

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

Takaichi Sanae became Japan's [first female prime minister](#) after the ruling Liberal Democratic Party formed a new coalition with Japan Innovation Party, a centre-right group. The alliance helped Ms Takaichi secure enough support from parliament. Ms Takaichi is a proponent of expansionary fiscal spending and monetary easing. The Nikkei 225 stockmarket index surged to an all-time high, while the value of the yen slumped in response to the news.

Nicolas Sarkozy, a former French president, began his five-year sentence in a prison in Paris. Last month Mr Sarkozy was [convicted](#) of “criminal conspiracy” for seeking illicit campaign funds in 2007 from Muammar Qaddafi, the late Libyan dictator. Mr Sarkozy denied wrongdoing. Though he appealed, a judge ordered him to start serving his sentence without waiting, given the “seriousness of the disruption to public order”.

Britain borrowed £99.8bn (\$134bn) in the six months to September, £7.2bn above forecast, according to the Office for National Statistics. The amount borrowed in September—£20.2bn—was the highest figure for that month in five years. The data add to the [pressure on the chancellor](#), Rachel Reeves, ahead of her budget on November 26th, in which she is expected to raise taxes.

Amazon said that it had restored its cloud services, after a massive outage disrupted social-media sites, financial services, and messaging apps. Amazon Web Services, the tech giant's cloud-computing arm, said it had "fully mitigated" the problem. It was the biggest internet disruption since 2024, when a routine software update by CrowdStrike, a cyber-security company, [caused computer outages](#) in offices, hospitals and airports worldwide.

Donald Trump said he did not think **Ukraine** would win [the war](#) against **Russia**, though he added that "anything could happen". The remarks came hours after reports emerged that Mr Trump had urged Volodymyr Zelensky to cede territory to Vladimir Putin. Meanwhile, European officials said they had made progress towards a deal that would allow using frozen Russian assets to fund aid to Ukraine.

Argentina's central bank signed a **currency-swap** agreement worth \$20bn with America. The [deal](#) comes days before Argentina's midterm elections and seeks to shore up the country's economy. Mr Trump, who is a supporter of Argentina's libertarian president [Javier Milei](#), said that any future assistance would depend on the election, warning "if he doesn't win, we're gone."

An **eye implant** helped nearly 30 blind people see again, according to a study published in *the New England Journal of Medicine*. The implant, inserted beneath the retina, replicates cells degraded by age-related macular degeneration, the most common form of blindness in old people. When paired with special infrared glasses, it may offer hope to the millions of people in the world with AMD.

Figure of the day: 10,000, the number of Papuans who could join Australia's armed forces under a new defence pact between Australia and Papua New Guinea. [Read the full story.](#)



Photograph: Getty Images

Chinese spy case stumps Britain

On Tuesday the British government was scheduled to rule on the planning application to build a giant new Chinese embassy in London. Instead the decision has been postponed yet again, amid a smouldering [political row](#) over Chinese espionage. Last month British prosecutors withdrew a case against two men accused of spying for China shortly before the trial was due to begin, claiming that government witnesses had failed to make their case that China posed a national-security threat to Britain.

The government has since published those statements, which spell out the large scale of Chinese [espionage](#). They also note Britain's desire for positive economic ties. Legal experts are baffled as to why the case has fallen apart. But Anglo-Chinese relations are looking shaky regardless. In recent days China has ominously warned of “consequences” if the embassy—which would be the largest in Europe—is not approved. Until then Royal Mint Court will remain an expensive, empty site.



Photograph: AP

Japan's Iron Lady takes power

For a moment, [Takaichi Sanae](#), the new leader of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, appeared to be in trouble. Its longtime coalition partner, Komeito, withdrew from their coalition, citing concerns about Ms Takaichi's hardline conservatism. Her path to becoming the country's first woman prime minister, which requires a parliamentary vote, looked uncertain. She can now rest assured. On Monday, the LDP signed an agreement with the Japan Innovation Party (Ishin), a centre-right opposition outfit, to form a new coalition. Ms Takaichi was elected on Tuesday, winning 237 of 465 votes in the lower house.

Ishin is aligned with the LDP on its conservative social values and hawkish stance on defence. But it casts itself as a challenger to the establishment, calling for a leaner and cleaner government. It demands reforms such as reducing the number of seats in parliament and banning corporate donations. These ideas might cause friction with the LDP. But for now Ms Takaichi has secured her [path](#) to power.



Photograph: Getty Images

Netflix and the battle for attention

The undisputed winner of the [streaming](#) wars reports its quarterly earnings on Tuesday. After a strong start to the year, however, Netflix's share price has had a flat few months. Investors seem worried that people are watching less. Despite the success of "KPop Demon Hunters", a hit film released in August, the average daily watch-time by Netflix's American subscribers in the past two quarters has been the lowest in at least three years, estimates Bernstein, a broker.

But the next quarter's programmes look promising. "Stranger Things" returns for its final season. "The Witcher", a fantasy series, and "Monster", a true-crime one, will be back too. Netflix is experimenting with new genres, from [live sport](#) (it will air two American football matches on Christmas Day) to podcasts (it recently announced a deal to show some Spotify video-pods). Its video games can now be played on TVs as well as smartphones. But amid heightened competition for viewers' attention, keeping people tuned in is getting harder.

Streaming along

Netflix, share price, 2025, \$'000



Source: LSEG Workspace



Photograph: Getty Images

NBA tips off a new season

The men's National Basketball Association season starts on Tuesday, when the defending champions, the [Oklahoma City Thunder](#), host the Houston Rockets. The new season is the first of a giant domestic media deal, in which ESPN, NBC and Amazon will pay \$76bn over the next 11 years to show games.

Yet the NBA's appeal is increasingly global and its foreign players are a growing force. Its biggest [American](#) names, 40-year-old LeBron James, 37-year-old Steph Curry and 37-year-old Kevin Durant, are past their prime age. Two younger stars, Tyrese Haliburton and Jayson Tatum, are injured. Instead, players such as Nikola Jokic of Serbia, Luka Doncic from Slovenia, Giannis Antetokounmpo, who is Greek-Nigerian, and Victor Wembanyama, a Frenchman, will continue to shine.

The NBA commissioner, Adam Silver, is unlikely to mind. With a big American media deal in the bag, he is looking to grow the league [overseas](#), including in Africa.



Illustration: The Economist

Daily quiz

We will serve you a new question each weekday. On Friday your challenge is to give us all five answers and tell us the theme. Email your responses (and your home city and country) by 1700 BST on **Friday** to [\[email protected\]](#). We'll pick three winners at random and crown them on Saturday.

Tuesday: Who in 2021 became the oldest person to win the Oscar for best actor?

Monday: Which veteran singer shares his name with an 18th century novel by Henry Fielding?

The truth is, a great mind must be androgynous.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge