

Catch up: Ukraine seizes Russian prisoners; Israel's army rescues hostage



[Oleksandr Syrsky](#), the head of **Ukraine's** army, said his soldiers had captured nearly 600 Russian soldiers since Ukraine began its incursion into [Kursk](#). Ukrainian forces have been operating in the Russian border region since the beginning of August. Mr Syrsky said that the newly captured prisoners would add to Ukraine's so-called "exchange fund", which it has used to secure the release of its own soldiers. Earlier this week Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine's president, requested permission to use Western-supplied weapons systems to [strike inside Russia](#).

Israel's army said it had rescued a [hostage](#) who had been held by **Hamas** in Gaza since October 7th. Qaid Farhan Al-Qadi, a Bedouin citizen of Israel, had been working as a security guard in southern Israel when he was kidnapped. More than 250 hostages were [abducted by the militant group](#) last year, with around 100 still believed to remain in Gaza.

Andrés Manuel López Obrador, **Mexico's** president, announced he would pause relations with the American and Canadian embassies.

The move, which he clarified will not affect overall Mexican-American relations, comes days after America's ambassador to Mexico warned that a **judicial reform** that [AMLO is pushing](#)—which would let Mexicans elect judges—posed a “major risk to the functioning” of the country's democracy.

America's consumer-confidence index rose to its highest level in six months. The figures, published by the Conference Board, an economic research group, probably reflect [consumers' expectations](#) that the Federal Reserve could [cut interest rates](#) in September. Views of the labour market weakened this month, however, with more people saying that jobs are hard to find.

[Jake Sullivan](#), **America's** national security adviser, visited China for several days of talks. Mr Sullivan, who will meet a number of Chinese officials, hopes to ease relations between the two countries and broaden communications between their armed forces to lessen the risk of conflict. President Joe Biden has repeatedly clashed with China over trade and the status of [Taiwan](#), which China claims.

Indian police fired [tear-gas](#) and water cannons at protesters in Kolkata who were demonstrating against the government's handling of the rape and murder of a 31-year-old trainee doctor in the city [earlier this month](#). Protesters, led by university students in West Bengal's capital, were demanding the resignation of the state's chief minister. Protests have taken place across the country and doctors are striking for safer working conditions.

Australia said it would limit the number of foreigners [allowed to study](#) at its universities and colleges. Places will be capped at 145,000 for the academic year beginning in 2025; places on technical courses will be limited to 95,000. Foreign student numbers have spiked since the pandemic. The government says it is concerned that [rising immigration](#) is driving up housing costs in the country's big cities.

Figure of the day: 350, the rough number of pages in the “Equal Treatment Bench Book”, a language guide for British lawyers.

[Read the full story.](#)

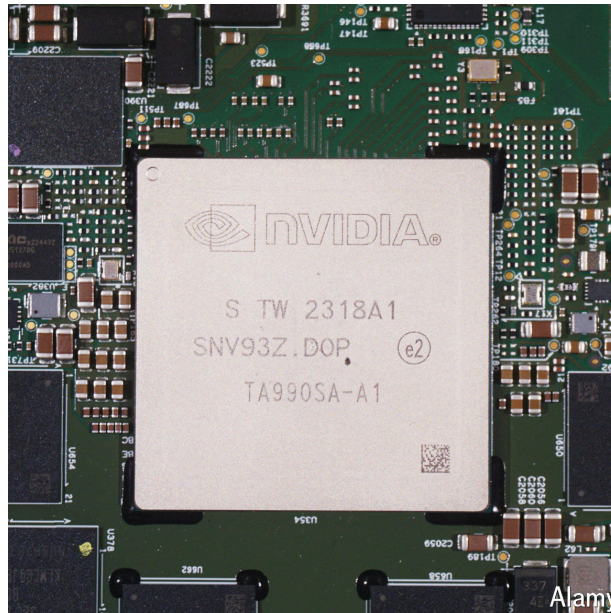
Kamala swings around Georgia



Can she sustain the momentum? That is the question pundits are asking as Kamala Harris embarks on Wednesday on a two-day bus tour of southern Georgia. *The Economist's* forecast model shows Ms Harris trailing Donald Trump by just two points in the Peach State, a [remarkable improvement](#) for Democrats who were consistently down by five to ten points when Joe Biden was on the ticket.

