

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: AFP

Chinese and American economic officials met in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday ahead of **Donald Trump**'s nearly week-long tour of **Asia**. They hope to diffuse mounting [trade war](#) tensions. America's president will visit Malaysia, Japan and South Korea, where he is expected to meet China's leader, Xi Jinping, on Thursday. Mr Trump said he was also open to meeting Kim Jong Un, North Korea's dictator.

**Venezuela's** despot, Nicolás Maduro, said America was "fabricating" a war after the Trump administration deployed the *USS Gerald R. Ford*, the world's largest aircraft-carrier, to **Latin America**. Pentagon officials said the latest escalation of America's military presence aimed to "counter narco-terrorism". American forces have struck ten boats in the region since the start of September [on similar grounds](#), killing at least 40 people.

**Madagascar's** new government stripped Andry Rajoelina, the former president, of citizenship. Mr Rajoelina fled the country on October 13th after weeks of youth-led protests triggered by shortages of water and power; Michael Randrianirina, the colonel of an elite military unit, soon [took power in a coup](#). The new

regime said Mr Rajoelina was ineligible for citizenship because he also had a French passport.

**Russian** strikes on Kyiv killed two people and injured 13 more, according to local officials. They said the attacks mainly damaged residential parts of Ukraine's capital. The strikes came after more than 20 of **Ukraine's** allies met in London. Britain's prime minister, Sir Keir Starmer, said they had vowed to "take **Russian oil and gas** off the global market".

**Catherine Connolly**, a hard-left former lawyer, won **Ireland's** presidential election after her rival, Heather Humphreys, backed by the centre-right Fine Gael party, conceded defeat. Ms Connolly ran as an independent for the largely ceremonial position but gained the support of left-wing opposition parties. She is known for her pro-Palestinian views and criticism of Europe's efforts to boost defence spending.

**Britain's** ruling Labour Party elected Lucy Powell as its deputy leader. She beat Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, to take the role. The result could pose a problem for Sir Keir Starmer, the prime minister, who sacked Ms Powell from his cabinet in September. In her victory speech she said [Sir Keir's government](#) had not been "bold enough" since taking office in July 2024.

Queen Sirikit, the mother of **Thailand's** King Vajiralongkorn, died, aged 93. She had been out of the public eye since 2012, but had occasionally waded into politics before then. Her husband, King Bhumibol, was the country's longest-serving monarch until his death in 2016. Thailand's prime minister cancelled most of his plans at a big regional summit on Sunday because of the queen's death.

**Word of the week:** *Digital dementia*, a kind of mental deterioration caused by too much screen time in older adults. [Read the full story.](#)





Photograph: Getty Images

## Ivory Coast goes to the polls

Ivorians will feel a strong sense of déjà vu at Saturday's presidential election. Once again Alassane Ouattara, the country's 83-year-old president, is the overwhelming favourite—this time seeking a [controversial fourth term](#). And again, thanks to a pliable electoral commission, he faces only little-known candidates.

As many as 55 candidates [have been barred from running](#). Two of them would have posed a serious challenge to Mr Ouattara: Tidjane Thiam, the former boss of Credit Suisse, and Laurent Gbagbo, a former president who refused to concede to Mr Ouattara in the election in 2010, sparking a brief civil war.

Mr Thiam's exclusion is ostensibly due to a legal technicality outside Mr Ouattara's control. But not all Ivorians are convinced. In recent demonstrations calling for the president to step down at least three people—two protesters and one police officer—have been killed. Should the election results be disputed, they may not be the last.



Photograph: Getty Images

## New Jersey's bellwether election

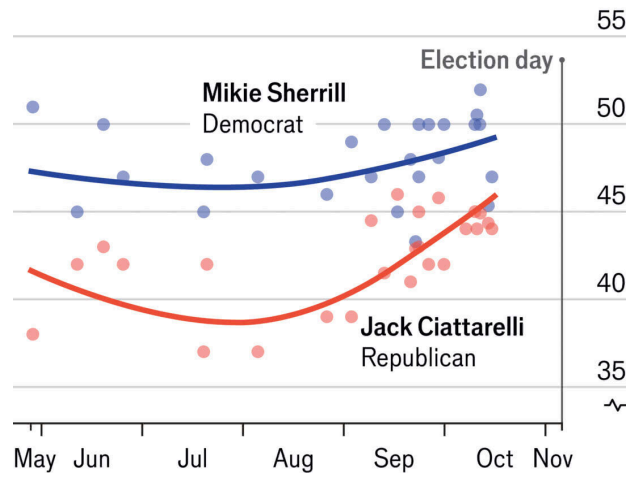
In-person early voting begins on Saturday in New Jersey's tight race for governor. Since the summer Mikie Sherrill, a moderate Democrat congresswoman, has [seen her lead](#) over Jack Ciattarelli, a Republican, shrink.

