

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Reuters

An overnight attack by **Russia** on **Ukraine's** capital, Kyiv, killed at least 18 people, including a child, and injured dozens, according to Ukrainian officials. Britain and the European Union summoned their Russian ambassadors in response. [Ukraine's president](#), Volodymyr Zelenskiy, called for tougher sanctions on Russia; Ursula von der Leyen, the head of the European Commission, said the EU would soon implement another package.

Lisa Cook sued Donald Trump over his [unprecedented attempt to fire her](#) from the board of America's Federal Reserve. The lawsuit challenges a statement issued by the president on Monday, in which he cites alleged mortgage fraud as cause for "immediate" dismissal. Ms Cook insists Mr Trump has "no authority" to do so, and that the central bank must remain independent of political influence.

Israeli strikes killed at least 16 people across [Gaza](#), local health officials said, as bombardment around the enclave's largest urban centre intensified. The Israel Defence Forces said it was preparing an assault on **Gaza City**, which it says is Hamas's last stronghold. Dozens were also wounded near an aid site in southern Gaza.

Israel struck targets south of **Damascus**, [Syria's capital](#), and deployed troops into the country overnight, Syrian state media

reported. America is mediating talks to de-escalate the conflict. Strikes earlier this week killed at least six Syrian soldiers. Israel has vowed to keep troops on territory seized around Mount Hermon, a strategic peak, and its defence minister said forces were operating “in all combat zones”.

The Trump administration said it had fired Susan Monarez, the director of the **Centres for Disease Control**, America’s primary [public-health agency](#). She had refused to step down. Ms Monarez, a government scientist, was sworn into the job less than a month ago. Reports suggest that the government wants to remove her because of her pro-vaccine views. Four other senior CDC officials resigned on Wednesday.

Kim Jong Un, **North Korea’s** dictator, will attend a military parade in **Beijing** on September 3rd along with 25 other leaders, including Vladimir Putin, Russia’s president. The parade will commemorate the 80th anniversary of [the end of the second world war](#). This week Mr Trump said he would like to meet Mr Kim again.

Police who raided a house in **Argentina** looking for a painting [looted by the Nazis](#) said that it had disappeared. Giuseppe Ghislandi’s “Portrait of a Lady”, stolen in 1940 from a Jewish art dealer in Amsterdam, was spotted hanging on the wall of a property in Buenos Aires after an estate agent advertised the house. The property is owned by the daughter of Friedrich Kadgien, a deceased senior Nazi.

Figure of the day: 5.5%, the drop in the number of arrivals at American airports between May and July, compared with the same period a year earlier. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Getty Images

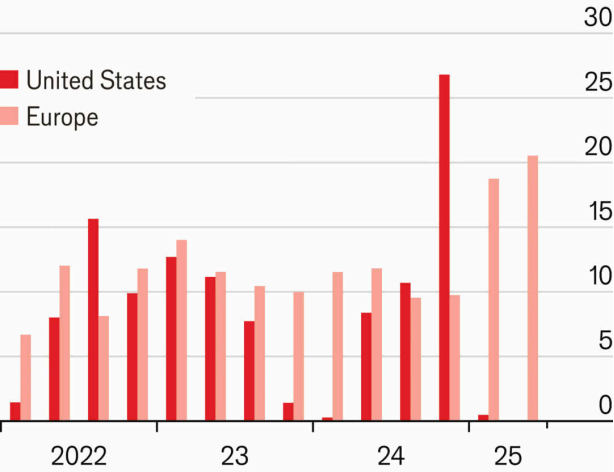
European defence in the shadow of Trump

On Thursday defence ministers from the European Union will meet in Copenhagen for a summit convened by Denmark, which holds the bloc's six-month rotating presidency. They will discuss [support for Ukraine](#) and enhancing Europe's military readiness. Under the leadership of Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, and Kaja Kallas, her deputy, the EU is growing its defence responsibilities in partnership with NATO. Since 2024 the EU has had a defence commissioner, Andrius Kubilius (pictured).

As the Trump administration cut America's support for [Ukraine](#) earlier this year, Europe accelerated. Between May and June, Europe allocated €10.5bn (\$12.2bn) in military aid to Ukraine. But divisions remain. Some countries, including France, Germany and Britain (which is outside the EU), are at least superficially supportive of Donald Trump's efforts to end the war. Other countries, including the Nordics and Baltics, are wary. The leaders of two, Hungary and Slovakia, are Russian sympathisers. But Europe has shown it can work around them to improve security.

Bombs away

Financial support for Ukraine, allocations, €bn



Source: Kiel Institute



Photograph: Getty Images

Will India shrug off Trump's tariffs?

On Thursday India releases industrial-production figures for July. Output growth slowed to 1.5% year on year in June, from 1.9% in May. Thursday's figures may indicate the strength of India's manufacturers before Donald Trump's tariffs begin to hurt India's economy. In early August Mr Trump imposed 25% tariffs on imports from India; on Wednesday those doubled.

Mr Trump is punishing India because it is the world's biggest buyer of [Russian crude oil](#). Economic pressure on Russia is one of his tools for trying to end the war in Ukraine. So far the levies have not discouraged India from buying Russian oil. After a recent buying dip, refiners have snapped up deliveries for October. They appear to have used the tariffs as a pretext to negotiate lower prices, to Russia's cost but India's benefit. The question—which the industrial-output data may help to answer—is how well prepared [exporters of manufactured goods](#) are for American tariffs brought on by India's undiminished appetite for Russian oil.



Illustration: David Simonds

France and Germany learn to get along

Two years ago Olaf Scholz, then Germany's chancellor, treated Emmanuel Macron to fish sandwiches at a joint governmental meeting in Hamburg. On Thursday Mr Macron will honour the current chancellor, Friedrich Merz, with a more glamorous occasion: dinner at the French presidential retreat, the Fort de Brégançon, on the Mediterranean.

They dine on the eve of a joint cabinet meeting at the French port of Toulon. Under Mr Scholz, Franco-German ties were strained. Mr Merz and Mr Macron, by contrast, are readier to overcome their differences. They agree on the need to strengthen European competitiveness and boost security. They still differ on the EU's trade deal with Mercosur, a South American bloc—France worries about its impact on farmers, while Germany sees economic gains—and on industrial defence, including a stalled project to build a Franco-German fighter jet. Worries about the [stability of France's government](#) will cloud the event. But at a crucial time for Europe's security, it is a chance to reset the continent's most important partnership.



Photograph: Giles Keyte/Netflix

The rise of “cosy crime”

Richard Osman’s four “Thursday Murder Club” novels, about four retirees who solve crimes together, have sold more than 10m copies around the world. It is easy to see why: they are funny, shrewd and clear-eyed about ageing, taking in the good (lunchtime drinking, caring less about others’ opinions) and the bad (everything else). On Thursday a [film adaptation of the first book](#) premieres on Netflix. The cast includes Dame Helen Mirren, Sir Ben Kingsley, a dreadfully miscast Pierce Brosnan, Celia Imrie and David Tennant at his twitchiest.

The script is witty and Chris Columbus’s direction is pacey. The film is the sort of diverting mid-budget dramedy that Hollywood once delivered in spades. Fans of the book may be disappointed by subplots trimmed, subtlety flattened and a few too many clunky exposition-driven scenes—but better a lean film than the bloat that would have resulted from turning it into a TV series. The film’s last scene implies that more is to come.



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 America, Amazon allows some users to select what delivery option if the item weighs five pounds or less?

Wednesday: Which Bobby Goldsboro song was the best-selling record worldwide in 1968?

*Liberty is the power that we have
over ourselves.*

Hugo Grotius