

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

Binyamin Netanyahu said that a **Palestinian state** would “never happen”. Israel’s prime minister was responding to Australia, Britain and Canada **formally recognising Palestinian statehood**. Sir Keir Starmer, **Britain’s** prime minister, said he wanted to revive hope for a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Other Western countries, including France, are expected to follow suit on Monday at the UN General Assembly.

At **Charlie Kirk’s** memorial service **Donald Trump** accused the “radical left” of fomenting political violence. (In fact, extreme liberals are **probably not** responsible for most violence.) The president called Kirk—a right-wing activist who was murdered on September 10th— “a martyr for American freedom”. Kirk’s widow offered forgiveness to her husband’s killer. Tens of thousands of people turned out for the service in Arizona.

A bipartisan group of American lawmakers arrived in **Beijing** for talks with Chinese officials. The members of the House of Representatives, led by Adam Smith, a Democrat, met Li Qiang, China’s prime minister, as the countries try to improve ties. This week Mr Trump said China’s leader, Xi Jinping, approved a deal to

sell the American operations of [TikTok](#), a Chinese video-sharing app, though America's president gave few details.

**China** left its benchmark lending rates unchanged for the fourth straight month. The one-year- and five-year-loan prime rates remained at 3% and 3.5% respectively. The central bank's cautious approach is a response to mixed [economic signals](#). Although factory output and retail sales are weak, trade tensions with America have shown signs of easing. That makes officials reluctant to launch big monetary stimulus measures.

**Turkey's** Republican People's Party re-elected Ozgur Ozel as its leader, as the opposition prepares itself for [more pressure](#) from President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government. A court is expected to rule next month on whether Mr Ozel's original election as party chair in 2023 should be annulled, in a case widely seen as politically motivated. Several party officials, including Ekrem Imamoglu, the mayor of Istanbul, are in prison.

The **Democratic Republic of Congo** said it would lift a ban on cobalt exports in October, though it will still restrict supply. The central African country introduced the ban in February to [shore up the price of the metal](#), which is crucial for making batteries. Now miners will be able to export 96,000 tons per year in 2026 and 2027, according to Bloomberg.

**Hong Kong's** airport said it was considering suspending all flights for 36 hours, as the territory braced for **Super Typhoon Ragasa**. The storm is expected to batter Hong Kong on Tuesday and Wednesday. It could be the strongest typhoon to hit the territory in years, with winds of up to 220kmh (137mph).

**Figure of the day:** 12.6bn tonnes, the amount of carbon dioxide that China emitted from burning fossil fuels last year. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Getty Images

## Recognising Palestinian statehood

On Sunday Australia, Britain and Canada formally recognised a Palestinian state, bringing them into line with much of the rest of the world. Several other Western countries are expected to follow suit on Monday, during a conference at the UN General Assembly organised by France and Saudi Arabia. It aims to seek diplomatic steps towards ending nearly eight decades of Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

On the ground, though, that [state has never seemed further away](#). In the West Bank, the putative heart of a future Palestine, Israel is planning to build a new batch of settler homes that would in effect separate the northern and southern halves of the territory. In Gaza, meanwhile, Israel's war with Hamas is nearly two years old. The recent Israeli air strike on Qatar has put ceasefire negotiations on hold. The diplomatic theatre at the UN will grab the world's attention for a week. But it probably won't bring the end of the conflict any closer.



Photograph: Picture Alliance

## Google is back in antitrust court

Alphabet's Google is back in court for a second antitrust hearing on Monday, less than three weeks after dodging a bullet in another [anti-monopoly trial](#). A federal judge will decide what action to take against Google after declaring in April that it had illegally monopolised two digital-advertising markets. The justice department will argue that to restore competition, [Google should sell off](#) its exchange used for online auctions of display ads, and the tools it offers websites to sell ad space.

Google will respond that divestitures are unnecessary because the display-advertising business is in decline. It used a similar tactic to avoid a break-up in its previous trial, when it was accused of stifling competition in the search market. The judge in that case bought Google's argument that artificial intelligence had changed the nature of the search business. But AI is less of a [disruptive force](#) in online advertising. Google may not be so lucky a second time.



