily blown away”.

Argentina tore down strict currency controls and said it will partially float the peso from Monday as part of a \$20bn loan from the IMF, which was approved on Friday. Javier Milei, the country’s libertarian president, hopes to bulk up currency buffers and boost exports, both of which Argentina—the IMF’s [most difficult customer](#)—needs if it is to grow.

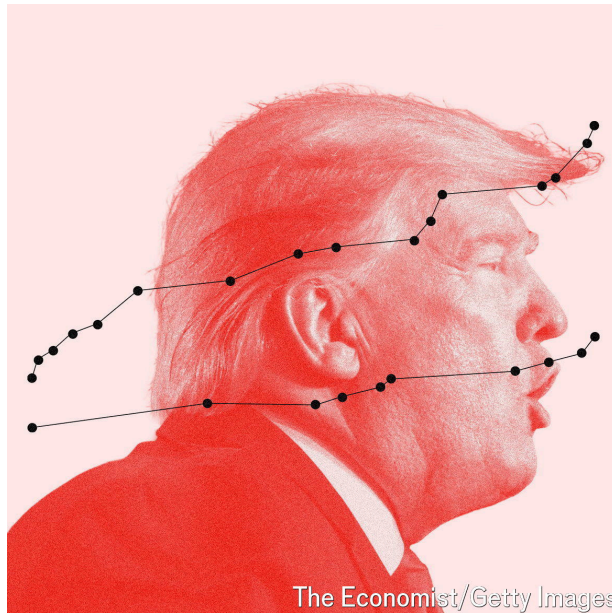
A judge in Louisiana ruled that **Mahmoud Khalil**, a leader of pro-Palestinian protests at Columbia University last year, [could be deported](#) for posing “potentially serious foreign policy consequences”, siding with the Trump administration. His lawyers are expected to appeal against the decision. Mr Khalil, a permanent resident, [was arrested](#) last month. He remains in America while a separate case proceeds in New Jersey.

Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil’s former president, was **hospitalised** after reporting severe abdominal pain. The hard-right populist, who is due to stand trial for allegedly trying to [overturn the result](#) of the 2022 presidential election, has been hospitalised frequently since he was [stabbed in the stomach](#) on the campaign trail in 2018. His condition is stable, but he could require surgery.

Word of the week: Steel porcupine, what Europe hopes to turn Ukraine into. [Read the full story](#).

*In a turbulent week of news, have you kept up with the headlines?
Play this week's [pint-sized news quiz](#) and find out what you may
have missed.*

Trump's ratings take a hit



Most presidents begin their term with a honeymoon period, during which the public is enamoured with its leader. In this, as in so much else, Donald Trump is an exception. More Americans viewed him unfavourably than favourably for the entirety of his first term in office—and that remained true when he was re-elected in November. That briefly changed in December and early January, but his net favourability barely turned positive.

His popularity has declined ever since. His announcement of damaging global tariffs on April 2nd sent his net favourability plunging as stocks plummeted and bond yields spiked. Will he regain some popularity now that he has paused some of the measures? You can see his standing on our [presidential tracker](#), which shows Mr Trump's latest polling numbers, based on YouGov surveys for *The Economist*. We're also monitoring economic data, executive orders and the legal challenges facing his government.

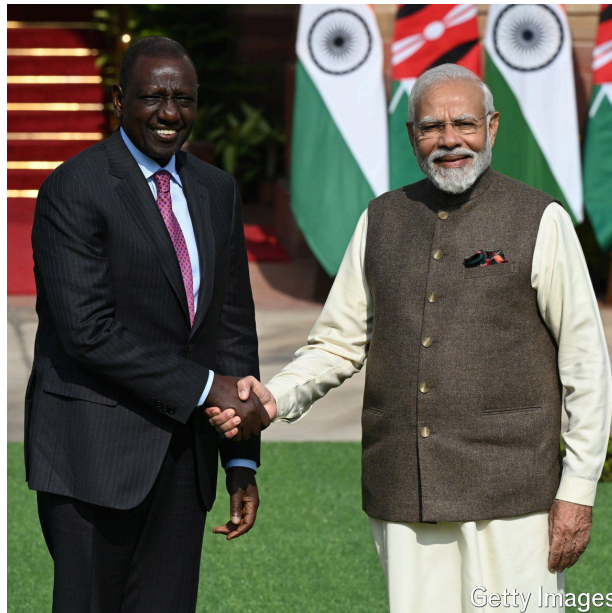
Ecuador's uncertain election



On Sunday Ecuadorians vote in a [presidential run-off](#) between Daniel Noboa, the 37-year-old incumbent, and Luisa González, a leftist and ally of Rafael Correa, a former president. Mr Noboa comfortably defeated Ms González in the October 2023 snap election. But this time around she has been polling slightly ahead of him.