Ms Sherrill, a former navy pilot, wants the race to be a referendum on Donald Trump. She has tried to tar Mr Ciattarelli as "100% MAGA". But in fact the Republican has narrowed the gap partly by [embracing the president](#), whom he once deemed "not fit" to hold the office. Mr Trump lost New Jersey in the 2024 presidential election by just six points, compared with nearly 16 in 2020. And the number of registered Republicans there has increased.

Some dynamics are state-specific: the outgoing Democratic governor, Phil Murphy, is unpopular, and Ms Sherrill is burdened by her party's baggage. But ahead of next year's midterms Democrats will watch whether Ms Sherrill gets progressives and left-leaning independents, outraged at Mr Trump, to turn out.

## Jack-ed up

US, New Jersey governor election, 2025,  
voting intention, %



Sources: FiftyPlusOne; *The Economist*



Photograph: Marc Damage/Courtesy of Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain

## **The new Fondation Cartier brings the bling**

The [Fondation Cartier](#), a museum backed by the French jeweller, opens on Saturday in its new home on Paris's Rue de Rivoli, across from the Louvre. The museum looks classically Haussmannian, but inside it is heavy on glass, concrete and steel. The eclectic inaugural show boasts works by around 100 artists, including James Turrell. Jean Nouvel, the architect, designed the space with five massive movable platforms. "Every time the visitor comes back to the Fondation the architecture will look completely different" inside, explains Béatrice Grenier, the exhibition's curator. The museum may be designed more for avant-garde French taste than that of tourists.

The opening is part of a broader trend of French luxury firms putting their mark on the arts: Fondation Louis Vuitton, for example, is mounting shows that rival those of the state-run museums. It also highlights how central Paris is entrenching its position as a cultural hub, with the Louvre, the Musée des Arts Décoratifs and Jeu de Paume all nearby.



Photograph: Getty Images

## Keir Starmer gets a new deputy

Britain's Labour Party announced Lucy Powell as its new deputy leader on Saturday. The job opened up because of the resignation last month of [Angela Rayner](#), who failed to pay the correct amount of tax on a seaside flat. (She says it was an accident.) Ms Powell, who was fired from Sir Keir Starmer's cabinet in the reshuffle that followed Ms Rayner's exit, beat Bridget Phillipson, the education secretary, to take the role.

Many will interpret Ms Powell's victory as a mild rebuke of Sir Keir's [drifting leadership](#). Some spectators predicted a titanic battle for the soul of the party, akin to the famous contest in 1981 between Denis Healey on the right and Tony Benn on the left. If only the stakes were that high and the campaign that compelling: neither candidate was much of an orator, and on policy it would be hard to put a cigarette paper between them.





Photograph: Alamy

## **Weekend profile: Karina Milei, Argentina's most powerful woman, faces a storm of scandal**

Since the start of the year Argentina's libertarian president, [Javier Milei](#), has been dogged by allegations that his sister Karina, who is also his chief of staff, is corrupt. For a leader who made his name denouncing Argentina's elite as parasites, such accusations are especially damaging. They threaten the prospects of his party, Liberty Advances, in [midterm elections](#) on October 26th.

In February came allegations that Ms Milei had taken payments from the founder of \$LIBRA, a memecoin that crashed shortly after her brother promoted it on social media. Recordings that became public in August suggested that she had taken a 3% cut of money used to buy medicine for Argentina's disability agency. Ms Milei denies wrongdoing in both cases. Her brother calls the second allegation a plot by his Peronist rivals. Yet he is paying a political price. Lawmakers in Congress have chanted "Karina is a massive bribe-taker". Nearly 60% of Argentines polled in August by Synopsis Consultores, a consultancy, said she should resign.

That is unlikely to happen. The president calls his sister "*El Jefe*" ("The Boss", using the masculine form of the word). The two have always been devoted to one another. She has recalled accompanying him to football practice and lighting fires to keep mosquitoes away from the pitch. There were also dark moments.

Mr Milei has spoken about growing up in an abusive household, and his father Norberto beating him. Mr Milei later claimed that his sister was the only person who stood up for him.

In adulthood, too, the pair's closest companions seem to be each other and their pets. To comfort her brother after his English mastiff, Conan, died in 2017, Ms Milei trained in "animal telepathy" to be able to "speak" to the dog.

