

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

A meeting between **Donald Trump** and **Volodymyr Zelensky** at the White House ended without the [Ukrainian](#) president securing Tomahawk missiles. Mr Trump said supplying the weapons “could mean bigger escalation” with Russia. He had previously suggested he would provide them. On Thursday America’s president spoke to Vladimir Putin, Russia’s president, and agreed to meet in Budapest for more peace talks.

Global stockmarkets calmed after worries over credit risk sparked a sell-off of American regional bank shares. The bankruptcies of two car companies, [First Brands](#) and Tricolor, has shaken investor confidence. In America the s&p 500 closed 0.5% higher on Friday. British stocks also recovered some earlier losses, although closed almost 0.9% lower. The price of gold fell after reaching a record high.

China said it had agreed to hold a new round of trade talks with **America** “as soon as possible”. Earlier Scott Bessent, America’s Treasury secretary, spoke to He Lifeng, China’s trade tsar, over video. Mr Bessent described the discussions as “frank and detailed”, and said the pair planned to meet in person next week.

The officials are trying to avoid another painful [tit-for-tat tariff battle](#).

John Bolton, Mr Trump's former national security adviser, pleaded not guilty to [18 criminal counts](#) related to transmitting and storing classified information. Each count carries a potential prison sentence of up to ten years. The indictment accuses Mr Bolton, who became an [outspoken critic of Mr Trump](#), of sending "diary" notes from his time as NSA in 2018-19 to family members.

Israel said the remains of another apparent hostage was returned by Hamas. The country has demanded that Hamas deliver the bodies of all remaining hostages for the ceasefire to hold. Meanwhile in **Gaza**, Turkey deployed rescue workers to search for bodies [under rubble](#), which Palestinian officials believe number around 10,000. Some aid has reached the enclave, but the UN says more is needed.

A landmark global shipping climate tax hit the rocks. Before countries could vote on a tax to curb [greenhouse gas emissions](#) in shipping, the **International Maritime Organisation**, a UN agency, adjourned following pressure from Saudi Arabia and others, pushing back discussions for at least a year. Mr Trump, who called the tax a "scam", threatened supporting countries with visa restrictions and port fees.

Prince Andrew renounced his royal titles, including the Duke of York. He remains a prince. He stepped down from duties in 2019 amid scrutiny of his ties to [Jeffrey Epstein](#), a convicted paedophile. He denies allegations that he sexually assaulted [Virginia Giuffre](#), a vocal Epstein accuser, when she was 17; her posthumous memoir releases next week. "Continued accusations", he wrote "distract" from the royal family's work.

Figure of the day: 193, the number of countries a Singaporean passport holder can travel to visa-free. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Getty Images

Donald Trump's ambiguity on Ukraine

Donald Trump met Volodymyr Zelensky, [Ukraine's](#) president, at the White House on Friday. Ukraine's allies are watching to see whether Mr Trump's recent shift to a tougher stance on Russia is more than just rhetoric. Their anxieties will have been heightened by the "productive" phone call Mr Trump held on Thursday with Vladimir Putin, his Russian counterpart. They agreed to meet in Budapest, eventually, to talk about ending the war.

Before his call with Russia's president, Mr Trump had appeared to acknowledge that a threat to increase military pressure on [Russia](#) is crucial for bringing Mr Putin to the negotiating table. He even stoked speculation that he would supply Ukraine with Tomahawk cruise missiles. They carry a 450kg warhead and have a range of 1,600km to 2,500km. Ukraine could use them to hit well-defended military targets inside Russia. Now Ukrainians will wonder if Mr Trump was just bluffing.



Photograph: Getty Images

Africa's latest coup

Michael Randrianirina was sworn in as the president of Madagascar on Friday, nearly a week after launching the tenth successful African [coup](#) of the 2020s. The colonel of an elite army unit, Mr Randrianirina says he seized power to answer the “incessant call” of the Malagasy people. They had been protesting in their thousands since September 25th against persistent power cuts and water shortages. Andry Rajoelina, the ousted president and the chief target of protestors’ ire, fled the country after security forces turned against his regime, which was widely seen as corrupt.

