

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

The widow of **Charlie Kirk** urged people to join Turning Point USA, the right-wing activist's organisation, saying that her **murdered** husband's "wisdom will endure". Earlier, Spencer Cox, the governor of Utah, named the suspect arrested for the killing of Mr Kirk as Tyler Robinson, a 22-year-old from the state. Mr Cox thanked the family of the suspect for providing information to investigators.

NATO will bolster the defence of the **alliance's eastern flank** in an "Eastern Sentry" operation. The mission will involve deploying sensors and weapons to destroy drones after a **Russian incursion** into Polish airspace earlier this week. Denmark, France and Germany have sent fighter jets and other European countries have expressed willingness to support the operation.

Fitch, a credit-rating agency, downgraded **France's** debt from AA- to A+. The decision comes amid political turmoil in the country and will add to the **woes** of President Emmanuel Macron. This week the prime minister, François Bayrou, resigned after losing a vote of confidence in the National Assembly. He had been unable to pass a deficit-narrowing budget. His successor, Sebastien Lecornu, may fare little better.

America's **Environmental Protection Agency** proposed ending requirements for companies to report their **greenhouse-gas emissions**. The reporting programme has been collecting data from 8,000 polluters for 15 years. The rollback [follows efforts from the EPA](#) to weaken emissions and pollutant standards for power plants, renounce its ability to regulate greenhouse-gas emissions and stop updating research that helps firms calculate those emissions.

The **Trump administration** said an undocumented immigrant resisting arrest in **Chicago** was shot and killed by an immigration officer, who was also injured in the confrontation. Meanwhile, Mr Trump said he would send the [National Guard](#) to **Memphis**, a Democratic-run city he described as “deeply troubled”. Tennessee’s Republican governor voiced support. The National Guard has [already been deployed](#) to Washington, DC and Los Angeles.

Sushila Karki, **Nepal’s** former chief justice, was sworn in as the interim prime minister, making her the first woman to lead the country. She was named days after the former leader, K.P. Sharma Oli, resigned amid [widespread protests](#) sparked by a social media ban. Ms Karki was the preferred choice of protestors for her stance against corruption.

Giorgio Armani’s wills, outlining his wishes for his fashion empire, were made public. The documents instruct his heirs to sell stakes in his luxury group to one of three larger rivals: LVMH, EssilorLuxottica and L’Oréal. While he was alive, Armani resisted takeover attempts. The Italian designer, who drafted the wills earlier this year, [died aged 91](#) on September 4th.

Figure of the day: 17, the age of Gout Gout, the sprinter who may be athletics’ new mega-star. [Read the full story.](#)

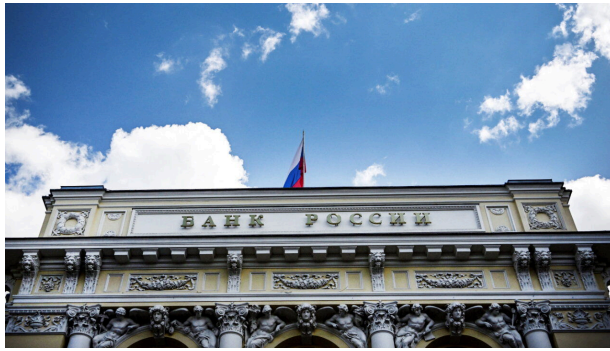


Photograph: Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

War games put NATO on edge

NATO members, [especially Poland](#), will be on alert on Friday as Russia launched its *Zapad* (“West”) military exercise in Belarus. Officially, some 13,000 troops are meant to take part in the drills, which are scheduled to end on Tuesday. The actual number is expected to be much higher.

The manoeuvres had Poland on edge even before 19 Russian drones [breached the country’s airspace](#) on Tuesday night. It was the biggest such incursion into NATO skies since the alliance formed in 1949. Hours before the drones appeared, Poland announced it would close its border with Belarus ahead of the *Zapad* drills. Following the incursion, which Poland described as an act of aggression, the country announced it would deploy 40,000 soldiers to its eastern border. The *Zapad* exercises are defensive in name only. The last ones took place in the autumn of 2021. Russia invaded Ukraine five months later.



