

# THE SUNDAY BLENDER

*Chinese New Film Ne Zha 2  
Shattered Record*

Feb 09, 2025

## TECH



**OpenAI's Stargate Project** is actively evaluating multiple U.S. states for new data center locations. Beyond the flagship site in Abilene, Texas, the company is considering sites in Pennsylvania, Oregon, and Wisconsin. Other potential locations include Arizona, California, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia. Each data center is expected to have a capacity of approximately 1 gigawatt, comparable to the output of a nuclear reactor. Key factors in site selection include proximity to power and water resources, future expansion potential, and logistical considerations for large-scale construction.

**France** and the **United Arab Emirates** have agreed to develop a 1-gigawatt data center dedicated

to artificial intelligence, representing an investment between \$30 billion and \$50 billion. This initiative aims to strengthen the AI value chain through collaborative projects and investments, including the acquisition of advanced chips, development of data centers, and talent cultivation.

Singapore Telecommunications (**Singtel**) has secured a \$476 million green loan to finance the development of a new 58-megawatt data center in Tuas, Singapore. Scheduled to be operational in 2026, the DC Tuas data center is designed to support high-density artificial intelligence workloads. This capacity is equivalent to 0.058 gigawatts (GW).

message ChatGPT

Attach Search

Deep research

**OpenAI** recently launched Deep Research, an AI tool within ChatGPT designed for in-depth, multi-step online research and data analysis. Powered by a specialized version of OpenAI's upcoming o3 reason-

ing model, Deep Research can autonomously find, analyze, and synthesize information from hundreds of online sources, including text, images, and PDFs, to generate comprehensive, cited reports. It's intended for professionals in fields like finance, science, and law, as well as for complex purchasing decisions.

**Sberbank**, Russia's largest bank, plans to collaborate with Chinese researchers on joint artificial intelligence (AI) projects. This initiative follows the advancements by China's DeepSeek, which developed a powerful AI model at a fraction of the cost of U.S. counterparts. This collaboration aligns with directives from President Vladimir Putin, who has urged enhanced AI cooperation with China and other BRICS nations to counter U.S. dominance in the field.

**ELEGNT:** Expressive and functional movement design for non-anthropomorphic robot



**Apple** has revealed a prototype of a robotic table lamp called ELEGNT, showcasing a potential direction for consumer robotics. Unlike purely functional robots, ELEGNT incorporates expressive qualities like intention, attention, and emotion into its movements. The lamp uses a multi-axial robotic limb to interact with users through gestures and postures, adapting to user movements and conveying a sense of emotion. Apple's research suggests that expression-driven movements enhance user engagement.

In February 2025, California Senator Steve Padilla introduced a bill aimed at safeguarding children from the potentially harmful effects of AI chatbots. The proposed legislation mandates that AI companies periodically inform young users that they are interacting with artificial intelligence, not real people. The

bill also seeks to prevent AI developers from employing addictive engagement strategies, aligning with broader efforts to enhance digital platform safety for younger users.

Garmin experienced a widespread issue in late January 2025, caused by a corrupted GPS satellite file. This faulty file triggered crashes and boot loops in numerous Garmin devices, including popular models like Forerunner, Fenix, and Edge cycling computers. The problem occurred when users attempted to start GPS activities or accessed features relying on GPS data.



Panasonic is undergoing a significant restructuring, including the potential end of Panasonic televisions. The company plans to dissolve Panasonic Appliances Company by the end of fiscal year 2025. While Panasonic has denied definitively exiting the TV business, they acknowledge considering all possibilities for restructuring, including potential sales or withdrawal. Panasonic's TV business, once a major revenue source, has faced challenges from Chinese and South Korean brands, leading to declining market share and profitability.

Chinese AI firm DeepSeek is aggressively recruiting AI talent, offering competitive salaries to attract both fresh graduates and experienced professionals. The company has listed over 50 job openings, including positions for deep learning researchers in Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), with potential annual incomes reaching 1.54 million yuan. DeepSeek emphasizes

sizes skill over experience, aiming to attract the best talents in China.

