

The world in brief, June 4th 2024



Mexico's peso fell by around 4% against the dollar on Monday—its steepest decline in almost four years—after **Claudia Sheinbaum's** landslide victory in the country's presidential election and unexpected gains for her Morena party in congressional polls. It remains to be seen whether Ms Sheinbaum will maintain the populist policies of her mentor and predecessor, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, or break with him to tackle Mexico's [deep-rooted problems](#). President **Joe Biden**, who will reportedly soon sign an executive order to limit asylum requests at [America's border](#) with Mexico, said he looked forward to “working closely” with Ms Sheinbaum on “advancing the values and interests of both our nations”.

A high court in **Pakistan** quashed [Imran Khan's conviction](#) on charges of leaking state secrets. The former prime minister had been sentenced to ten years in prison on the charges in January, just days before Pakistan's general election. Mr Khan accuses the army of targeting him for political reasons. He remains in prison because of a conviction in a separate case.

Nigel Farage, a former head of the UK Independence Party, said he would stand for Parliament in Britain's general election. The veteran populist, who played a leading role in the campaign to leave the European Union, will also take over as [leader of Reform UK](#), a right-wing party. The campaign will mark Mr Farage's eighth attempt to become an MP. According to *The Economist's* [tracker](#), Reform UK enjoys the support of 11% of voters.

Turkey's exports to **Israel** collapsed by 99% in May, compared with the same month last year, after the Turkish government stopped trade because of [the war in Gaza](#). Turkey said it would not resume normal trading relations until Israel allowed more aid into the strip. In 2023, before the war, trade between the two countries was worth \$6.8bn.

India's stockmarkets soared after exit polls forecast that the governing **Bharatiya Janata Party** had won a [landslide majority](#) in the general election. The Nifty 50 rose by 3.6% and the BSE Sensex by 3.8%. Narendra Modi, India's prime minister, has pledged to turn his country into a manufacturing hub to rival China if he does indeed win a third term.

Somalia threatened to expel thousands of **Ethiopian** soldiers who are stationed in the country. The soldiers are part of a peacekeeping mission, organised by the African Union, that is fighting al-Shabab, a terrorist group. Somalia wants Ethiopia to ditch a [planned deal with Somaliland](#), a breakaway region in Somalia's north, that would allow Ethiopia to use its ports.

Australia's government ordered several Chinese-linked investment funds to sell their stakes in **Northern Minerals**. The company specialises in mining [critical metals](#) that are widely used in wind turbines, smartphones and electric vehicles. Australia is keen to slim down China's role in its mining industry because of concerns that China already has a near-monopoly in rare-earths mining.

Figure of the day: 9m, the number of barrels of oil produced each day by Saudi Aramco, nearly a tenth of the world's total. [Read the full story.](#)

In the run-up to America's presidential election, we've launched The US in brief—a daily update to help you keep on top of the political stories that matter. Sign up here to receive it as a newsletter, each weekday, in your inbox.

India's election results



India's mammoth, weeks-long election is finally over. It was the world's biggest-ever exercise in democracy, featuring 8,360 candidates representing 744 parties. Yet when results are announced on Tuesday, just one party and one man is likely to dominate. [Exit polls](#) all point to a sweeping victory by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, and a third term for Narendra Modi, the incumbent prime minister.

The only uncertainty appears to be the extent of the victory. The most optimistic prediction puts the BJP and its allies winning 401 seats in India's 543-seat parliament, more than their stated ambition of 400 seats. Even the worst-case projection, of 281 seats, would exceed the 272 needed to form a government. The opposition, led by the Congress party, insists that the polls are wrong, pointing to a precedent in 2004. But such egregious errors are rare. According to one estimate, 97% of pre-poll and exit surveys between 1998 and 2019 predicted electoral outcomes correctly.

Hong Kong tries to forget Tiananmen Square



Victoria Park in Hong Kong used to glow with candlelight every June 4th, as tens of thousands of people gathered to commemorate the [Tiananmen Square massacre](#) of 1989. Very few other places on Chinese soil allowed such remembrance. In 2020 officials, blaming covid, banned the vigil—20,000 people gathered anyway. Beijing then imposed sweeping new security legislation, and the event has been effectively banned ever since. This year—after Hong Kong introduced a new national-security law in March—Victoria Park will be filled with food trucks instead of candles. Pro-Beijing groups have organised a carnival in the vigil’s stead.

The commemoration’s organisers have been jailed. In March they failed to overturn their convictions. Mementos (such as a dedicated museum and a huge artwork called the “Pillar of Shame”) have been dismantled. Last week seven suspects were detained, apparently because of social-media posts about the upcoming anniversary. Even wearing black on June 4th is now considered controversial. City officials are working hard to snuff out memories of Tiananmen.

The first TV debate ahead of Britain's election



On Tuesday Rishi Sunak, the prime minister, will face Sir Keir Starmer, the leader of Labour, the main opposition party. The first debate of Britain's general election campaign will be hosted on ITV, a commercial network; a further series of parlays will air on the BBC, the publicly funded broadcaster, from Friday.

Head-to-head TV debates arrived in Britain only in 2010, but are now a fixture of elections. The public debate over their format and line-up attracts almost as much attention as the actual debates themselves. Tuesday's one, featuring a moderator and questions from a studio audience, is sure to be spirited. Our [poll tracker](#) shows that Labour has an average lead of 22 points: to stave off a heavy defeat on [July 4th](#), Mr Sunak needs voters to reassess him. Sir Keir, meanwhile, has run a buttoned-up campaign, mostly of formal speeches. Going toe-to-toe with his rival introduces a new element of risk.

A horribly hot summer in prospect



On Tuesday, as the world awaits India's election results, many Indians will do so whilst sweltering. Much of the country has been broiling for a week or more; India's Meteorological Agency has issued further heatwave warnings for the north. More than 70 people have died, including at least 33 poll workers on a single day in Uttar Pradesh. In Delhi, the capital—which hit 49.9°C last week, breaking its temperature record—water shortages have compelled people to queue for hours by government-provided tankers.

India is not the only place afflicted. Intense temperatures in Mexico have killed more than 60 people and caused scores of dead monkeys to fall from the trees. That heatwave is now headed for large swathes of America. Worse is probably yet to come. The hottest weeks in the northern hemisphere, where over 80% of the world's population lives, tend to fall around August. And this summer follows almost a year in which every month consecutively (even during winter) has set a new [global monthly temperature record](#). Unbearable heat is no longer extraordinary.

A new opera about a puzzling painter



Hilma af Klint knew she was ahead of her time. The pioneering Swedish artist made her first-ever abstract painting in 1906, after being inspired to “proclaim a new philosophy of life”. When she died, in 1944, she left more than a thousand artworks, which she ordered to remain private for twenty years at least.

They were largely forgotten. But in 2018, a [major retrospective](#) was mounted in New York. It became the most-visited show in the Guggenheim Museum’s history. Klint had finally arrived, representing a welcome female addition to the male-dominated canon of modern art.

Now she is being brought back to life in “Hilma”, which opens on Tuesday at the Wilma Theater in Philadelphia. The opera explores Klint’s interest in mysticism, her creative process, and her legacy, as well as her possibly-romantic relationship with her closest friend, Anna Cassel, who may have had a hand in some of her paintings.

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

Tuesday: Who was the first chief justice of the United States?

Monday: Cain and Abel were the first two sons of Adam and Eve in Genesis. But what was the name of the third?

9m

The number of barrels of oil produced each day by Saudi Aramco, nearly a tenth of the world's total.

Read the full story.

**But for the silly chaps, we would still be
living in the Stone Age.**

Christopher Cockerell