One reason is Ecuador's deepening crisis of gang violence. Mr Noboa has taken a hardline approach, deploying the army and emulating El Salvador's president, Nayib Bukele. The murder rate initially fell but has since leapt, and reports of abuses by soldiers are growing. Meanwhile, the economy is sluggish, despite Mr Noboa's push for free-trade deals. Critics say that Mr Noboa, the son of one of Ecuador's richest men, is out of touch. Ms González offers a return to Mr Correa's populism. He governed the country for a decade but fled to Belgium in 2017 to dodge corruption charges. No matter who wins, Ecuadorians have reason to worry.

India looks to deepen ties with Africa



On Sunday India kicks off joint naval drills in the Indian Ocean with ten African countries, including Kenya and South Africa. Two features of Indian statecraft will be on display. The first is an [obsession with acronyms](#). The exercises, dubbed AIKEYME (which means “unity” in Sanskrit but also stands for Africa-India Key Maritime Engagement), are part of a new foreign-policy doctrine of MAHASAGAR (“ocean”, or the “Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions”).

More substantively, the war games will demonstrate India’s keenness to deepen co-operation with countries in Africa—where its rival China already has a strong presence. India believes the drills, which will be held every two years and broadened to include other countries, will consolidate its role as the “preferred security partner” in the Indian Ocean, which is crucial for global trade. Amid Trump-induced uncertainty, India is also looking for other export markets. It hopes the exercises can boost trade with Africa, especially through greater defence exports.

Power shifts in the Vatican



Christians mark the start of the holiest week in their calendar today on Palm Sunday, and end it with Easter the following week, the commemoration of Jesus's resurrection. It is typically a time when Roman Catholics look to Rome and the pope—especially in a jubilee year like 2025, marked by special celebrations.

But [Pope Francis](#) is still recovering from a life-threatening case of pneumonia. The 87-year-old pontiff made a brief appearance in St Peter's Square on Thursday, and received a surprise private visit from King Charles III and Queen Camilla during the British monarch's state trip to Italy last week. Still, Francis is said to be handling only the most urgent matters himself. Day-to-day affairs are being overseen by his secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin. That is a change for Francis. He has generally rejected the influence of the Vatican bureaucracy and governed in a highly personal style. But the longer his convalescence lasts, the more power the Vatican bureaucracy is likely to reclaim.

Weekly crossword



We now publish an interactive edition of our crossword, allowing you to enter and check the answers, and see explanations, instantly. Try it [here](#). Or, if you prefer to do things the old-fashioned way, use the grid below.

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*:

Cryptic Clues

1 down Weird handiwork cult with big influence over the global economy (6, 7)

1 across Desire distorts her gun (6)

2 across A chunk of wood in charge? Does that make sense? (5)

3 across Estonian heard heartless diva (6)

Factual clues

1 down Trump official with hardline views on tariffs

1 across What Viola Davis's character in a new film has a plan to end

2 across What is wanting in Scott Bessent's approach to trade

3 across Politician whose brainchild is a way to support Ukraine's military efforts

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

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:

Lars Bergkvist, Stavanger, Norway

James Salvin-Keech, Inverurie, Britain

Alexandra Sivov, Poitiers, France.

They all gave the correct answers of Nicole Kidman, Bette Midler, Jason Momoa, Bruno Mars and Barack Obama. The theme is that they were all born in Hawaii.

The questions were:

Monday: Who won an Oscar for appearing in “The Hours” and Emmys for her roles as producer and actress in “Big Little Lies”?

Tuesday: Which singer won Grammy awards for “The Rose” and “Wind Beneath My Wings”?

Wednesday: Which muscular actor played Khal Drogo in “Game of Thrones” and Aquaman in various DC movies?

Thursday: Which singer-songwriter was born Peter Gene Hernandez?

Friday: Which politician became junior senator for Illinois in the 2004 election?

The surest test of discipline is its absence.

Clara Barton