

Catch up: Trump pauses tariffs on most countries; stocks surge



Donald Trump [announced he would pause reciprocal tariffs](#) for 90 days on countries that did not retaliate against his levies, but maintain a 10% universal tariff on American imports. The president raised tariffs on China, however, to 125%, after China increased its levies on American goods from 34% to 84%. Before Mr Trump's reversal, the EU approved tariffs on some €21bn (\$23.2bn) of American goods, in response to America's 25% levies on steel and aluminium.

Stockmarkets rallied on the news. In America the NASDAQ was up 12.2% when markets closed on Wednesday and the S&P 500 climbed 9.5%—the indices' largest daily gains since 2001 and 2008 respectively. As markets opened in Asia, Japan's Nikkei surged by more than 8% while Hong Kong's Hang Seng rose by 3.1%. Bond yields also fell, after [jumping](#) on Wednesday.

Friedrich Merz said **Germany** was “back on track” after the Christian Democratic bloc agreed a coalition deal with the centre-left Social Democrats. [Mr Merz](#), the head of the Christian

Democratic Union, will become chancellor, having led his party to an election victory in February. He promised Germans and Europeans “a strong government capable of action”.

A whistleblower from **Meta** told American senators that the tech giant ignored national-security concerns in order to build its \$18bn business in China. Sarah Wynn-Williams, formerly an executive at Facebook, [Meta’s](#) social-media platform, said the company had given the Chinese Communist Party users’ data and created AI censorship tools—which Meta denies. The firm claims it does not operate in China, though it does generate revenue from Chinese advertisers.

Volodymyr Zelensky, **Ukraine’s** president, said at least 155 [Chinese recruits](#) were fighting for Russia, a day after Ukraine said it had captured two Chinese volunteers. China earlier dismissed the claims as “groundless”. Meanwhile the head of Ukraine’s armed forces, Oleksandr Syrsky, told local media that Russia had launched its spring offensive. On Thursday America and Russia will continue talks about normalising relations.

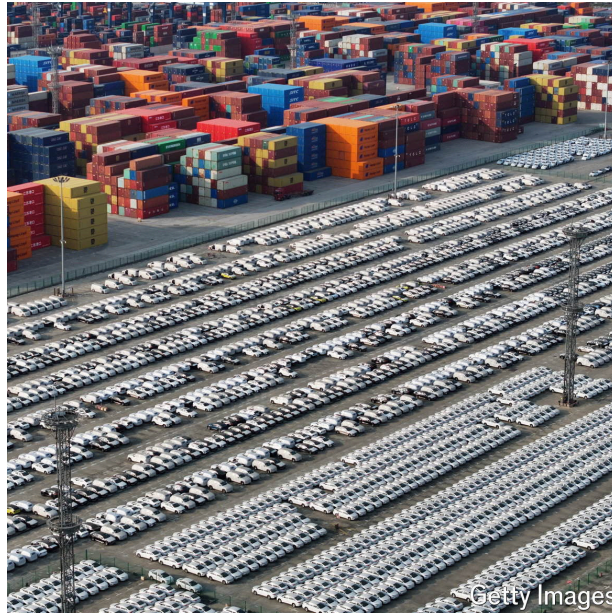
OpenAI countersued **Elon Musk**, accusing the billionaire of “malicious campaigns” and harassment. Mr Musk co-founded the artificial-intelligence startup with Sam Altman, its boss, in 2015, but left in 2018. Mr Musk has filed a lawsuit against OpenAI [to stop it](#) from becoming a for-profit company, which it must do by the end of 2025 in order to secure its current fundraising round of \$40bn.

Mattel, the maker of Barbie, created the first Ken doll of a male athlete. It takes the form of LeBron James. The American basketball player is one of the world’s greatest and tallest athletes—the new Ken doll is an inch taller than the standard. Mattel risks being slam-dunked by America’s trade war with China, where nearly 40% of [its production](#) is based.

Figure of the day: 51,000, the number of government workers sacked by Argentina's president during his first year in office. [Read the full story.](#)

How is America's economy faring under Donald Trump? Assess the performance of stocks, bonds, the dollar and other economic indicators on [our presidential tracker.](#)

China squares up in the trade war



No bell or siren sounded at China's ports at one minute past noon, local time, on Wednesday when America's devastating new 84% tariffs came into effect. But make no mistake: this is a trade emergency. Most Chinese goods entering the world's biggest market now face combined levies of at least 104%. On Wednesday Donald Trump said he would raise them higher still: to 125%, although his formal order has not yet appeared.

China's Ministry of Finance sees this as "economic bullying." And the logic of playground fights has been governing the country's response: it is retaliating shove for shove, punch for punch. At one minute past noon, local time, on Thursday it raised tariffs on American goods by the same 84%. It must now decide whether to match Mr Trump's latest hike, too. [Neither country will win this fight](#). But will either back down? America has more customer clout than China. But its leaders are more dependent on the support of the governed. In fighting terms: America packs a bigger punch, but China has the stronger chin.

