

The world in brief, July 15th 2024



A federal judge dismissed a case against **Donald Trump** over his handling of [classified documents](#). **Aileen Cannon**, whom Mr Trump appointed to the bench, argued that the appointment of Jack Smith, the special counsel prosecuting the case, was unconstitutional because he had not been selected by the president or confirmed by the Senate. Mr Smith will probably appeal against the ruling.

The **Republican National Convention** kicked off in Milwaukee, two days after Mr Trump survived an [assassination attempt](#). Mr Trump said that he would announce his pick for [vice-president](#) on Monday. Meanwhile, the FBI faced intense scrutiny over its handling of the attack. The motives of Matthew Crooks, the 20-year-old from Pennsylvania who shot the former president, remain unknown.

Profits at **Goldman Sachs**, a bank, almost tripled year on year during the second quarter. Meanwhile, **Blackrock's** assets under management reached a record high of \$10.7trn. Revenues rose by 8% year on year, reaching \$4.8bn. Stockmarkets have hit record-

highs in recent months as investors believe that an [AI boom](#) will boost productivity. Shares of both companies rose on the news.

Pakistan's government said that it plans to ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the party of former prime minister **Imran Khan**. Mr Khan is currently imprisoned on religious, corruption and national-security charges. It also said that it would file treason charges against him. Despite a crackdown by Pakistan's generals, who in effect run the government, PTI won more national-assembly seats than any rival in [February's election](#).

Burberry replaced its chief executive with Joshua Schulman, the former boss of Michael Kors. The British [luxury](#) group also warned that sales fell during the first quarter, and that annual profits will underperform this year. The luxury sector is struggling as inflation has eroded consumers' purchasing power and demand has dropped in China, its biggest market.

Voting began in **Syria's** parliamentary [election](#), the fourth since anti-government protests in 2011 led to a civil war. The election could pave the way for constitutional reform to extend the term of Bashar al-Assad, the president. Voting excludes the north-west of the country, which is held by rebel forces, as well as the north-east, which is under the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces.

Scientists said they had found proof of an underground cave on the **Moon**. It is believed to be at least 100 metres deep and was probably formed millions of years ago out of flowing lava which left behind a tunnel. Researchers reckon that there may be hundreds of other such caves, which could eventually be used to build [liveable conditions](#) for humans on the Moon.

Figure of the day: 171,000, the number of Jews in Argentina. Javier Milei, the Catholic country's "anarcho-capitalist" president, has been embracing Orthodox Judaism. [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

China's Third Plenum



On Monday 376 bigwigs from the Chinese Communist Party gathered for its “[third plenum](#)”, where they will set economic goals for as far out as 2035. These meetings have yielded important results before. The third plenum in 1978 kicked off economic reforms that led to decades of rapid growth and China’s rise as a superpower.

China’s economy is again in need of serious reform. An ongoing crisis in the property sector, long a driver of the country’s growth, worsened in May when prices for new homes took their biggest fall in nearly a decade. Local governments, no longer able to raise funds through land sales, are taking on debt. Consumer confidence is dismal. And China’s export-focused growth strategy is getting riskier as rich countries put up tariffs. Xi Jinping, the party’s chief, has in the past offered half-measures and empty rhetoric where consistent action was needed. This time he must be bolder.

The Republican Party's dramatic convention



The Republican National Convention convenes on Monday in Milwaukee amid more drama than the organisers of the made-for-TV event could have imagined. They had booked elected officials, Trump-family members, business leaders and celebrities as supporting acts to Donald Trump. His speech, expected on Thursday, was meant to be the event's showstopper. And his long-awaited [vice-presidential pick](#) was to finally be revealed. But the attempt to assassinate Mr Trump on July 13th—America's most serious act of political violence in decades—will overshadow that.

In his early statements after the assassination attempt he focused on praising law enforcement and avoided speculating about the motives of the shooter. [Will the presidential front-runner](#) echo some members of his party, who blamed the shooting on the Democrats' angry rhetoric about Mr Trump and their claims that he is a wannabe dictator? Or will he offer a unifying message in Milwaukee and attempt to lower the temperature of political discourse?

Biden gets in front of the cameras again



While Donald Trump revels in Republicans' adulation in Milwaukee, heightened by his [narrow escape](#) from assassination, Joe Biden will try to calm fears about his candidacy. On Monday NBC will air a pre-taped interview with the president. He has appeared more cogent in recent media appearances than he did on the debate stage on June 27th, but this has not ended a [rebellion](#) in his party.

Mr Biden is hoping that the disorganised uprising dissipates. Meanwhile he continues to insist that only he can defeat Mr Trump. [Even if](#) voters believe him, that is not their only concern. Among Democratic-leaning voters who want him to step aside, polls say, more than twice as many cite concerns about his fitness for office than worry that he will lose in November. No set-piece interview is likely to persuade them that Mr Biden will stay sharp enough to hold the world's toughest job for the next four years.

Another rigged election in Rwanda



In this [year of elections](#) few have a more certain outcome than that of Rwanda on Monday. Paul Kagame, who has in effect run the country since 1994, will almost certainly be re-elected president in a ballot that will be neither free nor fair. A constitutional referendum in 2015—passed with 98% of the vote—means that he can run twice more after this, potentially extending his time in office until 2034. The 66-year-old is going nowhere.

The official line is that Rwanda is peaceful, united and prosperous—a beacon of progress lit from the embers of the genocide that took place [30 years ago](#). Many [African leaders](#) see Mr Kagame's rule as a model. But his repression of his own people and [Rwanda's involvement in a war in neighbouring Congo](#) have created enemies at home and abroad. No wonder Mr Kagame would rather not test his popularity by allowing serious candidates to run against him.

New malaria vaccines offer a jab of hope



For 60 years scientists have tried to develop a vaccine to defend against *Plasmodium falciparum*, a parasite that causes malaria, which kills around 600,000 people a year. Now two have arrived at once. Both attack the parasite in the first few minutes after it is transmitted via mosquito bite. The first, called RTS,S, was rolled out in Cameroon in January. The second, R21, which can be made in larger volumes at less than half the price, will be launched on Monday in Ivory Coast.

Malaria deaths had been falling, but a decade ago that decline stopped. These vaccines, together with other innovations such as better mosquito nets, should give the fight against the disease a [shot in the arm](#). According to Sania Nishtar, the chief executive of Gavi, a public-private vaccine initiative that is supporting the roll-out, “we have an opportunity to finally turn the tide against this killer disease.”

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 QuizEspresso@economist.com. We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

Monday: Which Chekhov play, the last he wrote, focuses on the estate of the Ranevskaya family?

171,000

*the number of Jews in Argentina. Javier Milei, the Catholic country's "anarcho-capitalist" president, has been embracing Orthodox Judaism.
Read the full story.*

**I daresay anything can be made holy by
being sincerely worshipped.**

Iris Murdoch