

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter

Britain froze trade talks with [Israel](#) over its escalating military campaign in Gaza. Britain's foreign minister accused Israel's government of displacing civilians and blocking aid. Earlier, alongside Canada and France, it threatened targeted sanctions unless Israel halts the assault and allows humanitarian access. Palestinian health officials said at least 50 people were killed in Israeli air strikes on Tuesday.

Britain and the **EU** imposed new sanctions on Russia, targeting its shadow oil fleet and financial intermediaries. The move followed [Donald Trump's call with Vladimir Putin](#) on Monday, which failed to produce progress on the war in Ukraine. European leaders urged America to follow suit, but Mr Trump has yet to act. Russia insisted it would not bow to ultimatums.

Honda cut its planned investment in electric vehicles and software this decade from ¥10trn (\$69bn) to ¥7trn, citing slowing demand. The Japanese carmaker's boss, Mibe Toshihiro, said EVs may account for just 20% of sales by 2030, down from a 30% target. [Honda](#) will instead launch 13 hybrid models by the end of the decade and expects to sell over 2.2m hybrids annually.

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, accused America of making "outrageous" demands in [nuclear talks](#) and cast doubts on the possibility of a positive outcome. On Sunday American officials said Iran should cease all uranium enrichment, to prevent the development of nuclear weapons. Iran insists its nuclear programme is focused on energy. Talks are expected to continue this weekend in Rome.

During a speech marking a year in office Lai Ching-te, **Taiwan's** president, said that the island was “committed to peace” [with China](#), but that it would continue to strengthen its defences. China called his remarks a “waste of effort”. In March Mr Lai [proposed a controversial crackdown on China](#), which does not recognise Taiwan's independence, declaring it a “foreign hostile force”.

Elon Musk said he would cut back on future political spending and that he had “done enough”. The world's richest man was the Republican Party's top donor last year, contributing more than \$290m. But his [presence in the White House](#) has [prompted backlash towards Tesla](#), his electric-vehicle company. He said he intends to remain in charge of the firm for another five years.

Qatar's prime minister, Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, dismissed suggestions that his country's offer to give Donald Trump a \$400m jet was bribery. The offer from Qatar, which Mr Trump visited last week [during a tour of the Gulf](#), sparked concerns the country was trying to buy influence. But Sheikh Muhammad called it a “normal thing that happens between allies”.

Figure of the day: 27m, the number of falsehoods about covid-19 that Facebook and Instagram deleted at the height of the pandemic. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Reuters

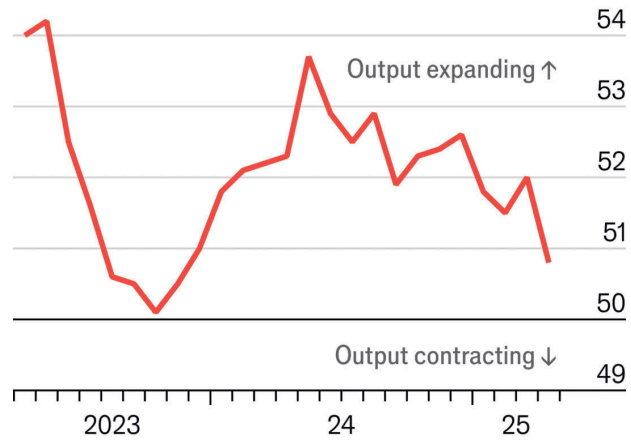
Defying gravity: the global economy

On Tuesday Canada will welcome the finance ministers and central-bank governors of the G7 in Banff. Much of the talk amid the mountains will focus on Donald Trump's [tariff war](#)—but not only that. Many rich countries face shaky public finances, political pressure on immigration and growing fears about AI's impact on jobs.

Yet the data offer some reassurance. The MSCI World index, a decent measure of global stockmarkets, is once again approaching an all-time high, having plunged following Mr Trump's "Liberation Day" in April. The global purchasing-managers index, a high-frequency measure of growth, has come down but still points to GDP growth in the region of 2%. And unemployment remains near all-time lows. The outlook could worsen. But for now, the mood in Banff may prove surprisingly relaxed.

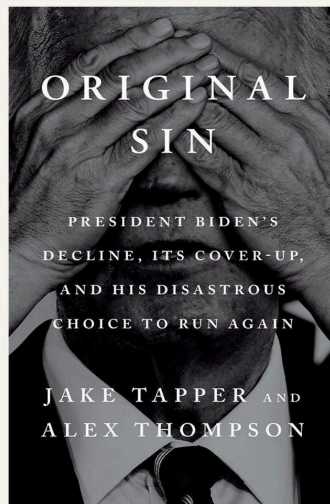
On the plus side

World, composite purchasing managers' index*



*Based on a survey of around 27,000 companies

Source: LSEG Workspace



Photograph: Penguin Press

Propping up a president

By March 2023, there were times when Joe Biden seemed “completely out of it, spent, exhausted, almost gone”, according to “Original Sin”, [a book published on Tuesday](#) by Jake Tapper and Alex Thompson, two journalists. In one encounter in December 2022, he did not remember the name of his national security adviser or communications director. “You know George,” an aide prodded Mr Biden in June 2024, coaxing him to recognise George Clooney at a fundraiser.

