THE CURRENT AFFAIRS DIGEST

WEEKLY

"The news you need to know, and remember."

SCAN TO READ & PLAY

Vol. 1 • No. 30 • Saturday, November 21, 2026 • New Delhi, India • 4 Pages

TOP STORY • INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

World Court Finds Myanmar Responsible for Genocide Against the Rohingya

Nine of the 15 judges in The Hague backed the finding in a case brought by The Gambia; Myanmar must pay compensation and let displaced Rohingya come home safely.

Written and fact-checked by AI · News Pebbles

A small West African country has won a case it brought on behalf of people far from its own borders. Ruling on 19 November in The Gambia v. Myanmar, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the UN's highest court, held Myanmar responsible for genocide against the Rohingya, a Muslim minority, in a 2017 military crackdown. The finding, for events in the north of Rakhine state, was carried by 9 judges against 6, who also ruled that Myanmar neither prevented nor punished it. Never before has a State been found responsible in this way under the Genocide Convention.

The judges also laid out the toll. In the court's account, roughly 10,000 Rohingya died in the 2017 "clearance operations" and some 700,000 escaped into Bangladesh. Close to 400 villages, around 40% of all those in three townships of northern Rakhine, were partly or completely destroyed. Myanmar's position is that its army was responding to raids on police posts by Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army fighters.

Those findings carry duties. Myanmar must pay compensation, let displaced Rohingya come home in safety and dignity and only by their own choice, reunite separated families, and tell the court within two years what it has done. Over 1.3 million Rohingya are still displaced, some 1.2 million in the Cox's Bazar camps in Bangladesh.

The Gambia, which filed the case in November 2019, hailed "a historic day for international justice"; UN chief Antonio Guterres called the judgment a "powerful recognition" of the victims.



About 700,000 Rohingya fled northern Rakhine for Bangladesh in 2017; about 1.2 million now live in camps at Cox's Bazar.

WHY THIS MATTERS

It is the first time a State has been held responsible under the Genocide Convention, and it shows one country can sue another over harm to people who are not its citizens.

WORLD • AFTER SHENZHEN

Europe Answers the Shenzhen Summit With a History Lesson: No New Yalta

Germany's Merz recalled how Europe was carved up in 1945; Putin replied that Yalta was not necessarily bad, and invited Europe's leaders to Moscow.

The leaders of the US, Russia and China met as a trio for the first time in Shenzhen on 19 November, and Europe heard an echo of 1945. Their four-point "Declaration toward Peace" dealt with UN reform, oil supplies, the International Criminal Court and nuclear risk, yet said nothing about Russia's war in Ukraine. Even before the talks, Russian lawmaker Pyotr Tolstoy, head of his parliament's foreign affairs committee, had floated the label "new Yalta".

Why does that name sting? In February 1945, at Yalta in Crimea, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin settled much of post-war Europe's shape. The Soviets pledged free elections in lands freed from Nazi rule, but Washington and London accepted that neighbouring Eastern European governments should be "friendly" to Moscow, and a declaration on Poland gave Communists a place in its post-war government. Yalta also produced the UN Security Council's five permanent, veto-holding seats. Critics later accused Roosevelt of "handing over" Eastern Europe to the Soviet Union.

Meeting Ukraine's backers in Berlin that day, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said a Yalta format "will not bring peace", adding: "At Yalta, Europe was divided up." He handed out fragments of the Berlin Wall. The 36-nation Coalition of the Willing, led by the UK, France and Germany, promised Ukraine more money and military help, the UK alone 10 billion pounds.

Moscow reads the history differently. Putin said the 1945 conference was not necessarily bad, since victory over Nazism was formally sealed there, and that Yalta "just codified the realities". He turned down Kyiv's call for a ceasefire before winter but invited Europe's leaders to Moscow; Merz proposed a neutral venue such as the Emirates. In Washington on 20 November, Trump said Putin "clearly expressed his desire" to see the war end by diplomatic means.

THREE VIEWS OF A 'NEW YALTA'

Merz (Germany): a Yalta format will not bring peace
Putin (Russia): the 1945 conference was not necessarily bad
Trump (US): Putin wants the war to end by diplomacy

What each leader said after the Shenzhen summit, as reported. Rows are neutral and in no order.

CONNECT THE DOTS

History: Yalta, in February 1945, shaped post-war Europe and created the five veto-holding permanent seats on the UN Security Council; the US, Russia and China, who met in Shenzhen, hold three of them today. Geography: Yalta lies in Crimea, the peninsula Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014.

*New to this story? Catch up with **The story so far** on Read & Play.*

INDIA • ANIMAL HEALTH

A Bhopal Lab Gives India Its Own Killed-Virus Vaccine Against H5N1 in Chickens

Developed over three years by ICAR-NIHSAD, it targets the strain behind most outbreaks on Indian farms and may cost Rs 1 to Rs 2 a dose.

