

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Getty Images

**European leaders** said “now is a critical moment” [to support Ukraine](#), after Sir Keir Starmer, Britain’s prime minister, hosted Volodymyr Zelensky for talks in London. Friedrich Merz, Germany’s chancellor, and Emmanuel Macron, France’s president, also attended. Ukraine’s president, who travelled on to meet NATO officials in Brussels, said he would share a revised peace plan with America on Tuesday.

**Thailand** evacuated nearly 450,000 people from provinces near its border with **Cambodia** as fighting between the two sides intensified. Cambodia claimed that six civilians have been killed since Monday. Thailand said it had detected Cambodian forces on its territory and vowed to repel them. The clashes have [shattered a rickety ceasefire](#) brokered by Donald Trump following a five-day conflict in July.

**Paramount** made a \$108bn all-cash offer to buy **Warner Bros Discovery** which includes financing from a private-equity firm run by Jared Kushner, Donald Trump’s son-in-law. The Hollywood studio is trying to thwart **Netflix**, which is seeking regulatory approval [to buy much of Warner Bros](#) for \$83bn. Paramount was

bought this year by [David Ellison](#), the son of Larry Ellison, a tech billionaire.

**PepsiCo** promised to cut costs and lower prices as part of a settlement agreement with **Elliott Management**. The deal avoids a confrontation between the giant snackmaker and the activist hedge fund. In September Elliott revealed that it built up a stake of \$4bn in PepsiCo and urged its board to improve performance. Pepsi said the proposed plan would help revenues grow by 2-4% next year.

Conservative justices at America's **Supreme Court** signalled they would side with Mr Trump's dismissal of Rebecca Slaughter from the **Federal Trade Commission** in March. A lower court previously ordered Ms Slaughter to be reappointed to the [independent regulator](#), citing decades-old removal limits. A ruling is expected by June. A win for Mr Trump could grant him—and future presidents—sweeping control over dozens of executive agencies.

Warplanes used by the **Sudanese** Armed Forces killed at least 1,700 civilians in strikes on areas for displaced people since April 2023, according to the Sudan Witness Project, a monitor. It did not analyse strikes by the rival Rapid Support Forces. Sudan has suffered from nearly three years of [civil war](#); putative peace talks—in London, Washington and Geneva—failed earlier this year.

At least 30 people were injured after a magnitude 7.5 **earthquake** shook **Japan's** north-east on Monday night. The quake prompted evacuation orders for 90,000 people as well as tsunami advisories, which were later lifted. Thousands of homes were left without power. Authorities warned that [a stronger tremor](#) could occur within a week and urged caution.

**Figure of the day:** 500,000, the number of hours police in England and Wales spend on unnecessary paperwork annually. [Read the full story.](#)





Photograph: Getty Images

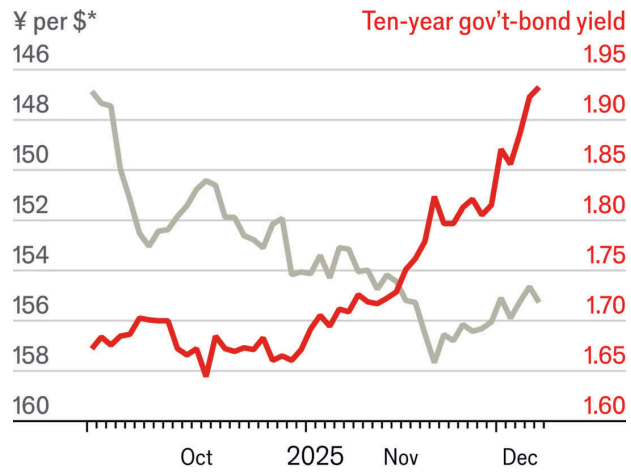
## Takaichi's big spending

On Tuesday Japan's parliament began debating a supplementary budget put forward by Takaichi Sanae's government. At ¥18.3trn (\$118bn), it is the largest since the covid-19 pandemic and far above last year's ¥13.9trn. Nearly half the spending aims to help households cope with rising prices (annual inflation is hovering around 3%). The proposals include handouts of ¥20,000 per child and scrapping a provisional gasoline tax. The package will also allocate funds to industries such as semiconductors, and raise [defence spending](#) to 2% of GDP.

