

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter

**Donald Trump** said he would double tariffs on **aluminium and steel** imports to 50%. The president said the new rates could come into effect on Wednesday and would “further secure” America’s steel industry. Despite Mr Trump’s claims, the tariffs are unlikely to help raise domestic production of the metals and will probably be [painful](#) for many American companies.

America’s defence secretary, **Pete Hegseth**, warned that the prospect of a Chinese attack on Taiwan was “real” and “could be imminent”. Speaking at the Shangri-La forum in Singapore, he urged regional allies to spend more on arms. He said China’s expansive military actions in the Indo-Pacific should serve as a “wake-up call”. His own administration’s fickleness has [added to Taiwan’s anxieties](#).

**Volodymyr Zelensky** said that **Russia** was doing everything it could to ensure the failure of peace talks scheduled for next week. Neither Ukraine’s president nor his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, appear likely to attend the negotiations in Istanbul. [Ukraine](#) insists that Russia must set out its position in advance and that a ceasefire must be in place.

The United Nations said that “100% of the population of **Gaza** is at risk of famine.” Jens Laerke, a spokesman for OCHA, the UN’s humanitarian arm, described the enclave as “the hungriest place on Earth”. Israel is overseeing aid distribution in Gaza in an effort to stop Hamas getting its hands on it. But aid groups say Israel’s plan is [woefully insufficient](#).

**America’s Supreme Court** allowed the [Trump administration](#) to revoke a parole programme that gave legal protection to 500,000

migrants from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela. Earlier this month the court let the Trump administration end protections against deportation for 350,000 Venezuelans who settled under the Temporary Protected Status programme.

Flash floods in central **Nigeria** killed around 110 people. A local official told the BBC that water washed away 50 houses “with their occupants”. The chairman of the local area told AP that bad infrastructure had worsened the impact of the floods, and asked the government to begin construction work on a planned waterway project. The search and rescue operation is ongoing.

**Taylor Swift** bought the rights to her first six albums, ending the singer’s [long battle](#) to control how her music is used. In 2019 her then record label sold the master recordings of her early material to Scooter Braun, a music-industry entrepreneur. She later re-recorded the albums; many Swifties cold-shoulder the originals on principle.

**Word of the week:** *Catéchuménat*, the path to baptism in the Catholic church. The number of French adults who were baptised at Easter this year was 46% higher than in 2024. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: EPA

## **NATO's exercises to deter Russia**

For the past few weeks NATO troops have been parachuting into Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. The paradrops are part of Swift Response 25, an exercise involving 25,000 soldiers from 29 allied and partner countries. The next stage of the exercise, Defender 25, runs until June 9th, shortly before a summit of the alliance's leaders in the Netherlands. The point is to both test NATO's readiness for war and [show it off to the Kremlin](#) as a deterrent.

That is particularly important in light of fears that America might soon withdraw significant numbers of troops from Europe. Moreover, Russia and Belarus plan to hold their own major exercise, Zapad 25, in September. The previous iteration of Zapad was held in 2021 and used as cover to mass Russian troops ahead of the invasion of Ukraine. Belarus says this year's exercise will be much smaller, to reduce "tensions". Nonetheless, NATO will still be eager to show that it has the will and capacity to match any suspicious moves.





Photograph: Getty Images

## Chinese manufacturers get hustling

When China and America agreed to [a tariff truce](#) in Geneva on May 12th—negotiated on comfy patio sofas in an ambassador’s residence—Chinese exporters leapt into action. The agreement gave them 90 days to fulfil American orders before higher levies could return. Their hustle was reflected in the manufacturing purchasing-managers’ index released today by China’s statistics bureau. It improved to 49.5 in May from 49 in April, thanks partly to a higher reading for new export orders. (Anything below 50 suggests that business is worsening.)

