

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Bloomberg via Getty Images

**Xi Jinping** urged countries to work together to maintain “stable and smooth” supply chains in his first remarks since **China** and **America** [sealed a trade truce](#). The Chinese president also insisted that his country remains committed to an open world economy. Meanwhile, new data revealed that China’s factory output slumped in October, contracting for a seventh straight month.

**Amazon’s** share price rose by 13% in after-hours trading after it reported strong quarterly earnings. Revenues of its cloud-computing unit, **Amazon Web Services**, grew by 20% year on year, driven by AI-related demand for [extra computing power](#). Shares in Apple also rose after positive results, which the tech giant attributed to the successful launch of a new iPhone model.

The **Trump administration** slashed the number of refugees it will admit to America over the next year to 7,500, a decision it said was “in the national interest”. The previous limit under the Biden administration was 125,000. Officials said they would prioritise white South Africans, known as Afrikaners. The administration [claims that the group faces discrimination](#).

**Netflix** is reportedly considering acquiring **Warner Bros Discovery**, a rival [media firm](#). According to Reuters, the streaming

giant has hired an investment bank to help with a potential offer. Netflix is believed to be interested only in Warner Bros's streaming and studio arms—and not its television networks. Last week Warner Bros received an offer from Paramount Skydance, another media firm.

**Palantir**, a data-analysis outfit, sued two of its former top AI engineers, accusing them of using the company's trade secrets to launch a “competing copycat business”. The lawsuit claims the engineers, having been “entrusted with Palantir's crown jewels”, violated their contractual obligations to create an AI company called Percepta.

Hundreds of thousands of **ultra-Orthodox Jews**, or Haredim, protested in Jerusalem against plans to end their [exemption from conscription](#) into the **Israeli armed forces**. The authorities shut down some public-transport services in response. Israel's parliament is struggling to pass a bill to bring ultra-Orthodox Jews into the army. They believe that religious study is a more important duty.

**Prince Andrew**, the brother of **King Charles III**, was stripped of his title. He will now be known as Andrew Mountbatten Windsor and must leave the Royal Lodge. The “censures” by Buckingham Palace follow the posthumous publication of a book by Virginia Giuffre, who said that the prince [had sexually abused her](#) when she was 17 years old. He has always denied wrongdoing.

**Figure of the day: €53bn**, the growth in market value achieved by Rheinmetall, a German defence company, since the start of this year. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Getty Images

## Sudan's humanitarian crisis worsens

Fears are growing of a bloodbath in el-Fasher, the capital of Sudan's Darfur region. The city, which has endured an 18-month-long siege and a resulting [famine](#), fell to the Rapid Support Forces, a paramilitary group, earlier this week. Some 26,000 panicked civilians fled in just 48 hours, according to the UN. But that still leaves perhaps 177,000 trapped in the city.

Evidence of atrocities is already emerging. More than 2,000 civilians have been killed, according to allies of the national army. Survivors arriving in the nearby town of Tawila report young men being separated from their families and taken away in trucks. Across Darfur, places that have fallen to the RSF since Sudan's civil war began in 2023 have been ethnically cleansed; in January America accused the RSF of committing a [genocide](#) in the region. With every major city in Darfur now in the paramilitary group's hands, another frightening escalation could be imminent.





Photograph: Getty Images

## **America's government runs on empty**

America's government [shutdown](#) has now slouched into its 30th day. If it drags on for another five days, it will set a record. Republicans and Democrats do not seem close to an agreement. Three major funding deadlines are fast approaching. Will they break the impasse?

For starters, members of the armed forces are due their next pay cheque on Friday. The Trump administration will reportedly draw funds from the Department of War's other budgets, including those for housing, research and development and procurement, to cover the \$5.3bn wage bill. Second, funding for a federal food-aid programme that reaches 40m Americans will expire by November 1st. That day is also the start of the period when Americans can sign up for Obamacare, the health-care programme that is one of the issues [at the heart](#) of the shutdown. Without renewed subsidies, premiums will rise sharply for millions. That might finally focus minds in Washington.



Photograph: Reuters

## Who will pay for Ukraine?

Europe faces a [steep bill](#) to keep Ukraine fighting. With America retreating under Donald Trump, European countries will have to finance almost all of Ukraine's war effort and recovery. Between 2026 and 2029 Ukraine will need about \$389bn in cash and arms—roughly twice what Europe has provided since Russia's invasion. Ukraine's annual budget deficit is around \$50bn, and it relies on \$40bn-worth of donated weapons each year.

EU leaders are scrambling to [fill the gap](#). They are weighing a new seven-year budget that could allocate \$30bn a year and debating how to unlock \$163bn in frozen Russian assets for a “reparations loan”. The latter faces resistance from Belgium (many of the assets are in Belgian accounts) and there is disagreement over whether the funds should buy weapons or cover Ukraine's budget shortfall. Meanwhile Nordic leaders have rejected calls for joint EU borrowing. Europe's unity—and Ukraine's survival—depend on a breakthrough soon.



Photograph: Getty Images

## APEC in Trump's shadow

More than a dozen world leaders gathered in South Korea on Friday for the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit. The meeting takes place in the shadow of Donald Trump's [gilded tour](#) of the region. From Malaysia to Japan and South Korea, leaders courted him with gold-dusted banquets, investment pledges and trade concessions in exchange for goodwill—and relief from his tariffs.

[Mr Trump](#) is skipping the main APEC leaders' forum, reflecting his disdain for multilateral talking shops. Created in 1989 to liberalise trade around the Pacific rim, APEC faltered in its mission during the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s and never recovered. In recent years it functioned mainly as a meeting point for its members.

Leaders are expected to endorse a statement that encourages a series of modest free-market reforms. But it will be non-binding—an indication of how hard it will be to sustain open [trade](#) in an era of transactional politics.



Illustration: The Economist

## Daily quiz

We will serve you a new question each weekday. On **Friday** your challenge is to give us all five answers and tell us the theme. Email your responses (and your home city and country) by 1700 BST on Friday to [\[email protected\]](#). We'll pick three winners at random and crown them on Saturday.

**Friday:** Which breed of dog, used to find game, is often called a “bird dog” in the American South?

**Thursday:** Which human organ is contained within the pericardium?

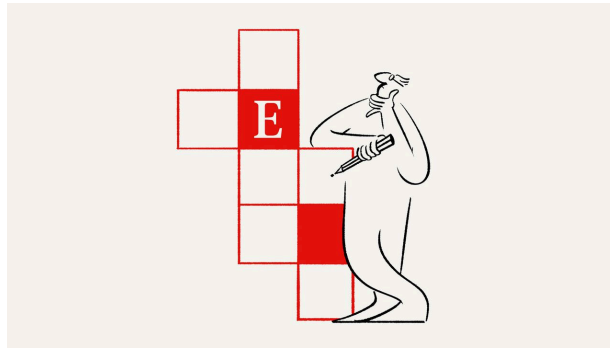


Illustration: The Economist

## The winners of last week's crossword

Thank you to everyone who took part in our crossword, published on Saturday. The winners, chosen at random, were:

**Ailsa Green**, Choma, Zambia

**Catherine Oikonomou**, Altadena, America

**Patrick Allen**, Shanghai, China

They all gave the correct answers of [Nairobi](#), [Senator](#), [YouTube](#), [Nicolas Sarkozy](#).

*Scenery is fine - but human nature  
is finer.*

---

***John Keats***