

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

Donald Trump said he would extend the deadline for **Mexico** and **America** to reach a trade deal by 90 days, following a “very successful” conversation with Claudia Sheinbaum, Mexico’s president. The president’s [postponed “Liberation Day” tariffs](#) are due to come into effect on Friday. The Trump administration said it would contact countries without a trade deal by the deadline.

The White House said Mr Trump will approve an aid plan for **Gaza** on Friday, after Steve Witkoff, **America’s** special envoy to the Middle East, visits a [food-distribution site](#) in the enclave. On Thursday Mr Witkoff met Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister, in Jerusalem. Separately America imposed sanctions against figures from two Palestinian groups, the Palestinian Authority and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

A **Russian** aerial attack killed at least 16 people and wounded 155 in **Kyiv**, according to Ukrainian officials. Ukraine is [struggling to cope](#) with Russian bombardments, which have escalated in recent months. Meanwhile, Russia’s defence ministry said its forces captured Chasiv Yar, a strategically important town in eastern Ukraine, after more than a year of fighting.

Police in **Macau**, an autonomous region of **China**, made their first arrest under the city's national-security law. The legislation, implemented in 2009 and expanded in 2023, mirrors [measures imposed](#) on neighbouring Hong Kong in 2020 that tightened the control of the Chinese government. The person arrested is thought to be Au Kam San, a pro-democracy former legislator.

A group of Western countries, including America and Britain, condemned **Iran's** intelligence services for attempting to “kill, kidnap and harass” people in their territories. In a joint statement the 14 countries said that Iran was increasingly working with international crime organisations to target exiled dissidents and other figures in Europe and America. The countries said the attacks violated their sovereignty.

Shell posted adjusted profits of \$4.3bn in the second quarter, 32% lower than the previous year, as low oil and gas prices narrowed margins. Despite the slowdown the oil major's shares rose slightly. The firm had warned investors of declining profits in early July. Investors were buoyed by its commitment to continue buying back \$3.5bn in shares each quarter.

Shares in **Microsoft** and **Meta** soared after the tech companies reported bumper profits in the second quarter. Microsoft's better-than-expected results were largely due to its bold bet on artificial intelligence. Meanwhile Meta said it would further [ramp up investment in AI](#), adding that the integration of AI into its advertising products was already generating “meaningful” revenue.

Figure of the day: 172%, the increase in the share price of Robinhood, an online broker, this year. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: EPA

A pivotal vote for Ukraine's democratic future

On Thursday Ukraine's parliament, the Rada, voted in favour of a new anti-corruption bill. It will in effect reverse an earlier bill passed on July 22nd that weakened the independence of the country's two main anti-corruption agencies. The first bill, passed in haste at the instigation of [Volodymyr Zelensky](#), the president, was a step backwards in the fight against corruption. It sparked protests and drew warnings from the European Union, which said the policy would impact financial aid tied to Ukraine's governance reforms, as well as Ukrainian hopes of joining the bloc.

Why Mr Zelensky pushed for the bill remains a mystery. He claimed the agencies had fallen under Russian influence. Some believe their investigations were getting uncomfortably close to his own inner circle. Mr Zelensky will be relieved that the Rada has endorsed his u-turn. The vote was tense—some lawmakers scuffled in the chamber. The bill will now head to Mr Zelensky's desk for his approval.

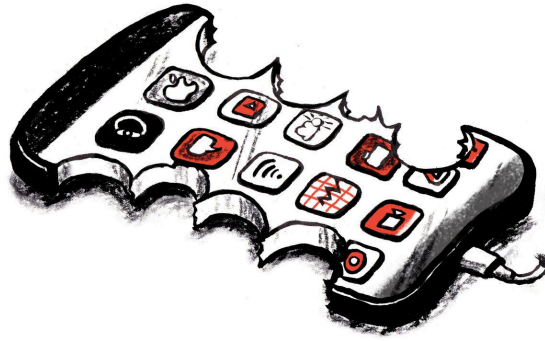


Illustration: David Simonds

Apple defies expectations

[Apple](#) was expected to deliver underwhelming news when it released quarterly earnings on Thursday amid concerns that tariffs will weigh on the American tech giant's profit margins. In the event, revenues rose 10% year on year in the third quarter, to \$94bn, with strong growth in iPhone sales. The firm said its gross margin was 46.5%, above expectations of around 46%.

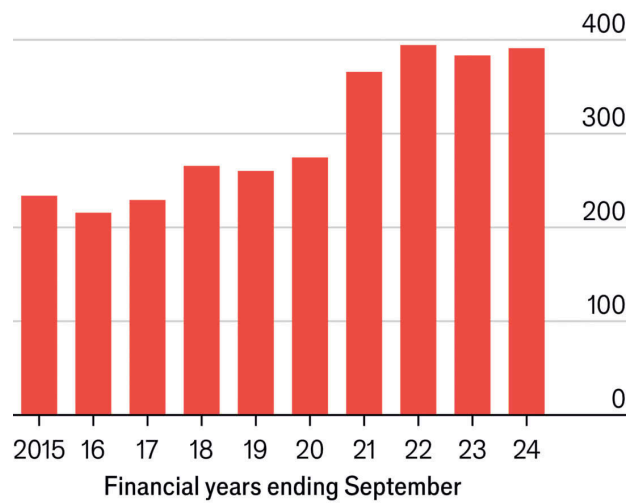
Still, Apple has longer-term problems. Uncertainty remains about America's tariff policy towards crucial manufacturing hubs like China and India. Meanwhile the firm's artificial-intelligence strategy is rudderless. Important AI scientists have been lured away. An antitrust ruling against Google may jeopardise the \$20bn or so of exclusivity payments that Google makes to be the default search engine on Apple devices. The firm hopes that a slimmed-down iPhone, expected later this year, will prove popular. But Apple needs a bolder strategy.

