

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Reuters

Sébastien Lecornu, **France's** prime minister, [resigned](#) after less than a month in the job and hours after appointing a cabinet. The composition of the cabinet was criticised both by opposition parties and some of Mr Lecornu's ministers. French markets and the euro fell on the news. Rivals, including the leader of the hard-right National Rally, Jordan Bardella, urged President Emmanuel Macron to call an election.

Israel deported more than 170 of the 450 activists arrested last week while trying to reach Gaza as part of an aid flotilla. Their number included Greta Thunberg, a Swedish campaigner. Meanwhile Donald Trump urged negotiators from **Israel** and **Hamas** to “move fast” to finalise his [peace plan](#) for Gaza. Officials from both sides arrived in Egypt on Monday for talks.

A federal judge blocked the Trump administration from [deploying](#) any National Guard troops to **Portland**, Oregon. The decision came after the Pentagon tried to sidestep an earlier ruling that blocked the deployment of Oregon National Guard troops by sending ones from California instead. The Trump administration insists that forces are needed to quell violent protests—a claim that was rejected by the judge and Oregon's governor.

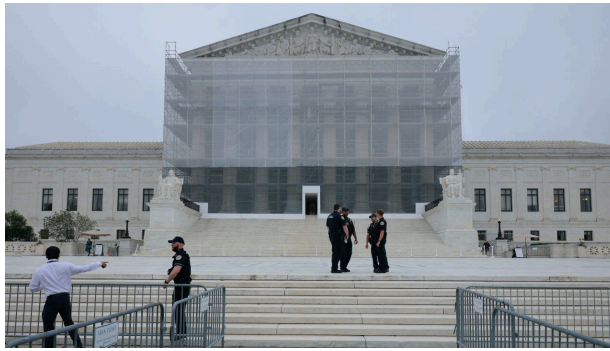
Stockmarkets in Japan soared in response to **Takaichi Sanae's election** as leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic party. The Nikkei 225 index surged by more than 4% to an all-time high during early trading. Other Asian markets also rose. Investors believe Ms Takaichi, who is now set to become Japan's first female prime minister, will increase spending and push for looser monetary policy.

The **Nobel prize in physiology or medicine** was awarded to three scientists based in America and Japan "for their discoveries concerning peripheral immune tolerance". The Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, which awards the prize, said that Mary Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell and Shimon Sakaguchi had made "decisive" discoveries in identifying how the immune system works, particularly by identifying regulatory T-cells.

Australia and Papua New Guinea signed a mutual defence pact seemingly aimed at opposing China's growing influence in the Pacific. The countries committed to come to the other's defence if attacked. The deal also allows some PNG citizens to join Australia's armed forces. Australia has **sought stronger ties with PNG** since China signed a security pact with the Solomon Islands in 2022.

Dame Jilly Cooper, **queen of the bonkbuster**, died aged 88. Since her debut in 1975, the British author wrote over 40 novels, with titles like "Mount!" and "Score!", in which posh reprobates thrust their way through pacy plots. While not the sort of books to win fancy literary prizes, they sold 11m copies in Britain alone. In addition to titillation, readers cherished her works for their sheer good fun.

Figure of the day: 118,000, the number of kilolitres of wine produced by China in 2024. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Getty Images

SCOTUS's new term

The Supreme Court begins a [new term](#) on Monday. Donald Trump enters it in a position of strength: his administration has prevailed in nearly all of its 30-odd emergency appeals to lift lower-court injunctions blocking his policies. But now the conservative supermajority will squarely confront several of Mr Trump's [most contentious actions](#).

In November the justices will examine the legality of his sweeping tariffs. December brings a challenge to a 90-year-old precedent that shields independent agency heads from arbitrary dismissal. In January they will consider his bid to replace Lisa Cook at the Federal Reserve. The most explosive case concerns his attempt to abolish birthright citizenship, which critics say violates the 14th Amendment's guarantee of citizenship to anyone born on American soil. Also on the docket are disputes over conversion therapy for minors, racial gerrymandering, campaign-finance limits, the death penalty and police searches—cases that will test how far the court is willing to go.