The Geneva truce, however, is looking fragile. On Friday Donald Trump said that China has “totally violated” the agreement. Although it reduced its tariffs, it has been slow to roll back other retaliatory actions, says the White House. China, meanwhile, is upset about American plans to revoke some Chinese students’ visas, as well as reports it will restrict the sale of chip-design software to China. The prospects of a lasting deal before August 12th look bleak—the more reason for manufacturers to stay off the couch until then.



Photograph: Alamy

## The Met's long-awaited new wing

He is probably a priest, arms raised to the heavens, an opaque expression on his face. The seven-foot wooden sculpture, carved in Mali between the 14th and 17th centuries, will welcome visitors to the new Rockefeller Wing at the [Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York](#), which reopens on Saturday.

After four years of renovations costing \$70m, nearly 2,000 objects from Africa, the ancient Americas and Oceania will go on show in the radically reimagined wing. Many of them were acquired by Nelson Rockefeller, an oil heir, in the 1950s, and were displayed at first in the poky “Museum of Primitive Art” in Midtown. The Met created a wing for them in 1982, but objects from different cultures and continents were confusingly jumbled together. They are now clearly demarcated, in a lighter and more spacious setting. A debate about repatriating artefacts continues in museums around the world. But these are at least now being given the space they deserve.





Photograph: Alamy

## Shooting for Champions League history

The French men's national football team is one the world's most successful. *Les Bleus* have [won two European Championships and two World Cups](#), most recently in 2018. France's club teams, however, have fared less well abroad. No team from Paris has ever won the Champions League, Europe's top club competition. Bayern Munich beat Paris Saint-Germain in their only previous final appearance, in 2020. On Saturday PSG will try to avenge that loss, when they play Inter Milan in this year's final.

This time PSG are slight favourites. They knocked out Liverpool and Arsenal in earlier rounds with scintillating attacking play and heroics from Gianluigi Donnarumma, their Italian goalkeeper. But Inter are a tough test. Their line-up is similar to their team that reached the Champions League final in 2023 and won Serie A, Italy's domestic league, in 2024. The grizzled group of veterans will try to absorb Parisian pressure and counter through Lautaro Martinez and Marcus Thuram, two dangerous strikers.



Photograph: Getty Images

## **Weekend profile: Karol Nawrocki, a possible Polish president with a shadowy past**

When Poland's populist-nationalist [Law and Justice](#) (pis) party picked Karol Nawrocki, a historian, as their [presidential candidate](#) in November, he was relatively obscure. What he lacked in political experience, the party reckoned, he could make up for in earnest patriotism. Friendly commentators at the time praised his “strength of character” and his “humble background”, overlooking his rigid speaking style and lack of charisma.

The 42-year-old, who has never been a member of any political party, would be untainted by any failures of the pis government that was booted out of office in 2023. Once elected, he would be expected to use the presidential veto to obstruct the centrist government's reforms, in an attempt to spur pis's comeback in parliamentary elections in 2027.

But Mr Nawrocki's clean image was quickly scuffed up. An onslaught of press scandals in the final weeks of the campaign began with allegations that he had defrauded a pensioner, which he denies. Then, in an interview on May 16th, he admitted that he had



taken part in illegal arranged fights of football hooligans in 2009 (he was a junior boxing champion). Many of his companions in “manly combat”, as he described it, are thought to have been mobsters. This week journalists alleged that Mr Nawrocki arranged prostitutes for guests while working as a hotel security guard in the early 2000s. Mr Nawrocki calls this a political smear campaign. He has played down his brawls and denies the allegations of procuring sex workers too. Further reports alleged that Poland’s security services blocked his access to classified information, something his critics, including Donald Tusk, the prime minister, called a “red flag”.

Despite the scandals, Mr Nawrocki is neck-and-neck with [Rafal Trzaskowski](#), the liberal mayor of Warsaw, who won the first round of voting on May 18th with 31.4% to Mr Nawrocki’s 29.5%. Mr Nawrocki is expected to win over more of the hard-right voters (a total of 22% of the vote) whose preferred candidates have been eliminated from the race.

