

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: AP

[François Bayrou](#), **France's** prime minister, lost a confidence vote in the National Assembly. Fully 364 of the chamber's deputies voted against Mr Bayrou, with just 194 voting for him. Before the vote Marine Le Pen, the leader of the hard-right National Rally, called for a fresh parliamentary election. Mr Bayrou's fall is a blow to President Emmanuel Macron, who now must appoint his fifth prime minister in two years.

Binyamin Netanyahu said **Israel** would “catch everyone who helped” two Palestinian gunmen who killed six people and wounded 12 in **Jerusalem**. An Israeli security officer and an armed civilian killed the attackers. [Hamas](#) hailed the attack as a “heroic operation” but did not claim responsibility. The Israel Defence Forces said they were surrounding villages in the West Bank in response to the shooting.

Pete Hegseth, America's defence secretary, made an unannounced visit to **Puerto Rico**, days after the Trump administration said it would deploy fighter jets to the island to crack down on drug cartels in the region. Last week America [conducted a military strike](#) on a boat in the Caribbean which Donald Trump said was full of

drugs and “narco-terrorists” from Tren de Aragua, a Venezuelan gang.

Tesla’s share of the American car market fell to its lowest level since 2017 in August, according to Reuters. Elon Musk’s company, which once sold more than 80% of America’s electric vehicles, sold 38% last month. Cox Automotive, a research firm, suggested Tesla is under growing pressure from other companies offering newer models. Mr Musk’s [embrace of hard-right politics](#) has also damaged Tesla’s brand.

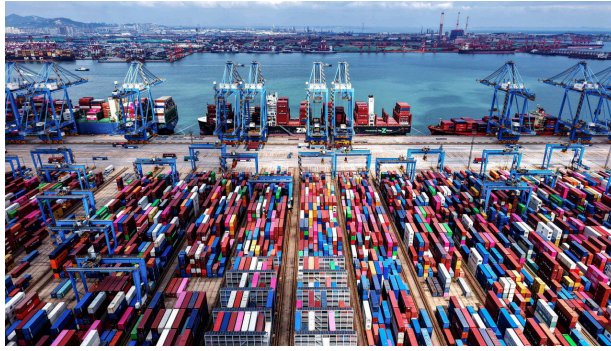
The price of **gold** rose above \$3,600 an ounce, a record high, just days after it went above \$3,500 for the first time. Mr Trump’s [pressure on the Federal Reserve](#) and weak American jobs data have driven the rally. The labour-market slowdown has raised expectations that the Fed will cut interest rates on September 17th.

At least 16 people died in **Nepal** during a protest against a restrictions on social media. Thousands of people gathered in Kathmandu, the capital, after platforms including Facebook and X were blocked. Some tried to storm the country’s parliament. The government blocked the platforms last week after their owners failed to register with the communications ministry. Critics say the restrictions threaten free speech.

Scientists cannot rule out that **Trappist-1e**, a faraway planet, might have a nitrogen-rich atmosphere, according to papers published in *The Astrophysical Journal Letters*. Researchers used the [James Webb Space Telescope](#) to study the planets orbiting Trappist-1, a star some 40 light-years from Earth. Most appear to lack any atmosphere. But Trappist-1e, could potentially be enveloped by gases similar to the Earth’s, meaning the planet could support water.

Figure of the day: 40%, the share of Britons who had not read or listened to any book in 2024, according to YouGov, a pollster. [Read](#)

the full story.



