

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: AFP

Sergei Lavrov, **Russia's** foreign minister, said that his country had “no intentions” of attacking NATO or EU countries. His remarks at the UN General Assembly come at a time of heightened tension in Europe, with multiple Russian drones recently [breaching Polish airspace](#) and Russian jets doing the same above Estonia. Mr Lavrov also said that “any aggression” against his country would be met with a “decisive response”.

America's Department of Justice issued a subpoena for records related to **Fani Willis's** travel history, according to the *New York Times*. It is not yet clear why. In 2023 [Ms Willis](#), a district attorney in Georgia, charged Mr Trump with election subversion. Earlier the president suggested that his administration would prosecute “others” after the DOJ indicted [James Comey](#), a former director of the FBI.

Drones were once again spotted in **Danish** skies on Friday night, this time near some military facilities, among them the large Karup air base. These sightings followed others earlier in the week that led to the closures of various Danish airports. Mette Frederiksen, Denmark's prime minister, has already voiced her suspicions of Russian involvement.

Donald Trump said he would send troops to “War ravaged” **Portland**, Oregon to deal with “domestic terrorists”. He said the soldiers would defend immigration facilities that are “under siege from... Antifa, and other domestic terrorists”. One facility, which is being investigated for possible permit violations, has been the site of multiple protests.

America’s State Department said it would revoke the visa of **Gustavo Petro**, the president of Colombia, after he made some incendiary comments at a pro-Palestinian rally in New York on Friday. “I ask all the soldiers of the army of the United States not to point their guns at people. Disobey the orders of Trump,” he said. He reportedly headed home soon after the demonstration.

Electronic Arts, a video-game [publisher](#), is reportedly close to being acquired for around \$50bn by a group of investors. The consortium includes Affinity Partners, a private-equity firm run by Jared Kushner, Mr Trump’s son-in-law, as well as Saudi Arabia’s [Public Investment Fund](#). If a deal goes through, it would be one of the largest leveraged buyouts ever.

American drugmakers’ stock rose slightly on Friday after Mr Trump announced new **tariffs** of 100% on imports of branded or patented **drugs**. The [duties](#) will take effect on October 1st but won’t apply to companies building manufacturing plants in America. Foreign companies AstraZeneca and GSK have already pledged more than \$350bn this year for new manufacturing and research facilities in the country.

Word of the week: Hanuman, the Hindu monkey-god of strength, courage and devotion. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Getty Images

The promise of Palestinian statehood—and the reality

The Palestinians had a good week at the [UN General Assembly in New York](#). Ten Western countries, including Britain and France, announced plans to recognise a Palestinian state. Donald Trump met with Arab leaders and said he “will not allow Israel” to annex the occupied West Bank. For now, at least, America’s president also seems to have dropped his talk of [turning Gaza into a beach resort](#): he endorsed a plan to end the war and rebuild the ruined enclave.

Yet on the ground reality still trumps diplomacy. Dozens of Palestinians are being killed each day as Israel presses ahead with [a major offensive in Gaza city](#). Displaced families are squeezing into Gaza’s crowded south, where a tent can cost \$1,000. In the West Bank, meanwhile, Israel shut the only border crossing with Jordan for much of the week, leaving 2m Palestinians unable to leave. Thousands of miles from New York, the prospect of statehood seems further away than ever.



Photograph: AP

Seychelles heads to the polls

Voting in Africa's richest country concludes on Saturday. Seychelles' election will test its fragile democracy. The strongest challenger to the incumbent, President Wavel Ramkalawan of the Linyon Demokratik Seselwa Party (pictured), is Patrick Herminie, whose United Seychelles Party ruled from 1977 to 2020.

Mr Ramkalawan's victory in 2020 was Seychelles' first peaceful transfer of power between two parties. But some accuse the president, who has been squeezing Seychelles' independent press, of drifting towards authoritarianism. In 2023 his government prosecuted Mr Herminie for [witchcraft](#) (those charges were later dropped).

The president's re-election campaign is also dogged by criticism that he has sidelined Seychelles' conservation efforts; his government recently leased land to Qatari-backed developers to build a resort near a UNESCO World Heritage reserve. His government insists that its reforms have powered Seychelles' economy, pointing to low debt and inflation as well as a post-covid tourism bounce. His opponent, meanwhile, has his eyes on a party comeback.



Photograph: AP

America's immigration officials turn to AI

America's Immigrations and Customs Enforcement is [having trouble meeting its targets](#). In June it arrested 30,000 people. That is a lot compared with the 8,000 arrested in that month the year before. But it is far short of the administration's target of 90,000 a month.

Like many unimaginative employers, the administration has decided that the solution is artificial intelligence. This week it began using ImmigrationOS, an AI system designed by Palantir, a data firm named after the all-seeing stones in J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings". The system will sift through huge amounts of data—some of it collected with questionable legal authority from government agencies—to help ICE with "streamlining selection and apprehension" of illegal immigrants. Given the [well-documented problems](#) and biases of AI systems, critics worry that ImmigrationOS might lead to wrongful arrests and deportations. But considering the administration's [love of security theatre](#), this may be a feature, not a bug.



Photograph: Getty Images

A dramatic final for the Red Roses

On Saturday England and Canada will face off in the [Women's Rugby](#) World Cup final. So far England, the host of the games, has sailed through their group. The team handed out heavy defeats in front of big crowds to America, Samoa, Australia and Scotland. Their first real challenge came during the semi-finals, where England beat a competitive French side 35-17.

