

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: AFP

Donald Trump claimed that **Israel** has agreed to the “necessary conditions” for a 60-day **ceasefire** in **Gaza**. America’s president credited Egyptian and Qatari officials for the proposal, which they will now deliver to Hamas. Mr Trump urged the militant group to accept the deal, warning that “IT WILL ONLY GET WORSE”. He said the truce would be used to “work with all parties to end [the War](#)”. Neither Israel nor Hamas has commented on the proposal.

America’s Senate [narrowly passed](#) Mr Trump’s “**One, Big, Beautiful Bill**”. Three Republicans defected, leaving the vote split at 50-50; J.D. Vance, the vice-president, broke the tie. The [tax-and-spending measure](#), which runs to nearly 1,000 pages, must now clear the House, where changes made by the Senate could face opposition. Mr Trump wants Congress to pass the legislation before July 4th.

British MPS voted 335-260 to advance **Labour’s welfare bill**—after the government offered last-minute concessions to party rebels. A controversial reform to disability benefits will be delayed at least until a review concludes next year. [Sir Keir Starmer](#), the prime minister, had already significantly reduced planned welfare

cuts after more than 120 Labour MPs [turned against him](#). Forty-nine still voted against.

The White House said that America will pause the shipment of some weapons to **Ukraine**, over fears that its stockpiles are running low. Interceptors used for air-defence and precision-guided missiles are among the arms being held back. There were no details about the timing or the number of weapons involved. Ukraine is currently facing Russia's [summer offensive](#) and [unprecedented](#) attack from the air.

Qantas said it had been hit by a massive **cyber-attack**, exposing the personal data of around 6m customers. The Australian airline said it took “immediate steps” to tackle the breach, but expected a “significant” portion of data to be stolen. There have been a spate of such data breaches in Australia recently. In April hackers targeted several superannuation funds.

Switzerland will hold a referendum on whether to introduce a 50% inheritance tax on assets above SFr50m (\$63m). Critics worry that the proposed measure would scare off the [super-rich](#), who are drawn to the country's low taxes. But despite government opposition, activists have gathered enough signatures to put it to a plebiscite on November 30th.

BTS announced a comeback, revealing plans for a new album and a world tour next year. The [South Korean](#) boy band has been on hiatus since 2022 while several of its members undertook mandatory military service. BTS was the first K-pop group to top the Billboard 200 chart in America and remain the most-streamed band on Spotify.

Figure of the day: Three-quarters. The proportion of young Africans who say they cannot find adequate work. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Alamy

Who will be the next Dalai Lama?

Tibetan Buddhists consider it inauspicious to discuss what happens after the [Dalai Lama](#), their spiritual leader, dies. But on Wednesday—days before his 90th birthday—the man himself announced how his successor should be chosen. Some believed he would choose to “emanate” as another person while still alive. Instead, as tradition holds, he said that after his death aides and senior lamas should identify a child as his reincarnation. Moreover, he insisted that the choice should be made by those from the Gaden Phodrang Trust, the non-profit he founded. “No one else has any such authority to interfere,” he added.

That speaks to fears about China. The country’s Communist Party, which seized Tibet in 1951, claims that it alone can approve the next Dalai Lama. It hopes the death of the current one, who fled to India in 1959, will curb international backing for his non-violent campaign for Tibet’s greater autonomy within China. No matter whom Gaden Phodrang Trust chooses, it plans to appoint a rival successor.



Photograph: AP

Russia's party is over

Figures due out on Wednesday are expected to confirm that [Russia's economy is slowing](#). In 2023 it boomed, defying forecasts of a deep recession. Last year GDP grew by more than 4%. Oil exports surged and the government spent big on defence and welfare. Sanctions, what sanctions?

Now, though, growth has fallen to about 1%. That is in part due to tougher Western sanctions on oil exports. But domestic developments play a role, too. The central bank has raised interest rates to quell high inflation. As a result, consumers have pulled back on spending and companies on investment. And the government is taking its foot off the fiscal accelerator, in part because it no longer sees the need to continue to build up the military. Other statistics due out on Wednesday, from retail sales to real-wage growth, will reinforce the downbeat narrative.



Photograph: EPA

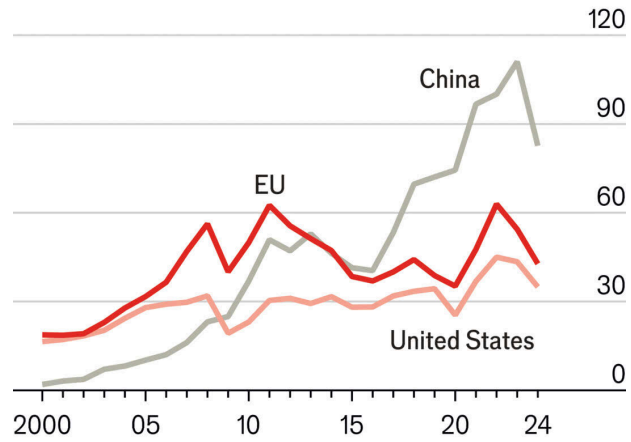
The Middle East divides South America

On Wednesday President Javier Milei of Argentina (pictured) will host a summit of Mercosur, a customs union in the Southern Cone, with the region's presidents. Last year the bloc agreed to a [historic trade deal](#) with the European Union. But the tone of the meeting is unlikely to be triumphant: the deal has not yet been fully ratified in Europe.

And tensions smoulder between the bloc's heavyweights, the libertarian Mr Milei and the leftist [Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil](#), known as Lula. The two seldom speak. Their divergent view on the Middle East, in particular, will not make conversation any easier: Mr Milei is a forthright supporter of Israel; Lula is not. Both bang on about it. Lula may also visit Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, a leftist former president of Argentina, who is under house arrest after she was given a six-year sentence for corruption. The leaders of Uruguay, Paraguay and Bolivia would be happy to just chat about trade.

European opportunity

Mercosur*, goods exports, \$bn



*Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay

Source: Mercosur



Photograph: Alamy

Spain's water-pistol moment

Last year a record 94m tourists visited Spain—nearly double the size of the country's population. This year it is on track to receive even more visitors, as data for May, released on Wednesday, confirmed. In May Spain hosted around 9.4m tourists, taking the total for the year so far to 35m, which is 5% more than the same period in 2024. Their spending is contributing to Spain's healthy economic growth.

But with the peak season about to begin not everyone is happy. Last year activists protested against "[overtourism](#)". In one widely publicised incident young women shot water pistols at tourists tucking into their *tapas* on Barcelona's famous *las Ramblas*. This year hard-left groups have already repeated the stunt. Although protests are sporadic, many Spaniards sympathise with them. Tourist apartments worsen an acute housing shortage and visitors choke pavements, they say. For the authorities, the challenge is to allay those concerns without strangling the tourist goose that lays the golden tortilla.



Photograph: Getty Images

Europe's women footballers fight for the crown

Bookmakers have Spain as narrow favourites to win the [UEFA Women's Euro](#) 2025, which kicks off on Wednesday in Switzerland. But England, Germany and France are close behind. Spain are the reigning world champions and have what looks like the strongest squad, which balances [experienced players](#) and fearless young talent. Midfielders Alexia Putellas and Aitana Bonmati have each won the *Ballon d'Or Féminin*, the award for the world's best female player, twice in the last four years.

England won the previous Euros but have had a horrid build-up to the tournament with three important players retiring. Their coach, Sarina Wiegman, is however an expert at negotiating tournament football. Staggeringly, Germany lost only one knock-out match at the Euros between 1991 and 2007. And France, who draw players from some of the world's best clubs, have until now been women's football's great underachievers. They have reached only one semi-final. This year they will have another very talented squad but also the toughest path to victory, with England, the Netherlands and Wales in their group.



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.

Wednesday: What word can mean both an awkward predicament and a narcotic dose for an addict?

Tuesday: Plymouth, Puget and Roanoke are all examples of which geographical feature?

*In every tragedy, an element of
comedy is preserved. Comedy is
just tragedy reversed.*

Wisława Szymborska