Democrats are keen to take credit for the improvement in [their prospects](#) in the swing state, but Mr Trump is helping them, too. At a rally in Atlanta earlier this month the former president [reignited a feud](#) with Georgia's popular Republican governor, bruising his chances with conservative voters in the suburbs. Although the two now seem reconciled, Mr Trump will have plenty to prove when he returns to Georgia. The infighting diverts attacks from Ms Harris who at last week's Democratic convention received an on-stage endorsement from Geoff Duncan, Georgia's Republican former lieutenant-governor, who split with Mr Trump after the 2020 election.

Can Nvidia meet expectations?



Nvidia, the world's most valuable [semiconductor company](#), is something of a canary in the coalmine. When it announces second-quarter results on Wednesday, its report will be parsed for insights into the global artificial-intelligence economy. Analysts expect the company to post sales of approximately \$28.7bn for the three months ending in July—more than twice as much as in the same period last year. Since the start of 2024, Nvidia's share price has surged by over 160%.

Yet investors smell trouble. In early August rumours began swirling about design issues delaying the rollout of Blackwell, [Nvidia's latest AI chip](#). The company said that it was confident that production would ramp up in the second half of the year. Another worry is whether businesses are adopting AI more slowly than expected. So far, tech giants such as Google, Microsoft, Meta and Amazon—Nvidia's main customers—are still heavily investing in new data centres. Nvidia's forecast for the next quarter will give an early sign of whether this trend will continue.

Billionaires push farther into space



Jared Isaacman, an American businessman, space enthusiast and astronaut, will head into space for a [second time](#) on Wednesday. If all goes to plan (a launch scheduled for Tuesday was postponed) Mr Isaacman and three others will blast into orbit in a Dragon spacecraft made by SpaceX, a rocketry company founded by Elon Musk.

Billionaires have been paying for [trips into space](#) since 2001, when Dennis Tito, another American, visited the International Space Station aboard a Russian rocket. Mr Isaacman's flight, dubbed Polaris Dawn, is part of his broader project to advance human spaceflight. With a maximum altitude of around 1,400km, the mission aims to get farther from the Earth than any crewed flight since the final Apollo mission in 1972. The trip will also take the astronauts through the van Allen radiation belts, and see Mr Isaacman and Sarah Gillis, another of the astronauts, perform the first ever commercial spacewalk.

Abercrombie is cool again



For some millennials, Abercrombie & Fitch might still evoke moose logos, upturned collars and sexy black-and-white catalogues of the fashion brand's early-aughts heyday. For their parents, it might summon the overpowering scent of "Fierce", a cologne that was a teenage favourite. Both groups would probably find Abercrombie's shops and merchandise unrecognisable today.

In 2006 Mike Jeffries, the company's then boss, bragged that the preppy brand was "exclusionary" and went after "the cool kids". His successor, Fran Horowitz, prides herself on paying closer attention to what young buyers want. The brand now stocks more denim sizes. In its "Wedding Shop", it offers outfits and accessories for burdened bridesmaids. The revamp appears to have worked: in May Abercrombie reported a record \$1bn in net sales for the first quarter. Investors are expecting similarly strong results from the second quarter when the company reports on Wednesday. In 2023 Abercrombie's share price rose by 285%, outperforming [even Nvidia's](#), the world's most valuable chipmaker.

Cinematic riches in Venice



The roster of movies and stars at this year's [Venice Film Festival](#), which starts on Wednesday, looks especially plentiful. Angelina Jolie will become the opera diva Maria Callas in "Maria". Daniel Craig, known for playing James Bond, will be transformed into an American junkie in Mexico in an adaptation of William Burroughs's novel "Queer" by Luca Guadagnino, an Italian director. George Clooney and Brad Pitt will come together in the action-comedy "Wolfs".

Two blockbuster sequels are also launching at the fest. Tim Burton's "Beetlejuice Beetlejuice" reprises the director's dark fantasy epic from 1988, and "Joker: Folie à Deux" sees the return of Joaquin Phoenix as the eponymous supervillain, this time starring alongside Lady Gaga.

Documentaries include a probe of the Mexican-American border by Erroll Morris and an intimate portrait of a professional "mistress dispeller" in China, who delicately breaks up affairs to save marriages, by Elizabeth Lo, a filmmaker from Hong Kong. The

jury, headed this year by Isabelle Huppert, a French actress, can look forward to a great show—and some tough decisions.

Daily Quiz



The Economist

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.

Wednesday: In October 2022, a leader in *The Economist* said, that Liz Truss, Britain's then prime minister, had the shelf life of which vegetable?

Tuesday: Cheshire, Cornish Yarg and Stracciatella are all types of what?

350

*The rough number of pages in the “Equal Treatment Bench Book”,
a language guide for British lawyers.
Read the full story.*

Liberty is the power that we have over ourselves.

Hugo Grotius