

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: AFP via Getty Images

Nine people suffered life-threatening injuries after attackers indiscriminately stabbed passengers on a train in **Cambridgeshire** in eastern England. Two people were arrested at the scene. Police said that they had not determined a motive for the attack, but that counter-terrorism officers were involved in the investigation. Sir Keir Starmer, Britain's prime minister, described the incident as "appalling".

Canada's prime minister, **Mark Carney**, said he had apologised privately to Donald Trump for an **anti-tariff ad** that had "offended" the American president. He said that he had asked Doug Ford, Ontario's premier, not to run the clip that **prompted Mr Trump** to sever trade negotiations with Canada in late October. The pair met at the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation gathering in South Korea.

Tens of thousands of **Serbians protested** on the first anniversary of a fatal accident that sparked months of **anti-government demonstrations**. Last November 16 people were killed when the canopy of a railway station in Novi Sad, Serbia's second-largest city, collapsed. The disaster was blamed on graft. Student-led protests have since **demanded political change**.

**Berkshire Hathaway** reported selling about \$12.5bn of stock and buying \$6.4bn in the last quarter. Since late 2022 Warren Buffett's firm has sold roughly \$212bn worth of shares, while purchasing only \$34bn. Mr Buffett, who [plans to step down](#) at the end of this year, seems to think equities are overpriced. He looks set to leave his successor, Greg Abel, a record cash hoard of more than \$350bn.

Mr Trump said he would stop all aid to **Nigeria** and might send in troops "guns-a-blazing" unless the government took action to stop "Islamic Terrorists" killing Christians. On Friday the Trump administration designated Nigeria "a country of particular concern" for failing to stop Christian persecution. Earlier Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Nigeria's president, denied the country was religiously intolerant.

As America's government shutdown enters its second month, uncertainty surrounds the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programme**, which was expected to run out of money on Saturday. On Friday a judge ordered the Trump administration to tap emergency funds to [sustain the scheme](#), better known as food stamps. The president said he would comply once the courts clarified "how we can legally" supply the money.

The Los Angeles Dodgers secured a late victory over the Toronto Blue Jays to win an unusually international **World Series**. The Dodgers came from behind to tie the seventh game of the series at 4-4 in the last inning of regular play. A home run in the second extra inning made them the first team to successfully retain baseball's top title in 25 years.

**Word of the week:** *Sisu*, a Finnish attitude to life that draws on inner strength and perseverance in the face of adversity. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Reuters

## Putin's Pokrovsk deadline

Vladimir Putin has reportedly ordered Russian forces to seize Pokrovsk, in eastern [Ukraine](#), by mid-November. They have been trying, at great cost, to take the logically important former coal-mining town since July last year. Mr Putin's deadline is likely to be missed. But the situation has become critical as Russian forces attempt to encircle the town.

Russia does not yet have full control over any positions in Pokrovsk, according to the Institute for the Study of War, an American think-tank. However, small groups of its soldiers have infiltrated the town. And 1,200 civilians are more or less trapped. Ukrainian forces have mounted limited counter-offensives. But Russia's ten-to-one advantage in [drones](#) around Pokrovsk is hampering their ability to move troops and equipment.

The fall of Pokrovsk would not immediately threaten the four cities of Ukraine's Donetsk "fortress belt" that lie between 60km and 90km to the north. But it would remove a key defensive barrier.



Photograph: Reuters

## A new course for Japan's car giants

Automakers are showing off their whizziest designs at the Japan Mobility Show, a gathering of [automotive](#) and technology firms running this weekend in Tokyo. Toyota flaunted a redesigned and sleek Corolla. “Wanting to drive a car that looks cool...I think that many of us share such a desire,” said the firm’s chief executive.

Yet in the boardrooms of [Japan’s automakers](#), the mood is far from cool. Carmakers have largely absorbed Donald Trump’s tariffs on vehicles and car parts, taking a hit to their margins. Eventually, most analysts expect, they will pass on the higher costs to consumers.

Meanwhile they are rushing to catch up with [Chinese rivals](#). Toyota has inked several joint ventures with Chinese firms such as BYD, giving it access to the battery technology required to compete in China’s fast-growing electric-vehicle market. Other Japanese carmakers, including Nissan and Mazda, have, too. Japan’s automaking prestige now hinges on its firms’ ability to re-engineer themselves.