Photograph: Getty Images

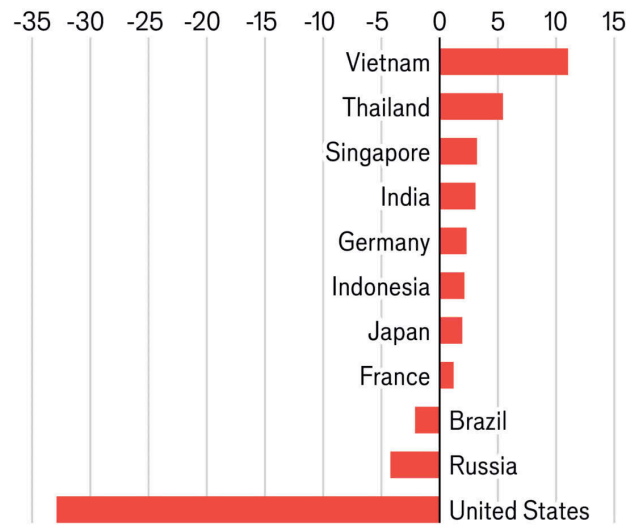
China learns to live with tariffs

Having already waged a damaging trade war with China, America has [decided to pick a tariff fight](#) with Asia's other billion-person power. On August 27th it raised tariffs on India to 50% to punish it for buying Russian oil. President Donald Trump's latest "reciprocal" tariffs also went into effect earlier in the month, raising levies on many other trading partners, including Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia.

All this means China no longer looks so singled out. Trade figures released today showed that its exports continued to grow in August, rising by 4.4% year on year. America is still threatening to crack down on "transshipment"—goods that reach America from China through third countries. But it has yet to define the term clearly. And by raising tariffs on China's neighbours, it has anyway reduced the incentive for rerouting goods. Mr Trump's tariffs must be endured, not escaped.

Like it or lump it

China, goods exports to selected countries,
June-August 2025, change on a year earlier, \$bn



Source: China Customs



Photograph: AFP

What next for Japan?

On Sunday Japan's prime minister, Ishiba Shigeru, resigned. For months, he had insisted he would remain in office despite two stinging [electoral defeats](#) that led his Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition to lose their majority in both houses of parliament. But the pressure from within the LDP proved too much. Mr Ishiba said he wanted to avoid division within the party.

He says he will stay on in a caretaker role until the LDP chooses a new leader. That vote will determine the [direction of the party](#)—and of Japan. The LDP has held power for most of the past seven decades by accommodating a wide range of views. Mr Ishiba was seen as a liberal moderate. His successor might be too: Koizumi Shinjiro, a telegenic centrist, is a leading contender. But the party could also veer sharply right under Takaichi Sanae (pictured), a hardline nationalist who wants to become Japan's first female prime minister.



Photograph: Getty Images

France's government collapses—again

Yet another French government fell on Monday, when 364 members of the lower house of parliament voted against François Bayrou, the centrist prime minister. He called the confidence vote over his unpopular plans to reduce the budget deficit in 2026, currently running at 5.4% of GDP, with savings worth €44bn (\$51bn). The outcome [was expected](#). Mr Bayrou's centrist grouping is in a minority, and the opposition on both the left and the hard right had said they would not support him.

It marks the second time parliament has brought down a government in nine months. President Emmanuel Macron is not obliged to call fresh elections; he can name a successor to Mr Bayrou of his choosing. Whoever gets the job, however, will face the same structural problem: a deadlocked parliament, split into three blocs, which cannot agree how to bring down France's budget deficit, the highest in the euro zone.



Photograph: Disney

The winning formula of “Only Murders in the Building”

For most people, the most important word in the show title “Only Murders in the Building” is the second. For New Yorkers it’s the last. Part of the fun of watching is cattily wondering how the main characters—an actor (played by Steve Martin), director (Martin Short) and artist (Selena Gomez)—can afford to live in such beautiful apartments, especially as they are all underemployed enough to spend hours investigating crime and podcasting about it.

Expect lots of enviable interiors, punchy dialogue and famous guest stars in the show’s fifth season, which begins this week on Hulu. Meryl Streep returns as Mr Short’s wife; Renee Zellweger and Christoph Waltz play wealthy residents (and suspects). The show mixes [cosy crime](#) with household names hamming it up: the main characters’ podcast becomes successful enough to inspire a film version, which entails having other famous actors play characters played by famous actors. It sounds tortuous and smug—but is actually great fun.



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.

Monday: Which Austrian dignitary was assassinated, along with his wife, in Sarajevo on June 28th, 1914?

*Soldiers are dreamers; when the
guns begin they think of firelit
homes, clean beds, and wives.*

Siegfried Sassoon