

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: AFP via Getty Images

An **Israeli** negotiating team will travel to Qatar on Sunday to discuss a [possible ceasefire](#) in **Gaza**. The office of Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister, said on Saturday that Hamas had asked for conditions that were “not acceptable”; they reportedly include an Israeli withdrawal to its positions before a previous, short-lived ceasefire in March. Donald Trump has called the proposal for a 60-day truce “final”.

At least 52 people were killed and dozens more are missing after **heavy floods** swept through **Texas**. Many of the victims were girls staying at a summer camp near the Guadalupe river; 24 are still unaccounted for. Emergency workers have rescued several hundred people and are searching for more. Greg Abbott, Texas’s governor, signed an emergency disaster declaration.

**Ayatollah Ali Khamenei**, Iran’s supreme leader, appeared in public for the first time since the 12-day war with Israel, according to Iranian state media. Footage released on Saturday shows him attending a Shia religious ceremony at his compound. [Mr Khamenei](#) had spent weeks hiding in a bunker while the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps called the shots [during the war](#).

**Britain** re-established diplomatic relations with **Syria**. David Lammy, Britain's foreign secretary, met [Ahmed al-Sharaa](#), Syria's president, in Damascus, where he announced that Britain would provide the country with £94.5m (\$129m) in aid. Mr Lammy is the first British minister to visit Syria since the beginning of the civil war in 2011 and the fall of the Assad regime last year.

Weeks after his [falling out](#) with Mr Trump, **Elon Musk** claimed he would create a new political party. "Today, the America Party is formed to give you back your freedom," wrote Mr Musk on X, his social-media site. Yet on Saturday evening the world's richest man had not yet filed paperwork to register the party, which would need to be disclosed to the Federal Election Commission.

**Foxconn** reported revenue of \$62bn in the second quarter of 2025, a year-on-year increase of 16%. The Taiwanese [electronics firm](#) said much of the quarter's growth came from rising demand for its artificial-intelligence products. Foxconn, which is best known for assembling Apple's iPhone, also makes servers using chips developed by [Nvidia](#), America's leading AI chipmaker.

The **Seine** opened for public swimming for the first time since 1923. Bathers entered the river at three free sites in Paris. Swimming in the [Seine](#) had previously been banned because of concerns that effluent made the water unsafe. The Seine was used for several swimming events when France's capital hosted the Olympic Games last year—a test-run for opening the river to the public.

**Word of the week:** Kleptosomes, sac-like structures which sea slugs use to store chloroplasts. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Alamy

## **An awkward BRICS summit in Brazil**

On Sunday representatives from the BRICS will meet in Rio de Janeiro for their [annual summit](#). The BRICS, which was founded by Brazil, Russia, India and China in 2009, now includes 11 countries. Iran joined last year. Originally the bloc gave emerging economies a way to exert global influence. But as geopolitical tensions have increased, it has started to look more anti-Western.

The two-day meeting will be the BRICS's first big gathering since Israel and America bombed Iran. Brazil strongly criticised the attack, risking America's ire. Still, the host wants to focus the summit on less controversial topics, such as vaccine co-operation and green energy. It may fail. Russia and China may try to discuss plans to diminish the dollar's role in global commerce, an idea that Donald Trump hates. Iran could use the summit to lambast America. So far Brazil has avoided unwanted attention from Mr Trump. Hosting an anti-Western pow-wow could change that.

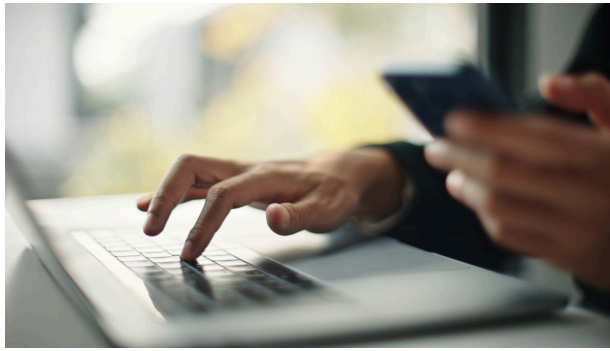


Photograph: AP

## **The Kremlin's strategy of death and distraction**

Vladimir Putin shows no sign of slowing his war in Ukraine. On Thursday Russia's president reportedly told Donald Trump that he would only seek to end the conflict once its "root causes" had been addressed. By that, Mr Putin means making Ukraine a country under Russia's thumb. Mr Trump said he was "very disappointed" by the call. But he has taken little action to pressure Mr Putin towards peace. Hours after the leaders spoke, Russia launched its largest drone attack yet on its neighbour.

Inside Russia, the Kremlin is tightening repression. Last week it introduced an order curbing what citizens can say about government institutions or preparations to mobilise more people to fight. Meanwhile officials are driving consumption as a means of distraction. Moscow's mayor is hosting a [three-month summer festival](#), replete with flower displays, open-air cooking classes and artisan ice-cream kiosks. Yet summers in Russia are short—and Mr Putin's regime offers no vision of the future.



