

The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Reuters

Donald Trump claimed “a very big victory” after America’s Senate passed a bill to end the longest-ever federal **shutdown**. The measure, which will restore funding for federal agencies through January, must still clear the House of Representatives. Its members, who have not been in session since September, may vote as early as Wednesday. Many are returning to Washington amid travel delays caused by the **shutdown**.

Colombia suspended intelligence-sharing with **America** in protest at the Trump administration’s strikes on alleged drug traffickers in the Caribbean. Gustavo Petro, Colombia’s president, has described such attacks as “murder”. America has recently carried out at least 19 **strikes against alleged drug boats** in the region. On Tuesday America’s navy said that the *USS Gerald Ford*, the world’s largest warship, had arrived in the Caribbean.

Pakistan’s defence minister said the country was in a “state of war” after a suicide bomber killed at least 12 people in **Islamabad**, the capital. The prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, claimed Indian-backed militants in **Afghanistan** were responsible. Meanwhile **Narendra Modi**, India’s prime minister, blamed “conspirators” for a car

explosion in Delhi on Monday that killed at least eight people. It is unclear who is behind either attack.

Shares in **Nvidia** closed 3% lower after **SoftBank** announced that it had sold its stake in the chipmaker for \$5.8bn. The Japanese tech investor said the sale had “nothing to do” with **Nvidia** as a company; it wants the funds in order to invest in **OpenAI**. Softbank also said it had sold a portion of its shares in T-Mobile for \$9.2bn.

Rumours buzzed around Westminster that **Sir Keir Starmer**, Britain’s prime minister, would face an imminent leadership challenge from within his Labour Party. One mooted contender to replace him, Wes Streeting, the health secretary, was forced to deny that he was about to mount a campaign. Voters elected Labour with a huge majority in 2024. But its support has **cratered** under Sir Keir’s limp leadership.

Australia’s spy chief accused hackers linked to the Chinese government and army of targeting the country’s critical infrastructure, including water, transport and telecoms networks. Mike Burgess, head of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, fingered Volt Typhoon and **Salt Typhoon**, two Chinese hacking groups that have compromised telecoms networks in America and Australia. Mr Burgess warned of a growing threat of “cyber-enabled sabotage” in the coming years.

A court in **London** sentenced a **Chinese** woman to almost 12 years in prison for money laundering. Between 2014 and 2017, **Qian Zhimin** used a fake company to steal money from over 100,000 pensioners in China, which she **laundered** into billions of pounds worth of cryptocurrency. British police raided her London home in 2018, after her extravagant lifestyle caught their attention.

Figure of the day: £174.50 (\$230), the annual price of Britain’s television-licensing fee, £30 more than the cost of Netflix and Disney+ combined. [Read the full story here](#)



Photograph: EPA

Milei's mandate to remake Argentina

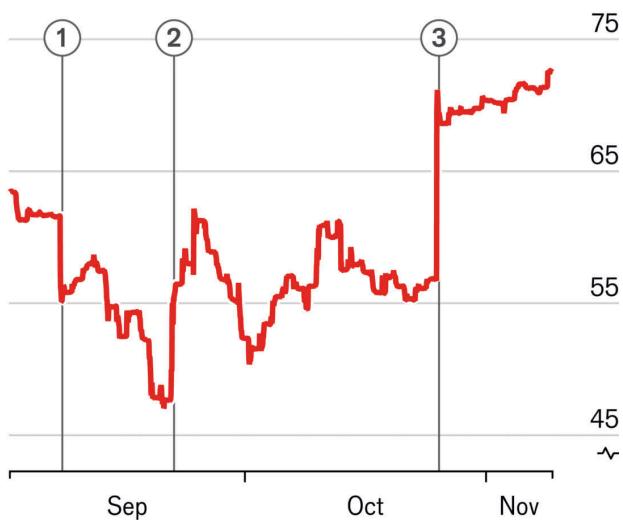
Since Javier Milei [won a thumping victory](#) in midterm elections on October 26th he has tweaked his cabinet and reached out to powerful provincial governors as he prepares tax and labour reforms, as well as the 2026 budget. Argentina's country risk index, a measure of the likelihood of default, is at its lowest level since January.

