

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter

Israel's security cabinet voted through [a plan to seize control](#) of all of **Gaza** indefinitely. Bezalel Smotrich, the finance minister, said there would be “no withdrawal”, not even in exchange for hostages. Ze’ev Elkin, another minister, said that ramping up the offensive over the next few months would open a “window of opportunity” to secure a ceasefire before Donald Trump’s visit next week.

Israel's battle with the **Houthis** in Yemen also heated up. Israel’s armed forces said they struck Hodeidah Port and nearby infrastructure, one day after the [Iran-backed rebels](#) fired a missile that landed near Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv. Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister, vowed that retaliation “will not happen in one bang, but there will be many bangs”.

OpenAI will allow its non-profit board to retain control over the company as it moves to a for-profit model. The artificial-intelligence firm, which was recently valued at \$300bn, was [founded as a non-profit](#) in 2015 and later added a for-profit subsidiary. The non-profit board ousted Sam Altman, the CEO and co-founder, in 2023, only to re-hire him after an investor revolt.

Russia said Ukraine had launched a **drone attack** on **Moscow** for a second consecutive night. Officials temporarily closed all four airports in Russia’s capital and said that there were no casualties. The mayor of Kharkiv, a city in Ukraine, said Russia had also carried out drone strikes overnight. The war is increasingly becoming [a battle of the drones](#).

Linda McMahon, America’s education secretary, said that **Harvard** would no longer be eligible for federal grants. In a coruscating

letter to its president, Ms McMahon accused the [university](#) of “ugly racism” in its admission policy and of inviting foreign students to its campus “who engage in violent behaviour”, among many other complaints. She said that Harvard should now operate as a privately funded institution.

Scott Bessent, America’s treasury secretary, sought to persuade the world’s wealthiest [investors](#) to continue betting on America. Speaking at the Milken Conference in California, Mr Bessent touted future tax cuts and said that Mr Trump did not only want to “drill, baby, drill” but also to “build, baby, build” by embracing “an ambitious deregulation agenda”. Later Mr Bessent suggested America was “very close” to cutting trade deals with other countries.

Zhao Xintong became the first Chinese player to win the world **snooker** championship. China is increasingly embracing—and giving zip to—the [fusty British game](#). Mr Zhao and many of his compatriots base themselves in Sheffield, considered the sport’s home. It was reported that 150m people in China tuned in to watch the 28-year-old beat Mark Williams, a Welshman and three-time champion.

Figure of the day: More than \$19m. The collective value of wagers on Polymarket, Kalshi and Betfair—three prediction markets—on identifying the next pope. [See who’s the favourite.](#)

We update The world in brief on our app and website as news happens. Check back throughout the day for our latest analysis.

In a turbulent week of news, have you kept up with the headlines? Play this week’s [pint-sized news quiz](#) and find out what you may have missed.



Photograph: Reuters

Carney meets Trump

“President Trump is trying to break us so that America can own us,” declared Mark Carney, Canada’s new prime minister, in his victory speech last week. “That will never, ever happen,” he pledged. Anti-Trump rhetoric may have scored Mr Carney points on the campaign trail. But it will now make his job that much harder as he visits the White House on Tuesday to meet the man he accuses of “betrayal”.

Mr Carney must persuade America—which buys three-quarters of Canadian exports—to cut his country some slack on tariffs. Canada’s economy is looking fragile. In February GDP shrank; productivity looks weak. Trade figures for March, released on Tuesday, are expected to show a widening deficit. In February, exports fell by more than 5%—including steep drops in cars, lumber and steel. Mr Carney wants to diversify to Asia and Europe, but re-routing oil and other goods is costly. Still, as America’s biggest customer, a major energy supplier and a potential source of critical minerals, Canada has leverage. Mr Carney needs every bit of it.



Photograph: EPA

Merz takes office in Germany

When the Bundestag elects Friedrich Merz as Germany's tenth postwar chancellor on Tuesday, it will be with more gravity than grandeur. Inaugurations in Germany lack the pomp of those in France or America, and government formation moves at a geological pace: it is six months since the coalition collapse that precipitated the election won by the Christian Democrats in February. Mr Merz, their [irascible, unpredictable leader](#), takes office amid widespread scepticism: just 38% of Germans are happy to see him as chancellor.

Abroad, expectations are higher. Mr Merz's rapid post-election move to [open the spending taps](#) for defence was welcomed by Germany's allies. He promises to [ditch the torpor](#) that characterised the European policy of his predecessor, Olaf Scholz. On Wednesday Mr Merz will spend his first full day in office visiting Paris and Warsaw. A blitz of summitry will follow. With the world watching, Mr Merz must now convince the country that elected him.