## GLOBAL



Japan is experiencing its largest influenza outbreak in 25 years, with 9.5 million cases recorded between September 2024, and January 2025. The surge is attributed to increased holiday travel and reduced flu exposure during the COVID-19 pandemic. This outbreak has strained the healthcare system, leading to shortages of antiviral medications like Tamiflu and some hospitals refusing to admit patients who are not in serious condition. The outbreak is mainly caused by influenza A, though there is still a risk of influenza B. Health officials recommend vaccinations and masks to prevent the virus's spread.

Greenland's government party has announced plans to hold an independence referendum after the upcoming election, signaling a potential shift towards full sovereignty.



The UK government will demolish Grenfell Tower, nearly eight years after the 2017 fire that killed 72 people. The demolition, expected to take two years,

will begin after the fire's eighth anniversary on June 1. Government engineers state that while the tower remains stable, its condition will worsen over time. Some families support the decision, while others, oppose it, wishing to preserve the tower as a memorial.

In a coordinated effort, Paraguayan authorities, with Interpol's support, arrested 26 individuals involved in illegal deforestation in the tri-border region of Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina. The mid-October operation involved 14 agencies conducting border inspections, waterway surveillance, and aerial monitoring. Approximately 1,000 logs of valuable quebracho wood were seized. Interpol emphasized the need for continued cross-border cooperation to combat environmental crimes.

## ECONOMY & FINANCE

In early February 2025, President Trump imposed tariffs on imports from Mexico, Canada, and China. The tariffs on Mexico and Canada were paused until March 4 after negotiations. However, tariffs on Chinese goods took effect on February 4, with a 10% tariff on top of existing ones. These measures could lead to higher prices for consumers and retaliatory tariffs from the affected countries.



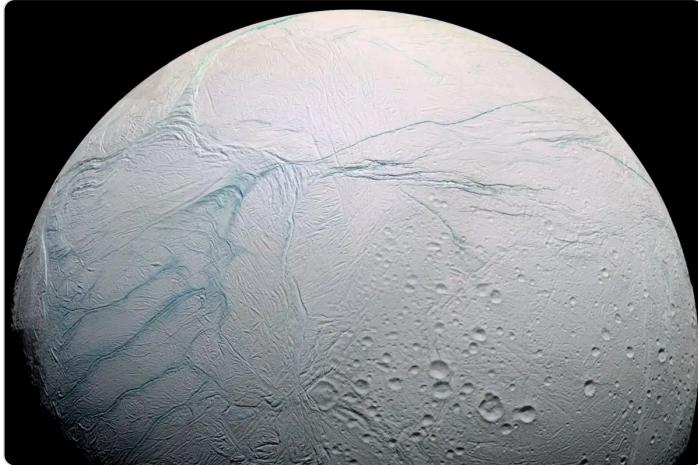
X.com announced a partnership with Visa for the upcoming XMONEY Account, set to debut later this year. This collaboration aims to provide secure and instant payment solutions for users.

President Trump signed an executive order to create a U.S. sovereign wealth fund. The fund would focus on projects such as improving infrastructure, in-

cluding airports and highways, and could enhance U.S. influence in regions like Panama and Greenland. The U.S. government directly holds \$5.7 trillion in assets. The announcement surprised some, as the U.S. operates with a budget deficit, unlike many nations with sovereign wealth funds.

Franklin Templeton Investments has filed for regulatory approval to launch a new cryptocurrency index exchange-traded fund (ETF), aiming to capitalize on the growing interest in digital assets. The proposed ETF seeks to offer exposure to spot prices of Bitcoin and Ether. This move aligns with a broader industry trend, as several firms have recently applied to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission for crypto-related ETFs.

## SCIENCE



Recent findings highlight Enceladus, Saturn's icy moon, as a promising site for potential extraterrestrial life. NASA's Cassini mission data reveals an ocean beneath its icy shell containing key building blocks for life. Analysis of plume samples shows a diverse chemical composition with potential for redox reactions. However, a 2025 study indicates that ocean layering on Enceladus could hinder the detection of life's signatures by slowing the movement of materials from the ocean floor to the surface.

A study finds that short-term exposure to particulate matter (PM) air pollution can reduce people's ability to interpret emotions and focus on tasks. This

impairment may make everyday activities more challenging and highlights the broader cognitive impacts of air pollution.



A study has found that bonobos can recognize when humans lack specific information and will communicate to fill in the gaps. This behavior demonstrates a level of social cognition previously unattributed to these primates.

