

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: DPA

Israel and **Hamas** [agreed](#) to the first phase of Donald Trump’s peace plan. The breakthrough should mean that the remaining 20 living Israeli hostages held in Gaza are set free in the coming days, and that hundreds of Palestinian prisoners are released from Israel’s jails. Under the terms of the agreement Israeli troops will also end their assault on Gaza and withdraw from much of the enclave.

Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister, hailed a “great day” for his country and the agreement’s “sacred mission of releasing our hostages”. **Hamas** said that Gazans had “demonstrated unmatched courage” during the war and that it was incumbent on America and other states backing the deal to guarantee the ceasefire. Mr Trump wrote on social media that the Middle East had taken the “first steps toward a Strong, Durable, and Everlasting Peace”.

James Comey, a former FBI director, pleaded not guilty to charges of lying to Congress and obstructing an investigation. The case, [sought by Mr Trump](#), concerns testimony Mr Comey gave to a Senate committee in 2020. It was probing alleged Russian links to Mr Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign. Mr Comey’s lawyers are

trying to dismiss the case before trial, calling the prosecution vindictive.

[Sébastien Lecornu](#), France's outgoing prime minister, said he expects **Emmanuel Macron** to name his replacement within 48 hours. The French president had tasked Mr Lecornu, who resigned on Monday, with holding last-ditch talks with other political parties to back a new government. Mr Lecornu said that the “prospect of dissolving parliament” and triggering snap elections “was receding”.

HSBC proposed to take Hang Seng, a Hong Kong bank in which it owns a majority share, private. Europe's largest lender said it would spend \$13.6bn buying out Hang Seng's shareholders, valuing it at \$37.2bn. Hang Seng has been weighed down by bad loans in recent years, partly because of faltering [real-estate markets](#) in Hong Kong and mainland China.

TSMC, a [Taiwanese chipmaking giant](#), reported a 30% rise in third-quarter revenue from a year earlier, beating analysts' expectations. Growth was driven by demand related to artificial intelligence. The firm produces 90% of the world's most advanced chips—a concentration that many see as a risk, given tensions between the island and China.

The **European Parliament** voted to chop **meat-related words**, like “burger” and “bratwurst”, from [plant-based products](#). The changes are part of a broader package, aimed at helping farmers, that the bloc will negotiate before it can become law. Meat substitutes are not the only alternatives to face a grilling: the EU defines dairy as “products secreted by mammary glands”, a blow to oat drinks.

Figure of the day: 79%, the share of Americans who say immigration is a good thing for the country as a whole. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: eyevine

Levi's are back in fashion

Levi Strauss & Co, the [American clothing company](#) that created blue jeans in 1873, will report quarterly results on Thursday for the period ending on August 31st. The firm's stock price underscores its recent revival. Its shares have soared over 40% this year, more than three times the rise in the S&P 500 Apparel Retail index.

New collections, which include 1990s-style loose jeans and longer shorts, have refreshed the brand's image. A campaign featuring [Beyoncé](#), a pop singer—and a namecheck on her latest album—has broadened its reach among young consumers. Levi's has also expanded its direct-to-consumer arm. The division now accounts for nearly half of revenues and delivers higher margins than wholesale.

Levi's is less exposed to Donald Trump's harshest tariffs. China supplies only 1% of its product. No country supplies more than a third of its products. Overseas sales now make up about three-fifths of revenue. Investors will hope Levi's can stay a boot-cut above the rest.

Stonewash success

Share prices, January 1st 2025=100



Source: LSEG Workspace



Illustration: David Simons

German carmaking car-crash

On Thursday Friedrich Merz, [Germany's chancellor](#), is hosting bosses at a car summit in Berlin. The aim is to address the deepening crisis in Germany's biggest industry, which employs roughly 750,000 people. Carmaking has shed 50,000 jobs in a year, around 6% of the total. It is forecast to lose another 140,000 by 2035, according to VDA, the car-industry federation.

The main reasons for the job losses are the transition to electric vehicles, which require less manpower to build, and [competition from China](#). The European Union's goal to reach climate neutrality by 2050 is an additional burden for the struggling industry. In the run-up to today's summit Mr Merz, a Christian Democrat, said that the EU's plan to ban new cars with internal-combustion engines from 2035 was "wrong" and he wants it to be dropped. But the Social Democrats, his coalition partners, want to keep the ban. After Mr Merz's pep rally with the carmakers, expect a robust debate at the chancellery.



Photograph: Reuters

British Jews rally outside Downing Street

On Thursday British Jews will gather outside Downing Street to protest against a surge in antisemitic hate. The rally, called by the Campaign Against Antisemitism, follows last week's attack on a synagogue in Manchester, where two worshippers were killed on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar. More than 1,500 [antisemitic hate crimes](#) were reported in the first half of this year, three times more than during the equivalent period in 2015.

Organisers are urging ministers to do more to protect British Jews. They want them to ban “extremist” protests. The government has already given the police powers to restrict repeated demonstrations. In July it proscribed [Palestine Action](#), an activist group that targets property, as a terrorist organisation. Such measures are understandable, yet risk blurring the line between antisemitism—a hate crime—and legitimate criticism of Israel and its war in Gaza, which many Jews condemn. The government faces the delicate task of making Jewish communities feel safe while safeguarding freedom of expression.



Photograph: AP

A turn-up for the books?

In 1901 the first Nobel prize in literature caused conniptions. Literary buffs were perplexed when the judges failed to give the award to Leo Tolstoy and offered it to Sully Prudhomme, a lesser-known French [poet](#), instead. Famous writers including Rudyard Kipling, Ernest Hemingway and Annie Ernaux have won. Yet many other esteemed authors were never even nominated: James Joyce, Marcel Proust and Virginia Woolf among them.

The Nobel committee has already compiled this year's shortlist, though it is embargoed for 50 years. Bookmakers reckon Gerald Murnane, an Australian [novelist](#), and Can Xue, a Chinese writer, have the best chance of winning the prize, which comes with a bonus of SKr11m (\$1.2m). Other favourites include Laszlo Krasznahorkai from Hungary, Cristina Rivera Garza from Mexico and Haruki Murakami from Japan. Last year many punters and scholars were surprised when Han Kang, a South Korean writer, took home the prize for her “intense poetic prose”. The bookworms may confound the bookies.



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.

Thursday: At which Greenwich Village site in 1969 did a protest against police harassment spark a broader movement for gay rights?

Wednesday: Chris Owen played which character in the American Pie film series?

*The fact that somebody is
displeased is no evidence that we
are wrong.*

Mary Ann Shadd