Photograph: Getty Images

## **Anti-phishing training may be useless**

Phishing attacks trick victims into handing over personal details and passwords, often by sending emails that impersonate messages from legitimate businesses. Such [scams](#) can be costly. According to America's Federal Bureau of Investigation, American companies reported losses of \$70m from phishing and similar scams last year.

To avoid falling victim, many businesses buy expensive anti-phishing training for their staff. But a study by academics at Purdue University suggests they are wasting their money. The researchers divided 12,511 employees of an American fintech firm into three groups. They either got no anti-phishing tuition, a standard 15-video "awareness" course or the same videos plus interactive exercises. The researchers later subjected the workers to a mock phishing attack. One in ten employees clicked on the fake links regardless of training; the most expensive interactive lessons only raised by 1% the likelihood that an employee would report an attack. Business leaders may have to find another way to avoid becoming phish food.



Photograph: Reuters

## **A test of American football prowess**

On Sunday the United States will play Mexico in Houston, Texas, in the final of the CONCACAF Gold Cup, the ugliest acronym in the beautiful game. The winner of the tournament, which is for men's national teams in North and Central America and the Caribbean, will receive a boost to their [preparations](#) for the World Cup, which begins in just under a year in North America.

The United States is trying to raise the profile of its men's team. It has splurged to hire Mauricio Pochettino, a well-respected Argentine coach, paying him \$6m a year to run its men's team. During the Gold Cup, Mr Pochettino has been without many of his best players. Still, he has steered a second-string side through difficult assignments against Costa Rica and Guatemala. Mexico, whose star striker is Raúl Jiménez, a forward for England's Fulham at club level, will provide a much stiffer test. The game should provide both teams with a challenge as they prepare for next year's main event.

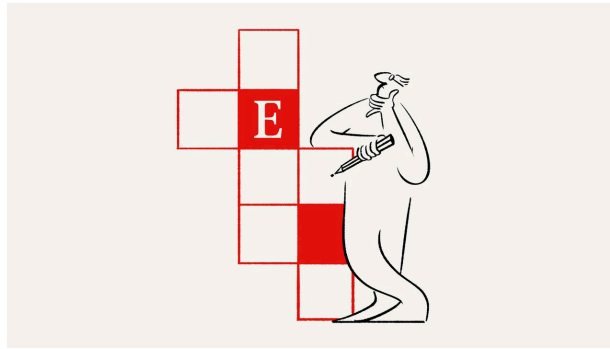


Illustration: The Economist

## Mini 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

*1 across* Artist clutches magic stick in central Africa (6)

*2 across* Slight reorganisation brings illumination (6)

*3 across* Self-contained frilly collar for the nape of the neck (6)

*1 down* Several cheer upset politician under pressure (6,6)

### Factual

*1 across* Country that last month signed a truce with the Democratic Republic of Congo (6)

*2 across* Could be traffic, Northern, electric or lungs (6)

3 across An untidy person (6)

1 down Britain's chancellor for many years to come, says Starmer (6,6)

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

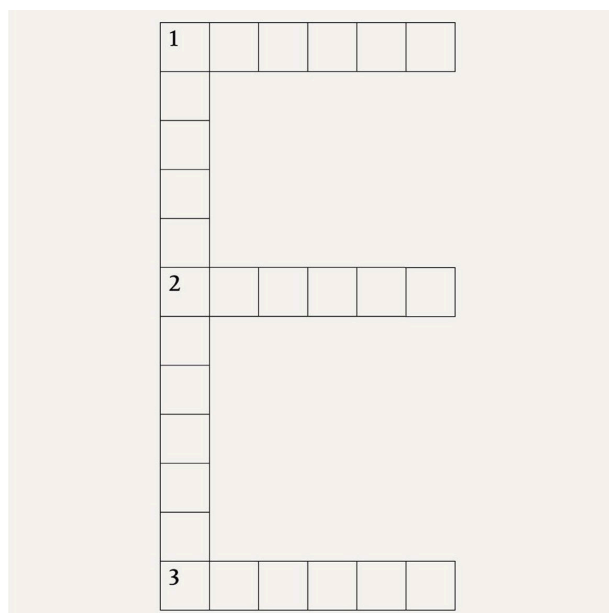


Image: The Economist





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:

**Fred Edwards**, Toronto, Canada

**Peter Graham**, Bertrange, Luxembourg

**Isabelle Ljunggren**, Gothenburg, Sweden

They all gave the correct answers of: clocks, sounds, fix, Sky and Yellow river. The theme is songs by Coldplay: Clocks, Speed of Sound, Fix You, A Sky Full of Stars and Yellow

The questions were:

**Monday:** Horology is the study of what?

**Tuesday:** Plymouth, Puget and Roanoke are all examples of which geographical feature?

**Wednesday:** What word can mean both an awkward predicament and a narcotic dose for an addict?

**Thursday:** Rupert Murdoch founded which British satellite TV company?

**Friday:** The Huanghe river is better known by what name in English?

*All music is folk music. I ain't  
never heard a horse sing a song.*

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***Louis Armstrong***