The Economist

What next in South Korea?

France heads into the unknown

A rebel surge in Syria

Tariffs: how would China retaliate?

DECEMBER 7TH-13TH 2024





 Australia
 A\$16.99(Inc.GST)

 Bangladesh
 TK850

 Cambodia
 US\$14.00

 China
 RMB120

Korea Won Malaysia RM Myanmar US Myanmar N

Rs. 245 NT\$36 d Baht40

Contents Politics



On the cover

America's boom in gambling should be celebrated, not feared: leader, page g. Legal and technological changes are spurring a betting bonanza: briefing, page 15. Nothing can stop China's gamblers, page 61. How gambling became ubiquitous, page 60

What next in South Korea?

Yoon Suk Yeol's attempt to impose martial law failed. But grave tests still remain: leader, page 11. A rash, unexpected move by the president tests democracy, page 18

France heads into the unknown

The country has no budget and no government: leader, page 10. Michel Barnier's downfall accelerates the unravelling of the French centre, page 39. France is not alone in its fiscal woes, page 59

A rebel surge in Syria President Bashar al-Assad is at his most vulnerable in a decade, page 34

Tariffs: how would China retaliate? The plans to fight back against Donald Trump, page 57. How painful will tariffs be for America Inc? Page 51

→ The digital element of your subscription means that you can search our archive, read all of our daily journalism and listen to audio versions of our stories. Visit economist.com

The world this week

7 A summary of political and business news

Leaders

- 9 Gambling in America
 Bettors' frenzy
- 10 France
 Into the unknown
- 11 South Korea
 A rejected coup attempt
- 11 Hunter Biden
 The pardoner's tale
- 12 Government spending
 A NASA parable

Letters

14 On Northvolt, veterans' benefits, iodine, Somalia, farm villains

Briefing and Base Book 88%

boom
What are the odds?



Banyan Exemplar or warning? Australia wants to lead the big tech crackdown, *page 21*



Asia

- 18 Chaos in Seoul
- 19 Bushra Khan's march
- 20 Bhopal, 40 years on
- 21 Banyan Social media in Australia



China

- 22 Corruption in the PLA
- 23 Holding back the desert
- 24 Women in film



United States

- 25 Defending the SecDef
- 26 Brian Thompson's murder
- 27 Trans kids and SCOTUS
- 27 The FDA and food
- 28 News avoidance
- 29 Mules and fools
- 30 Lexington Kash Patel and the FBI



The Americas

- 31 Peace in Colombia
- 32 Canada's nuclear waste
- 33 Brazilian football



Middle East & Africa

- 34 A rebel rout in Syria
- 35 A shaky truce in Lebanon
- 36 Elections in Ghana...
- 37 ...and in Namibia
- 38 India in Africa



Contents

Europe

- 39 France unravels
- 40 Notre Dame reborn
- 41 Sweden's bling-grabbers
- 41 Spain's hard-right youth
- 42 Ukraine's killer drones
- 44 Charlemagne Trump and Meloni



Britain

- 45 The woes of Wales
- 46 Assisted dying
- 47 Bagehot Blind state



International

- 48 An African pope?
- 50 The Telegram Georgia's protests



Business

- 51 Trump's terrifying tariffs
- 52 Intel's boss gets the boot
- 53 Russian business
- 54 Children and social media
- 54 Brussels v big tech
- 55 Bartleby How to inspire
- 56 Schumpeter Europe's corporate stars



Finance & economics

- 57 China's tariff revenge
- 58 Debanking complaints
- 59 French fiscal woes
- 60 Rouble worries
- 60 Sports-betting
- 61 Xi v gamblers
- **62 Buttonwood** The hidden cost of Chinese lending
- 63 Free exchange Cronyism



Science & technology

- 64 California's space cadets
- 66 Elon Musk's rocket rivals
- 67 Help for the paralysed
- 67 Early American diets



Culture

- 68 Food and the internet
- 69 Botanists v Nazis
- 70 The best video games of 2024
- 70 "Conclave"
- 71 The word of the year
- **72 Back Story** A festive gift guide



Economic & financial indicators

73 Statistics on 42 economies

Obituary

74 John Kinsel, Navajo code-talker

Volume 453 Number 9426

Published since September 1843 to take part in "a severe contest between

to take part in "a severe contest betw intelligence, which presses forward, and an unworthy, timid ignorance obstructing our progress."

Editorial offices in London and also:

Amsterdam, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Cape Town, Chicago, Dubai, Lagos, Madrid, Mexico City, Montevideo, Mumbai, Nairobi, New Delhi, New York, Paris, San Francisco, São Paulo, Shanghai, Singapore, Taipei, Tokyo, Washington DC

Subscription service

For our full range of subscription offers, including digital only or print and digital bundled, visit: Economist.com/offers

If you are experiencing problems when trying to subscribe, please visit our Help pages at: www.economist.com/help for troubleshooting advice.

To manage your account online, please visit my,economist.com where you can also access our live chat service which is available 24/7. To call us, contact our dedicated service centre on:

Banyan Exemplar or

Asia: 001800 7711 2711 Singapore: +61 2915 75069





PEFC certified

This copy of The Economist is printed on paper sourced from sustainably managed forests, recycled and controlled sources certified by PEFC www.pefc.org

© 2024 The Economist Newspaper Limited. All rights reserved. Neither this publication nor any part of it may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of The Economist Newspaper Limited. Published every week, except for a year-end double issue, by The Economist Newspaper Limited. The Economist is a registered trademark of The Economist Newspaper Limited. Publisher: The Economist. Printed by Times Printers (in Singapore). MDDI (P) 033/09/2024. PPS 677/11/2012(022861)