His aides tried to compensate, using two cameras for remarks to be shown on video so they could camouflage incoherence with jump cuts, for example. But his decline was plain to many Americans long before June 2024, when he [fell apart](#) in a TV debate with Donald Trump. The book is useful less as a cautionary tale about Mr Biden’s own decline than it is about the decline of the Democratic Party, which was dominated by its candidate, and of the press, which largely failed to point out the obvious.



Photograph: AP

Afghans in America are facing deportation

Donald Trump's mass deportation campaign is not limited to undocumented immigrants. His administration is also removing protections from people granted legal status because their country is too dangerous to return to. On Tuesday the designation shielding some 11,700 Afghan nationals from deportation will lapse.

Joe Biden first offered protections to Afghans a year after America's [disastrous withdrawal](#) from Afghanistan in 2021, which resulted in the country's takeover by the Taliban. Many who fled during the state's collapse had fought with American troops in the country, or worked alongside them. Yet Kristi Noem, the secretary of homeland security, insists that allowing Afghans to stay would be "contrary to the national interest". Ms Noem is required to offer a grace period between her decision and the end of the programme, so Afghans will have until July 14th to try to find a way to stay. Failure to do so could mean deportation.

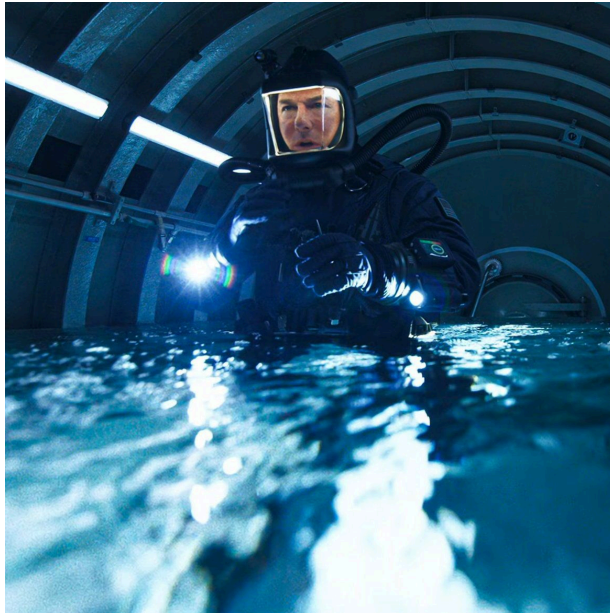


Photograph: EPA

Google's whizzy upgrades

On Tuesday Alphabet, Google's parent company, kicks off its annual developer conference. Expect plenty of splashy announcements. The firm is set to unveil updates to [Gemini](#), its family of AI models, and a version of its Android operating system designed for virtual reality.

The shindig comes on the heels of a strong set of results in April, with Google's search business performing particularly well. Yet there's no room for complacency. AI-powered apps such as ChatGPT and Perplexity pose a threat to Alphabet's core search function. And the company is fighting two big antitrust cases in America. In April a district judge ruled in one of them that the company operates an illegal monopoly in digital advertising. In the other, a court ruled last year that Google's [search business](#) was an illegal monopoly, too; hearings to decide on remedies are underway. While it appeals, Alphabet will hope that its whizzy upgrades will take investors' minds off the problems that lie ahead.



Photograph: LMK

Mission: Impossible—The Final Reckoning?

He hangs from the wing of a biplane (upside down, of course), dives into the shattered carcass of a Russian nuclear submarine and even gets down to his boxers for a knife-fight. It must be Tom Cruise, back as agent Ethan Hunt of the mysterious IMF (not to be confused with the International Monetary Fund). The eighth instalment of the Hollywood action franchise blasts through cinemas this week.

All the familiar tropes are present and correct; an absurdly convoluted plot (this time featuring a rogue AI known as “the Entity”), sidekicks played by Simon Pegg and Ving Rhames, and clueless bureaucrats who never get what it really takes to save the world.

But is this really Mr Cruise’s final mission? Glancing references to previous capers suggest that this is indeed a wrap-up, as the title suggests. But if the money’s there, and Mr Cruise’s body can take it, there might be more assignments, if he chooses to accept them.



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.

Tuesday: Who was the first African-American to win the “most valuable player” award in major league baseball?

Monday: Which character did George Clooney play in ER?

*Ask yourself whether you are
happy, and you cease to be so.*

John Stuart Mill