

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Reuters

America will begin implementing **tariffs** on all packages entering the country on Friday, removing the *de minimis exemption*, a tariff loophole for parcels worth less than \$800. During a six-month transition period shippers will be able to pay a flat duty of \$80-\$200 per package depending on their place of origin. In response some global postal services said they would stop delivering to America.

Britain and the **European Union** summoned **Russia's** ambassadors in London and Brussels. That follows a Russian attack on **Kyiv**, **Ukraine's** capital, which killed at least 23 people and damaged the EU mission and British Council buildings. Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelensky, called for tougher sanctions on Russia; Ursula von der Leyen, the head of the European Commission, said the EU would soon implement more.

Christopher Waller, a Trump-appointed **Federal Reserve** governor, said he supported cutting borrowing costs by 0.25 percentage points at the next policy meeting in September—and would back a bigger cut if the labour market substantially weakened in August. Jerome Powell, the Fed's chair, has hinted that interest-rate cuts

may be coming. Meanwhile, **Lisa Cook** sued Donald Trump over [his unprecedented attempt](#) to fire her from the Fed's board.

Thailand's constitutional court will decide on Friday whether to remove the prime minister, **Paetongtarn Shinawatra**, from office for violating ethical rules. Ms Shinawatra [was suspended](#) last month when a leaked recording appeared to show her disparaging a Thai general during a conversation with Hun Sen, Cambodia's strongman, following a border spat between their countries. She also called Mr Hun Sen "uncle", a term of endearment.

The Trump administration said it would nominate a new director of the **Centres for Disease Control** "very soon" and that the president had "every right" to fire Susan Monarez from leading America's [primary public-health agency](#). Ms Monarez, who refuses to resign, had reportedly resisted changes to vaccine policy suggested by Robert F. Kennedy junior, the health secretary known for his [opposition to vaccines](#).

Chinese money-laundering networks moved around \$312bn through **American** banks and other financial institutions between January 2020 and December 2024, America's Treasury said. The agency warned that such groups are being used by Mexican drug cartels to hide illicit profits, furthering the smuggling of fentanyl into America as well as human trafficking.

A 1.5 mile beach in **Canada** will be returned to the Saugeen First Nation after the country's top court found it had been mistakenly omitted from their reserve despite being promised in a 1854 treaty with the crown. A local town, South Bruce Peninsula, had fought to keep control of the popular stretch. Saugeen First Nation called it a "historic vindication".

Figure of the day: 5.5%, the drop in the number of arrivals at American airports between May and July, compared with the same period a year earlier. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Getty Images

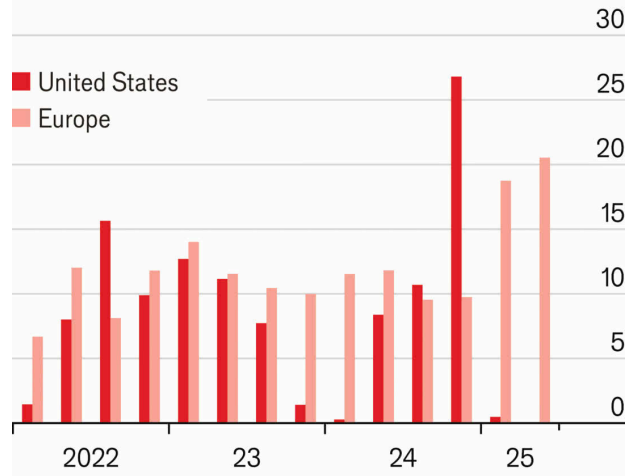
European defence in the shadow of Trump

On Thursday defence ministers from the European Union will meet in Copenhagen for a summit convened by Denmark, which holds the bloc's six-month rotating presidency. They will discuss [support for Ukraine](#) and enhancing Europe's military readiness. Under the leadership of Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, and Kaja Kallas, her deputy, the EU is growing its defence responsibilities in partnership with NATO. Since 2024 the EU has had a defence commissioner, Andrius Kubilius (pictured).

As the Trump administration cut America's support for [Ukraine](#) earlier this year, Europe accelerated. Between May and June, Europe allocated €10.5bn (\$12.2bn) in military aid to Ukraine. But divisions remain. Some countries, including France, Germany and Britain (which is outside the EU), are at least superficially supportive of Donald Trump's efforts to end the war. Other countries, including the Nordics and Baltics, are wary. The leaders of two, Hungary and Slovakia, are Russian sympathisers. But Europe has shown it can work around them to improve security.

Bombs away

Financial support for Ukraine, allocations, €bn



Source: Kiel Institute



Photograph: Getty Images

Will India shrug off Trump's tariffs?

On Thursday India releases industrial-production figures for July. Output growth slowed to 1.5% year on year in June, from 1.9% in May. Thursday's figures may indicate the strength of India's manufacturers before Donald Trump's tariffs begin to hurt India's economy. In early August Mr Trump imposed 25% tariffs on imports from India; on Wednesday those doubled.

Mr Trump is punishing India because it is the world's biggest buyer of [Russian crude oil](#). Economic pressure on Russia is one of his tools for trying to end the war in Ukraine. So far the levies have not discouraged India from buying Russian oil. After a recent buying dip, refiners have snapped up deliveries for October. They appear to have used the tariffs as a pretext to negotiate lower prices, to Russia's cost but India's benefit. The question—which the industrial-output data may help to answer—is how well prepared [exporters of manufactured goods](#) are for American tariffs brought on by India's undiminished appetite for Russian oil.



Illustration: David Simonds

France and Germany learn to get along

Two years ago Olaf Scholz, then Germany's chancellor, treated Emmanuel Macron to fish sandwiches at a joint governmental meeting in Hamburg. On Thursday Mr Macron will honour the current chancellor, Friedrich Merz, with a more glamorous occasion: dinner at the French presidential retreat, the Fort de Brégançon, on the Mediterranean.

They dine on the eve of a joint cabinet meeting at the French port of Toulon. Under Mr Scholz, Franco-German ties were strained. Mr Merz and Mr Macron, by contrast, are readier to overcome their differences. They agree on the need to strengthen European competitiveness and boost security. They still differ on the EU's trade deal with Mercosur, a South American bloc—France worries about its impact on farmers, while Germany sees economic gains—and on industrial defence, including a stalled project to build a Franco-German fighter jet. Worries about the [stability of France's government](#) will cloud the event. But at a crucial time for Europe's security, it is a chance to reset the continent's most important partnership.



Photograph: Giles Keyte/Netflix

The rise of “cosy crime”

Richard Osman’s four “Thursday Murder Club” novels, about four retirees who solve crimes together, have sold more than 10m copies around the world. It is easy to see why: they are funny, shrewd and clear-eyed about ageing, taking in the good (lunchtime drinking, caring less about others’ opinions) and the bad (everything else). On Thursday a [film adaptation of the first book](#) premieres on Netflix. The cast includes Dame Helen Mirren, Sir Ben Kingsley, a dreadfully miscast Pierce Brosnan, Celia Imrie and David Tennant at his twitchiest.

The script is witty and Chris Columbus’s direction is pacey. The film is the sort of diverting mid-budget dramedy that Hollywood once delivered in spades. Fans of the book may be disappointed by subplots trimmed, subtlety flattened and a few too many clunky exposition-driven scenes—but better a lean film than the bloat that would have resulted from turning it into a TV series. The film’s last scene implies that more is to come.



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: In America, Amazon allows some users to select what delivery option if the item weighs five pounds or less?

Wednesday: Which Bobby Goldsboro song was the best-selling record worldwide in 1968?

*Liberty is the power that we have
over ourselves.*

Hugo Grotius