Photograph: AFP via Getty Images

The convictions of Russia's central bank

On Friday Russia's central bank will make an interest-rate decision. In 2023 and 2024 it raised its benchmark rate as high as 21% as it tried to quell surging inflation, linked to labour shortages and the enormous fiscal stimulus provided by government war spending. That made the bank unpopular in some quarters. Russia's economy minister recently blamed high borrowing costs for [the slowing economy](#). Consumer confidence has dropped in recent months.

Yet while in most autocracies the central bank is in the pocket of politicians, in Russia it is a different story. President Vladimir Putin delegates monetary management to experts. For a long time the rate-setters held off on cutting, hoping for inflation to fall first. That is now happening: the annual inflation rate has fallen from a recent peak of more than 10% to 8.8%. The bank's mandarins have lowered rates by three percentage points since the spring. Don't be surprised if they cut again.



Photograph: AFP via Getty Images

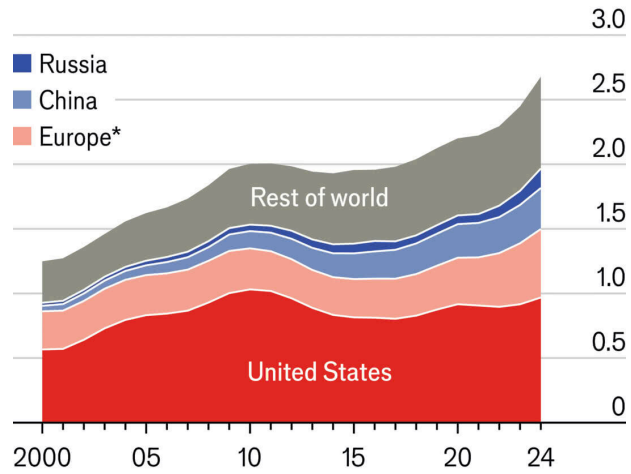
Britain's bombs bazaar

On Friday DSEI UK, a giant arms show, wraps up in London. More than 1,600 exhibitors are attending. Weapons dealers are prospering: global military spending rose by nearly 10% last year, to a record \$2.7trn. With that growth comes controversy. Protest groups such as “Shut the System” have thrown red paint, cut internet cables and scuffled with police. Much of their ire is aimed at Israeli arms makers. (Britain's government banned Israeli officials from the show because of the war in Gaza.)

Another big subject at the expo is Europe's vulnerability. Despite Russia's growing bellicosity, Europe still relies for protection on an increasingly hesitant America. [European armies](#) are especially short of air defences, longer-range strike systems, reconnaissance aircraft and satellites. European countries have launched fewer satellite-bearing rockets in the past decade than SpaceX, an American firm, put up in the first half of this year alone.

Here comes the boom

World, military spending, 2023 prices, \$trn



Source: SIPRI

*Excluding Russia



Photograph: Rory Mulvey / FOCUS FEATURES

A final chapter for Downton Abbey

Hugh Bonneville, Laura Carmichael, Jim Carter and other original “Downton Abbey” actors close out their characters’ stories in the final film of the trilogy spun off from the hit television show. “Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale”, out on Friday, follows the Crawley family and their staff as they enter the 1930s and cope with divorce, financial trouble and social disgrace.

Studios reckon that remakes, spin-offs and sequels are a more certain path to commercial success than work based on new ideas. The Downton trilogy shows that the tactic doesn’t always work. The first spin-off film, “Downton Abbey”, released in 2019, grossed \$195m. Its sequel, “Downton Abbey: A New Era”, which came out in 2022, took in less than half as much, perhaps in part because of the covid-19 pandemic. Still, fans of the franchise will no doubt enjoy the final instalment. As an astute chronicler of class in England, [Julian Fellowes](#), Downton’s creator, deftly balances upstairs and downstairs plots with historical events and the challenges of everyday life.



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.

Friday: Which New York congresswoman was nominated by President Donald Trump to be ambassador to the United Nations, only for her nomination to be withdrawn?

Thursday: Which film was really awarded the Oscar for best movie in 2017, after the presenters mistakenly announced the winner as La La Land?



Illustration: The Economist

The winners of this week's crossword

Thank you to everyone who took part in our weekly crossword, published in the weekend edition of Espresso. The winners, chosen at random, were:

Caron O'Hara, Harare, Zimbabwe

Kariem Abdellatif, Uebersyren, Luxembourg

Sonja Horte, London, Britain

They all gave the correct answers of Xanadu, Nordic, growth and [Xi Jinping](#).

*It all goes so fast, and character
makes the difference when it's
close.*

Jesse Owens