

Tehran will keep strait of Hormuz closed and continue attacks on US assets, speech read out on state TV says. Iran issued its first message in the name of its new supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, on Thursday, saying it would keep the strait of Hormuz closed and continue to attack US bases in the region. The missive was read out on state TV rather than delivered live or on video, however, and will do little to satisfy those seeking proof that the son of the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is actually alive. In the message, Khamenei said he would demand compensation from the US for its attacks, and that if Washington refused he would order the destruction of its assets equivalent to the amount Iran is owed.

THE ECONOMIST

Monday [9th March] marks the 250th anniversary of the publication of the bible of economics. Adam Smith's sprawling *Wealth of Nations* caused a sensation in 1776. [...] It does not, as know-nothing pundits claim, encourage selfishness and greed. Smith's views of human nature were more subtle than many of his modern interpreters assume. [It] is instead a scholarly account of how countries become rich, including through the division of labour. Still, its novelty is overstated. Smith was far from the first to recommend free trade, predictable government policies or the division of labour as a way for countries to prosper. Is the father of economics a little overrated? Probably. Is Monday's anniversary still worth celebrating? Definitely.

BBC NEWS

First Mandelson files published by UK government
www.youtube.com/watch?v=q43jnI1Nv_s



NEWS IN BRIEF 10

28 February – 13 March 2026 (UK)

February 28 – March 13, 2026 (US)

Teh'ran /teə'ra:n/ = Téhéran**strait of Hor'muz** /'streɪt əv hɔ:'mu:z/ = détroit d'Ormuz**Iran** /'i'ra:n/**to issue a message** /tə 'ɪʃu: ə 'mesɪdʒ/ = diffuser un message**su'preme 'leader** /su'pri:m 'li:dəʳ/ : the head of state and the highest political and religious authority of Iran above the president. Established in 1979 after the Islamic revolution that ended the Pahlavi dynasty. Reza Shah Pahlavi was the last **Shah** /'ʃɑ:/ (monarch) of Iran.**Mojtaba Khamene'i** /,hɒmənɪ'i:/**Aya'tollah** /,aɪə'tɒləʃ/ : a title for a **Shi'ite** /'ʃi:at/ cleric with advanced knowledge of Islamic law.**to de'mand** /dɪ'mɑ:nd/ (UK), /dɪ'mænd/ (US) = exiger (false friend)**'Washington** /'wɒʃɪŋtən/ : the capital of the US, coextensive with (= having the same boundaries as) the District of Columbia; site chosen by President Washington in 1790; contains the White House and the Capitol; a major educational and administrative centre.**an 'asset** /'æset/ = un atout, avantage ; actif, capital (patrimoine, finance). Les installations américaines, dans ce contexte.**anni'versary** /,æni'vɜ:'səri/ : the date of an important event that is celebrated or remembered that day ≠ birthday**eco'nomics** /i:kə'nɒmɪks/ : the science that deals with the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services≠ **e'conomy** /i'kɒnəmi/**Adam Smith** (1723-1790) : a Scottish social philosopher and political economist, instrumental in the rise of classical liberalism.**to sprawl** /sprɔ:l/ : to stretch, spread out**(a) know-'nothing** : an ignoramus /,ɪgnə'reɪməs/ ≠ know-it-all**a 'pundit** /'pʌndɪt/ : a person (treated as) an expert, an authority**greed** /'gri:d/ = cupidité, avidité. **Naked greed** = pure cupidité/avidité**to a'ssume** /ə'sju:m/ = supposer, partir du principe que, assumer (un rôle)**'labour** (UK) / 'labor (US) /'leɪbə/**Over'stated** /,əʊvə'steɪtɪd/ = exagéré**free trade** : a policy by which a government does not discriminate against imports or interfere with exports by applying tariffs (to imports) or subsidies (to exports).**Over'rated** /,əʊvə'reɪtɪd/ = surfait, surestimé0:04: **a 'breaking 'story** = une information de dernière minute0:15: **Lord Peter Mandelson** : the former British ambassador to Washington0:28: paedophile **financier** /fi'nænsiəʳ/, /fɑ'nænsiəʳ/ Jeffrey Epstein0:44: a 'criminal **in'quiry** /ɪn'kwɪəri/ : enquête, investigation