Photograph: Getty Images

## How politics shapes the world's clocks

On Sunday Americans will turn their clocks back an hour, ending [Daylight Saving Time](#) (DST) and resuming a debate about what time it ought to be. The Senate this week failed to agree on a proposal, backed by Donald Trump, to make DST permanent. Opponents argue that darker winter mornings could endanger schoolchildren. For now, America will keep resetting its clocks twice a year, a practice that began as a wartime energy-saving measure.

Non-Americans argue about [time](#), too. Around the world, governments use time zones to make political statements. China runs entirely on “Beijing time”. In western cities, such as Kashgar, the sun thus rises after 10am. Spain, whose longitudinal position overlaps with Britain’s, uses Central European Time—a legacy of General Francisco Franco, a dictator who adopted Nazi Germany’s time zone in 1940. Russia has moved the parts of Ukraine it has conquered onto Moscow time. In a fractious world, expect more leaders to make statements by the clock.



Photograph: Alamy

## Chimps show human-like reasoning

The view that only humans think rationally is being put to the test by ever-more-sophisticated [artificial-intelligence](#) models. And chimpanzees. A new study of our closest relative, published in *Science*, a journal, suggests that the human mind may be less distinctive than previously thought.

In a series of experiments, researchers hid a piece of apple in one of two boxes and asked the [chimpanzees](#) to find it, offering a mix of helpful and misleading clues about where it was. The animals revised their choice with each new clue, weighing a clue's strength, discarding anything misleading and keeping track of what they knew. It is the first evidence of this kind of reasoning in a non-human animal.

The findings suggest that the common ancestor of humans and chimps may have possessed this skill millions of years ago—meaning that rational thought could predate human [language](#) and culture. They may reshape how humans approach intelligence, whether human or artificial.

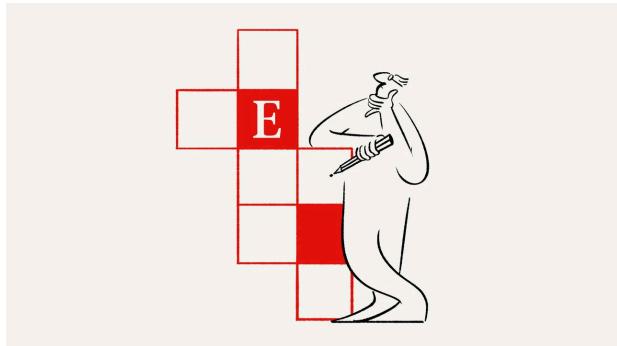


Illustration: The Economist

## Mini crossword

We publish a new interactive edition of our crossword daily, allowing you to enter and check the answers and see explanations. Try it [here](#). Or, if you prefer, use the grid below.

There are two sets of clues, one for seasoned cruciverbalists and the other for less experienced solvers. Both give the same answers.

### Cryptic clues

*1 across* - Anxiety in the style of René Magritte, initially (5)

*2 across* - Film five papers on executive order (5)

*3 across* - Might get alternative city leader (5)

*1 down* - Protection from snake bite meant I've no malignancy inside (9)

### Straight clues

*1 across* - Warning klaxon; state of fear (5)

*2 across* - Visual accompaniment to audio (5)

*3 across* - Position up for grabs in the city that never sleeps (5)

*1 down* - Something that can neutralise a snake bite (9)

Email all four answers, along with your home city and country, by 9am GMT on Monday to [\[email protected\]](mailto:[email protected]). We will pick three winners at random and crown them in Tuesday's edition.

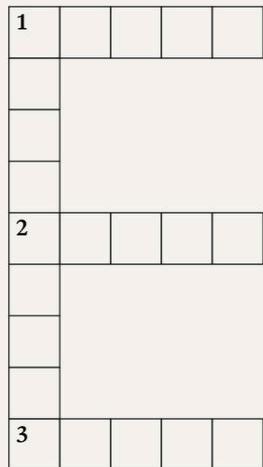




Illustration: The Economist

## 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:

**Tetsuyuki Maruyama**, Ito, Japan

**Orla McRann**, Dublin, Ireland

**Michael Zenaitis**, Calgary, Canada

They all gave the correct answers of: chicks, sledge, St Andrews, the heart and a pointer. The theme is musical groups with sisters in them: The Chicks (formerly the Dixie Chicks), Sister Sledge, The Andrews Sisters, Heart and the Pointer Sisters. The questions were:

**Monday:** What is the general term for baby birds?

**Tuesday:** What British word for a toboggan is also a verb that describes the tactic of insulting sporting opponents?

**Wednesday:** Which university did Prince William and his wife, Kate, attend?

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

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

*If you want to gather honey, don't kick over the beehive.*

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**Dale Carnegie**