

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

Britain's prime minister, Sir Keir Starmer, left a gathering of European leaders in Copenhagen early following a car-ramming and stabbing attack at a synagogue in Manchester, a city in northern England. Police said two people were killed and three others were in a serious condition. Officers shot another person, who they believe to be the assailant. The attack coincides with Yom Kippur, a Jewish holiday.

OpenAI reached a valuation of \$500bn after a secondary share sale, Bloomberg reported. That makes the American artificial-intelligence company the world's most valuable private firm, ahead of SpaceX, Elon Musk's rocket-maker. Despite fears of a bubble, investors are [flocking to AI companies](#), which are splurging on the computing power needed to develop the biggest large language models.

Israel intercepted more than a dozen civilian ships carrying aid to [Gaza](#), arresting several activists on board, including Greta Thunberg. Organisers of the **Global Sumud Flotilla** said that around 30 boats were still heading towards the enclave, which is under Israeli blockade. Several world leaders, including Malaysia's

Anwar Ibrahim, condemned Israel's action. Israel said the mission was backed by Hamas.

France's prime minister, Sébastien Lecornu, said naval forces arrested two crew members of an oil tanker suspected of being part of [Russia's shadow fleet](#)—ships that conceal their identities to evade sanctions or commit sabotage. Those detained are reportedly the vessel's captain and first officer. Officials said the tanker had been seen near Denmark when unidentified drones appeared in the country's airspace last week.

Warren Buffett's investment firm, **Berkshire Hathaway**, bought Occidental Petroleum's petrochemicals business, **OxyChem**, for \$9.7bn. It is the largest deal since 2022 for the veteran investor, who is [set to retire](#) at the end of the year. The all-cash sale will release some pressure on Occidental, one of America's biggest oil-and-gas producers, which has accrued large debts following a series of recent acquisitions.

Anti-government protests in **Morocco** spread to several cities as thousands of people took to the streets for a fifth straight night, demanding better education and health care. At least two people have been killed and hundreds more injured in clashes with security forces. The movement, dubbed GenZ 212, has been largely mobilised on social media and inspired by similar protests in Asia.

Rescue workers in **Indonesia** said they found “no signs of life” during their latest attempts to free around 60 teenagers trapped beneath the rubble of a school. Hundreds were in the building in Sidoarjo, a town on the island of Java, when it collapsed on Monday. Officials have so far confirmed the deaths of five people, with more than 100 injured.

Figure of the day: 8%, the share of land in Paraguay that is owned by Mennonites, a close-knit group of German-speaking Christians. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Getty Images

More unrest in France

France's unions will make a last-ditch effort to get protesters onto the streets on Thursday before the country gets a fresh government. Sébastien Lecornu, the [new prime minister](#) and ally of President Emmanuel Macron, is expected to name a team shortly. He will hold discussions with the opposition Socialists on Friday, in an attempt to secure a non-aggression pact with them. Union leaders want a show of force to demonstrate their hostility to potential budget cuts and Mr Macron, as well as their support for a new tax on the super rich.

Two weeks ago, a one-day strike brought out a million people. Despite worries that troublemakers would disrupt the protests, they passed off without serious incident. This time the authorities are expecting a lower turnout. It is proving difficult to mobilise support against a budget and a government that do not yet exist.



Photograph: AP

The UN's new plan to take on Haiti's gangs

On Thursday the UN mandate officially ends for a Kenyan-led mission to provide stability in Haiti. Plagued by a lack of funds and police officers—only about 1,000 of the envisaged 2,500 arrived—the force never really matched up to the task of bringing some [semblance of security](#) to the Caribbean nation, which has been overrun by gangs since mid-2021. Since then thousands have been killed and 1.3m displaced, big numbers for a country of just 12m. Up to half the gang members may be children.

On Tuesday the UN voted for the current mission to transition into a “Gang Suppression Force”. Proposed by the United States and Panama, it envisages a beefed-up force of up to 5,500 and a bigger UN logistics office in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital. But many are sceptical that the necessary funding will follow. It may end up being just as ineffective as the former mission. Haiti's suffering is likely to continue.