Argentina's exchange-rate scheme, however, remains a source of tension. Earlier this year Mr Milei had sought to maintain the peso's artificial strength as he fought against high inflation. New data released on Wednesday is expected to show the monthly rate in October at 2.2%, up slightly from September.

With elections out of the way, investors are pushing for the peso—which floats within a band—to be freed. Pimco, a giant American asset-management firm, warned Mr Milei that without that it would withhold investments. Mr Milei insists he will not float the currency, though reports suggest that he may widen the band more quickly over time.

Rebound

Argentina, ten-year government-bond price, 2025
Cents on the dollar



- 1 Milei's party loses the Buenos Aires provincial election
- 2 Bessent posts on X that the US Treasury stands with Argentina
- 3 Milei's party wins midterm elections

Source: Bloomberg



Photograph: Alamy

Germany's gloomy growth outlook

The German Council of Economic Experts, a group of academics that advises the government on economic policy, will present its annual report on Wednesday. In May the council revised down its economic-growth forecast for this year: [instead of weak growth it predicted stagnation](#). Its forthcoming report will assess the impact of increased defence and infrastructure spending on growth. The report will also make suggestions for reforming corporate tax, bolstering the European single market and reducing inequality in Germany.

On Tuesday the Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW) announced that its indicator of economic sentiment was stable this month. “But the overall mood is characterised by a fall in confidence in the capacity of Germany’s economic policy to tackle the pressing issues,” said Achim Wambach, head of the ZEW. The council’s report will probably do little to lighten it.



Illustration: Dan Williams

Fighting China's bullying of a university

China's increasingly muscular approach towards its critics has left Sheffield Hallam, a British university, bruised—and has raised broader questions about how democracies respond to Chinese intimidation. Last year the university abruptly ended its research into Uyghur forced labour in China and the resulting corruption of international supply chains. Writing exclusively for *The Economist*, the professor who led the research, [Laura Murphy, explains](#) how it took a freedom-of-information request to reveal that the ban came soon after Chinese state-security agents had visited the university's student-recruitment office in Beijing, issuing what a university memo described as a clear “message to cease” the research.

Sheffield Hallam has apologised to Professor Murphy for any uncertainty regarding her research and allowed the research to resume—while denying it was stopped for commercial reasons—but the case continues to reverberate: British MPs plan to investigate Chinese interference in academia. Professor Murphy worries that more such cases will corrode institutions unless governments in democracies “build a fortress” around academic freedom.



Photograph: Quadrille

An ode to the pantry

Alison Roman's fourth cookbook, "Something from Nothing", out this week, extols the virtues of not spending too much time cooking. The recipes come together quickly. They rely on pantry ingredients, especially tinned anchovies and dry beans, which have in recent years seen [resurgent interest](#) on social media and in restaurants.

What many hurried cooks do out of necessity, Ms Roman—an American food star—has cleverly made her personal brand. "I don't soak my beans, and I enjoy doing in two steps what's usually done in five," she proclaims proudly. But that laid-back approach is paired with a perfectly crisp white shirt and gourmet ingredients. "High-low", she calls her lifestyle. To impress her guests, she usually serves grocery-store radishes with "very yellow, very expensive butter", to signal that she is both casual and elegant. She loves crisps—paired with caviar. Many readers will be put off by Ms Roman's distinct, opinionated tone. Many more will make space in their pantry.



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.

Wednesday: Which city, not known for its bear population, is home to the Grizzlies basketball team?

Tuesday: Which city was designed by Pierre Charles L'Enfant in 1791?

Truth is the only safe ground to stand on.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton