

## Catch up: Gaza ceasefire delayed; TikTok goes “dark”



**Hamas** belatedly released the names of three hostages that it will free on Sunday as part of a ceasefire deal that was due to begin in Gaza. Israel delayed the truce when details of the release failed to materialise and instead launched airstrikes, reportedly killing ten people. Earlier, **Binyamin Netanyahu**, Israel’s prime minister, said he was prepared to resume fighting “in new, forceful ways”, if Hamas violated the [terms of the deal](#).

**TikTok** was removed from app stores in America, ahead of a potential nationwide ban. On Friday the Supreme Court upheld a law forcing the app’s Chinese owner, ByteDance, to sell it by Sunday or shut down the video platform. TikTok said it would be impossible to find a buyer. It is now banking on [a reprieve](#) from Donald Trump, who assumes the presidency on Monday.

Thousands of demonstrators, mostly women, marched in **Washington, DC** in protest against **Mr Trump’s** [inauguration](#). Monday’s event will be moved indoors due to freezing weather, the first time in 40 years that the swearing-in ceremony has been

relocated inside the Capitol. The change will deprive him of the large outdoor crowds that he so prizes.

Supporters of **Yoon Suk Yeol** went on the rampage in a court in Seoul after a judge extended the **South Korean** president's detention. Some 40,000 protesters had gathered around the building; hundreds breached police lines, smashing windows and vandalising offices. Mr Yoon was arrested last week for insurrection, following his attempt to introduce martial law in December.

A gunman shot dead two senior judges in **Iran's Supreme Court** in [Tehran](#), before killing himself. Officials said the motive was unclear, but suggested that "enemies" of the state were behind the attack. The judges, Mohammad Moghiseh and Ali Razini, had presided over cases involving espionage, terrorism and dissidents.

At least 70 people died in the north of **Nigeria** when a petrol tanker overturned and exploded. Many of the victims had been collecting leaking fuel. Such accidents are common in Nigeria, where [petrol prices](#) have soared since 2023. In October a similar blast in the Jigawa state killed 147 people in one of the country's deadliest fuel explosions.

America's Federal Aviation Administration grounded **SpaceX's** Starship programme while investigators look into why one of the firm's rockets exploded. The vessel burst into flames shortly after launch in Texas, possibly following an oxygen or fuel leak. The upper stage came to earth over the northern Caribbean, disrupting flights. Despite the failure, [SpaceX](#) successfully landed the rocket's reusable booster.

**Word of the week:** *chanoyu*, a Japanese tea ceremony that contributed to the spread of matcha. [Read the full story.](#)

# TikTok clocks off in America



Donald Trump tried to ban TikTok during his first presidential term. Can he save it in his second? The Chinese-owned video app becomes outlawed in America from Sunday, under a law to protect users from apps controlled by “foreign adversaries”. On Friday the [Supreme Court upheld the law](#), exhausting TikTok’s legal fight for survival. The hopes of its 170m American users now rest on a political solution.

Mr Trump, whose inauguration is on Monday, has promised to “save” the app, which he credits with winning him youngsters’ votes. But he has few options. The clearest long-term fix would be to persuade China’s government to let TikTok’s owner, ByteDance, sell the app to an American company, bringing it outside the scope of the ban. China is reluctant. But with Mr Trump threatening wider economic sanctions against the country, its leaders may see TikTok as a useful bargaining chip.

# Gaza's ceasefire halted before it began



A temporary truce in Gaza was due to begin on Sunday at 08:30am local time, 15 months and 12 days after Hamas launched its surprise attack on Israel. But at the last minute Israel delayed its implementation because the militant group failed to deliver a list of the hostages it would release. What comes next is uncertain.

The first phase was due to last six weeks, during which Hamas was set to release a third of the 98 hostages it is holding, in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners. Further negotiations were planned during the truce to finalise the next phase of the ceasefire and secure the release of the remaining hostages. Israel's cabinet approved the deal in a 24-8 vote on Friday. Far-right ministers opposed the agreement. Expect them to push Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister, to resume the war.

The delay is a tragedy most of all for civilians in Gaza, who hoped to be gradually allowed to return to their homes—many of which have been destroyed in a war that has killed more than 45,000 people.



# What Trump can do for MAGA



On Sunday Donald Trump will hold a MAGA victory rally in Washington, DC, ahead of his inauguration on Monday. Many Republicans counted him out after his loss in 2020, but his most ardent supporters never considered switching loyalties to Ron DeSantis or other “MAGA-lite” options. Now, as he prepares to take office, will he be able to deliver for them?

In his first term, Mr Trump’s promised repeal of Obamacare was thwarted at the last minute by John McCain, a moderate Republican senator. He was talked out of his pledge to pull all American troops out of Afghanistan by the national-security grandees he gave senior roles. This time, Mr Trump has been careful to appoint vetted loyalists to top jobs. But he has [less authority over Republicans in Congress](#), where his party holds slender majorities. Fiscal hawks in the House could challenge his budget proposals; establishment Republicans in the Senate could block his more radical nominees. Mr Trump will not get everything his way.

