

Catch up: Trudeau reportedly to resign; steel firms file lawsuit against Biden



Justin Trudeau, Canada's prime minister, is likely to resign this week, according to the *Globe and Mail*, a daily. Mr Trudeau's government was thrown into turmoil in December following the resignation of **Chrystia Freeland**, the finance minister. With elections due in October, around **three-quarters** of Canadians disapprove of the prime minister, who has been in power for nine years.

Nippon Steel and **US Steel** filed a joint lawsuit in an American Court, challenging President Joe Biden's decision on Friday to block their proposed merger. Mr Biden said the acquisition could pose a threat to national security. The firms accused Mr Biden of "unlawful political influence". They also filed a separate suit against Cleveland-Cliffs, a rival steel company.

Alexander Van der Bellen, **Austria's** president, asked Herbert Kickl, the leader of the **hard-right Freedom Party** (FPÖ), to begin talks to form a new coalition government. Mr Kickl's party won an election in September, but was shunned by other parties in coalition

talks. On Sunday Christian Stocker, the new head of the centre-right People's Party, said he was open to negotiating with the FPÖ.

The names of 34 **Israeli hostages** in Gaza who could be released by **Hamas** in the first stage of a ceasefire agreement were published by media outlets. Negotiations between Israel and the militant group resumed over the weekend. Israel downplayed the significance of the [list](#). It includes ten women and 11 older men, as well as children. It is unclear how many on the list are still alive.

Ukraine launched a big new offensive in the **Russian** border region of [Kursk](#). Ukrainian forces stormed the region in the summer, but have since lost around 40% of what they seized. Russia claimed to have launched its own large-scale offensive in Kursk. Separately, Russia's defence ministry said Russian forces had captured Kurakhove, a strategic town in the east of Ukraine.

Workers driving into **Manhattan's** busiest neighbourhoods on Monday morning will face a \$9 [congestion charge](#) for the first time. New York became the first city in America to launch a congestion-charge zone over the weekend, after years of delays and legal challenges. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which runs public transport as well as some tunnels and bridges, expects 17% fewer vehicles on New York's jammed streets.

"The Brutalist", a drama about a visionary architect, and "Emilia Pérez", a Spanish-language musical about trans identity, were the big winners at the **Golden Globes**, collecting three and four awards respectively. "Shogun", a historical drama about Japan, "Hacks", a comedy about comedians, and "Baby Reindeer", a controversial Netflix series, led the small-screen wins.

Figure of the day: 35m, an estimate of the number of cosmetic procedures carried out globally in 2023. [Read the full story.](#)

Can Trump broker peace in Ukraine?



Nobody expects Donald Trump to end the Ukraine war in 24 hours, as he has claimed he could in the past. However, the new administration, which takes office on January 20th, is highly invested in bringing both sides to the negotiating table. But even that may prove difficult. In an interview on December 30th the Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, slammed leaked proposals from Mr Trump's team for a peace deal.

Vladimir Putin, who believes Russia is winning, has given no sign of retreating from his maximalist goals. [Ukraine, for its part](#), has indicated it might agree to a ceasefire while its territory remains occupied by Russia, but has ruled out formally accepting annexation or making concessions that would limit its sovereignty, such as giving up military capabilities and becoming a “neutral state”. America has potential leverage on both sides. But Mr Putin is not in the mood to compromise and Ukraine (with support from Europe, it hopes) will resist what it sees as an unjust peace.

Two visions for Germany's economy



On Monday Destatis, Germany's statistics agency, will publish preliminary figures for inflation in December. The annualised rate is unlikely to surpass November's rate of 2.2%. But that will not suffice to lift the mood of German business. [The economy has hardly grown](#) for the past five years—and is unlikely to do so in the near future.

Jumpstarting Europe's largest economy has thus become a key issue ahead of federal elections next month. [Friedrich Merz](#), the probable next chancellor, promised "prosperity for all" in his centre-right party's manifesto. He suggests lowering corporate and personal income taxes, reducing red tape and cutting benefits—including basic income for jobseekers, which he argues discourages people from seeking work. The centre-left party of Olaf Scholz, the current chancellor, is instead proposing tax hikes for the rich, big public investment projects and subsidies for corporate investments. But economists worry that [neither platform](#) sufficiently tackles the structural reforms that Germany's economy sorely needs.

Pardons for one and all



Four years ago a mob of Donald Trump’s supporters stormed America’s Capitol in Washington, DC, terrorising lawmakers and destroying government property in an attempt to stop the certification of Joe Biden’s presidential victory. At the time both Democrats and Republicans recoiled in shock and blamed Mr Trump for encouraging the violence. The Justice Department has since charged 1,561 people for crimes arising from the attack; 979 pleaded guilty and 645 went to prison. At least seven—most notably the leaders of the Oath Keepers and the Proud Boys, two far-right groups behind the assault—received sentences of more than a decade.

But in the years since, Republican leaders have changed their tone and Mr Trump has [recast the rioters as heroes](#). On the campaign trail he called them “warriors”, “hostages” and “unbelievable patriots” and [pledged to pardon](#) them upon returning to the White House. Historically, mass amnesty has been used to bring the country together. Pardoning these criminals could do the opposite.

Bread-and-butter issues in Britain



On Monday Britain's Parliament returns from its Christmas recess. On the same day, Sir Keir Starmer, the prime minister, delivered a speech outlining his ambition to cut National Health Service waiting times—one of the big targets of his premiership and which have remained sky-high since the pandemic five years ago. Sir Keir said new plans will deliver around 450,000 extra appointments.

The prime minister hoped that progress on domestic issues would divert attention from accusations by Elon Musk, the tech tycoon allied with Donald Trump, of mishandling a child-sexual-abuse scandal that started over a decade ago. As then chief prosecutor, Sir Keir was “complicit in the rape of Britain”, Mr Musk charged, and called on King Charles to dissolve Parliament. When asked on Monday about Mr Musk's comments, Sir Keir criticised those “spreading lies and misinformation”. Such blather might not matter were Sir Keir not [so unpopular](#) at home: just months into his prime ministership, his approval rating has fallen to its lowest ever, says YouGov, a pollster.

Netflix enters the ring



Rhea Ripley, an Australian wrestler known as the “The Eradicator”, will fight Liv Morgan for the title of Women’s World Champion in Los Angeles on Monday. Usually *The Economist* would not trouble its readers with such theatrics in the ring. But this match is significant in another way: it coincides with the beginning of [live WWE wrestling on Netflix](#), a streaming platform.

Netflix has big ambitions for live sport. On December 25th it hosted two American-football games; the audience peaked at more than 27m people. Unlike some of its previous live efforts, the broadcasts went off without any technical hitches. Netflix has also bagged the American rights for the next two women’s football World Cups. Live sport doesn’t come cheap. The decade-long deal with WWE cost \$5bn. But big sporting events attract prestige and, more importantly, subscribers and advertisers. Much like The Eradicator, Netflix will hope its size and power can knock out the competition.

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

Monday: Which actor played “The Six Million Dollar Man” in the 1970s TV show?

**Trying to define yourself is like trying to
bite your own teeth.**

Allan Watts