Inflation returns to America



Much of America's economic data seems, for the moment, like a time capsule from a happier era. The latest figures for inflation, due on Thursday, are expected to show that overall consumer prices rose just 0.1% month on month in March. That would make for an annual pace of 2.6%, almost back to the 2% level that is generally seen as a [healthy inflation rate](#). In normal circumstances that would be unalloyed good news.

Alas, not much is normal now. With a trade war escalating between America and China, and [uncertainty over the future of Donald Trump's global tariffs](#), consumers may start to see higher prices in stores and on apps in the coming weeks. The steady reduction in the inflation rate experienced over the past two years could well go into reverse. Mr Trump had promised to vanquish rising prices, but instead may end up reviving them.

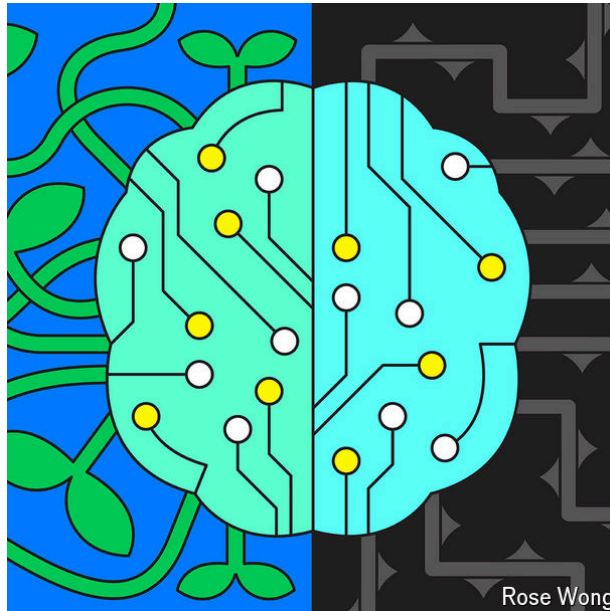
Sudan accuses the UAE of complicity in genocide



Since it began in April 2023, Sudan's civil war has taken tens of thousands of lives, displaced about 15m people and provoked famine. It is the [greatest humanitarian crisis](#) in the world. Both parties to the conflict have been accused of atrocities. On Thursday the first legal case comes to court. The government of Sudan is charging the United Arab Emirates at the International Court of Justice with enabling the Rapid Support Forces, a rebel group, to commit genocide.

The charges relate specifically to the killing of thousands of the Masalit group in West Darfur, a stronghold of the RSF. The UAE has often been accused of backing the RSF, even by the UN, but dismisses the ICJ case as a “cynical publicity stunt”. If Sudan wins the case, it hopes the UAE will be obliged to cease such support, thus [shortening the war](#). That is unlikely, however, as an ICJ judgment is not legally binding. More probable is continued war, and more deaths.

Is AI good for the climate?



In 1999, shortly after Amazon started selling books online, a *Forbes* article declared (incorrectly) that “a lump of coal is burned” every time anyone ordered one. Today, the panic is about artificial intelligence, which consumes considerably more energy than other types of computing and is growing rapidly. On Thursday the International Energy Agency, a forecaster, published a report assessing those concerns. It concluded that AI’s energy use will, indeed, become considerable. Data centres—which provide the computational heft needed for most online tasks, from video streaming to shopping—currently consume about 1.5% of the world’s electricity. The growth of AI, the IEA reckons, will increase that demand by 128-203% in the next five years.

That is significant. But, as the IEA notes, so is [the potential for AI](#) to make the energy sector more efficient and greener. They assess that existing AI solutions alone, if scaled up correctly, could save the annual electricity generation of both Australia and New Zealand combined.

Golfers vie for a coveted green jacket



April is a puzzle for [Rory McIlroy](#). It is the only month in which the world's second-ranked player has failed to win a solo golf tournament. Pundits like to remind him of this every spring before the Masters. The championship in Augusta, Georgia, which tees off on Thursday, has for 10 years been the only major title missing from the Northern Irishman's collection. A win on Sunday would make him the sixth player to win all four majors and complete golf's career grand slam.

Meanwhile, his rival [Scottie Scheffler](#) is eyeing his third Masters win in four years. The American is on a roll. He has topped the world rankings for the past 98 weeks, a streak bettered only by Tiger Woods (281 consecutive weeks). The odds are in his favour. Yet it will not just be a two-horse race. Golf fans could reel off a dozen potential winners, and Augusta's prettiest course is designed to confound.

Daily quiz



The Economist

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 QuizEspresso@economist.com. We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

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

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

It is well that there is no one without a fault; for he would not have a friend in the world.

William Hazlitt