

Catch up: Russian strike kills dozens in Ukraine; Turkey requests to join BRICS



A **Russian** missile attack killed more than 50 people and injured more than 219 in Poltava, a city in central **Ukraine**. The strike destroyed part of an educational institute and a nearby hospital, according to Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine's president. A statement by the country's Ministry of Defence said that many are still trapped underneath rubble. Mr Zelensky also [repeated calls](#) for more Western air defences and for allies to allow the use of long-range weapons so Ukraine can strike deeper into Russian territory.

Turkey submitted a request to join the BRICS in an attempt to forge [alliances](#) outside of the West. The group—which initially comprised Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—has been expanding in recent years. In 2024 it welcomed four new members, including Iran and Saudi Arabia. Their admission reflects how geopolitics is changing: the world is becoming more multipolar.

At least 12 **migrants** died while trying to cross the **English Channel** after a boat capsized off the coast of Le Portel in northern France. The French coastguard said that more than 50 other

migrants were rescued, with several needing urgent medical care. It is the [deadliest disaster](#) in the Channel this year.

The trial of **Martin Winterkorn**, the former boss of **Volkswagen**, a carmaker, began in **Germany**. [In 2015](#) Volkswagen was found to have [rigged emissions](#) tests, allowing their vehicles to produce illegal levels of pollution. Mr Winterkorn is accused of fraud, market manipulation and perjury; he denies all charges. If found guilty, Mr Winterkorn could face up to ten years in prison.

Linda Sun, an ex-aide to **New York's** current and former governors, was charged with acting as a foreign agent to **China**. Prosecutors accuse Ms Sun of working on China's behalf—blocking Taiwanese officials' access to New York officials, for example. She allegedly earned millions of dollars in exchange; she and her husband were also charged with money-laundering conspiracy. They pleaded not guilty.

At least 129 prisoners died during a failed escape attempt in the **Democratic Republic of Congo**. Many were killed during a stampede, officials said. Prison guards also shot around 24 inmates, according to Shabani Lukoo, the country's interior minister. The [prison](#) was about ten times over capacity. In 2017 more than 4,000 prisoners escaped from it.

Pope Francis arrived in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority country. Catholics make up about 3% of the population. Francis aims to develop inter-faith dialogue there. During his 12-day trip across Asia he will fly some 30,000km and visit four countries. At age 87, Francis is making the longest trip of his [papacy](#).

Figure of the day: 16.8, the pupil-teacher ratio in state schools in Britain, up from 14.8 in 2010. [Read the full story.](#)

China courts Africa



Leaders from around 50 African countries will meet in Beijing on Wednesday for a three-day triennial summit. The Forum on China-Africa Co-operation—the ninth since it first convened in 2000—is a showcase of [China's decades-long effort](#) to deepen ties with the continent.

That push has mostly been successful. But some African countries have expressed concern about China's exploitation of natural resources, including minerals and [fisheries](#). China is also under pressure to relieve the large debts accumulated for infrastructure projects it has financed in places such as Angola, Ethiopia and Kenya.

Still, more African heads of state typically show up for the summits than attend annual meetings of the UN General Assembly (where China often relies on African votes to support its priorities). President Xi Jinping is expected to encourage his guests to buy Chinese green tech. Yet African leaders may seek to rebalance the trading relationship: China is yet to fulfil a pledge from 2021 to buy \$300bn in African goods.

Turkey and Egypt bury the hatchet



Time and again Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Islamism takes a back seat to his pragmatism. More evidence of this will be on display in Ankara on Wednesday, when Turkey's president rolls out the red carpet for a man he once called a tyrant, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Egypt's strongman. This is Mr Sisi's first trip to Turkey. He and Mr Erdogan are expected to discuss trade, defence and co-operation on tourism, as well as humanitarian assistance to Gaza.

The two countries fell out in 2013, after Mr Sisi and other Egyptian generals ousted the government of Muhammad Morsi. He was a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, a group that Turkey had backed. They reconciled only last year, after Turkey, desperate for foreign investment, restored ties with the United Arab Emirates and [Saudi Arabia](#). Another front in Mr Erdogan's regional charm offensive may soon open. Turkey is seeking a rapprochement with Syria's dictator, Bashar al-Assad.

Trudeau hopes for a monetary boost



Few will be watching the Bank of Canada's interest-rate decision on Wednesday more closely than Justin Trudeau, the prime minister. Economists expect the bank to cut the benchmark rate by a quarter of a percentage point, to 4.25%. Mr Trudeau will hope the bank signals larger reductions to come, too. That would be good news for mortgage holders and would-be homebuyers. The high cost of housing has been a big reason for the [declining popularity of Mr Trudeau's Liberals](#). Rises in other prices have angered voters, too: annual inflation peaked at 8.1% in June 2022.

In response, the central bank raised its trend-setting rate from 0.25% to 5% between 2022 and 2023. That helped reduce inflation—the annual rate was 2.5% in July 2024. But it also made mortgages more expensive and dampened consumer spending. More aggressive rate cuts may soon provide relief. But that may not give much of a political boost to Mr Trudeau ahead of elections due next year.

Resentencing the January 6th rioters



On January 6th 2021 Thomas Robertson walked from [Donald Trump's](#) “Stop the Steal” rally in Washington to the Capitol, where he saw an angry mob. Rather than walk away, the off-duty police sergeant donned the gas mask he had brought from home and joined in. Armed with a wooden stick, he held back law-enforcement officers while rioters broke into the Capitol building. He then followed them inside. For his part in [the chaos](#), Mr Robertson was given 87 months in prison in 2022.

On Wednesday that sentence could be reduced. One of Mr Robertson's convictions was for “obstruction of an official proceeding”. In June the Supreme Court decided the charge did not apply to the January 6th rioters. That called the lengths of over a third of the sentences handed down so far into question. Mr Robertson's lawyers want time shaved off his. Whether their request is granted will give some indication of the fate of his fellow obstructionists.

South Korea's artistic streak



The global arts spotlight falls on South Korea on Wednesday, when the opening of the [Frieze Seoul](#) coincides with other big events in the country's capital. Now in its third edition, the art fair brings works of more than 110 international galleries to the giant COEX Center in the Gangnam district. The show is an offshoot of the original Frieze art fair in London, a franchise now owned by Endeavor, a sports and entertainment group.

The Korea International Art Fair, an older event showcasing more local galleries, is showing in the same complex. Capitalising on the double feature's draw, several of Seoul's top galleries are also holding exhibits. They include works by international figures such as Georg Baselitz and Refik Anadol, as well as Korean artists like Kyungah Ham, Lee Ufan and Yoo Youngkuk. Two cities in South Korea's far south, Busan and Gwangju, are both hosting art biennales, too. Korea is very much in season.

Daily quiz



The Economist

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 QuizEspresso@economist.com. We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

Wednesday: Who wrote the original novel “The Lost World” about a land where dinosaurs had survived?

Tuesday: Who starred as Axel Foley in the Beverly Hills Cop film series?

16.8

The pupil-teacher ratio in state schools in Britain, up from 14.8 in 2010.

Read the full story.

I'll meet my match when I'm dead.

Steve Irwin