iPain

Apple, share price, \$



Apple, revenue, \$bn



Sources: Bloomberg; LSEG Workspace

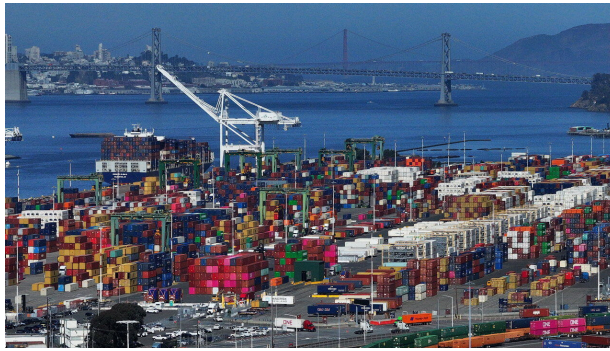


Photograph: Alamy

Myanmar's junta on the front foot

On Thursday Myanmar's junta ended the state of emergency that it imposed when it seized power in February 2021. Since then the regime has fought a civil war which has killed nearly 10,000 civilians and left 2m people on the brink of famine. It plans to hold elections in December. Opposition groups have said they will boycott the poll, which they believe will be a sham.

But things are looking up for the junta. [China](#), its most powerful backer, has successfully pressured rebels to strike deals with the generals. Meanwhile America is warming to Myanmar. It is reportedly in talks to gain access to the country's rare-earth resources. On July 24th it lifted sanctions on allies of Myanmar's generals, shortly after Min Aung Hlaing, the junta's leader, praised Donald Trump and asked him to do so. Official communications between the two sides suggest that America may now recognise the junta's rule. The generals could stand to gain from Mr Trump's transactional diplomacy.



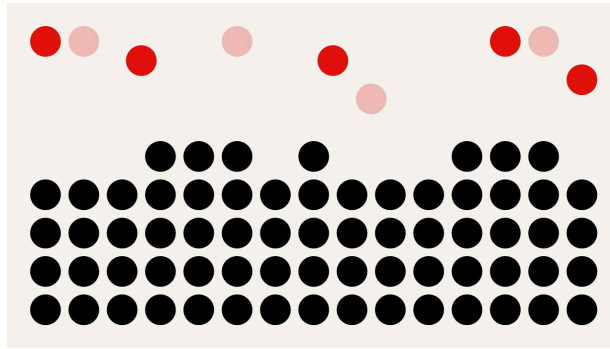
Photograph: Getty Images

Trump's tariffs in the dock

America's trading partners have been falling over themselves to strike deals with Donald Trump before his arbitrary deadline of August 1st and avoid [steeper tariff rates](#) on goods they send stateside. But might the president's threats turn out to have been empty? On Thursday a federal appeals court will hear oral arguments over whether Mr Trump even had the right to impose many of the tariffs in the first place.

Mr Trump has claimed that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act grants him the right to impose tariffs in an emergency. Back in May, America's Court of International Trade shot that argument down. The appeals court stayed the ruling to allow the government to appeal.

Don't expect a quick resolution. Whoever loses will probably ask the Supreme Court to intervene. And even if the government wins this case, there are several similar legal challenges to his tariffs in the works.



Photograph: The Economist

Data bite: Asia's new private-jet power

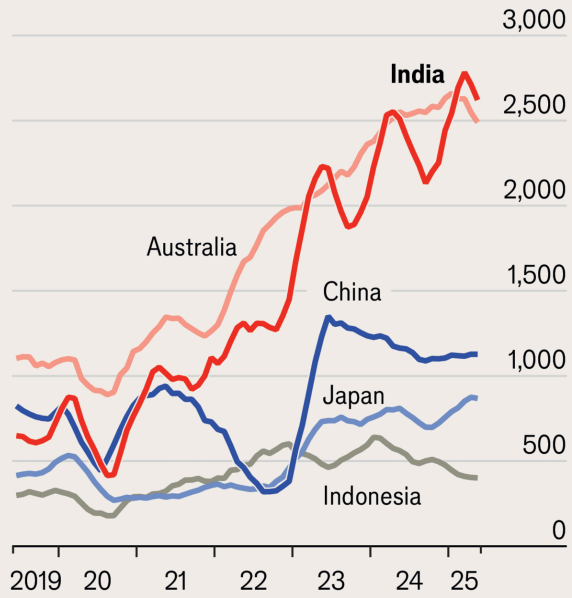
In India, first class is increasingly not good enough. Between 2020 and 2024 the number of monthly private flights there tripled to more than 2,400, higher than anywhere else on the continent (see chart below). In the year to March 2025, four of the ten most popular private-jet routes in Asia were domestic Indian ones, connecting Mumbai to Delhi, Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Pune.

Read the [full story](#) on why India overtook China in oligarchic aviation.

“Data bite” is a new feature we’re testing, highlighting an interesting chart or other bit of data we’ve published elsewhere. Do you like or dislike it? We’d welcome your feedback at [\[email protected\]](#).

Up and away

Monthly private-jet departures*



*Six-month moving average

Source: Asian Sky Group

Image: The Economist



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: In the original “Terminator” movie, which character returns from the future to protect Sarah Connor?

Wednesday: Which Canadian singer-songwriter performed hits such as “If You Could Read My Mind” and “Daylight Katy”?

*The four most beautiful words in
our common language: I told you
so.*

Gore Vidal