

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter

In pouring rain outside 10 Downing Street, a soggy **Rishi Sunak**, Britain's prime minister, called a [general election](#), to be held on July 4th. Mr Sunak said that “now is the moment for Britain to choose its future.” He will hope that a six-week campaign will be long enough to close the 20-point gap in the opinion polls between his Conservative Party and Sir Keir Starmer's Labour Party. *The Economist's* [forecast model](#) gives the Tories less than a 1% chance of retaining their majority.

Nvidia, a semiconductor giant, announced record year-on-year revenue growth of 262% in the last quarter, beating expectations. The stratospheric rise was driven by its data-centre business, which grew by 427% in the same period. Jensen Huang, [Nvidia's](#) chief executive, said he expects “a lot of” revenue this year, as the company is launching a new line of chips.

Taiwan dispatched troops to “defend” itself after **China** began two days of military drills in five areas around its territory. China said the exercises were “punishment” for the democratic island's “separatist acts”. Taiwan swore in [Lai Ching-te](#) as its new president on Monday. In the past Mr Lai has called for Taiwan's independence, but he did not campaign for any constitutional change or referendum on the matter.

Nikki Haley said she would vote for **Donald Trump** in [America's election](#). The former governor of South Carolina, dubbed “bird brain” by Mr Trump, repeatedly castigated the former president as unfit for office during her fight for the Republican nomination. Her announcement may help Mr Trump to garner more support from centre-right voters and bridge divides in the Republican party.

Shares in **vaccine-focused** biotech companies rose after two bird-flu cases were found in humans, bringing the total number detected this year to eight. **Bird flu** has been spreading through cattle in nine American states, including Michigan, where one case was detected. The other was found in the Australian state of Victoria. Shares in Novavax, an American biotech company researching bird-flu vaccines, rose by 5.3%.

[Zhang Zhan](#), a citizen journalist who was jailed by China in 2020 for reporting about **covid-19**, was released from prison. Ms Zhang used social media to document the epidemic then engulfing the city of Wuhan; she was sentenced to four years in jail for “picking quarrels and causing trouble”. Reporters Without Borders, an NGO, said that despite her release the state was keeping Ms Zhang under strict surveillance.

An auction of Graceland, **Elvis Presley’s** Tennessee mansion, was temporarily halted by a judge. An investment company is attempting a foreclosure sale, claiming that [Presley’s](#) estate owes it \$3.8m in loan repayments; the King’s granddaughter sued, alleging that the loan’s paperwork is fraudulent. A trial is expected. Over half a million people visit Graceland each year. It remains open in the meantime.

Figure of the day: 714m, the number of barrels of oil that America’s Strategic Petroleum Reserve can store. [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.

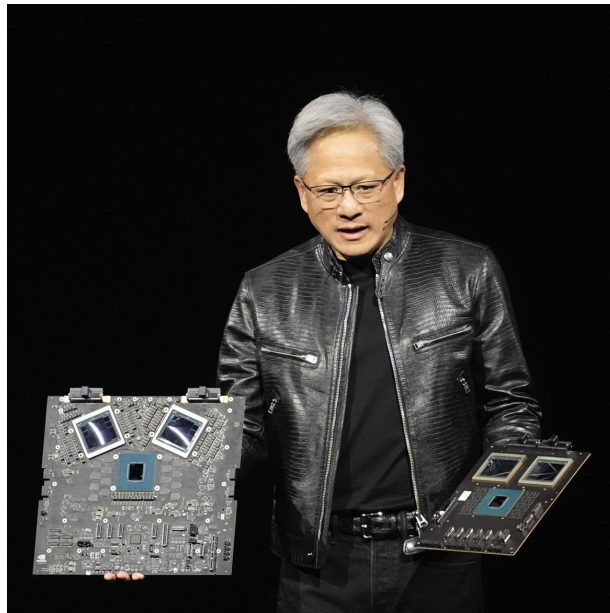


Photo: AP

How high can Nvidia go?

In its quarterly results Nvidia, the world's [most valuable](#) semiconductor company, reported year on year revenue growth of 262%, surpassing analysts' expectations and reflecting thirst for its artificial-intelligence chips. At \$2.3trn, the company's market capitalisation has almost doubled since the beginning of this year. But Jensen Huang, its boss, thinks it can grow even more.