Mr Nawrocki has promised to veto the EU’s Green Deal, a policy to cut greenhouse gas emissions, calling it “eco-madness”, and has denounced the bloc’s migration pact, a package to reduce and redistribute asylum-seekers. He says he stands for “a sovereign, ambitious Poland, not one that listens to voices from Brussels, Berlin and Paris”. To that end, Mr Nawrocki has looked eagerly to America’s president, Donald Trump. In April, he visited him in the White House to seek an endorsement. Mr Trump has not openly backed him, but on May 28th at CPAC, a global MAGA gathering in Poland, he received fulsome support from Kristi Noem, Mr Trump’s homeland security secretary.

Two days later Viktor Orban, Hungary’s pro-Russia prime minister, also chimed in: “Long live Nawrocki!” Such endorsements will alarm liberal-minded Poles, but plenty of conservatives are willing to give [Mr Nawrocki](#) their vote.



Illustration: The Economist

## Crossword

We now publish an interactive edition of our crossword twice a week, 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 across* Hippo is only concealing venom (6)

*2 across* Trojan hero's city (5)

*3 across* Even infant disowns country (6)

*1 down* Hull librarian with pink hair takes pill, surprisingly (6,6)

### Factual clues

*1 across* What the Texas blindsnake secretes from its tail (6)

*2 across* Home of Notre-Dame Cathedral (5)

*3 across* Mohandas Gandhi was described as the “father of the \_\_\_\_\_”, for India (6)

*1 down* Who wrote that it was possible to make a living “by being a poet” rather than just by poetry itself (6,6)

Email all four answers, along with your home city and country, by 9am BST on Monday to [\[email protected\]](#). We will pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners in next week’s edition.

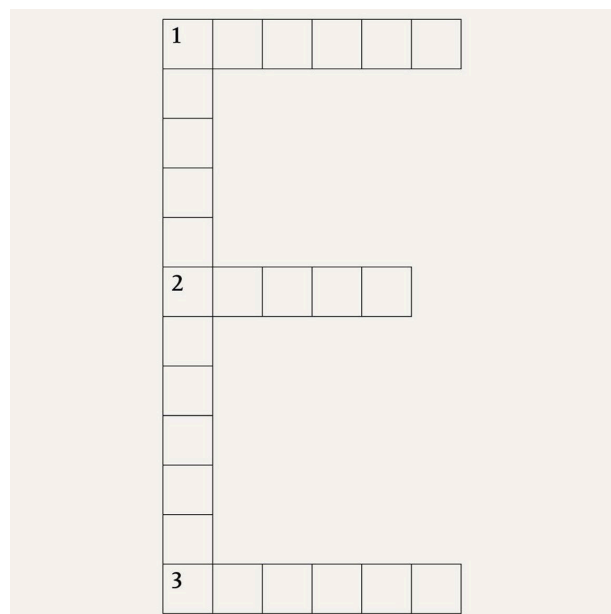


Image: The Economist



Illustration: The Economist

## The winners of this week's quiz

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

**Alvaro Tomas**, Panama City, Panama

**Linda Ely**, Hanover, New Hampshire, America

**Alexander Svanberg**, Horten, Norway

They all gave the correct answers of: lion, hydra, bull, cattle, apple. The theme is the labours of Hercules: he must slay the Nemean lion, kill the nine-headed Hydra, capture the Cretan bull, steal the cattle of Geryon and retrieve the golden apples of the Hesperides.

The questions were:

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

**Tuesday:** Which sinister organisation, with its roots in Nazi Germany, is one of the main opponents of Captain America?

**Wednesday:** The green circle on a darts board is commonly known by what term?

**Thursday:** A mass audition for a showbiz event is colloquially known by what term?

**Friday:** Braeburn, Gala and Pink Lady are all types of what?



*None of us can know what we are  
capable of until we are tested*

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***Elizabeth Blackwell***