Voters seem to back Ms Takaichi's big spending. Her cabinet's approval rating is around 70%. Markets, though, are [less convinced](#). Critics warn the stimulus could fuel inflation. Most of the budget is financed through new government bonds, which worries fiscal hawks, given the country's enormous public debt. Meanwhile, the package risks further weakening the yen, which could push up import costs and hurt the households Ms Takaichi claims to support.

## This might hurt

### Japan



Source: LSEG Workspace

\*Inverted scale



Photograph: Reuters

## **The Indian future of German steel**

Thyssenkrupp, a German industrial giant, reports results for the past fiscal year on Tuesday. The troubled group is in the midst of an overhaul of its five business units under the stewardship of Miguel Ángel López Borrego, the chief executive. The firm supplies parts for the car industry, builds ships and makes green technology. Yet it is best known for its steel-making unit, one of the biggest in Europe, which is battling high energy costs, competition from Asia and lower domestic demand. To improve performance, the steel business is cutting jobs, among other restructuring measures.

It may also get a boost from abroad. In September Naveen Jindal, an Indian tycoon, made a surprise bid for the unit. He is a prominent backer of low-carbon “green steel”, which, thanks to federal- and state-government subsidies, is an increasingly big part of Thyssenkrupp’s business. The question facing him and the company is whether Germany will continue to pay these subsidies under foreign ownership.



Photograph: AP

## America's execution surge

Mark Gerald's has done something unusual. Convicted of a murder in Panama City, Florida, in 1989, he sat on death row for decades before Ron DeSantis, the state's governor, signed his death warrant last month. Unlike most prisoners facing execution, Mr Gerald's said he would not appeal the order. He is set to be killed by lethal injection on Tuesday.

Mr Gerald's will be the 18th person that Florida has killed so far in 2025, already making it the state's deadliest year on record and pushing the national tally to a [nearly two-decade high](#). The reason for the surge? Some Republican politicians think executing people is good politics—and the Supreme Court, reshaped by Donald Trump, is letting them go ahead with it. Years ago the court routinely blocked states from executing people too fast, or in ways deemed too cruel. Now, it rarely does so. Perhaps Mr Gerald's understands that eleventh-hour appeals are not the saving grace they once were.





Photograph: Getty Images

## More budget chaos in France

On Tuesday France holds a crunch parliamentary vote on the government's budget for 2026. The lower house will vote on the social-security bill, which forms the first half of the budget. It includes a suspension until 2027 of [President Emmanuel Macron's](#) pension reform, which since 2023 has been gradually increasing the legal minimum retirement age from 62 years to 64. The prime minister, Sébastien Lecornu, agreed to freeze its implementation as a way of securing support from the Socialists for his minority centrist government.

The prime minister's own supporters, however, are rebelling. Édouard Philippe, Mr Macron's first prime minister, said his centrist party's 34 deputies would not vote for it. Bruno Retailleau, leader of the centre-right Republicans, some of whose members are in the government, said his wouldn't either. If the measure should fall, Mr Lecornu's government will be severely weakened in the run-up to the vote on the main budget bill, which must be passed by December 23rd.





Photograph: Getty Images

## **A timid Turner prize**

The Turner prize is Britain's most prestigious, and controversial, contemporary-art award. Many shortlisted works have sparked uproar. Think of Damien Hirst's installation of a tiger shark preserved in formalin in 1992, and Tracey Emin's unmade bed in 1999. A bold shortlist would be especially fitting this year: it is the 250th anniversary of the birth of J.M.W. Turner, the visionary painter for whom the prize is named.

Alas, the 2025 shortlist is unimpressive. Nnena Kalu makes cocoon-like sculptures; Rene Matic, the second-youngest nominee ever, takes documentary-style photographs; Zadie Xa paints colourful, abstract canvases. If you go to the Cartwright Hall Art Gallery in Bradford, the host of this year's prize, you might feel you've seen it all before. That is until you notice the work of Mohammed Sami, the favourite to win the prize. His paintings of war and loss are unusual and unsettling.



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 GMT on Friday to [\[email protected\]](#). We'll pick three winners at random and crown them on Saturday.

**Tuesday:** Roy Harold Scherer found fame as an actor under which stage name?

**Monday:** The experiences of the marooned Alexander Selkirk were the reported inspiration for which famous novel?

*If you want to get an idea across,  
wrap it up in a person.*

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***Ralph Bunche***