Nvidia's fat profit margins have attracted competitors, from large companies such as AMD, another American chipmaker, to a bunch of [well-funded startups](#). But the biggest challenge to the company's dominance could come from its own customers. Tech giants including Amazon, Alphabet, Meta and Microsoft spend billions annually on chips from Nvidia to power their data centres. But these firms are also crafting chips in-house. For now, Nvidia's competitive advantage is deep: its products have the best hardware, software and networking kit. Shareholders will hope things stay that way.



Photo: EPA

So near yet so far on British inflation

Data released on Wednesday show Britain's annual inflation rate fell to 2.3% in April, down from 3.2% in March. That is close to the [Bank of England's](#) target of 2%, but still above the 2.1% that forecasters had predicted. The decline mostly reflects falling energy prices after Ofgem, the industry's regulator, lowered a price cap.

The smaller-than-expected fall suggests Britain has not yet vanquished its inflation problem. The core rate, excluding volatile food and energy prices, was 3.9% in April, still well above the headline figure. Wage growth was also high—at 6%—in the latest release, covering March. The figures make life difficult for the Bank of England's rate-setters, who are deciding when to begin interest-rate cuts. Financial markets now see the chances of a first cut in June as very unlikely.

Make it two!

Britain, consumer prices,
% increase on a year earlier



Source: Haver Analytics



Photo: EPA

Almost there: a Dutch coalition

Geert Wilders's hard-right Party for Freedom [came first](#) in the Dutch election last November, but it took almost six months of talks with three other right-leaning parties to get a rough coalition accord on May 15th. On Wednesday parliament is debating the deal, which would give the Netherlands its most right-wing government since the 1960s.



The ruling parties would agree to halt asylum applications, restrict work visas, loosen nitrogen-pollution limits (which many farmers loathe) and slash the budgets for public broadcasting, foreign aid and tech research. The deal may violate EU laws on asylum and the environment. But the coalition—which includes the governing Liberals, the fledgling New Social Contract and a farmers’ party—have the votes to implement it.

They still lack a prime minister: the parties have agreed that none of their leaders will get the job. [Mr Wilders’s](#) preferred candidate, a quirky biologist and ex-minister from the Labour party, is under fire over an allegedly unethical patent deal.



Photo: Alamy

The world’s most contested shipwreck

In June 1708 the *San José* , a Spanish galleon, sank off the coast of what is now Colombia during a naval battle with the British. She went down with 600 sailors and tantalising riches from the New World, including emeralds, gold and silver from Potos  in modern-day Bolivia. The ship has since lain near Cartagena, 600 metres deep.

On Wednesday the Colombian government will announce an archaeological exploration, which will be the first scientific investigation of a deep-sea site in the Caribbean. Gustavo Petro, Colombia's president, has said he wants some of the wreck recovered before his term ends in 2026.

The operation is legally and politically fraught. Spain, Bolivian indigenous groups and an American treasure-hunting firm all dispute Colombia's claim to the *San Jos* and its booty, which is thought to be worth hundreds of millions of dollars, at least. Colombian archaeologists, though, are adamant that the real treasure will be the [history](#) the ship may reveal.



Photo: Getty Images

A German club on the ball

Bayer Leverkusen are on the verge of a remarkable treble. The football club has already won Germany's Bundesliga, ending the 11-year winning streak of Bayern Munich. On Wednesday Leverkusen will play Italy's Atalanta in the Europa League final. Next, on May 25th, they will contest the final of the domestic cup against second-tier Kaiserslautern. Winning both these matches would also achieve something even more remarkable: an unbeaten [season](#) of 53 matches.

Occasionally teams in Europe's big five leagues win two, three or even four trophies in a season, but never without losing a match. The previous record for the longest unbeaten run was 42 matches, set by Italy's Juventus in 2011-12. Impressively, Leverkusen have achieved their streak without the resources of Europe's super-clubs. The club does not publish its accounts, but revenue has been reported at around €270m (\$293m), which would make Bayer around the 18th largest in the world. No wonder Leverkusen's manager, Xabi Alonso, is Europe's most in-demand coach.



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.

Wednesday: Which Larry McMurtry Western novel won the 1986 Pulitzer prize for fiction?

Tuesday: Meryl Streep played a fashion magazine editor in which 2006 film?

Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which it is impossible to be silent.

Victor Hugo