# The NFL's ruthless streak



This year seven [National Football League](#) coaches lost their jobs, either during the regular season or shortly thereafter. But will the sackings improve the teams' fortunes? Researchers at Stanford University have studied the effect of such firings. They found that the median tenure of an NFL head coach is less than three and a half years (in the National Basketball Association the average spell was even shorter, at just under three years). The researchers suggest that cycling through coaches can become a habit; some teams are in a permanent state of churn, which does little to improve their performances.

Still, the instability can work for highly regarded coaches. Each team with a vacancy has its own culture. For instance, the Dallas Cowboys, the world's most valuable sports team, offer glamour and prominence. But the side's owner, Jerry Jones, has notoriously high standards. Coaches considering such roles may ask for higher wages to offset the risk.

## Weekend profile: Pam Bondi



Pam Bondi did not kidnap a dog, exactly. But the 20-year-old custody battle, fought over a St Bernard named Noah (né Master Tank), did not look great for America's probable next attorney-general. In 2005, during Hurricane Katrina, the dog was separated from its family. Ms Bondi adopted the mutt from a charity that rescued him, then refused to part with him once the original owners tracked him down. (She maintained that his original family had neglected him.) The story attracted local attention in 2010 when Ms Bondi ran to be Florida's attorney-general. She lost the dog in a legal fight, but won the election, and served for eight years.

When it comes to Donald Trump's picks for his administration, a canine custody battle is unlikely to raise eyebrows. Consider the competition: the prospective homeland-security secretary, Kristi Noem, once shot her dog. On January 15th, as senators questioned Ms Bondi, it was clear that she faced a relatively smooth path to confirmation. Unlike some of her fellow cabinet nominees, the 59-year-old does not profess any bizarre ideology or seem to give [foreign dictators](#) the benefit of the doubt. Democrats instead worry

about her long-standing loyalty to Mr Trump and cosy relationships with corporate interests.

Ms Bondi's rise has brought her far from Temple Terrace, the city where she grew up on Florida's Gulf Coast. Her father, a teacher, was the mayor. She had a successful 18-year career at the state prosecutor's office, winning convictions in some high-profile murder cases and doing part-time commentary on Fox News. An endorsement for Florida attorney-general from Sarah Palin, a one-time vice-presidential candidate, helped propel her to victory.

But questions about her independence began swirling. Of particular relevance now is her dealings with Trump University. By 2013 Mr Trump's for-profit college, which he promised would "teach you better than the best business school", had been under scrutiny for years. Florida was Trump University's third-biggest market by sales. That August the New York attorney-general sued Trump University for fraud. In September Mr Trump's foundation sent a \$25,000 check to Ms Bondi's re-election campaign. In mid-October her office announced it would not be pursuing the two-dozen-odd complaints it had received. Mr Trump and Ms Bondi deny that the donation influenced any decision-making, and Mr Trump later paid back the \$25,000 to his foundation, which as a nonprofit cannot donate to political entities, plus a fine.

In the 2016 Republican primary, Ms Bondi became one of the first Republicans to back Mr Trump, and defended him during his first impeachment, in 2019. Her devotion to the president-elect is clear; she has refused to say that Joe Biden won the 2020 presidential election, and called the criminal charges filed against Mr Trump "diabolical". But Democrats will save their loudest objections for Mr Trump's other picks. "The people of America"—not the president—"would be my client," she insisted. When swearing an oath to give truthful answers during the hearing, she told senators that the last four words were the most important: "So help me God".



# Weekly crossword



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 down* Crazy man with a plan (and odd cravat) in important waterway (6,5)

*1 across* Inn, with landlord in charge initially, is not private (6)

*2 across* Deposed dictator found among crass admirers (5)

*3 across* City left with bare ponds and no backing (6)

## Factual clues

*1 down* Something that Donald Trump wants America to have back (6,5)

*1 across* What Venture Global, a large American gas exporter, is about to become (6)

*2 across* Whose regime collapsed in Syria in December (5)

3 across What accounts for 15% of Britain's population, and 22% of its economic output (6)

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

# The winners of this week's quiz



*The Economist*

Thank you to everyone who took part in this week's quiz. The winners, chosen at random, were:

**Laura M. Linger**, Winnetka, Illinois, America

**Andreia Bessa**, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**Thomas Rynell**, Stockholm, Sweden

They all gave the correct answers of The Interpretation of Dreams, Durham, Tin, a hood, and wolves. The theme is Kevin Costner movies: Field of Dreams, Bull Durham, Tin Cup, Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves and Dances with Wolves..

The questions were:

**Monday:** Sigmund Freud's book "Die Traumdeutung" is generally known in English by what title?

**Tuesday:** Which town in north-east England on the river Wear is home to a prestigious university and has a castle, and cathedral, that are UNESCO world heritage sites?

**Wednesday:** Which atomic element has the symbol Sn?

**Thursday:** What is the term for the cap placed over the head of a trained falcon?

**Friday:** A pack of canis lupus would be better known by what name?

# Chanoyu

*A Japanese tea ceremony that contributed to the spread of matcha.  
Read the full story.*



**Words are the most powerful drug used by mankind.**

*Rudyard Kipling*