

# The world in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter



Photograph: Reuters

**Hamas** said it would return another deceased hostage to **Israel** as part of the ceasefire agreement. The slow return of the bodies has put the agreement under strain. Earlier Israel said it would resume aid deliveries to **Gaza** and would return to observing the [ceasefire](#) in the territory after it suspended aid and launched air strikes that killed 26 people.

Many services impacted by problems with **Amazon Web Services** are recovering. Earlier AWS caused an **internet outage**, affecting as many as 500 companies. The firm said it was “continuing to work towards full recovery” while the underlying problem had been “fully mitigated”. Amazon’s cloud-computing arm provides services to millions of companies and accounts for over half of Amazon’s operating income.

**Brazil’s** environmental regulator said **Petrobras**, an oil giant, could begin drilling an exploratory well in the **Amazon** basin, about 500km from the mouth of the Amazon. The Brazilian state-run firm hopes to “prove the existence of oil” in its patch of the [“new global energy frontier”](#). The area shares geological features with Guyana, where **ExxonMobil**, an American competitor, is developing oil fields.

**America** and **Australia** agreed to invest \$3bn in **critical-minerals** projects over the next six months, in a bid to advance “self-reliance” in processing such materials. China, where much of the world’s supply [is concentrated](#), recently said it would tighten rare-earths exports, prompting Donald Trump to retaliate with [additional Chinese tariffs](#). America’s president suggested he would visit China early next year.

Shares in **BNP Paribas** fell by more than 10% after an American court ordered the French bank on Friday to pay over \$20m to three **Sudanese refugees**. Lawyers for the refugees accused the bank of abetting Omar al-Bashir, Sudan’s repressive former dictator. In 2014 the bank was fined for providing financial services to his government. The verdict may lead to further fines still.

**China’s** [growth](#) slowed to 4.8% in the third quarter, compared with a year earlier—the weakest pace in a year. A crackdown on excess capacity and a prolonged property slump have weighed on demand. Meanwhile, the country’s rulers gathered for the Communist Party’s “fourth plenum”, during which they will review a new [five-year plan](#).

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: 0.4%**, the share of Ukrainian territory that Russia has seized since it launched a big offensive in May. [Read the full story](#).



Photograph: Getty Images

## **Gaza's ceasefire hangs in the balance**

As expected, making sure that Donald Trump's ceasefire deal holds in Gaza is [proving to be the hard part](#). On Saturday America's State Department warned of "an imminent ceasefire violation by Hamas against the people of Gaza". Israel accused Hamas militants of killing two Israeli soldiers near Rafah, in southern Gaza, on Sunday, prompting dozens of Israeli strikes on the territory. The fighting ended after a few hours; the ceasefire is now back in effect. But it was a reminder of how fragile the deal is.

Meanwhile Hamas continues to return the bodies of hostages who died in captivity in Gaza. It returned two on Saturday night. Hamas told mediators that it may take time to find the 16 remaining bodies, but Israeli officials accuse it of violating the agreement. Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister, said on Saturday that the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt would remain closed until Hamas fulfils its obligations.



Photograph: Getty Images

## China's rulers set out their plans

China's ruling elite (diminished by a recent purge of several generals for lack of loyalty and "chastity") gathered in Beijing on Monday for the Communist Party's "fourth plenum". The meeting will review a draft of the next five-year plan. China's leaders must decide whether to set a formal growth target for the economy from 2026 to 2030.

Meanwhile, the [economy](#) must get through the rest of this year. Figures released on Monday showed that China's growth slowed to 4.8% in the third quarter, compared with a year earlier. The government's campaign against overcapacity, aimed at improving the allocation of capital, seems to have stunted the flow of investment, which fell by around 7% year-on-year in September. Although surprisingly strong exports have helped fill the gap, even this source of growth cannot be taken for granted, given renewed trade tensions with America. The next five years may get off to a slow start.



Photograph: Alamy

## **Australia's prime minister meets Donald Trump**

On Monday Donald Trump met Anthony Albanese, Australia's prime minister, in Washington. America has been conducting a review of AUKUS, a security pact with Australia and Britain that was signed under Joe Biden. Mr Trump confirmed his support for the project at his meeting with Mr Albanese.

In return, Mr Albanese is making promises of his own. On Monday the two countries signed an agreement to invest more than \$3bn in critical-mineral projects over the next six months. Under the deal Australian pension funds will increase investments in America by \$1trn over the next decade.

The two also discussed [China](#). Mr Albanese has been resisting the spread of Chinese influence in the Pacific. Australia has signed a series of treaties with Pacific-island countries to stop China from gaining access to their territory or critical infrastructure. The latest, between Australia and Papua New Guinea, is Asia's first new [military alliance](#) since the cold war.



Photograph: Kay Nietfeld/dpa

## **No end in sight for America's government shutdown**

On Monday the [shutdown](#) of America's government is set to become the third-longest in history. But neither side is bending. Democrats in the Senate have voted for the tenth time to reject a short-term spending bill to fund the government. Democrats insist they will not budge until Republicans agree to continue tax credits that have expanded health-care coverage.

So the Trump administration is looking for ways to apply extra pressure on Democratic lawmakers. On October 15th it made sure that 1.2m members of the armed forces received their pay checks despite the shutdown, closing off one line of attack for Democrats. The administration has fired 4,100 federal employees and plans to slash at least 10,000 government jobs overall. But such threats have hardened Democrats' positions. Expect plenty more votes in the days ahead. They are unlikely to end the shutdown.





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.

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

*Architecture aims at eternity.*

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***Sir Christopher Wren***