## NATURE & ENVIRONMENT



Gwadar, a coastal city in Pakistan, faces increasing climate change challenges. Extreme weather, including heavy rainfall, has caused devastating floods, destroying infrastructure and isolating the city. Rising sea levels and warming ocean temperatures lead to more forceful waves and coastal erosion, washing away homes and altering tidal patterns. The lack of proper drainage systems exacerbates flooding. Experts warn that if these issues are not addressed, Gwadar may become uninhabitable.



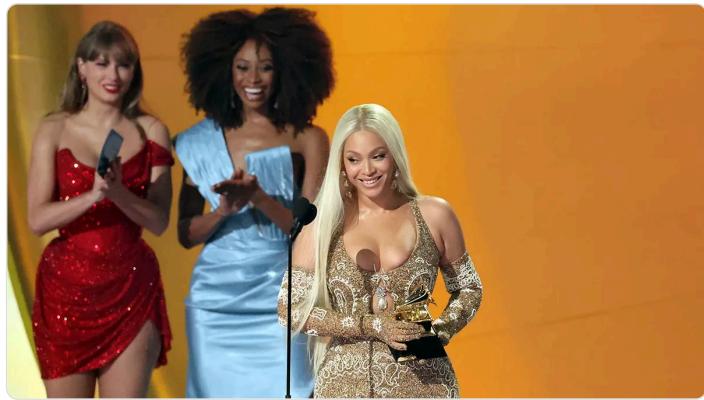
Santorini, Greece, declared a state of emergency after experiencing a series of undersea earthquakes since late January. Thousands of tremors, some as strong as magnitude 5.2, have rattled the island, leading to mass evacuations. Around 11,000 locals and tourists have fled, and schools are closed. The seismic activity, described as an “earthquake swarm,” is unusual due to its intensity and lack of a main-shock. Experts are unsure how long it will last, with some suggesting the biggest quake may be yet to come.

## ENTERTAINMENT & CULTURE



**Ne Zha 2**, a Chinese animated film, has become a global box office sensation, grossing over \$932 million (¥6.79 billion) as of February 7, 2025. This has made it the highest-grossing film in a single market worldwide, surpassing *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. It also overtook *The Battle at Lake Changjin* to become the top film in China's box office history. Released on January 29, the film has captivated audiences with its animation, action, humor, and themes of family and identity. Some projections estimate it could reach \$1.51 billion (¥10.85 billion)

in China. *Ne Zha 2* is scheduled for release in the United States and Canada on February 14.



Beyoncé finally secured the coveted Album of the Year Grammy at the 2025 Grammy Awards for her album “Cowboy Carter”. This marks her first win in this category after being nominated five times. The win is especially meaningful as “Cowboy Carter” is a country album, with Taylor Swift, known for her successful genre transitions, presenting the award. Beyoncé entered the ceremony with 11 nominations, already holding the record for the most Grammy wins with 32 trophies.



New York Fashion Week 2025 is underway, but with a slightly altered schedule, as London, Milan, and Paris shifted their dates to accommodate menswear and haute couture shows. The week is marked by highly anticipated returns, most notably Veronica Leoni’s debut at Calvin Klein, aiming to revive the brand’s 90s minimalism. Other highlights include shows from Tory Burch, Michael Kors, Eckhaus Latta, Khaite, Coach, Thom Browne, and Christopher John Rogers. Marc Jacobs presented off-schedule.



Kendrick Lamar announced he will headline the Super Bowl halftime show, promising a performance that narrates his journey from humble beginnings to rap superstardom. Fans anticipate a storytelling experience highlighting his personal and artistic evolution.



The Chinese action RPG **Phantom Blade Zero** (影之刃零) is generating buzz with recent updates. A new, fully in-game recorded, unedited Boss battle video was released for the Lunar New Year, showcasing at least 27 usable weapons. The developers, S-Game, are aiming for a “Wuxia-punk” style, blending martial arts with modern and global elements. The game is being developed in Unreal Engine 5 for PC and PlayStation 5, with a planned release around 2026. The latest demo video has been very well received, with over 9 million views on Bilibili. Phantom Blade Zero is considered by some to be the “second college student” of Chinese-developed AAA games, following in the footsteps of Black Myth: Wukong.