Mr Randrianirina insists that he will rule for no more than two years before holding elections. The Malagasy seem inclined to give him the benefit of the doubt. But juntas in other recent [African coups](#) have made similar promises—only to break those pledges once they grew accustomed to the trappings of office.



Photograph: Getty Images

Canada's tricky balancing act

Canada is battling a trade war with its two largest trading partners: America and China. On Friday, Anita Anand, Canada's foreign-affairs minister, wraps up a rare trip to Beijing. Her visit is part of a strategy to diversify trade away from the United States-Mexico-Canada [trade agreement](#), through which three-quarters of Canada's exports were funnelled to America in 2024. That trade corridor is now impacted by Donald Trump's tariffs.

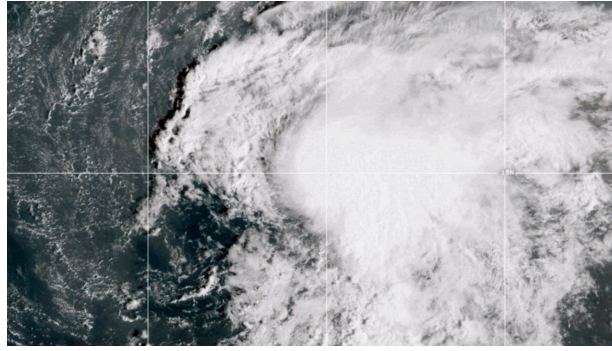
There is room for growth in Canada's trade with China. Canada exported close to C\$30bn (\$21bn) of products to China in 2024—a mere fraction of the nearly C\$600bn it sent to America. But any trade deal with China will require some nimble diplomacy. Canadian tariffs on Chinese EVs have prompted retaliatory duties on Canadian rapeseed, pork and seafood. And Canada must also [avoid provoking](#) the ire of Mr Trump as he wages his own trade war with China.

Off-kilter

Canada, goods trade with China, C\$bn



Source: Statistics Canada



Photograph: AP

How to track a hurricane

In recent days Storm Lorenzo churned into being over the Atlantic Ocean and then, just as rapidly, ebbed away. It is not the only one. This [hurricane](#) season was expected to be lively but so far it has seemed unusually quiet. The biggest storms have stayed away from land. Meanwhile, Atlantic weather conditions haven't been that conducive to storms forming.

A sleepy season is a problem for Google DeepMind, which in June unveiled an [AI-based](#) model for forecasting tropical cyclones in partnership with America's National Hurricane Center. Trained to spot patterns in huge quantities of historical weather data, it could, DeepMind said, forecast storms' paths and intensity as well as conventional physics-based models do, and often even more accurately. It performed well on Hurricane Erin in August, but those claims have not yet fully been tested. If the season picks up, observers will watch closely: AI weather models are increasingly touted as a way to make forecasting better and cheaper.



Illustration: The Economist

Daily quiz

We will serve you a new question each weekday. On Friday your challenge is to give us all five answers and tell us the theme. Email your responses (and your home city and country) by 1700 BST on Friday to [\[email protected\]](#). We'll pick three winners at random and crown them on Saturday.

Friday: In the Abba song “Dancing Queen”, which instrument does the character “feel the beat of”?

Thursday: Which ghost story by Susan Hill was turned into a 2012 film starring Daniel Radcliffe?



Illustration: The Economist

The winners of this week's crossword

Thank you to everyone who took part in our crossword, published on Saturday. The winners, chosen at random, were:

Rob Blair, Harare, Zimbabwe

Vo Tan Dat, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Amelia Cheng, Coquitlam, Canada

They all gave the correct answers of Pagoda, [Monkey](#), [Tenors](#) and [Paramount](#).

*Don't be seduced into thinking
that that which does not make a
profit is without value.*

Arthur Miller