The Economist

Which economy did best in 2024?

Indian cricket diplomacy

How to improve cows

In praise of odd book titles

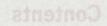
DECEMBER 14TH-20TH 2024

WHAT NOW?



Australia	A\$16.9	9(Inc.GST
	h	
		.US\$14.00

Contents Politics





On the cover

Amid all the uncertainty, celebrate the fall of a tyrant and prepare for what could yet go right: leader, page g. The Middle East's most brutal dictator has gone, but it is not clear how benign or stable the new leadership will be, page 14. The Assad regime's fall voids many of the Middle East's old certainties, page 16

Which economy did best in 2024? Our annual rankings provide an answer, page 55. Spain shows that there is nothing inevitable about Europe's decline: leader, page 10

India's cricket diplomacy The national sport is a geopolitical tool wielded against Pakistan: Banyan, page 21

How to improve cows What has four stomachs and could change the world? *Page 46*

In praise of odd book titles Britain's least-coveted literary prize, page 44

→ 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 business and financial news

Leaders

- 9 Syria
 What now?
- 10 Economic growth Spanish lessons
- 10 American capitalism Artificial exuberance
- 11 Economic development Abandonment anxiety
- 12 Brain drain
 Can you read as well as a ten-year-old?

Letters

13 On nuclear weapons, Jordan Peterson, credit cards, John D. Rockefeller, our cover, behaving in lifts

Briefing

- 14 Syria after Assad
 An unfamiliar hope
- 16 The region
 An unexpected juncture



Schumpeter Too many directors at American companies aren't doing their job, *page 54*



Asia

- 19 South Korea's crisis
- 20 Bangladesh's economy
- 21 Banyan Cricket diplomacy
- 22 Rubbish in India



China

- 23 Trumpy nationalists
- 24 Chinese hackers attack
- 25 Interest in English wanes
- 25 Rules for soap operas



United States

- 26 Insurance and violence
- 27 Linda McMahon
- 28 Gender medicine
- 30 Fani Willis
- **31 Lexington** The Trump school of public policy



The Americas

- 32 An EU-Mercosur deal
- 33 Nicaraguan dictators
- 34 Energy in the Caribbean



Middle East & Africa

- 35 Mozambique's revolt
- 36 Femicide in Kenya
- 37 Netanyahu in the dock
- 37 Football in Sudan



Contents

Europe

- 38 Booming Spain
- 39 Syrians in Europe
- 40 Polish milk bars
- 40 Nuclear power in Ukraine
- 41 Romania's cancelled vote
- **42 Charlemagne** Guns and butter



Britain

- 43 Infrastructure plans
- 44 Odd book titles
- 45 Bagehot The death zone



International

- 46 Cash cows
- 48 The Telegram Trump the dealmaker



Business

- 49 The China dream fades
- 50 A Madison Avenue mega-merger
- 51 Trump's tech bros party
- 51 America's trustbusters
- 52 AI's next big thing
- 53 Bartleby Employee awards
- **54 Schumpeter** Feckless boards



Finance & economics

- 55 Economic rankings
- 56 The Fed's year ahead
- 58 Buttonwood Crypto rally
- 59 Trump's oil ambitions
- 60 The World Bank struggles
- 61 Falling literacy
- **62 Free exchange** China's economic woes



Science & technology

- 63 Machine translation
- 64 AI can bring back voices
- 65 Tourism's emissions
- 65 Neanderthals meet humans
- 66 China's answer to Starlink



Culture

- 67 The novel
- 68 From shelves to screen
- 69 "Dungeons & Dragons" turns 50
- 70 The year's best albums
- 70 Henry Kissinger on AI
- 71 The Russian Orthodox Church



Economic & financial indicators

72 Statistics on 42 economies

Obituary

74 Shalom Nagar, the policeman who hanged Eichmann

Volume 453 Number 9427

obstructing our progress."

Published since September 1843 to take part in "a severe contest between intelligence, which presses forward, and an unworthy, timid ignorance

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:

Asia: 001800 7711 2711 Singapore: +61 2915 75069





PEFC certified This copy of The Economist is printed on paper sourced from sustainably managed

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. Publisher 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 Newspaper Limited. Publisher: The Economist Newspaper Limited by Times Printers (in Singapore). MDDI (P) 033/09/2024. PPS 677/11/2012(022861)