

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: AFP via Getty Images

A “massive” Russian strike on Kyiv, **Ukraine’s** capital, killed at least four people and injured dozens, according to the country’s government. Ukraine’s armed forces said that [Russia](#) launched nearly 600 drones and almost 50 missiles overnight at various targets, but that it shot down most of them. Volodymyr Zelensky, the country’s president, called on America, Europe and the G20 to take “decisive action” against Russia.

Moldova’s pro-European Action and Solidarity party (PAS) took a commanding lead in **parliamentary elections**. With around 96% of votes counted, PAS has nearly 50% of the vote, well ahead of the pro-Russian Patriotic Electoral Bloc, on under 25%. Both Russia and the European Union are vying for influence in [Moldova, a small, former Soviet republic](#) squeezed between Ukraine and Romania.

Eric Adams ended his campaign to be re-elected as mayor of New York. Elected as a Democrat in 2022, the party accused Mr Adams of collaborating with the Trump administration to get corruption charges against him dropped (he denies both wrongdoing and making a deal). He was running as an independent for the election in November but was tanking in the polls.

Afghanistan's ruling **Taliban** released an American citizen following months of mediation by Qatar. Amir Amiry had been in custody for nine months. The reason for his detention has not been fully revealed. He is the fifth American to be set free by the Taliban this year. The Qataris also helped negotiate the release of a British couple earlier this month.

Denmark banned all civilian use of **drones** for a week after the devices were spotted near Danish military facilities again on Sunday. Drone sightings earlier this week led to the closures of some Danish airports. Mette Frederiksen, Denmark's prime minister, has already voiced her suspicions of Russian involvement. The Kremlin has denied that it is responsible. Denmark hosts an EU summit on Wednesday.

Donald Trump will reportedly attend a meeting of **America's top military officers** at Quantico, a Marine Corps base in Virginia, on Tuesday. Pete Hegseth, the secretary of war, has instructed hundreds of generals and admirals stationed across the world to attend the powwow. The administration has not disclosed the purpose of the meeting, although grooming standards are reportedly on the agenda.

Europe won golf's **Ryder Cup**, beating America in a bad-tempered tournament in **New York state**. Having been thrashed over the first two days, America was on the verge of an unlikely comeback on day three, before the Europeans prevailed 13-15. Rory McIlroy, Europe's captain, said that the personal abuse meted out by the partisan crowd to his players and their families was unacceptable.

Word of the week: Hanuman, the Hindu monkey-god of strength, courage and devotion. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Getty Images

Trump's escalating war with big pharma

On Thursday President Donald Trump announced a 100% [tariff](#) on imported branded drugs from October 1st. Drugmakers building factories in America would be exempt. Because most [big drugmakers](#) have already promised to expand domestic production, the immediate effect may be modest.

But a bigger headache looms. In May Mr Trump signed an executive order instructing firms to lower drug prices in America, in line with those in other rich countries. In July he wrote to the bosses of 17 firms giving them 60 days to comply or face “every tool in our arsenal” against “abusive pricing”. That deadline is Monday.

Some firms have responded by raising prices abroad rather than cutting them at home. Bristol Myers Squibb plans to launch a schizophrenia drug in Britain at the same price as in America. Officials have offered little clarity on how the new pricing rule will be enforced. For pharma bosses, already grappling with vaccine scepticism, the days ahead promise more pain.



Photograph: Reuters

Britain's Labour Party confers, unhappily

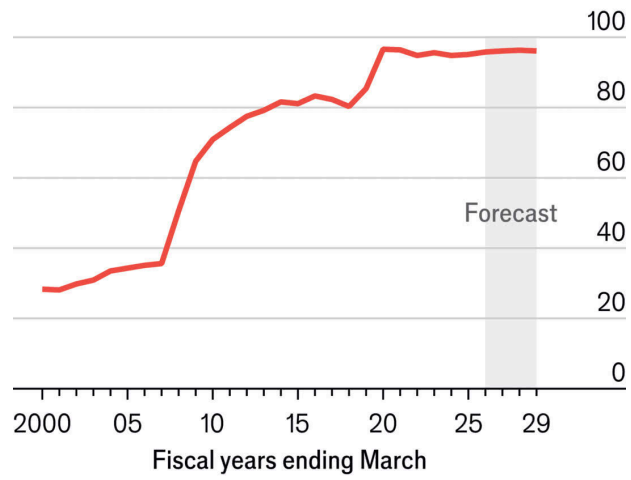
The Labour Party will hold its annual conference in Liverpool this weekend. Although the government it leads has held office for just a year, and has a large majority in Parliament, it is in trouble. Polls put it behind Reform UK, a right-wing startup party.

Labour came to power promising to revive growth, but [output has barely budged](#) and forecasters expect little improvement. Ministers vowed to reform Britain's restrictive planning system, widely seen as the biggest obstacle to growth, but weakened proposals as soon as they met resistance. A [fiscal squeeze looms](#): to meet its own rules, the government must raise taxes or cut spending.

Doubts over Sir Keir Starmer's leadership are growing. Andy Burnham, the mayor of Greater Manchester, has mounted a barely-disguised attempt to replace him. Sir Keir will try to reassert control by framing the next phase of his premiership as a fight against populism—a choice, as he puts it, between “patriotic renewal” and grievance.

Pounds of pain

Britain, net debt as % of GDP



Source: OBR



Photograph: AP

Russia tries to derail Moldova's European future

Fear will be the dominant force in Sunday's parliamentary elections in Moldova, a small, former Soviet republic squeezed between Ukraine and Romania. With both Russia and the European Union vying for influence, its result is of outsize importance for a country of 2.4m people and annual GDP of less than \$20bn.

[Maia Sandu](#), who won last year's presidential elections, has warned that unless her Action and Solidarity Party (PAS) wins, progress towards EU membership will be halted and Russia will be in control. The Patriotic Electoral Bloc, a Moscow-friendly coalition of left-wing parties, accuses PAS of dragging Moldova into the war between Russia and NATO.

Although PAS shows a slim lead in polls, neither party will win a majority. Roughly a fifth of Moldovans vote abroad, where support for PAS is strong. The Kremlin has countered that with money and disinformation. The biggest fear is that contention could turn Moldova into another hot spot in the war-ravaged region.



Photograph: Warner Bros.

Leonardo DiCaprio eyes one Oscar after another

Paul Thomas Anderson's new film, "One Battle After Another," runs for more than two and a half hours—about average for the director of "There Will Be Blood" and "Boogie Nights". Yet it rattles along at such a brisk pace that it feels shorter.

Loosely adapted from Thomas Pynchon's novel "Vineland" (1990), it stars Leonardo DiCaprio as a far-left former bombmaker in present-day America, who now lives quietly with his teenage daughter (Chase Infiniti). His peace is shattered when an old nemesis, a fascistic colonel played by Sean Penn, tracks him down.

What follows are car chases, shoot-outs and cartoonish slapstick. But the film is more than spectacle. Its villains are white supremacists, and Mr Anderson interweaves scenes of migrants being detained. Mr DiCaprio and Mr Penn are getting Oscar buzz for their performances. The politics of "One Battle After Another" will make it one of the year's most debated films.



Photograph: Andy Henderson

Waiting for Keanu

From this week Keanu Reeves and Alex Winter, co-stars of the cult comedy “Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure”, will reprise Samuel Beckett’s “Waiting for Godot” on Broadway. It is the play’s first run there since Sir Patrick Stewart and Sir Ian McKellen’s rendition in 2013. The absurdist classic, which premiered in Paris in 1953, depicts two shabbily dressed men in bowler hats who are stuck waiting for someone who never arrives. Their rambling banter makes up almost all of the action. Jamie Lloyd, a British director, is overseeing the revival.

The play is an avowedly cynical mix of humour and despair. Messrs Reeves and Winter, comic partners on screen, take on clownish roles in a darker register. The pair’s reunion gives the production a pop-cultural twist that may draw new audiences. The combination of their celebrity with Beckettian drollery has some theatregoers willing to pay dear: weekend orchestra seats are fetching up to \$670.



Illustration: The Economist

Mini crossword

We now publish an interactive edition of our crossword each day 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 - Look noble (4)
- 2 across - Oddly grim, no? Have a drink (3)
- 3 across - Flog to the left. What sport! (4)
- 1 down - Drunken pony gang? Yes, in a hermit state (9)

Straight clues

- 1 across - A member of the upper chamber of Britain's Parliament (4)
- 2 across - Spirit affectionately known as Mother's ruin (3)
- 3 across - Ryder Cup sport (4)
- 1 down - Capital city of North Korea (9)

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

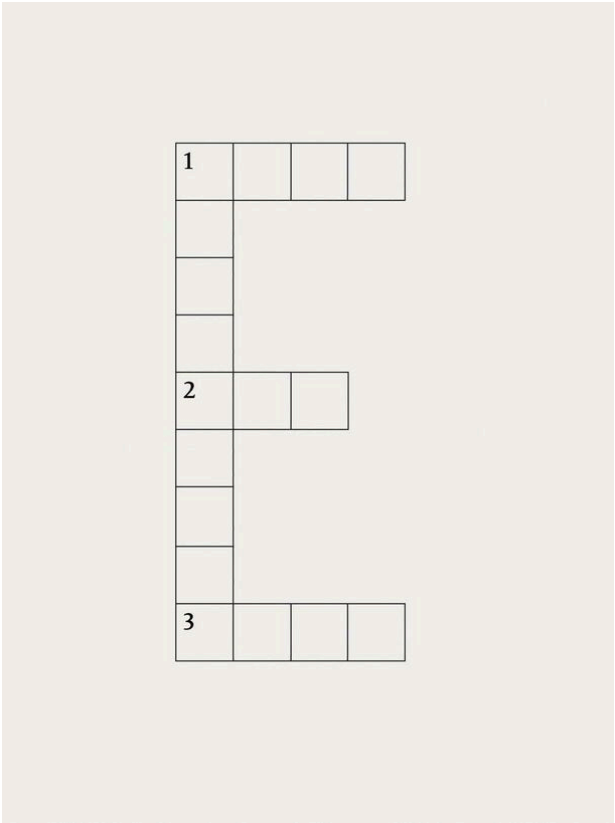


Image: The Economist



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:

Katie Cho, Palo Alto, California, America

David Harris, Powell River, Canada

Diego Yribarren Arocha, Monclova, Mexico

They all gave the correct answers of: Billie Jean King, sound, the Pacific Ocean, Oklahoma and carousel. The theme is Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals: "The King and I", "The Sound of Music", "South Pacific", "Oklahoma!" and "Carousel".

The questions were:

Monday: Which female tennis player won the "Battle of the Sexes" against Bobby Riggs in 1973?

Tuesday: What travels at around 1,235 kilometres an hour?

Wednesday: Which geographical feature covers around 165m square kilometres?

Thursday: Which territory became an American state in 1907?

Friday: California's Great America amusement park in Santa Clara features the world's tallest version of what ride?

*Doing easily what others find
difficult is talent; doing what is
impossible for talent is genius.*

Henri Frederic Amiel