

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

America's House of Representatives passed the **“One Big Beautiful Bill”** by 218-214 votes, sending it to **Donald Trump's** desk ahead of his July 4th deadline. Two Republicans voted against it. [The Republican bill](#), which extends the tax cuts from Mr Trump's first term, is expected to [increase the budget deficit](#) and could leave an additional 12m Americans without health insurance.

Russia said that **Mikhail Gudkov**, its second-highest naval commander, who oversees the navy's coastal and land forces, was killed in Ukraine. He had reportedly been killed in combat operations in Kursk, [a region of western Russia](#) near its border with Ukraine. Mr Gudkov is the one of the highest ranking Russian officers to be reported dead since the full-scale invasion began.

The number of workers on non-farm payrolls rose by a surprisingly healthy 147,000 in **America** during June. The unemployment rate fell slightly to 4.1%, also confounding expectations. The robustness of the labour market will ease pressure on the Federal Reserve to lower interest rates. Jerome Powell, the Fed's [beleaguered chair](#), had said that a rate cut in July was not “off the table”.

**OpenAI** signed a deal worth \$30bn a year to rent 4.5GW of computing power from Oracle, a business-software giant. The

agreement is part of the artificial-intelligence startup's [Stargate initiative](#) to invest \$500bn in building AI infrastructure in the coming years. Oracle plans to build several data centres across America to meet OpenAI's demand for power.

**French** air-traffic controllers began a two-day strike over pay and working conditions, affecting hundreds of flights across Europe. France's civil aviation authority asked airlines to cancel a quarter of their flights to and from Paris on Thursday, and almost half on Friday. Philippe Tabarot, France's transport minister, called the strikes, which coincide with the start of summer holidays in France, "unacceptable".

Annual negotiations between **Japan's** trade unions and large companies, known as *shunto*, resulted in the highest wage increase in 34 years. Rengo, the country's largest federation of unions, estimated that the 7m workers who belong to them negotiated an average wage increase of 5.25% in the spring. The bump will feed into the Bank of Japan's decision whether to raise rates in response to a [rise in inflation](#).

A small number of senior **BBC** staff were asked to "step back from their day-to-day duties". The broadcaster has been [heavily criticised](#) after it failed to stop streaming a concert by Bobby Vylan, a rapper from Ipswich, as he led a chant of "Death, death to the IDF", referring to Israel's armed forces. Mr Vylan is being investigated by the police over the matter.

**Figure of the day:** 14,000. Ferrari's car sales last year. For comparison, Stellantis sold 5.7m and yet has a smaller market cap. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Getty Images

## Trump's attempt at a ceasefire in Gaza

A week after announcing a [ceasefire between Israel and Iran](#) on social media, Donald Trump is trying to do the same with the war in Gaza. On Tuesday Mr Trump posted that Israel had agreed the “necessary conditions” for a 60-day truce, during which more talks would be held to reach the end to a war which has been [dragging on for 21 months](#).

The Israeli government hasn't made an official statement, and the question remains whether Hamas, the Islamic movement which began the war with a surprise attack on Israel back in October 2023, will accept the deal. Hamas has so far insisted that any agreement include guarantees that Israel would not return to fighting after a truce, during which it would release Israeli hostages. In its response to Mr Trump Hamas emphasised that it was still insisting on a deal “that clearly leads to the complete end to the war.” Mr Trump may have to try harder.

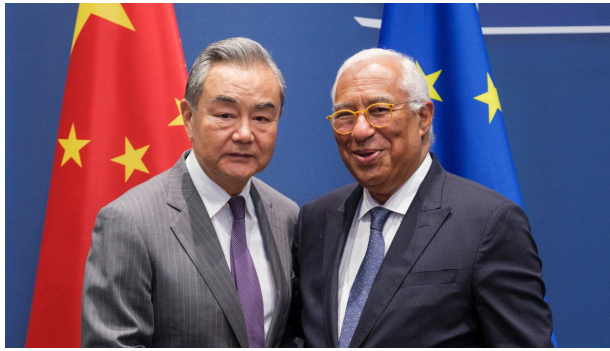


Illustration: David Simonds

## America's resilient jobs market

Since President Donald Trump came to power in January, chaos has been aplenty in the world's largest economy. Deportations! Attempts to slash the federal bureaucracy! A trade war with the rest of the world! But, as figures out on Thursday showed, someone forgot to tell the labour market.