Rockstar Games and publisher Take-Two Interactive have reaffirmed that **Grand Theft Auto VI** is scheduled for release in fall 2025 on PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X. The game returns to Vice City, a fictionalized Miami, featuring dual protagonists: Jason and Lucia, marking the series' first playable female character. The narrative draws inspiration from Bonnie and Clyde, focusing on their criminal exploits. The initial trailer, released in December 2023, showcased the vibrant, chaotic world players can anticipate.

Building on the success of its “Drive to Survive” series, Netflix is exploring a bid for the U.S. broadcast rights to Formula 1. This move would mark Netflix’s first major foray into live sports broadcasting. The current rights, held by ESPN, are up for renewal, with Netflix and Apple among potential bidders.

## SPORTS



Shortly after turning 40 on February 5, Cristiano Ronaldo continued to find the net, recently scoring his 924th career goal for Al Nassr in their Saudi Pro League match. The goal, a powerful strike from a cross, contributed to Al Nassr’s 3-0 victory. This goal

also puts him in the lead as the Saudi Pro League's top scorer with 16 goals. Overall for the 2024-2025 season, Ronaldo has 23 goals and 4 assists in 25 appearances for Al Nassr across all competitions. He is aiming to reach 1,000 career goals before he retires.

Neymar's stint with Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal has ended prematurely, with the club announcing a mutual termination of his contract. He only played in seven matches after joining in August 2023, having been sidelined by a knee injury. Despite a reported salary of around \$104 million per year, his impact was limited with only 1 goal and 2 assists, in 428 total minutes, costing Al-Hilal approximately \$572,429 per minute.



Sky Sports has secured a landmark five-year, £125 million TV deal with the Professional Darts Corporation (PDC), significantly influenced by the rising popularity of young darts sensation Luke Littler. The contract covers six major annual events, including the PDC World Darts Championship and Premier League, from 2025 to 2030. Littler's remarkable performances have boosted darts viewership, attracting a younger audience.



Having scored 16 points in 68 grands prix for Sauber, 25-year-old Zhou Guanyu, the first Chinese driver in F1, has been appointed as Ferrari's reserve driver for the 2025 season. Zhou, who was a member of the Ferrari driver academy from 2015 to 2018, will support race drivers Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc. Reserve drivers typically do simulator work to assist the race team, including over race weekends as teams work to perfect their car set-up, and perform selected testing duties, including tyre tests.

Mercedes has added 16-year-old Ethan Jeff-Hall to its junior team after his impressive victory in the CIK-FIA World Championship. Jeff-Hall's achievement is notable, as even seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton did not secure a world karting title before entering motorsport. He is set to debut in single-seater racing with Argenti Motorsport in the British Formula 4 championship.



Chase Elliott captured a historic win at the Cook Out Clash at Bowman Gray Stadium, marking the NASCAR Cup Series' return to the venue after 54 years. Elliott dominated the race, leading 172 of 200 laps in his No. 9 Chevrolet to win the exhibition event. A sold-out crowd of 17,000 witnessed Elliott's victory, with many on their feet as he battled door-to-door. The event, known for its close-quarters racing and potential for flared tempers, remained relatively calm. This win marks Elliott's first Clash victory, and he joins his father, Bill Elliott, as a Clash winner.



In a shocking move, the Los Angeles Lakers acquired Luka Dončić from the Dallas Mavericks in exchange for Anthony Davis, Max Christie, and a 2029 first-round pick. The trade has been described as one of the biggest in NBA history. Mavericks General Manager stated the move was to boost the team's defense, but many see it as a questionable decision given Dončić's status as a top-five player. The trade was unexpected, with reports indicating neither Dončić, Davis, nor LeBron James knew about the discussions prior to the trade. Dončić was reportedly emotional upon learning of the trade, especially after recently purchasing a \$15 million mansion in Dallas.

## FUNNY



Emergency responders in Texas were called to manage an unusual traffic hazard when a cow escaped from a trailer and wandered through busy roads. The bovine adventure was safely concluded without incident.

Caroline, an American visiting Ireland, lost her driving license during her trip. Upon returning home to Ohio, she received her license along with a playful letter from the Irish police, advising her to "not drink so much Guinness next time."

A Maryland resident won a \$50,000 prize from a scratch-off lottery ticket that happened to be the very last one in the roll. His unexpected win adds to the list of fortunate lottery stories.

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