

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter

The **Kremlin** dismissed **Donald Trump's** criticism of **Vladimir Putin**, suggesting that his comments were “emotional reactions”. Mr Trump called Russia's president “absolutely crazy” after Russia [bombarded Ukrainian cities](#) over the weekend. Meanwhile Ukraine's foreign-intelligence chief accused China of supplying Russia's [defence industry](#) with machines, chemicals and gunpowder. China has previously denied providing military assistance to Russia.

British police said they arrested a man after a car collided with “a number of pedestrians” in **Liverpool**. Thousands of football fans had gathered in the city centre on Monday for a Premier League victory parade for Liverpool FC. Sir Keir Starmer, Britain's prime minister, described the scenes as “appalling”. Police said they were still investigating the incident and urged people “not to speculate”.

**Germany's** chancellor criticised **Israel** for its [offensive in Gaza](#). Friedrich Merz said that “to harm the civilian population to such an extent...can no longer be justified as a fight against Hamas terrorism.” Mr Merz's criticism is unusually strong for a leader of Germany, one of Israel's strongest European supporters. On Sunday Israeli air strikes in Gaza killed 30 people, according to local media.

Mr Trump renewed his [attacks](#) on **Harvard**, threatening to withdraw \$3bn in grants to the university and give it to schools that teach vocational trades instead. America's president also demanded the university hand over lists of foreign students, claiming that some are “not friendly at all” to America. Last week a judge temporarily blocked the Trump administration from stopping Harvard enrolling foreign students.

**Volvo** announced plans to cut around 3,000 jobs, around 7% of its staff, to protect its profit margins. Last month the [Swedish carmaker](#) said it would make \$1.87bn in savings after a sharp drop in operating profits, which fell by 60% year on year in the first quarter of 2025. Volvo's share price has fallen 5% since this time last year.

The two main parties in **Suriname** were nearly tied after an election on Sunday. Both the ruling Progressive Reform Party and the National Democratic Party secured 18 seats. Weeks of coalition talks are likely to ensue. Suriname's next government will preside over an [oil boom](#): the South American country expects to produce 200,000 barrels per day by 2028.

A European watchdog investigating **Shein** accused the [Chinese online retailer](#) of breaching consumer-protection laws, for example by displaying false discounts. Regulators warned Shein of possible fines if the company does not address its findings within a month. The EU is meanwhile considering imposing a €2 (\$2.28) fee on small-value online purchases, affecting Chinese retailers like [Shein and Temu](#).

**Figure of the day:** 120, the number of ground stations which command China's BeiDou satellite navigation system, versus just 11 for GPS. Read the full story [here](#).



Photograph: REX/Shutterstock

## Beachheads by stealth in the Philippines

American marines and their Filipino, Japanese and South Korean equivalents formed up in the Philippines on Monday for exercises in island defence. China might attack Japanese and Philippine islands because America could use them as bases to counter a Chinese attempt to take control of Taiwan, a self-governing, democratic island. [China claims Taiwan](#) as its own territory.

The American marines will use the 12 days of exercises to hone their new way of waging amphibious warfare: coming swiftly and stealthily ashore on territory belonging to their allies, the Philippines and Japan, before invaders can strike, then destroying intruding ships and aircraft with missiles.

Previously, the marines would storm beaches to recapture territory from occupiers. In the second world war that tactic liberated Japanese-occupied islands in the Pacific, but at great cost in lives. Now, American marines are advertising their new tactics to deter their Chinese adversaries from attacking allied territory in the first place.



Photograph: Getty Images

## Carney's debut in parliament

Mark Carney will convene his first session of Canada's legislature as prime minister this week. His Liberals won a minority mandate in an [election](#) one month ago. The former central banker has said his government will focus on the “generational challenge” of negotiating a new trade and security relationship with the United States.

Since a convivial White House meeting with Mr Carney earlier this month, President Donald Trump has talked less often about Canada's becoming the 51st US state. The presence of Britain's King Charles, Canada's head of state, to open parliament will be a strong assertion of Canadian sovereignty, cocking a royal snook at Mr Trump. It is the first time in almost 70 years that a sovereign has performed the ceremony. However, [American tariffs](#) are still biting into the Canadian economy. Mr Carney has asked for the tariffs to be removed and proposed a new partnership with Canada's largest trading partner, while also expanding trading relationships with European allies.