The American economy added 147,000 jobs in June: above the average monthly rate so far this year. The unemployment rate declined to 4.1% from 4.2% in May. Why do employers seem so insouciant? Perhaps it is because it will take more time for the chaos engendered by Mr Trump's administration to [sway hiring decisions](#). A more optimistic interpretation is that the private sector does not take much notice of what happens in Washington, DC. The finances of firms and households remain healthy. For now, stand back and admire the robustness of America's capitalist machine.



Photograph: Getty Images

## China sweet-talks the EU

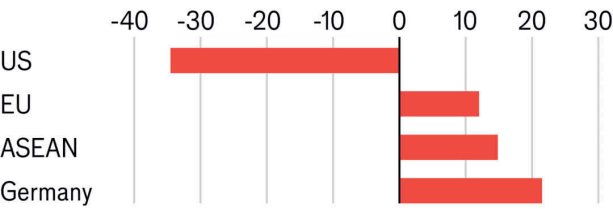
As the European Union struggles with its biggest trading partner, the United States, the second-largest, China, spies an opportunity. Days before Donald Trump's deadline of July 9th for the EU and other countries to reach trade deals with America or face the possibility of swingeing new levies, China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, is in Europe talking up free trade.

Having met EU officials in Brussels, he is on his way to Berlin and Paris for talks with the bloc's biggest members. Mr Wang is laying the groundwork for an EU-China summit in Beijing on July 24th and 25th. His main message is that, in a world thrown into turmoil by Mr Trump, the [EU and China should draw closer together](#). But the EU has many worries, including China's trade-distorting subsidies, its restrictions on rare-earth exports and its support for Russia in the war in Ukraine. Looking east, the bloc sees trouble, too.

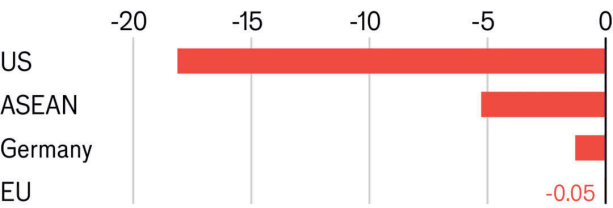
Redirection

China, goods trade, May 2024-May 2025,  
% change

Exports to



Imports from



Source: Haver Analytics



Photograph: Alamy

## America's teachers v MAGA education

On Thursday, roughly 7,000 teachers will begin to convene in Portland, Oregon for a meeting of the National Education Association, a union representing 3m public-school teachers. This year's confab "won't be business as usual", the union declares. The Trump administration has presented schools with a variety of problems: it has authorised immigration raids that may be keeping students from class; it supports schemes that let states use public money to fund private-school tuition.; and, more broadly, it is trying to [trim](#) the federal government's role in public schools. In March it announced a plan to abolish the Education Department (which would require Congressional approval).

Secondary and primary education are largely funded through state and local taxes, and so depend relatively little on federal financing. But certain schemes rely on it, including after-school activities, summer programmes and support for students learning English. On Monday the Trump administration said it would withhold almost \$7bn that Congress has already allocated for those.





Photograph: Universal Pictures/Amblin Entertainment

## Déjà vu at the pictures

Visit a [cinema these days](#) and you will see familiar posters. At this time of year, remakes of existing stories pop up like corn. Recent ones include “Lilo & Stitch” and “How to Train Your Dragon”, two children’s films. In July and August look out for reboots of the Smurfs, Superman, the Fantastic Four and even Detective Frank Drebin in “The Naked Gun”.

Revamps are easy money for film studios: they have ready-made fans who will pay for familiar characters and storylines. “Jurassic World: Rebirth”, which came out on Wednesday, is the seventh film of the dinosaur franchise which refuses to go extinct. “Freakier Friday” and “Happy Gilmore 2”, both coming out soon, rely on older originals. Critics might boo lazy revamps, but there are still original films to be found in the cinema in coming months, for example an all-star murder mystery (“The Thursday Murder Club”) or a crime thriller set in New York (“Caught Stealing”). Their stories may still feel familiar though; they’re both based on books.





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:** Rupert Murdoch founded which British satellite TV company?

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

*If the book we are reading does  
not wake us, as with a fist  
hammering on our skulls, then  
why do we read it?*

---

***Franz Kafka***