

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

America's economy grew at an annualised rate of 4.3% in the third quarter of 2025, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis. It is the fastest growth since the third quarter of 2023. Most economists had expected a mere 3.2% rise, according to a poll by Bloomberg. The BEA's report replaces estimates that were delayed in October and November because of the [government shutdown](#).

America's **Supreme Court** refused to allow the Trump administration to deploy **National Guard** troops in the **Chicago** area over the objections of Illinois officials. The administration said the soldiers were needed to protect [federal immigration agents](#). But two lower courts had [blocked the move](#), questioning its legality. The Supreme Court said the government had "failed to identify a source of authority" for the deployment, [one of several](#) Donald Trump has ordered.

Ukrainian troops pulled out of the eastern town of **Siversk**. Located on high ground, it had helped Ukraine block a [Russian advance](#) towards Sloviansk and Kramatorsk, two cities in the Donetsk province. Earlier Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine's president, said **Russia** had launched a "massive" bombardment, primarily targeting energy infrastructure, amid freezing weather.

The [attack](#) involved over 600 drones and killed at least three people.

The **Libyan** army's chief of staff died in a plane crash in Turkey, along with four other officials. Mohammed Ali Ahmed al-Haddad had been in Turkey on an official visit. The cause of the crash remains unknown. A day earlier, Turkey said it would continue to deploy soldiers in [war-torn Libya](#) for a further two years to support the UN-recognised Government of National Unity.

France's parliament passed a stopgap bill to keep the government running during January. The measure allows the government to continue spending and collecting taxes without a budget.

Lawmakers used the same measure last year. [Emmanuel Macron](#), France's president, has urged lawmakers to finalise a budget for 2026 when parliament convenes again in January.

The price of **gold** increased for the third straight day, soaring past \$4,500 an ounce. Silver and platinum also rose as investors piled into precious metals amid expectations of more interest-rate cuts in America. Meanwhile, the price of **copper** rose above \$12,000 a tonne for the first time. The [surge](#) has been driven by buoyant demand and disruptions at mines in big producers such as Chile.

America's Department of Justice released a further 30,000 pages of documents relating to **Jeffrey Epstein**, a dead sex offender. The [tranche](#) contains an email alleging that Mr Trump "travelled on Epstein's private jet many more times than previously has been reported". The DOJ said the files "contain untrue and sensationalist claims" about the president. It published other heavily redacted files on Friday and Saturday.

Figure of the day: 80%, the reduction in radio programming entering North Korea from outside since May. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Reuters

Mark Carney's remarkable victory

We are looking back on 2025. Today, elections around the world

In April Canadian voters handed Mark Carney and the Liberals a fourth straight term in power—an outcome few thought possible weeks earlier. The former central banker, who became party leader only in March, pulled off [a remarkable comeback](#) for a government languishing at record lows under Justin Trudeau.

His campaign was characterised by defiance. Facing threats and insults from Donald Trump, Mr Carney cast himself as the defender of Canada's sovereignty. His warning that “America wants our land, our resources, our country” struck a chord with anxious voters. The Liberals fell just short of a majority but still won decisively, while the Conservatives—once leading by 24 points—collapsed. Their leader, Pierre Poilievre, lost credibility after failing to distance himself from Mr Trump’s bombast.

Mr Carney’s victory rested more on competence than on charisma. A technocrat who guided two central banks through crises, he must now shield Canada’s economy from Mr Trump’s tariffs and reset relations with its dominant neighbour.



Photograph: Getty Images

Poland's political pendulum swings again

Poland's presidential election in June epitomised Europe's deepening divide between liberal centrists and nationalist populists. Rafal Trzaskowski, Warsaw's liberal mayor, supported by Donald Tusk's pro-European government, faced Karol Nawrocki, a nationalist historian and former boxer endorsed by the populist Law and Justice party. After a bitter contest, Mr Nawrocki [won narrowly](#), with 50.9% of the vote.

His victory dealt a heavy blow to Mr Tusk. The new president has vowed to veto government bills, threatening to stall efforts to restore judicial independence and liberalise social policy. With no parliamentary supermajority to override Mr Nawrocki, Mr Tusk's coalition—an uneasy mix of progressives and conservatives—may struggle to survive.

Mr Nawrocki's election has tilted Poland back towards nationalism and Euroscepticism. Backed by Hungary's Viktor Orban and sceptical of support for Ukraine, he seems intent on undoing his prime minister's efforts to re-anchor Poland in Europe.



Photograph: AP

Tanzania's Tiananmen moment

Tanks, not cheers, marked Samia Suluhu Hassan's second inauguration as president of Tanzania in November. Officially she won 98% of the vote. But her regime was reeling. Days earlier Tanzania had been convulsed by the biggest protests in its history, after the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) banned opposition parties, jailed their leaders and rigged the October election. The government's response was brutal. Security forces opened fire, killing hundreds—perhaps thousands—of demonstrators.

The violence has [ended Tanzania's reputation](#) as one of Africa's most peaceful states. Internet blackouts, mass arrests and disappearing activists followed. Even the usually docile Southern African Development Community admitted that voters had been denied a free choice.

Mrs Samia, once seen as a cautious reformer, now rules through fear. Within CCM, rivals are already circling, seeing her as a liability. Tanzania's longest-ruling party may cling to power for now. But it has lost something harder to regain: legitimacy.



Photograph: AP

Habemus papam Americanum

White smoke rose above the Sistine Chapel in May—and for the first time it signalled [an American pope](#). The cardinals chose Robert Prevost, a Chicago-born missionary who spent many years in Peru, to lead the Catholic Church as Pope Leo XIV.

Leo's election breaks taboos but not traditions. His papal name nods to Leo XIII, pope from 1878 to 1903, the author of *Rerum Novarum* and father of modern Catholic social teaching. Like his namesake, Leo XIV preaches balance: peace, justice and a church “open to all.”

His politics have unsettled MAGA Catholics. Leo's first major pronouncements described protecting migrants, fighting inequality and tackling global warming as sacred obligations. He denounced America's “inhuman” deportations, blessed a chunk of Greenland ice and said death-penalty supporters could not call themselves pro-life. Conservatives fumed at [the “woke pope”](#). Leo looks set on a progressive course that puts him at odds with the world's increasingly successful conservative populists.



Illustration: The Economist

Daily quiz

We will serve you a new question each weekday. All five have a common theme. We won't pick any winners this week; normal service will return next week.

Wednesday: *Rangifer tarandus*, an animal sometimes referred to as a caribou, is more generally known by what name?

Tuesday: Which orchestral piece, composed by Leroy Anderson, was turned into a hit song by the Ronettes in 1963?

The free thinking of one age is the common sense of the next.

Matthew Arnold