01:00: a 'payoff /'peɪf/ of £75,000 = pot de vin, bénéfice, indemnité de licenciement

01:57: **the Metro'politan po'lice**, or "The Met" : police service for Greater London, excluding the City of London. ▲ Gr: the police **are**02:31: **to put s.o. on the spot** = mettre quelqu'un dans l'embarras

Ten years after the EU referendum, Britain has become more European

The Economist, 8th March 2026

Almost a decade ago Britons started buying more coffee than tea. And not just any coffee. The long-running Family Food Survey shows that shoppers used to favour instant coffee: in the mid-1970s they bought about five times as much of that revolting stuff, by weight, as coffee beans. The scales tipped to beans in 2019. “The UK has become a coffee-drinking nation,” says Dock No, a statistician at the International Coffee Organisation.

Britain has become more like a continental European country in that respect, and in many others. The birth rate has slumped and young people are living at home for longer. Its economy tracks that of the euro zone. Britain is about to acquire continental-style employment regulations and renters’ rights. Its politics look decidedly European, with a fissile electorate and strong populist parties. Despite talk of a special relationship, Britain treats America’s military adventurers in the Middle East with *froidueur*. Even the Telegraph, a strongly pro-Brexit media brand, is being acquired by Axel Springer of Germany.

None of this seemed probable ten years ago, as campaigning began for the forthcoming referendum on membership of the European Union. Those who wanted to stay in the EU feared that Britain might throw out continental imports like parental leave and working-time restrictions, while some hot-headed Brexiteers argued that the country should align itself with the Commonwealth or what they called “the Anglosphere”. But the eventual vote for Brexit in June 2016 is a big reason why Britain has become more European.

Start with reproduction. The fertility rate in England and Wales had been falling for a few years before the referendum. It stood at 1.8 in 2016. By 2024, the last year for which figures are available, it had dropped to 1.4. The fall brings England and Wales close to the EU average. They have joined a central European medium-fertility clique that includes Austria, Germany and Hungary. Scotland has come to resemble the low-fertility countries of southern Europe.

A pervasive feeling of uncertainty may be contributing to the baby bust. Ann Berrington, a demographer at the University of Southampton, has shown that childless Britons who think they are faring worse than their parents at the same age are significantly less likely to expect to have a baby. Low earners are also more likely to remain living at home. In 2024 fully 49% of 24-year-olds were living in the family home, up from 36% a decade earlier. Britain has come to resemble a central European country in that way, too.

Economically, Britain was something of an outlier ten years ago. Although its GDP growth was hardly spectacular, the country had sidestepped the euro crisis, which hobbled southern Europe. Many British politicians believed that a chasm had opened between their country and the rest of the continent. Douglas Carswell, a Eurosceptic, argued that Britain was “shackled to a corpse”. Even Sir Nicholas Soames, a Europhile Tory, described Europe as mired in “insecurity, lack of confidence and lack of optimism”.

The gap was never as wide as politicians claimed, and it has closed, partly because Brexit has crimped trade and investment in Britain. The IMF projects GDP growth of 1.3% this year in both Britain and the euro zone. In 2016 [Britons] had become about as gloomy as the French, who make a national sport of pessimism. [...]

In 2016 some Remainers worried that Britain might turn its back on the “social Europe” of workers’ rights. The opposite has happened. Britain has strengthened paternity-leave rules and, from next month, is introducing tougher protections against redundancy. Labour politicians and trade unionists argue that the changes will make Britain more like the rest of Europe—as they will. The same is true of the property market. [...]

the scales tipped to beans = La balance a penché en faveur des grains	the birth rate has slumped = Le taux de natalité a chuté
its e’conomy tracks that of the euro zone = Son économie suit celle de la zone euro	a ‘fissile electorate = un électorat divisé
the ‘Telegraph (cf NiB6)	the forth’coming refe’rendum = le prochain référendum
the baby bust = le déclin de la natalité	they are ‘faring worse = Ils s’en sortent moins bien
the country had ‘sidestepped the euro crisis = Le pays avait échappé à la crise de l’euro (pluperfect)	‘Brexit has crimped trade = Le Brexit a freiné les échanges commerciaux. IMF = FMI