

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Bloomberg via Getty Images

**Donald Trump** insisted that America needed **Greenland** for “security” in a rambling press conference lasting nearly two hours. When asked how far he was willing to go [to acquire the territory](#), he said “you’ll find out”. Earlier, leaders gathering at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, criticised America’s bullying. **Emmanuel Macron**, France’s president, said Europe would not “passively accept the law of the strongest”.

American and European **stocks** fell as Mr Trump intensified threats to [spark a trade war over Greenland](#). The S&P 500 index closed more than 2% lower on Tuesday; Europe’s STOXX 600 index fell by 0.7%, slightly recovering from its losses earlier in the day. Mr Trump has threatened eight European countries who oppose his plans with 10% tariffs.

**Ukraine’s** president, Volodymyr Zelensky cancelled his plans to travel to Davos, Switzerland, after Russian drone and missile strikes cut off heat to more than 5,600 homes in Kyiv and caused widespread power outages. Mr Zelensky urged the Trump administration to “do more” to stop Russia, which has stepped up its [attacks on energy infrastructure](#) as winter bites.

**Czechoslovak Group**, a Czech armsmaker, said it aims to raise nearly \$4.5bn when it goes public on Friday, in what would be the largest ever **defence** listing. The firm, which makes ammunition and armoured vehicles, is a prominent supplier to Ukraine's army. It has grown rapidly as European governments [ramp up military spending](#). The IPO could value it at nearly \$30bn.

**Britain's** government gave the go-ahead to **Chinese** plans to build a large **embassy complex** in London after years of delays due to security concerns. Critics of the plan argued that its size and proximity to Britain's financial hub, [could facilitate spying](#). A member of the Conservative opposition party said the government's approval was "a disgraceful act of cowardice".

**Syria's government** struck a ceasefire agreement with Kurdish militants following its lightning advance into the north-east of the country. Following months of stalled negotiations and under pressure from America, their historic ally, the [Syrian Democratic Forces](#) agreed to withdraw to areas with a Kurdish majority. Tom Barrack, America's special envoy, has called for greater integration of central Syria while empowering its minorities.

Five countries signed on to Mr Trump's "**Board of Peace**" for Gaza, with several more considering their invitations. The United Arab Emirates, Belarus, Morocco, Hungary and Canada have publicly committed to the organisation to [oversee transitional governance](#) in the strip. However Canada said it would not pay a \$1bn fee required to make the three-year membership permanent.

**Figure of the day:** 1,800, number of applications for remote IT jobs from North Koreans that Amazon blocked last month. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Getty Images

## Europe weighs retaliation over Greenland

European leaders are [scrambling to respond](#) to Donald Trump's threat to impose tariffs on the eight countries that sent a few dozen troops to Greenland. They could try and convince Mr Trump that the crisis is merely a misunderstanding. The mostly symbolic deployment was carried out last week at Denmark's request—and followed American calls for a stronger European presence in the Arctic.

That is unlikely to sway Mr Trump. Another option, then, is retaliation. European parliamentarians are prepared to suspend a trade deal struck last year, under which Europe agreed not to match America's steep tariffs. Levies on exports to America from the eight countries would rise from 15% to at least 25%. More dramatically, the EU could invoke its most powerful economic weapon. The "anti-coercion instrument" would allow broader retaliation against American firms and investments. But such tactics risk damaging co-operation over Ukraine or spiralling into a wider trade war. Abandoning a strategy of American appeasement will come with consequences.



Photograph: Getty Images

## Netflix tests investors' faith

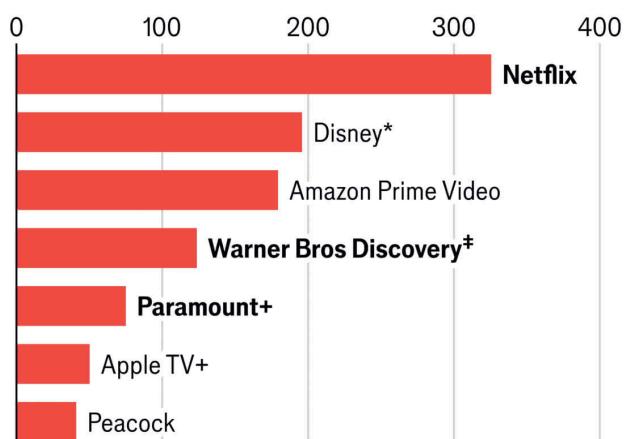
Netflix will report earnings on Tuesday, and update shareholders on its plans to get even bigger. The world's biggest streaming service, with more than 300m subscribers, hopes to [buy most of Warner Bros Discovery](#), which has over 100m streaming customers as well as one of Hollywood's biggest movie studios. Netflix had offered \$83bn in cash and stock but on Tuesday switched to an all-cash bid to fend off a rival approach from Paramount Global.

Some of the strongest doubts about the deal come from Netflix's own shareholders. The company's share price has dropped by more than a quarter since it started circling Warner last autumn. Some worry about the sheer scale of the acquisition; others see it as a sign that Netflix's existing growth engines are losing power. Tuesday's results will either steady nerves—or deepen concerns—over the company's boldest bet since it abandoned DVDS.

## No business like showbusiness

Global streaming subscriptions, m

Selected companies, Q3 2025



\*Disney+, Disney+ Hotstar and Hulu

‡Discovery+ and HBO Max

Source: Ampere Analysis



Photograph: Getty Images

## Challenging the Ten Commandments in America's classrooms

On Tuesday America's Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals will weigh the constitutionality of laws in Texas and [Louisiana](#) that require public schools to display the Ten Commandments in every classroom. A three-judge panel at the Fifth Circuit rejected Louisiana's law last June; now all 17 active judges will weigh in.

Texas's attorney general, Ken Paxton, argues that displaying the commandments is "imperative" to uphold Christian values in America. Lower courts have blocked the laws on the grounds that they breach the First Amendment's ban on establishing religion. Judges cited *Stone v Graham*, a 1980 Supreme Court ruling that struck down a near-identical requirement. The states counter that *Stone* depends on a legal test the court has since discarded. The case now sits squarely at the centre of America's culture wars—and looks destined for the [Supreme Court](#).



Photograph: Reuters

## Russia's view of the “Donroe Doctrine”

On Tuesday Sergei Lavrov, Russia’s foreign minister, will review the past year in his country’s diplomacy at a press conference in Moscow. The Kremlin has some reason to be cheerful. Russian officials have long sought to undermine NATO by trying to create divisions between America and its European allies. Now Donald Trump is doing it for them. The American president’s desire to take over Greenland, an autonomous Danish territory, is threatening to [tear the alliance apart](#). Meanwhile, it is distracting from the plight of Ukraine, where Russia’s full-scale invasion has nearly reached its fourth anniversary.

But a bellicose America poses tricky questions for Russia, too. The Kremlin could do nothing to stop America’s capture of Venezuela’s dictator, Nicolás Maduro, a long-time Russian ally. And while Mr Trump has retreated from threats to strike Iran, another Russian partner, he could return to the idea. Russia may like the sound of a might-makes-right world. But Mr Trump is hard to predict.



Illustration: Sandra Navarro

## 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 GMT on Friday to [\[email protected\]](mailto:[email protected]). We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

**Tuesday:** What was the popular name of the Chinese rebellion against Western occupation between 1899 and 1901?

**Monday:** Which actor, who appeared in many Hammer horror movies, called his autobiography “Tall, Dark and Gruesome”?

*Experience is what you get while looking for something else.*

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*Federico Fellini*