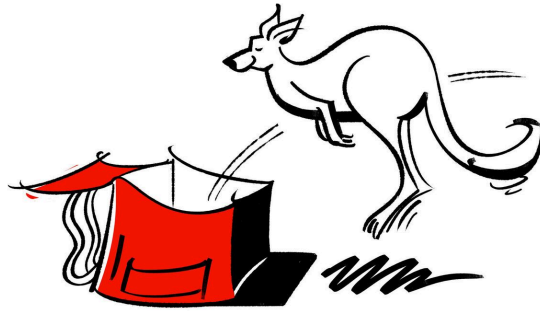


Illustration: Sandra Navarro

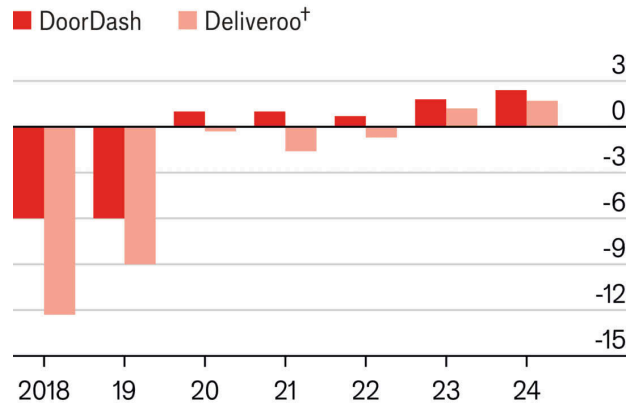
The food-delivery business slims down

DoorDash, America's biggest food-delivery platform, will on Thursday take over Deliveroo for £2.4bn (\$3.2bn). The tie-up with its British rival—which operates in 12 countries, including Ireland, France and the United Arab Emirates—will triple the size of DoorDash's business outside America. Together the two handled \$90bn of orders in 2024 around the world; they serve 50m users monthly.

DoorDash has also broadened its reach beyond delivery, recently paying \$1.2bn for SevenRooms, a platform that helps hotels and restaurants manage reservations. Demand for online restaurant and grocery orders has kept the company growing, even as the sector cools. Food-delivery firms are being pushed to consolidate after the [pandemic boom has slowed](#). Many are also diversifying into retail delivery and building advertising businesses to boost profitability. And the pressure is not limited to the West: the industry is fiercely contested in China and India, where competition has squeezed profitability for firms such as Swiggy and Zomato and Meituan.

Couch potatoes

Operating profit* as % of gross order value



*Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation [†]Gross transaction value

Source: Company reports



Photograph: Getty Images

Droning on: Europe's leaders discuss security

More than 40 leaders from across Europe will descend on Copenhagen on Thursday for the seventh meeting of the European Political Community, a [confab dreamed up by Emmanuel Macron](#) and which includes politicians from outside the EU. The run-up has been marred by Russian incursions into European air space and mysterious drone sightings in the Danish capital. Security will therefore be the main focus of the meeting, which is held every six months and follows an informal summit of EU leaders on Wednesday.

Denmark is among the staunchest supporters of Ukraine. Its prime minister, Mette Frederiksen, is keen to talk up the threat posed by Russia to the entire continent. With the help of Mark Rutte, secretary-general of NATO, the assorted prime ministers and presidents will probably discuss new initiatives such as a “drone wall” to keep such Russian machines at bay. Some European leaders, however, have opposed this.



Photograph: Getty Images

Weightlifters clean up

More than any other sport, weightlifting became synonymous with doping. Its leading athletes trashed the reputation of their sport. No fewer than 37 medallists at the 2008 and [2012 Olympic Games](#) were later found to have cheated and were stripped of their titles. Consequently, the International Olympic Committee demanded that the International Weightlifting Federation allow stricter independent testing if the sport was to remain on the programme for the 2028 Olympics.

So far, the IWF is making the right noises. Its lifters now have to do independent testing. Ahead of the world championships, which begin on Thursday in Norway, the IWF has also issued new weight classifications, designed to be more closely aligned with the Olympic programme. It's an important step, as lifters will have less incentive to bulk up or slim down artificially in order to compete in the appropriate Olympic classifications. Hopefully, that won't prevent them from heaving some new records in Forde.



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: David Lee Roth was the lead singer of which rock band?

Wednesday: Which band's first top-ten hit "Surfin' USA" was based on a Chuck Berry song?

*The truth is, all might be free if
they valued freedom, and
defended it as they ought.*

Samuel Adams