

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: AP

More than 800 people were killed and nearly 3,000 injured by a magnitude 6.0 earthquake that struck eastern **Afghanistan**. Entire villages were razed in Kunar province. Landslides and heavy rain hampered rescuers. The Taliban administration appealed for foreign aid; the disaster will further stretch the country's resources, which have suffered from Western countries' [cuts to aid](#).

**Vladimir Putin** said he had reached “understandings” with **Donald Trump** in Alaska last month on ending the [war in Ukraine](#), but stopped short of confirming peace talks with Volodymyr Zelensky. Speaking at a summit in China alongside Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi, Mr Putin again blamed the West for the conflict and praised China's and India's mediation efforts.

The International Association of Genocide Scholars, the largest academic body in the field, voted to declare that **Israel's** actions in **Gaza** meet the legal definition of genocide. Eighty-six per cent of members who cast ballots backed the resolution. Israel called the statement disgraceful and said it was based on “ Hamas lies”. Meanwhile, Gaza's health ministry said that more than 100 people died over the past day, including nine from [hunger](#).

**Nestlé** fired Laurent Freixe, its chief executive. An internal probe concluded that he had had an undisclosed romantic relationship with a subordinate, breaching company rules. Mr Freixe had worked at Nestlé for nearly 40 years. The Swiss group immediately appointed as his successor Philipp Navratil, a long-time executive who previously ran Nespresso.

**Christine Lagarde**, the president of the European Central Bank, described as “worrying” the possibility that **France’s government** will collapse, but said that intervention by the IMF is not yet necessary. France’s bond markets have wobbled since [François Bayrou](#), who leads a minority government, announced last week that he would call a vote of confidence.

A plane carrying the head of the European Commission, **Ursula von der Leyen**, was disrupted by suspected **Russian jamming**, according to the Bulgarian officials. The jet’s GPS appears to have been disabled as it prepared to land in Plovdiv in Bulgaria, forcing the crew to use paper maps to land safely. A spokesperson said that such [interference in planes](#) has become common since 2022.

A report commissioned by **Australia’s** government found that software that relies on selfies to verify users’ ages was broadly accurate, but that there was a “buffer zone” of two to three years either side for those aged 16. In December Australia will [ban all under-16s](#) from using social media, with many tech firms likely to employ the verification technology.

**Figure of the day:** More than 40, the number of times that Donald Trump has boasted that he brought peace to Kashmir. [Read the full story.](#)

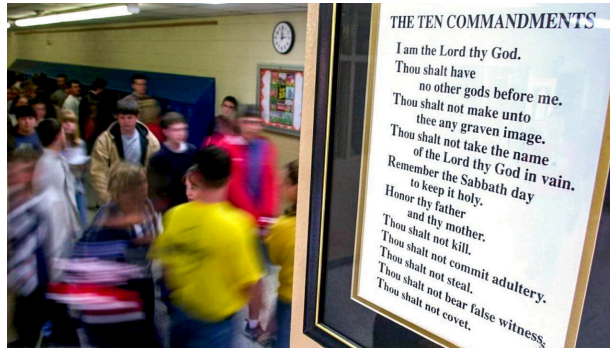


Photograph: AP

## **The IDF masses on Gaza city**

The end of the daily “tactical pauses” that allowed limited food supplies into Gaza city, which Israel’s army announced on August 29th, marked a new phase in Israel’s offensive. Half of the Gaza Strip’s 2.1m people are huddled, many starving, in and around the city. Israel is trying to force them southwards before advancing beyond the outskirts. The International Red Cross says a mass evacuation is “unfeasible”.

Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister, is determined to push on. The operation, he claims, will “topple” Hamas, the Islamist movement that attacked Israel nearly two years ago. Even his own generals are sceptical. Donald Trump, America’s president, wants to see a “conclusive ending” to the war in “two to three weeks”. That is unrealistic, but adds urgency to Mr Netanyahu’s already haphazard approach. The conflict has killed over 60,000 already. It is hard to see what will prevent another bloodbath.



Photograph: TNS

## From Mount Sinai to Mount Pleasant

On Monday the word of God comes to many of Texas's public schools. A law mandating that each classroom should display the Ten Commandments comes into force. Similar laws have been passed in neighbouring Louisiana and Arkansas.

Families of pupils have filed lawsuits in all three states, claiming that the laws are an insidious and unconstitutional violation of the First Amendment's separation of church and state. But defenders claim that the Ten Commandments are part of America's history, much like the Declaration of Independence, and so deserve a place in the classroom.

