

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

**Donald Trump** announced on social media a second military strike on a boat that he said was trafficking **drugs** from **Venezuela** to the United States. The blast killed three people on board. It follows a strike Mr Trump ordered on another Venezuelan vessel two weeks ago, which killed 11 people. Mr Trump again described drug-cartel members as “terrorists”, a [legally dubious designation](#), and argued they threatened American security.

**Scott Bessent**, America’s treasury secretary, said officials had agreed to a framework for a deal allowing **TikTok** to continue operating in America. Mr Trump and Xi Jinping, China’s leader, are expected to approve the deal on Friday. The Chinese-owned social-media platform had been facing [legal uncertainty](#) after Congress passed legislation last year forcing it to sell its American operations or face a nationwide ban.

**Qatar** [hosted officials](#) from Arab and Islamic countries to discuss Israel’s attempt to [assassinate Hamas leaders](#) in Doha, its capital. Qatar’s leader, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, called the bombing “cowardly and treacherous”. Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister, said the country would continue to target

Hamas “wherever they are”. Mr Trump has indicated that he disapproved of the attack.

**Elon Musk**, the boss of **Tesla**, bought \$1bn of the company’s shares last week, according to a regulatory filing. Shares in the carmaker closed up by nearly 4% on Monday. Tesla’s board has [proposed](#) granting Mr Musk more than \$1trn in stock if he boosts Tesla’s value eightfold, along with meeting other targets. Tesla is currently valued at around \$1.25trn.

The market capitalisation of **Alphabet**, the parent company of **Google**, reached \$3trn for the first time. Only three other companies—Apple, Microsoft and Nvidia—are worth more. The tech giant recently reported strong second-quarter earnings, buoyed by the demand for AI. Earlier this month shares of Alphabet soared after an American judge [rejected the government’s demand](#) to dismantle Google in an antitrust suit.

Spain’s prime minister, **Pedro Sánchez**, called for Israel to be banned from international sporting events over its war in Gaza. His criticism of Israel’s “barbarism” follows a pro-Palestinian protest at the Vuelta a España, a three-week cycling race held mostly in Spain. [Mr Sánchez’s](#) comments coincide with broader calls to exclude Israel from cultural events such as the annual Eurovision song contest.

**Armand Duplantis**, a two-time Olympic champion, broke the men’s **pole vault** record for a 14th time at the [World Athletics Championships](#) in Tokyo. The Louisiana-born athlete, who competes for his mother’s native Sweden, became the first person to clear the 6.3-metre barrier on his third attempt. Earlier he won his third gold medal at the event. Fewer than 30 men have cleared 6 metres.

**Figure of the day:** 43, the median age in Europe—ten years higher than the global average. [Read the full story.](#)





Photograph: AP

## America's redistricting arms race

For years Donald Trump has promised Republicans that, under his leadership, they'll grow "tired of winning". One way to ensure unrelenting success is to re-draw congressional maps to favour conservatives, and at the president's urging, [Texas did just that](#) this summer. On Friday Missouri also passed a new map, which would transform one Democrat-controlled legislative district into a Republican-leaning one.

Democrats have pursued three broad strategies to try to counter the effort. There are the courts: on Monday a civil-rights group, arguing that the Missouri legislature's move was unconstitutional, has a hearing before a judge. Similar lawsuits have been filed in Texas. Missouri Democrats are also trying to organise a referendum that would allow voters to throw out the new map. And some Democrat-controlled states, such as California and New York, are trying to retaliate in kind, bulking up their left-leaning congressional seats at the expense of right-leaning ones. But this process is more cumbersome. For now, Republicans appear set to continue winning.



Photograph: BACKGRID

## Democracy, with Syrian characteristics

It will be a curious sort of election—without any voters. On Monday Syria's interim government will start a week-long process to select a new parliament. The legislature will have 210 members, 70 of them appointed by the president, Ahmed al-Sharaa, and the rest chosen by committees in each of Syria's governorates. [Popular democracy](#) this is not, but it is certainly more unpredictable than elections for the old parliament, in which only Bashar al-Assad's toadies were allowed to run.

Still, there are concerns around the process. One is how much power parliament will have. Lawmakers may question ministers and draft laws, but the president can block legislation unless parliament musters a two-thirds majority—this, in a body where the president picks one-third of the members. Another issue is how the selection process will go in parts of Syria outside the central government's control. The electoral commission says it cannot choose MPs in three governorates under the sway of Druze and Kurdish groups.



Photograph: Getty Images

## Trump's tariffs begin pinching India

The effects of American tariffs on Indian goods are being felt. India's trade deficit was around \$27bn in August, according to figures released on Monday. That is similar to July, though less than some analysts had predicted. In late August [Mr Trump whacked Indian exports with even higher levies](#) of 50%. Export-dependent industries, such as textiles, are reporting fewer orders from America. Meanwhile, the rupee has slid to record lows against the dollar. Anxious foreign investors are yanking billions from the Indian stockmarket.

Last week Mr Trump and Narendra Modi, India's prime minister, exchanged pleasantries on social media, stirring hopes of a rapprochement. But that optimism was soon eclipsed amid reports that Mr Trump is pushing the EU to impose similar tariffs on India (as a way to exert pressure on Russia). Most worrying for India is talk from the Trump administration about possible tariffs on service exports. Those would clobber the country's vaunted IT industry, crucial for India's economic growth.



Photograph: Getty Images

## Turkey's opposition fights for survival

The future of Turkey's main opposition, the Republican People's Party (CHP), hangs in the balance. A verdict on whether to depose the party's leader, Ozgur Ozel, had been expected on Monday. The court, however, decided to adjourn the hearing to October 24th. Turkish markets breathed a sigh of relief.

Prosecutors allege that the party convention which elected Ozgur Ozel as chair had been tainted by irregularities. The court may overturn its results and appoint a trustee to run the CHP ahead of a new congress. Most analysts say the case is nakedly political, designed to cripple the party ahead of general elections, scheduled for 2028 but expected to be held earlier.

The CHP is facing a broader crackdown. Its presidential candidate, [Ekrem Imamoglu](#), the mayor of Istanbul, was [arrested](#) on allegations of corruption in March. Hundreds of party officials, including 15 other mayors, have been detained. More recently, a court removed the leader of the CHP's branch in Istanbul from office.





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

**Monday:** Which poet wrote “The Second Coming” with the lines “Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold”?



*“I have not told half of what I  
saw.”*

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***Marco Polo***