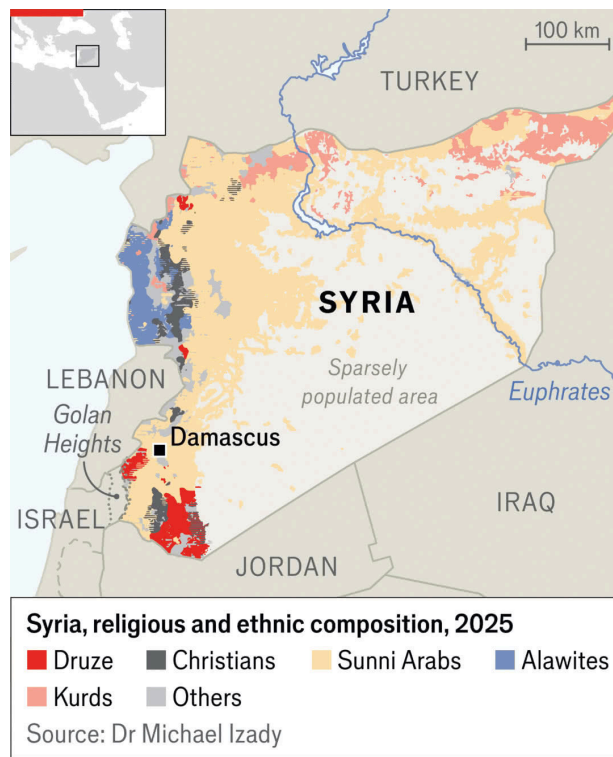


Photograph: Reuters

The Druze dilemma

The violence has ebbed, but the fear remains. More than 100 people have been killed in days of sectarian bloodshed in Syria. It began over a brief audio recording of a Druze cleric allegedly insulting the Prophet Muhammad. (The cleric in question says it was not his voice in the clip.) That sparked days of attacks by Sunni radicals, many of them with ties to Syria's new government.

Security forces have since restored calm. But [the Druze](#)—adherents of a small, esoteric faith—feel stuck. The group is segregated (marriage with outsiders is forbidden) but politically pragmatic. Many distrust Syria's Islamist rulers, who took power after Bashar al-Assad was overthrown in December. But they are torn about whether to seek support from Israel, which has appointed itself the protector of the Syrian Druze: it carried out several rounds of air strikes in recent days, including one near the presidential palace in Damascus. Some welcome Israel's help. Others fear it makes them a bigger target.





Photograph: EPA

Trump's immigration policy in the spotlight

[Kristi Noem](#), the secretary of homeland security (pictured), will testify in front of Congress for the first time since her confirmation hearings earlier this year. Expect tame questions in the Senate—certainly when compared with the grilling she can expect from the House about the Trump administration's immigration policy.

Until now Ms Noem has largely stuck to friendly media interviews. Tuesday's interrogation will offer the first opportunity for serious questioning about the legality of the administration's [deportation policy](#). Days before the hearing a Trump-appointed judge blocked the administration from further deportations under the Alien Enemies Act of 1798. The case of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, who was wrongly deported to El Salvador and whom the administration refuses to return to America, will also likely come up. Although Republicans are generally supportive of Mr Trump and his nominees, those of them unhappy with the pace of deportations may also ask Ms Noem some hard questions.



Photograph: Eyevine

A restaurant guru's regretful read

Keith McNally's restaurants are all unique, but instantly recognisable. The lighting is warm, the walls yellowish, and the mirrors copious and large: not Parisian so much as an American's Parisian fantasy. They are fantastically successful, attracting celebrities and star-gazers, the well-heeled and the aspirational. The food will be perfectly prepared, unchallenging as bistro fare, but elevated by a whiff of luxury.

Now 73, Mr McNally has gone from a working-class London upbringing to Manhattan celebrity status. He has become an entertainingly scabrous presence on social media, calling James Corden, for instance, a "tiny cretin of a man". Despite the promise of those rich raw materials online, his new memoir, "I Regret Almost Everything", is decidedly half-baked. Meandering, navel-gazing and superficial, it has the self-deprecating yet self-aggrandising tone of a Brit who's made good. The book's editor should have prodded Mr McNally to get past what happened to why and how. Alas. Read him on Instagram, and choose a different book.



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.

Tuesday: What deadly game does Christopher Walken play in a memorable scene in *The Deer Hunter*?

Monday: Which TV show starred Ricardo Montalban as Mr Roarke and Herve Villechaize as his assistant, Tattoo?



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 clues

1 across Sounds like you glance at an African country (6)

2 across A maker of graphics cards: initially artificial intelligence demanded its video-game nicknacks, repurposing them (6)

3 across An espresso, Vietnamese-style, involves a communist (6)

1 down Tainted unions messed up global organisation (6, 7)

Factual clues

1 across Kampala is the capital of this African country (6)

2 across This semiconductor superstar is having trouble doing business in China (5)

3 across The Russian word for a workers’ council (6)

1 down Founded 80 years ago, this bloc is facing a cash crunch (6,7)

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

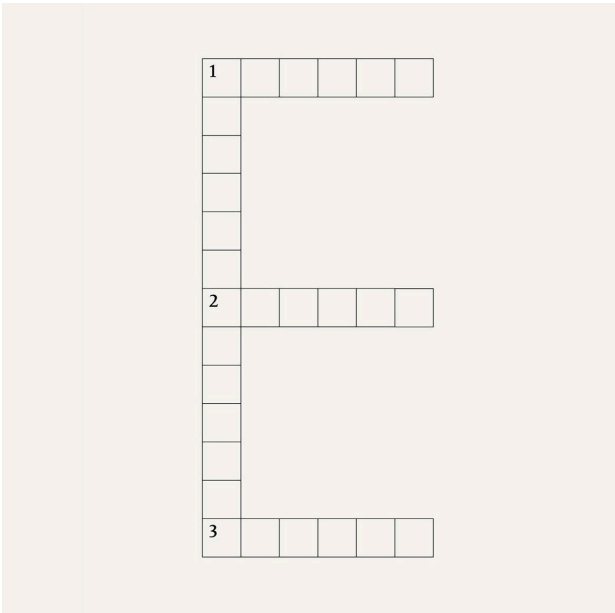


Image: .

*Civilisation began the first time
an angry person cast a word
instead of a rock.*

Sigmund Freud