

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Photothek via Getty Images

OpenAI, ChatGPT's creator, agreed to a \$38bn deal with **Amazon's cloud-computing** company. It committed to buying \$38bn-worth of computing power from Amazon Web Services over seven years. Despite running a loss, the artificial-intelligence startup has now committed to spending some \$1.5trn in [recent computing agreements](#). The latest deal allows it to relax the grip of [Microsoft](#), its biggest backer.

The **Trump administration** said it will partially pay for **food stamps** during the [government shutdown](#) after two judges issued rulings requiring funding to continue. The Agriculture Department, which oversees the programme, will tap into a \$4.7bn contingency fund, enough to cover half of the usual benefits for November. More than 42m poor and disabled Americans rely on food aid.

Kimberly-Clark, maker of Huggies nappies and Kleenex tissues, agreed to buy **Kenvue**, which produces Tylenol, a painkiller. The landmark health-care tie-up is worth \$48.7bn, including debt, according to Kimberly-Clark. Kenvue has had a rough quarter after Donald Trump [claimed that Tylenol caused autism](#); its stock has dropped by roughly a third since the beginning of 2025.

Andrej Babis, a billionaire whose party won the most votes in the **Czech Republic's** election last month, reached a coalition deal with hard-right allies. **Mr Babis**, a former prime minister, is set to return to office with the support of the SPD, whose leader advocates leaving the EU and NATO, and the anti-green Motorists. All three parties object to Czech financial support for Ukraine.

Israel arrested Major-General **Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi**, a former top lawyer in the country's armed forces, for leaking a video last year of Israeli soldiers allegedly sexually assaulting a Palestinian prisoner at the **Sde Teiman** base. The government's nationalistic supporters had criticised her office's investigations into the incident. Last week she admitted to releasing the video to counter "false propaganda" against military law enforcement and resigned.

Microsoft said the Trump administration granted it licences to export Nvidia chips to **AI data centres** in the **United Arab Emirates**. The technology giant also committed to investing more than \$15bn in **AI** infrastructure in **the UAE** between 2023 and 2029. In May Mr Trump announced plans to build an expansive data centre in Abu Dhabi, the capital.

The names of 5m **Holocaust victims** have been identified, with some help from **AI**, said Yad Vashem. Israel's Holocaust research centre has scoured archives over seven decades to document the deaths of the roughly 6m Jews killed by the Nazis during the second world war. Its researchers believe that **AI-powered tools** and machine learning could help identify a further 250,000 names.

Figure of the day: 7.4%, the share of deaths in Equatorial Guinea caused by heat. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Shutterstock

China's economy breathes a sigh of relief

Heading into trade talks with China last month, Scott Bessent, America's treasury secretary, said the Chinese economy was in a “recession/depression”. That was an exaggeration. But it will nonetheless benefit from the two superpowers' decision, [announced on October 30th](#), to back down from their trade war for a year. The Trump administration will lower tariffs by 10% and China will delay cumbersome licensing requirements on rare earths and batteries. Both concessions will aid China's exports, which have helped prop up the economy this year.

Recent surveys of purchasing managers illustrated the danger. An official survey released on October 31st showed export orders plunging after China and America exchanged trade threats earlier in the month. “Rising trade uncertainty” caused a similar tumble in export orders in a survey sponsored by RatingDog, a Chinese credit-rating firm, that was released on Monday. Reducing that uncertainty is, for China, the main reason to welcome the remission/intermission of the trade war.



Photograph: AP

Repression and rigging in Tanzania

On October 29th Samia Suluhu Hassan, Tanzania's president, was re-elected as president. According to her, at least. Prior to the poll her Chama Cha Mapinduzi party, which has ruled the East African country since independence in 1961, filed ludicrous treason charges against Tundu Lissu, the leader of [Chadema](#), the main opposition party, and banned this group. Several observers alleged on the day that vote counts were rigged. On November 1st Mrs Samia claimed to have won a North Korean-style 98% share of the vote.

Widespread demonstrations broke out. Security forces cracked down, killing hundreds, according to Chadema. Opposition leaders say they will continue to contest the result. But it may be enough to keep CCM in power, assuming the army stays in its camp. Either way, the brutality of Mrs Samia's "victory" has ended her country's once-deserved reputation as a somewhat democratic, peaceful place.