Photograph: Getty Images

## The food crisis in Gaza

The roll-out of a new network for distributing food to Gaza planned for Sunday has been delayed owing to “logistical reasons”, according to the Israelis. They want to start distributing food through [special “hubs”](#) operated by American mercenaries under their protection, denying Hamas control of the supplies. The arrangement has been criticised by aid organisations for being inadequate and forcing the 2m inhabitants of Gaza into encampments around the hubs. On Monday the head of the group implementing the plan resigned, saying that it would be impossible to carry out without compromising “humanitarian principles”.

Meanwhile, chaos reigns in the strip as the few aid convoys Israel has allowed through have been looted. Israel blocked crossings into Gaza on March 2nd, claiming the supplies were being commandeered by Hamas. But, following reports of starvation, on May 18th it announced supplies would resume temporarily under the existing distribution system. Last week 495 trucks were allowed in, but that is still a fraction of what Gaza needs. Before the war around 500 trucks went in daily.





Photograph: Getty Images

## Africa's top development job is up for grabs

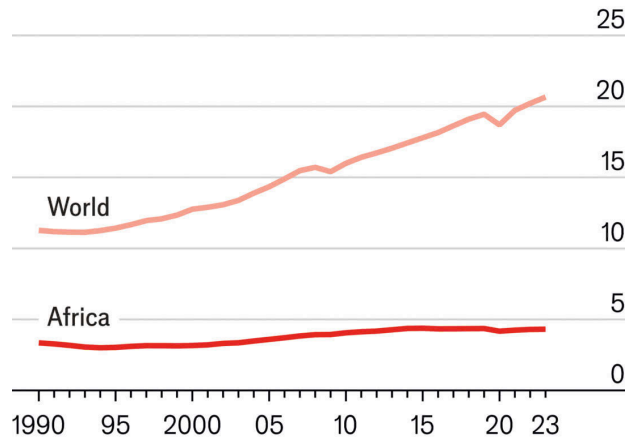
On Monday the African Development Bank will elect its [next president](#). The 60-year-old institution provides loans, grants and technical assistance across the continent. But it remains underpowered: it disbursed just \$6.1bn in 2023, less than half what its Latin American counterpart paid out.

All five candidates promise to boost jobs, trade and infrastructure. But the race is fractious. South Africa is backing Swazi Tshabalala, the bank's vice-president and the only woman on the ballot; other countries in the region are lining up behind Zambia's Samuel Maimbo. France and Senegal are split over Mauritania's Sidi Ould Tah and Senegal's own Amadou Hott—highlighting post-colonial tensions. Non-African donors have 41% of the vote.

Donald Trump plans to cut America's sizeable contribution to the bank and private capital is still not filling infrastructure gaps. Whoever wins will need to unite a divided board, attract fresh funding—and prove that the bank can rise to the continent's growing challenges.

## Crocked

GDP per person at PPP\*, \$'000, 2021 prices



\*Purchasing-power parity

Source: World Bank



Photograph: Getty Images

## CPAC in Poland

The Conservative Political Action Conference, the premier watering-hole of America's hard right, has weathered transitions from Reaganism to neo-conservatism to *MAGA*. In recent years it has begun staging events abroad to build bridges to ideological friends (notably in Hungary). Starting on Monday it holds its first-ever shindig in Poland. The event is well-timed to help the conservative candidate in the second round of Poland's [presidential election](#) on June 1st, which pits Rafal Trzaskowski, the liberal mayor of Warsaw, against Karol Nawrocki, a nationalist historian backed by the populist Law and Justice (*pis*) party.

Andrzej Duda, Poland's outgoing president, also aligned with *pis*, is expected to speak. So is Kristi Noem, America's secretary of homeland security. The event takes place outside Rzeszow, a city that has served as the main logistical hub for American military aid to Ukraine. Polish conservatives, who are adamantly anti-Russian, will be hoping for signals that their *MAGA* allies have not become too [enamoured with Vladimir Putin](#).





Illustration: The Economist

## Daily Quiz

We will serve you a new question each day this week. On Friday your challenge is to give us all five answers and, as important, tell us the connecting theme. Email your responses (and include mention of your home city and country) by 1700 BST on **Friday** to [\[email protected\]](#). We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

**Monday:** MGM uses which animal as a symbol?

*Strange to see how a good dinner  
and feasting reconciles everybody.*

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***Samuel Pepys***