Ms Milei shares her brother's libertarianism. When he ran for Congress, his sister organised his campaign. Several former allies of Mr Milei have said she forced them out of Liberty Advances during this period. She reportedly read tarot cards to identify enemies. In 2023 she had a senior role in running her brother's successful presidential campaign.

This year, however, she has blundered. She squandered opportunities to broaden her brother's coalition. The disability-payments scandal came just as voters were getting angry about slowing growth. The midterms may inflict a blow. "Our leader is Javier Milei, but the important thing is the ideas," Ms Milei said this year. The president is having increasing difficulty rescuing Argentina from decades of economic turmoil. Karina Milei, once an asset in that endeavour, now looks like a liability.

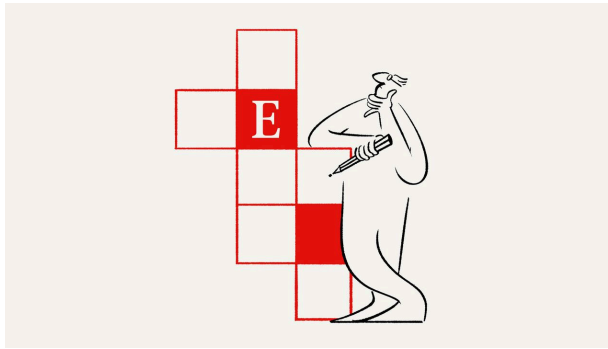


Illustration: The Economist

## 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* - On-air obituary has mention of capital (7)

*2 across* - Initially seven, eventually nine (actually ten) oust Republican politician (7)

*3 across* - Platform where sheep, I hear, take the underground (7)

*1 down* - “No cozy lair?”, asks corrupt former president (7,7)

### Straight clues

*1 across* - Recently jailed French politician (7,7)

*2 across* - A member or legislator whose name derives from ‘senex’, Latin for ‘elder man’ (7)

*3 across* - The most-watched platform in the world (7)

*1 down* - Recently jailed French politician (7,7)

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

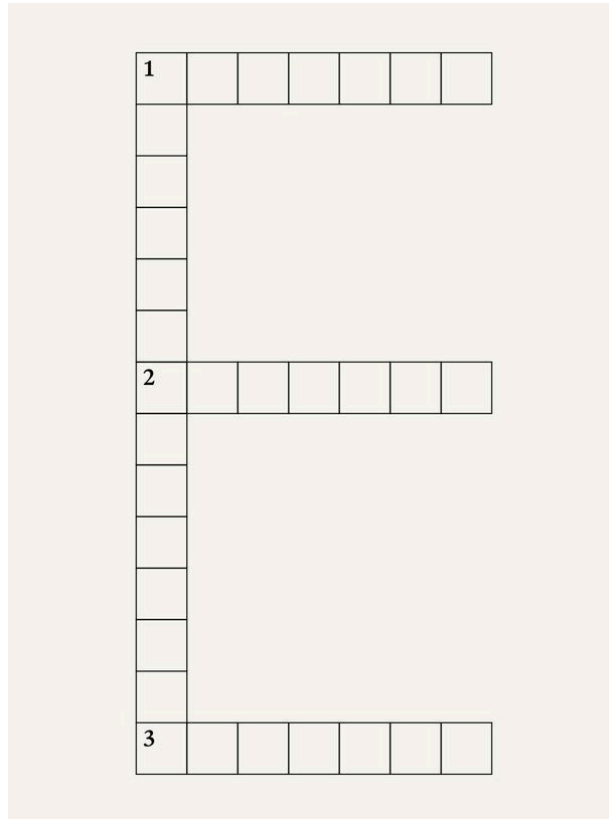


Image: .



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:

**Iskriyana Vasileva**, Berlin, Germany

**Donna Singmaster**, Pebble Beach, California, America

**Andrej Galogaza**, Zagreb, Croatia

They all gave the correct answers of: Tom Jones, Anthony Hopkins, Richard Burton, Michael Sheen and David Lloyd George. The theme is that they are all Welsh, including Lloyd George who spoke Welsh as his first language.

The questions were:

**Monday:** Which veteran singer shares his name with an 18th century novel by Henry Fielding?

**Tuesday:** Who in 2021 became the oldest person to win the Oscar for best actor?

**Wednesday:** Who was the only one of Elizabeth Taylor's husbands that she married twice?

**Thursday:** Which actor is noted for his appearances as real-life people, including Tony Blair and David Frost?

**Friday:** Who was the only British prime minister for whom English was not his first language?

*Every act of creation is first an  
act of destruction.*

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***Pablo Picasso***