Photograph: AP

Trump's redistricting push slows

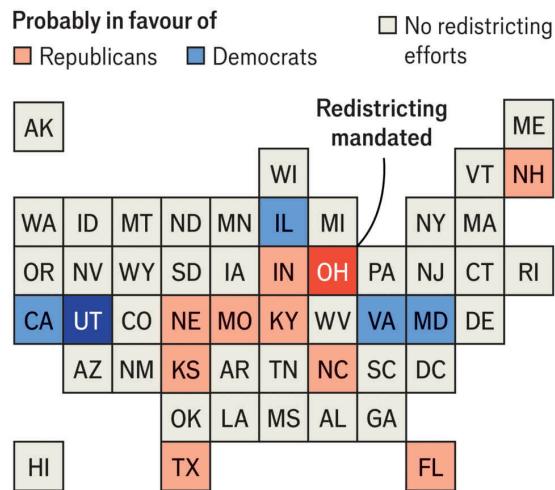
President Donald Trump has notched some victories in his [redistricting push](#), which aims to give Republicans a better chance of retaining their majority in the House of Representatives.

Looking ahead to next year's midterms, three states have redrawn a total of seven districts to favour Republicans. Mike Braun, Indiana's governor, wants his state to add two more to that tally in a special session of the state legislature that begins on Monday.

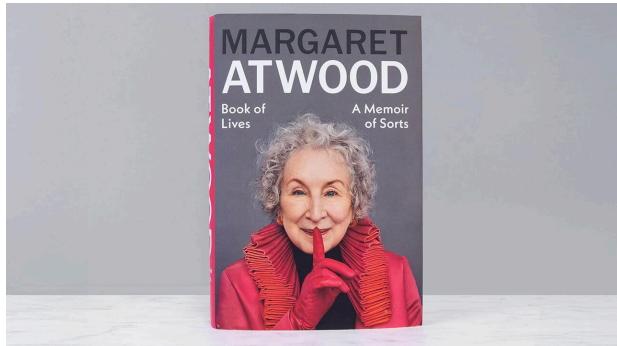
Indiana's lawmakers, though, will not convene in the capital for at least a few days. Republican leaders blame "member availability". It may be that they don't have the votes to pass a new map. Some Republican lawmakers worry about endangering their own re-election if they support redistricting. Others are opposed to it on principle. Republicans in Kansas, New Hampshire and Nebraska have voiced similar concerns. As Republican efforts slow, more Democratic-controlled states, such as Virginia, are entering the gerrymander war. And on November 4th, Californians will vote on a measure that would let the state legislature draw a new congressional map—one that would favour Democrats.

Gerrymanders run amok

US states that have redistricted* or may redistrict before 2026 midterms, at October 29th 2025



*MO, NC, and TX boundaries have been approved by legislature Sources: Press reports; *The Economist*



Photograph: Chatto & Windus

Margaret Atwood's many lives

Over more than 60 years, Margaret Atwood has written fiction, poetry and essays. But she has never attempted an autobiography, until now. This week the Canadian writer publishes her “Book of Lives”. In this “Memoir of Sorts”, Ms Atwood chronicles episodes from her past, including her rural and nomadic childhood in Ontario and Quebec and her romantic partnership with fellow writer Graeme Gibson.

Along with witty accounts of travel and shrewd observations on motherhood, cooking and the natural world, Ms Atwood shares insights into her craft (“poetry breaks a subject open, fiction grows from the break”). Fans will relish the origin stories of novels such as “The Handmaid’s Tale”—she decided to explore the “unthinkable idea” of America as a totalitarian theocracy while in West Berlin in 1984, separated from another autocracy by only a wall. As with all good memoirs, the “Book of Lives” shows how Ms Atwood’s eventful life fed her singular art.



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 GMT on Friday to [\[email protected\]](mailto:). We'll pick randomly from those with the right answers and crown three winners on Saturday.

Monday: Cantilever, continuous and overhanging are all types of what?

The test of a man or woman's breeding is how they behave in a quarrel.

George Bernard Shaw