A federal appeals court has struck down Louisiana's law, while district court judges have blocked its enforcement in four school districts in Arkansas and 11 in Texas that were sued. Litigation will continue. But in the meantime, since Arkansas has 237 school districts and Texas has more than 1,200, most of their pupils will start the year with the laws God gave to Moses next to their ABCs.



Photograph: Reuters

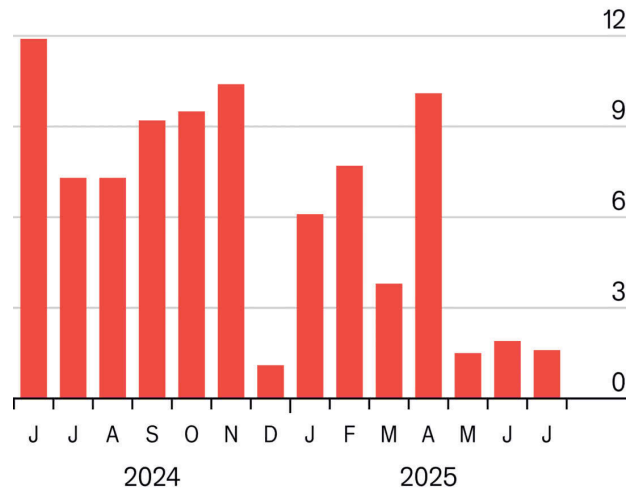
## Are Spain's beaches play'd out?

In July 11m international tourists arrived in Spain according to figures released on Monday. That is a record for the month and marks a 1.6% increase from the same month last year. But the upward trend is slowing: in the first six months of the year 44.5m tourists arrived, a 5% increase year on year. That may be because climate change is prompting northern Europeans to take their holidays earlier or later to avoid the baking heat of July and August.

Spain's hospitality industry risks falling victim to its success. The cost of a Spanish holiday is spiralling. Average hotel rates are 50% more expensive than in 2021. Those in the industry report that in July tourists came to the Balearic Islands for fewer days and spent less, leaving restaurant terraces half empty. Fewer visitors might be better for towns groaning with [overtourism](#). But only if they spend more.

## Going into holiday mode

Spain, international traveller arrivals\*,  
% increase on a year earlier



\*At main access points on roads and  
at airports, ports and railways

Source: National Statistics Institute



Photograph: Getty Images

## **Will Guyana stick with Irfaan Ali?**

Guyanese will elect a new president, vice-president and all 65 members of the National Assembly on Monday. Observers hope it will be more straightforward than in 2020, when the vote was marred by attempted fraud. Irfaan Ali, the current president, faces two other candidates. Both are polling fairly well, but Mr Ali is favoured to win a second five-year term. He is popular for having increased cash transfers and social spending, including making universities free.

Good stewardship matters. Guyana has only 800,000 people, but is tremendously wealthy thanks to relatively recent discoveries of oil deposits. Oil production is rising, and GDP is projected to grow by double digits again this year. Yet despite impressive gains in some areas, such as education, Guyana's poverty rate remains high. And whoever wins will have to manage Nicolás Maduro, Venezuela's dictator, who is threatening to snatch the oil-rich Essequibo region.





Photograph: Liverpool FC via Getty Images

## English football clubs pound the competition

European football clubs have until Monday night to sign new players. Even before any last-minute panic-buying, the trend of the summer was clear: English clubs made eight of the ten biggest purchases, compared with six two years ago. Of the 28 players who commanded transfer fees of £40m and above, 11 were bought and sold between English clubs.

English clubs have so much purchasing muscle because of the English Premier League's prowess at selling overseas broadcasting rights to its matches. Sporting Intelligence, a newsletter, has calculated that these deals are worth almost £2.2bn to the Premier League each year. By contrast La Liga (Spain) earns £800m, Serie A (Italy) £600m, the Bundesliga (Germany) £200m and Ligue 1 (France) £120m. The discrepancy is so great that Everton, who finished 13th in the Premier League in 2024/25, has spent more on net this summer than the combined total of the three highest-finishing Italian clubs.





Illustration: The Economist

## Daily Quiz

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 BST on Friday to [\[email protected\]](#). We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

**Monday:** Which colour, generated from a dye made from sea snails, became associated with Roman emperors?

*One can easily touch a living soul  
through the most grave vices and  
crimes, but vulgarity is  
impassable.*

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***François Mauriac***