Photograph: Getty Images

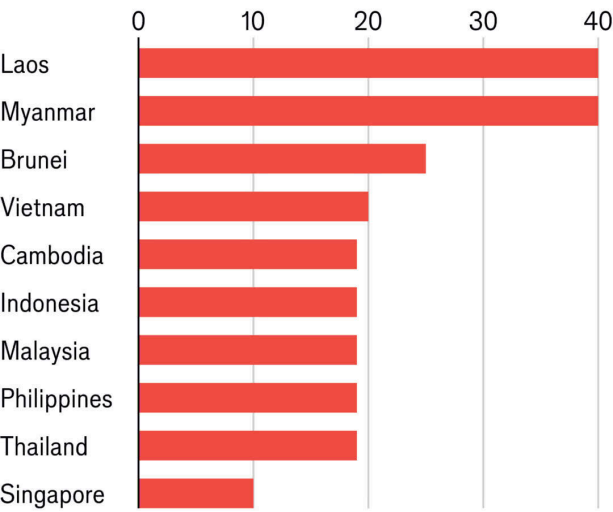
## South-East Asia reckons with America's tariffs

The [Association of South-East Asian Nations](#) is not known for its decisiveness. But Donald Trump's tariffs may be jolting the trade-dependent region into action. This week economic policymakers from the club's ten members will gather in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital. They will discuss how to deepen intra-regional trade and present a unified response to America.

The ministers no doubt hope to extract more from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which aims to ease trade between ASEAN and other countries in the Indo-Pacific, including China and Japan. The pact was heralded as the world's biggest trade deal on its launch in 2020. But it has [since been criticised](#) for its modest ambition (only a handful of countries have enjoyed tariff reductions). And even as ASEAN talks up unity in the face of America, many members have sought concessions from Mr Trump. More such wrangling could unfold this week: among those attending in Kuala Lumpur will be Jamieson Greer, America's trade representative.

**Common cause**

United States, reciprocal tariff rates, 2025\*, %  
ASEAN countries



\*Effective from August 7th

Source: Fitch



Photograph: Reuters

## Nicolás Maduro's grip over Venezuela

On Monday a UN fact-finding mission will present its latest annual report on the regime of Nicolás Maduro, Venezuela's despot. This year the UN focuses on what happened in the aftermath of a presidential election in July 2024. International observers agree it was stolen, a fact that Mr Maduro naturally contests. The report details how his regime has sought to silence and intimidate its critics.

One of its preferred methods is the arbitrary arrest: state-security goons in masks grab opposition activists, or even their entirely non-political relatives, from the street. Those nabbed often disappear incommunicado for months. One example cited in the report is Rafael Tudares, the son-in-law of the real winner of the election, Edmundo González. Mr Tudares was taken in January while accompanying his young children to school; his family haven't heard from him since. Opposition figures say the regime is weak. America is [applying high pressure](#). But for Venezuelans, the crackdown shows no sign of easing.





Photograph: Instar Images

## The world's greatest footballer

The Ballon d'Or is the most prestigious individual accolade in football. The prize recognises the best player in the world over the previous season. For a long time picking the men's winner was straightforward: it was usually deciding whether Argentina's Lionel Messi or Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo had enjoyed the better season. Between 2008 and 2023, Mr Messi won it eight times and Mr Ronaldo five.

Those players are past their peak. That makes the field more open. Voters, made up of football journalists, tend to give heavy weighting to performances in the Champions League, Europe's premier club competition. The trend augurs well for the favourite, Ousmane Dembele, a French forward whose club side, Paris Saint-Germain, won the tournament last season. His main challenger is probably Barcelona's [Lamine Yamal](#), a teenage sensation. Meanwhile in the women's competition Aitana Bonmatí, a Spanish midfielder who also plays for Barcelona, could claim her third prize in a row.





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:** Which female tennis player won the “Battle of the Sexes” against Bobby Riggs in 1973?

*A man possesses talent; genius  
possesses the man.*

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***Isaac Stern***