

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Reuters

**Moldova's** pro-European Action and Solidarity party (PAS) took a commanding lead in **parliamentary elections**. With 99.9% of votes counted, PAS has more than 50% of the vote, well ahead of the pro-Russian Patriotic Electoral Bloc, on under 25%. Both Russia and the European Union are vying for influence in [Moldova, a small, former Soviet republic](#) squeezed between Ukraine and Romania.

A “massive” Russian strike on Kyiv, **Ukraine's** capital, killed at least four people and injured dozens, according to the country's government. Ukraine's armed forces said that [Russia](#) launched nearly 600 drones and almost 50 missiles at various targets, but that it shot down most of them. Volodymyr Zelensky, the country's president, called on America, Europe and the G20 to take “decisive action” against Russia.

**Eric Adams** ended his campaign to be re-elected as mayor of New York. Elected as a Democrat in 2021, he lost the party's support amid accusation that he collaborated with the Trump administration to get corruption charges against him dropped (he denies both wrongdoing and making a deal). He was running as an independent for the election in November but was tanking in the polls.

**Afghanistan's** ruling **Taliban** released an American citizen following months of mediation by Qatar. Amir Amiry had been in custody for nine months. The reason for his detention has not been fully revealed. He is the fifth American to be set free by the Taliban this year. The Qataris also helped negotiate the release of a British couple earlier this month.

**Denmark** banned all civilian use of **drones** for a week after the devices were spotted near Danish military facilities again on Sunday. Drone sightings earlier this week led to the closures of some Danish airports. Mette Frederiksen, Denmark's prime minister, has already voiced her suspicions of Russian involvement. The Kremlin has denied that it is responsible. Denmark hosts an EU summit on Wednesday.

Donald Trump will reportedly attend a meeting of **America's top military officers** at Quantico, a Marine Corps base in Virginia, on Tuesday. Pete Hegseth, the secretary of war, has instructed hundreds of generals and admirals stationed across the world to attend the powwow. The administration has not disclosed the purpose of the meeting, although grooming standards are reportedly on the agenda.

Europe won golf's **Ryder Cup**, beating America in a bad-tempered tournament in **New York state**. Having been thrashed over the first two days, America was on the verge of an unlikely comeback on day three, before the Europeans prevailed 13-15. Rory McIlroy, Europe's highest-profile golfer, said that the personal abuse meted out by the partisan crowd to his players and their families was unacceptable.

**Figure of the day:** 6,549, the average number of miles the average British man travelled in 2024, down by 21% from 2002. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: AP

## **A countdown begins for Thailand's new PM**

Last month Anutin Charnvirakul, Thailand's new prime minister, made a deal with the opposition People's Party. It would support a minority government led by his Bhumjaithai Party. In return he promised to call an election within four months of delivering a speech to parliament that lays out his government's policies. On Monday he gave that speech, during which he pledged to tackle Thailand's economic and security challenges.

Mr Anutin will make the most of the time available to him to improve his election prospects. He is reviving the "half-half" stimulus: a pandemic-era programme under which the government covers half the cost of basic goods that consumers buy from small businesses. That could secure him enough support to win an election. But he might have another way to stay in power. MPs from small parties have thrown their support behind the Bhumjaithai Party. If he attracts enough of them in the next four months he could get a majority in parliament without the need to call an election at all.



Photograph: Getty Images

## **Can America's Congress avoid a shutdown?**

Getting face time with Donald Trump is hard, especially if he dislikes you. Last week Hakeem Jeffries and Chuck Schumer, the top Democrats in Congress, were to meet the president, but he cancelled. Now they are set to talk on Monday. Republicans leaders will also attend. The two sides are negotiating over how to fund the government, which will soon run out of money. Without an agreement, it will shut down on Wednesday.

Democrats want to extend health-care credits that expire at the end of the year and roll back cuts to Medicaid, health insurance for the poor. Republicans want government spending to stay at current levels. Both are bullish, betting that the public will blame the other party for a shutdown. But Democrats are in a tricky spot. The administration has threatened to sack federal workers if there is a shutdown. And a win on health care now will deprive them of a cudgel against Republicans in midterm elections next year.



Photograph: Getty Images

## The “Trump Plan” for Gaza

Donald Trump’s other big meeting of the day will be with Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister. American and Israeli diplomats predict that it will be pivotal in ending the war in Gaza, which began in October 2023 when Hamas, a militant group, attacked Israel. Mr Trump has been raising expectations. “ALL ARE ON BOARD FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL. FIRST TIME EVER. WE WILL GET IT DONE!!!” he posted the day before the meeting.

The “Trump Plan”, as it has been nicknamed, calls for Hamas to release all Israeli hostages immediately and to disarm. Israel would fully withdraw from Gaza and allow a Palestinian technocratic government to take over civil affairs. A foreign peacekeeping force would be responsible for security.

The plan has elements that Israel and Hamas will find hard to accept. Whether Mr Trump and the Arab regimes who helped draw it up can force them to agree to it remains to be seen.



Photograph: EPA

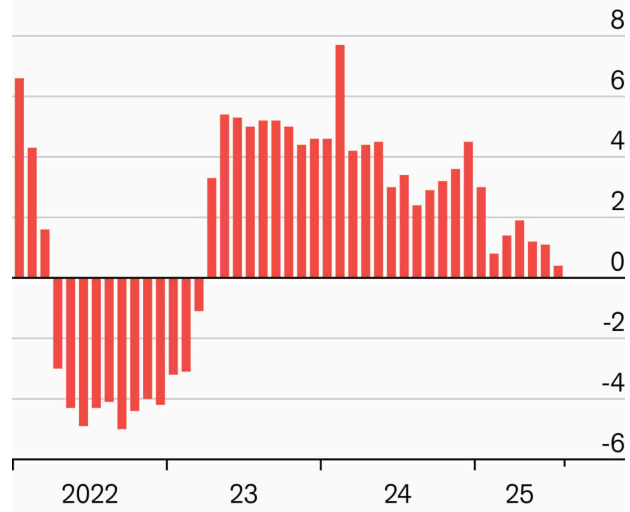
## Russia's finances feel the strain

When Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, many thought its [economy](#) would soon collapse. Those predictions proved wrong. A short recession was followed by a military-spending-induced boom in 2023-24. And oil exports, a major source of revenue, dodged sanctions. Yet after three and a half years of war, Russia's economy is stuttering. The price of oil has fallen. In July the economy expanded by just 0.4% year on year.

On Monday Russia's government is expected to submit a draft budget for 2026 to its rubber-stamp parliament. It is keen to reduce the deficit, which at nearly 2% of GDP is roughly four times the government's target for 2025. To do so, it will raise value-added tax and lower the tax threshold for businesses from 60m roubles (\$720,000) to just 10m roubles in annual revenue. Expect Russians to grumble as the money to pay for the war increasingly comes out of their pockets.

## Poorly oiled machine

Russia, GDP, % change on a year earlier



Source: LSEG Workspace



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

**Monday:** Which band was responsible for most of the biggest hits of the “Saturday Night Fever” soundtrack?



*Error does not end with youth but  
increases in the man.*

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***W. H. Audin***