Photograph: Getty Images

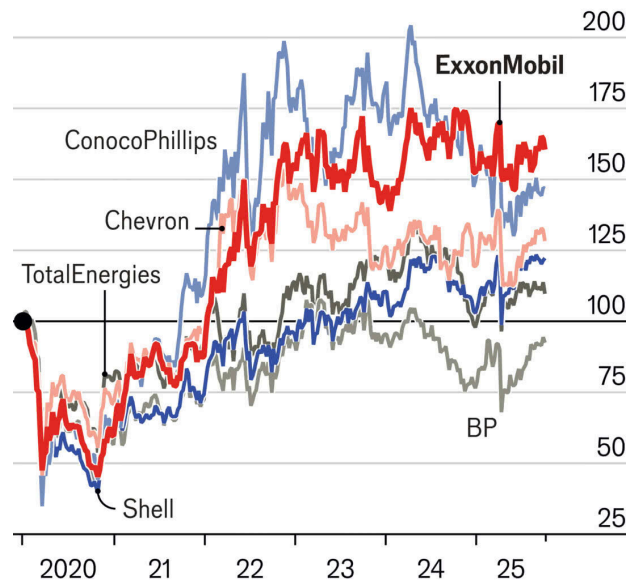
Exxon goes lean

On Monday ExxonMobil, an American oil major, is expected to preview its third-quarter results ahead of a full release later this month. Investors will be looking closely at its restructuring plans. They will assess whether they will make the firm leaner and more profitable, as management claims, or erode the capital spending needed to sustain growth in both hydrocarbons and low-carbon ventures.

Persistently weak oil prices have made it harder for ExxonMobil to maintain heavy investment in Guyana, its flagship offshore oilfield, while also funding its downstream ambitions in carbon capture and battery metals. Last month the company announced job cuts affecting up to 4% of its workforce—a notable move for a firm still earning strong profits. Even so, the mass layoffs look modest beside Chevron's plan to shed as much as a fifth of its staff. For ExxonMobil, slimming down may prove the only way to stay strong.

Crude awakening

Oil majors, share prices, \$ terms,
January 1st 2020=100



Source: LSEG Workspace



Photograph: AP

Protests are sweeping Madagascar

As Malagasy—the people of Madagascar—begin the week, they face an uncertain political future. Nearly two weeks of [youth-led protests](#) over poverty, failing public services and endemic corruption have shaken the island nation. The UN says at least 22 people have been killed. President Andry Rajoelina, the focus of demonstrators' anger, has dismissed his entire cabinet in an effort to cling to power. The unrest is the biggest since the 2009 protests that first brought him to power.

Whether he survives will depend on the military and the country's powerful business elites, who have long shaped Madagascar's politics behind the scenes. They may decide to replace Mr Rajoelina to preserve stability and their own interests. But many young protesters—part of a Generation z that has grown up amid persistent hardship—are unlikely to accept another handpicked successor. They are demanding genuine change in one of the world's poorest countries.



Photograph: Getty Images

How to guess a Nobel laureate

It's that time of year again. From Monday the world will get a new Nobel laureate in medicine or physiology, then in physics, chemistry, literature and economics. Each autumn brings a flurry of guesses about who will take the garland, some more serious than others.

Clarivate, a firm of analysts, gets its pointers from big data. By tracking the most cited researchers from 1970 onwards, and sorting the result by the most original and impactful results, [the company each year nominates](#) a group of people it reckons are Nobel prize-worthy. Roughly one in five of Clarivate's past nominees has eventually gone on to win a Nobel.

This year's standouts include the Japanese discoverers of ghrelin, a hormone that regulates appetite, and several pioneers in quantum computing. It also includes, for the first time, a scientist from mainland China—evidence of the country's growing research strength and America's gradual decline in global citations. Accurate forecasting is, however, impossible: the Nobel committees' deliberations are famously secret.



Photograph: Gilles Sabrié

Chinese wine tastes better than you think

In just a few short decades, Ningxia, a north-western Chinese region near the Gobi desert, has become fertile ground for the [country's top winemakers](#). The capital, Yinchuan, sits at the same latitude as Napa Valley, a centre of wine production in California. Sometimes described as “China’s Bordeaux”, the region has studied and collaborated with French grape growers and winemakers.

Strong government support for vintners is now bearing fruit. This year Chinese wines claimed 181 medals at the Decanter World Wine Awards, sometimes referred to as the “Oscars of wine”, up from three in 2007. China’s haul was a fraction of France’s or Italy’s, but more than other more experienced countries such as Austria and Germany.

Though Chinese demand for wine has slumped due to an economic slowdown and crackdowns on alcohol gifting and drinking among officials, China’s flourishing crop of boutique winemakers are banking on a growing domestic wine culture.



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.

Monday: Which martial arts star became a global icon before dying at age 32 from a brain edema in 1973?

*Knowledge comes, but wisdom
lingers.*

Alfred Lord Tennyson