

Catch up: America says 104% tariffs on China will go ahead; global stocks' rally stalls



The White House said that an additional 50% **tariff** on imports from **China**, on top of the 34% that President Donald Trump announced last week, would go into effect on Wednesday. That would bring America's total tariff rate on Chinese goods to 104%. Earlier China [promised to retaliate](#) by imposing a 34% levy on American imports, and vowed to “fight to the end”.

Global stockmarkets partially rebounded on Tuesday after three [dramatic days of sell-offs](#), but their rally stalled. Wall Street's benchmark S&P 500 index had lost its early gains by afternoon in New York. Earlier, the Stoxx Europe 600 rose by 3.2%. Japan—whose leader reportedly asked Mr Trump to rethink his tariffs—led the surge in Asia, with the Nikkei and Topix both jumping by around 7%.

Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelensky, said that his country's forces captured two **Chinese** nationals fighting with the Russian

army in eastern Ukraine. He said other such fighters were suspected to be operating at the front line and that he has asked for an explanation from China, which denies directly helping Russia's war effort. Earlier Mr Zelensky acknowledged that **Ukrainian** troops were active in Belgorod, a **Russian** border region.

America's **Supreme Court** allowed the Trump administration to [progress for now](#) with terminating 16,000 **probationary employees** at six government agencies. A lower-court judge ruled their jobs should be reinstated after trade unions and non-profits sued; the workers are on paid leave while the case proceeds. It is the third time in recent days that America's highest court has sided with Mr Trump.

Meta said that it would require **Instagram users under 16** to get parental permission to view some live-streamed features. The image-sharing platform will also blur images thought to contain nudity in the messages of under-16s. Meta said it would also extend its "teen accounts", which filter content and restrict contact lists on Instagram, to Facebook and Messenger.

Spain's government said it would spend an additional €2bn (\$2.2bn) on defence this year as Europe seeks to rearm. The country spends just 1.3% of its GDP on defence, the [lowest level](#) in NATO; the government has said it will boost that to 2% "as soon as possible", though its official deadline is 2029. European members of the alliance face pressure from America to contribute more to their continent's security.

Trenitalia, Italy's state railway company, said it would launch a high-speed service connecting London and Paris. It will work with Evolyn, a Spanish startup that first announced plans to challenge the Eurostar's lucrative 30-year monopoly on the train route beneath the English Channel in 2023. Trenitalia's parent company, FS Group, said it would invest €1bn (\$1.1bn) in its bid to create a "real alternative to air travel".

Figure of the day: 55,000, the number of containers sent from China to Europe via the Caspian sea in 2024—up from around 25,000 in 2021. [Read the full story.](#)

Donald Trump has begun his second term at a blistering pace. Keep up with his executive orders, legal challenges against them and what Americans think about it all on [our presidential tracker](#).

The fallout from Trump's tariffs



Donald Trump's trade war has caused [chaos in global markets](#) and sparked [fears of a global recession](#). Investors are panicking as “reciprocal” tariffs—which in fact seem designed not to match levies on American goods but to punish countries that sell to American consumers—are to go into force on April 9th. A baseline tax of 10% on almost all imports already went into effect over the weekend. Lawsuits have been filed to try to stop Mr Trump's tariff blitz.

Team Trump is under pressure to explain its plans. Jamieson Greer, Mr Trump's trade representative, will spend Tuesday and Wednesday testifying before Congress. The president has intimated that he is open to doing deals with countries affected by the levies. But it is unclear what concessions would satisfy him. Representatives may be conscious that they could put a stop to all of this. The constitution grants Congress, not the president, power over tariffs. They delegated it to him—and could take it back.

Japan and NATO get closer



“Ukraine today could be East Asia tomorrow,” warned Kishida Fumio, Japan’s then prime minister, in 2022. The fear was that Russia’s invasion could embolden China to conquer Taiwan. Breaking with a decades-long tradition of pacifism, that year Mr Kishida became the first Japanese leader to attend a NATO summit. He hosted the alliance’s then secretary-general in Tokyo in 2023. On Tuesday Mark Rutte, the current secretary-general, arrived in Japan to visit a naval base and a defence factory. He will meet [Ishiba Shigeru](#), Mr Kishida’s successor, on Wednesday.

Under a partnership agreement signed in 2023, Japan has been working with NATO in various fields, including cyber-security, information-sharing and maritime security. The aim is to counter a growing threat from autocratic regimes. Donald Trump’s threats to weaken [America’s security commitments](#) add urgency. Both Japan—and NATO—may hedge against that by drawing closer together.

America's shadow over Australia's election



The leaders of Australia's [two largest parties](#) met for their first election debate on Tuesday. A general election is scheduled for May 3rd. The centre-left Labor prime minister, Anthony Albanese, is trying to convince Australians that their lives are improving after the country recorded one of the sharpest drops in living standards across the OECD in the five years since 2019. His combative Liberal rival, Peter Dutton, paints a grim picture of the country. For all his rage against high energy prices and promised tax cuts, like Mr Albanese, he offers no real plan to lift low growth and productivity.

Donald Trump's policies hang over the election. Mr Dutton blames Mr Albanese for failing to negotiate a tariff deal. Labor points out that Mr Dutton's [complaints about "woke agendas"](#) and posturing about cutting public service jobs resemble Mr Trump's rhetoric. After sliding in polls, Labor is moving back up. Still, neither party looks popular enough to win a majority in the lower house of Parliament.

Death penalty: more executions, but fewer executioners



On Tuesday Amnesty International, a human-rights group, released its global report on the death penalty in 2024. Executions surged by 32% from the previous year to 1,518, the highest figure in a decade. But they occurred in just 15 countries, the fewest on record. Three nations accounted for 91% of all known killings. Iran executed 972 people, many of them opponents of the regime. Saudi Arabia doubled its number to 345. Iraq quadrupled executions to 63. [China](#), which is thought to execute thousands secretly, is excluded from the count. Executions for drug-related crimes constituted 42% of the global total, even though, under international law, states may impose the death penalty only on people who intentionally commit murder.

But more countries are [abolishing capital punishment](#). Zimbabwe did so in December 2024. Two-thirds of United Nations members now support a global moratorium. And in September Japan [overturned the conviction](#) of Hakamada Iwao, who had spent nearly half a century on death row—the longest ever in the world.

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.

Tuesday: Which singer won Grammy awards for “The Rose” and “Wind Beneath My Wings”?

Monday: Who won an Oscar for appearing in “The Hours” and Emmys for her roles as producer and actress in “Big Little Lies”?

**Lives of great men all remind us greatness
takes no easy way. All the heroes of
tomorrow are the heretics of today.**

Yip Harburg