Expect the concluding match at London's Twickenham stadium, the home of English rugby, to be thrilling. Roughly 80,000 fans will be in attendance, a record for the women's final. After suffering narrow losses against New Zealand in the previous two World Cup finals, England's players have no shortage of motivation. The last time England won the tournament was 2014. There are just two survivors from that squad: Alex Matthews, a forward, and Natasha Hunt, a back. England's opponents that day? Canada.



Photograph: Reuters

Weekend profile: Takaichi Sanae, the hardline nationalist who may soon lead Japan

“Overnight Success”, a thumping 1980s pop song, blared as Takaichi Sanae stepped up to the podium to announce her candidacy to lead Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). The music choice was inapt; this is the 64-year-old lawmaker’s third attempt. She spoke on topics such as the economy and geopolitics, and made little of her status as a female candidate. A nearby banner did not ignore her chance to make history; it called for her to become Japan’s first woman prime minister.

Ms Takaichi, a nationalist security hawk, is one of two front-runners in the race to lead the LDP that will be decided on October 4th. The winner will almost certainly become the country’s next prime minister, replacing [Ishiba Shigeru](#), who recently stepped down following two electoral drubbings. Her main rival is Koizumi Shinjiro, the son of a popular former prime minister. Ms Takaichi is a torchbearer of the party’s hard right and casts herself as heir to Abe Shinzo, who endorsed her before his assassination in 2022.

Her background contrasts with the dynastic pedigrees of many LDP grandees. She grew up in Nara in western Japan. In her youth, she rode motorbikes and played in a heavy-metal band. Ms Takaichi was a television anchor before she was elected to parliament in 1993, and has held senior cabinet positions, including minister for

internal affairs and for economic security. She cites Margaret Thatcher as a role model.

Ms Takaichi's campaign slogan is to "push Japan to the top again". Her economic policy includes tax cuts and large increases in public spending. She is open to issuing more [government debt](#)—already 135% of GDP on a net basis—to support households hit by inflation and to invest in sectors such as semiconductors and energy. Analysts predict that her victory could weaken the yen and push up bond yields.

Her nationalism draws ardent supporters. She wants to strengthen Japan's armed forces, and has downplayed Japan's wartime aggression. Though she may become Japan's first female prime minister, she is hardly a feminist: she opposes [separate surnames for married couples](#) and insists the [imperial family line must remain male](#).

The LDP has ruled almost without interruption for seven decades. But after a string of scandals, it no longer holds a majority in either chamber of parliament. Public support has grown for [Sanseito, a hard-right populist outfit](#). Led by moderates, the party fears losing its right-wing base. Ms Takaichi is trying to win those voters back. For her supporters, she is a rallying figure. To her critics, her victory would mark a dangerous lurch rightwards.



Illustration: The Economist

Mini crossword

We now publish an interactive edition of our crossword every day, 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 - Look noble (4)
- 2 across - Oddly grim, no? Have a drink (3)
- 3 across - Flog to the left. What sport! (4)
- 1 down - Drunken pony gang? Yes, in a hermit state (9)

Straight clues

- 1 across - A member of the upper chamber of Britain's Parliament (4)
- 2 across - Spirit affectionately known as Mother's ruin (3)
- 3 across - Ryder Cup sport (4)
- 1 down - Capital city of North Korea (9)

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.

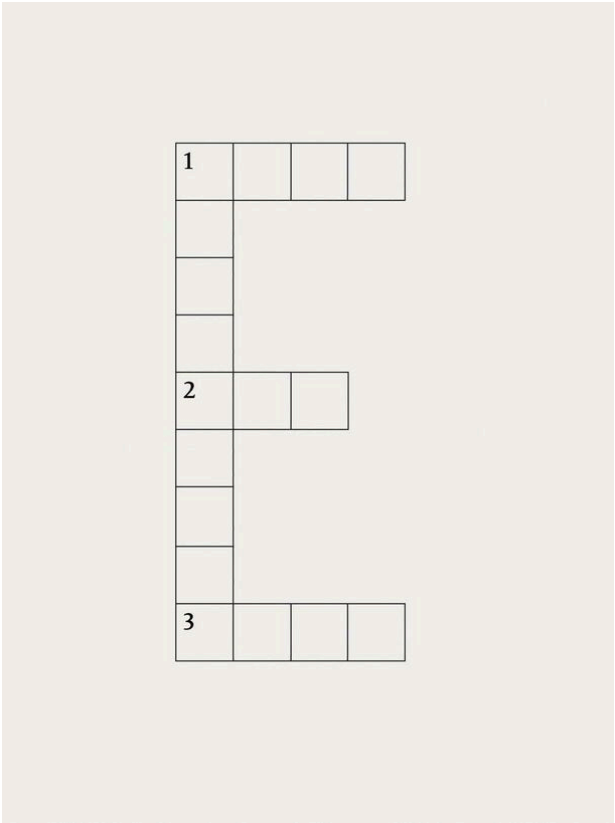


Image: The Economist



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:

Katie Cho, Palo Alto, California, America

David Harris, Powell River, Canada

Diego Yribarren Arocha, Monclova, Mexico

They all gave the correct answers of: Billie Jean King, sound, the Pacific Ocean, Oklahoma and carousel. The theme is Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals: "The King and I", "The Sound of Music", "South Pacific", "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel".

The questions were:

Monday: Which female tennis player won the "Battle of the Sexes" against Bobby Riggs in 1973?

Tuesday: What travels at around 1,235 kilometres an hour?

Wednesday: Which geographical feature covers around 165m square kilometres?

Thursday: Which territory became an American state in 1907?

Friday: California's Great America amusement park in Santa Clara features the world's tallest version of what ride?

*Doing easily what others find
difficult is talent; doing what is
impossible for talent is genius.*

Henri Frederic Amiel