Until this week, Indian poultry farms had no vaccine made for the H5N1 bird flu strain that keeps returning to them. On Friday 20 November Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched one at a programme in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh: India's first indigenous H5N1 vaccine for chickens, developed in the same city by the ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD). The launch had been planned for Delhi, but Chouhan moved it to Bhopal because the scientists there had done the work.

The vaccine targets the H5N1 virus of clade 2.3.2.1a, a lineage of highly pathogenic avian influenza and the main strain found on Indian poultry farms; according to Insights IAS, no specific commercial vaccine for it existed in India or abroad. It is an inactivated, or killed-virus, vaccine. It contains virus particles that have been chemically made harmless and cannot multiply, yet they still train the chicken's immune system to fight the real virus. Because the particles cannot replicate, the vaccine carries no risk of causing the infection itself. It was built from Indian virus samples collected since the country first detected H5N1 in 2006, and is designed for both commercial and backyard flocks.

The research took three years under strict biosafety rules: team members followed long sanitisation routines before going home, and were not allowed to keep other animals as pets. ICAR Director General Dr ML Jat estimated the price at Rs 1 to Rs 2 per dose, said talks with potential manufacturers on commercial production were under way, and hopes India can one day export the vaccine.

A cheap dose matters because the disease is common and deadly for birds. Chouhan said India has recorded more than 500 outbreaks of H5N1 and H5N8 bird flu since 2006. The first, at Navapur in Maharashtra, killed about 10 lakh chickens; nine lakh died in 2021 and two lakh this year, he said. Highly pathogenic bird flu can kill almost 100% of infected birds. To contain infection, farms have often had to cull, or kill, entire flocks. The vaccine is meant to prevent this, and is expected to help more than 90 lakh poultry farmers.

The wider stakes are economic and medical. Chouhan put yearly losses from livestock and poultry diseases at about Rs 56,000 crore, announced a Rs 300 crore modern laboratory in Bhopal, and called the vaccine "an example of India's self-reliance." The World Health Organization describes H5N1 as a flu virus that infects birds and mammals, and humans only in rare instances; the vaccine's stated aims include curbing its spread from birds to mammals and humans.

HOW A KILLED-VIRUS VACCINE WORKS

1. Virus particles are chemically made harmless and cannot multiply
2. They train the chicken's immune system to fight the real virus
3. The aim: no need to cull entire flocks

The mechanism described for India's new inactivated H5N1 vaccine; avoiding culls is its aim, not yet a measured result.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Bird flu can wipe out a flock and force farms to cull every bird; a cheap vaccine could protect the birds and the incomes of small poultry farmers.

POLITICS & CIVICS • PANCHAYATI RAJ

Rajasthan's Rural Councils Swing to Congress, Though the BJP Runs the State

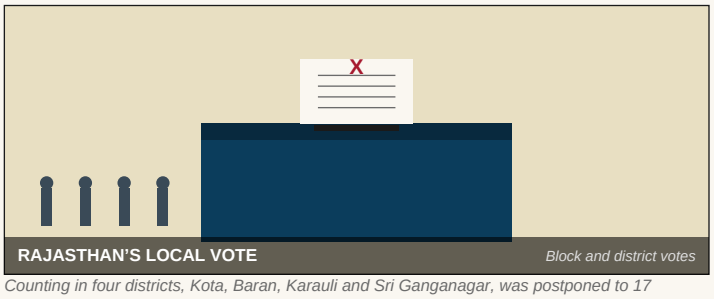
Congress won 3,701 block-level seats to the BJP's 2,181, and the ruling party says it will review its shortcomings.

Rural India governs itself through three layers of elected councils, and Rajasthan has just counted the votes for two of them. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment, passed by Parliament in 1992 and in force from 24 April 1993, made panchayats "institutions of self government". States with more than 25 lakh people have three tiers: the Gram Panchayat in the village, the Panchayat Samiti at block level and the Zila Parishad at district level. A State Election Commission in each state holds these elections every five years, and seats are reserved in proportion for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women.

Counting for Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad seats took place on Friday 20 November in 37 of Rajasthan's 41 districts, and the opposition came out ahead. By the evening, State Election Commission figures gave Congress 3,701 Panchayat Samiti seats and the BJP 2,181. In the Zila Parishads, Congress had 599 seats to the BJP's 301. The count was not yet complete: results had been declared for 7,393 of 7,543 Panchayat Samiti seats and 981 of 1,275 Zila Parishad seats. The BSP and CPI(M) also won a few seats.

The lead was spread widely. Congress won more Panchayat Samiti seats than the BJP in 33 of the 37 districts, and led in 24 districts in the Zila Parishad polls to the BJP's six. In Jaipur it took 216 Panchayat Samiti seats to the BJP's 87. The BJP was ahead only in Ajmer, Balotra, Salumber and Udaipur; in Udaipur it won 146 seats to Congress's 137. In Bharatpur, the Chief Minister's home district, independents won 76 seats, ahead of Congress with 46 and the BJP with 32. Counting in Kota, Baran, Karauli and Sri Ganganagar was postponed to 17 December; the Daily Jagran links this to the current councils' terms ending next month.

What makes the result notable is who runs the state. The BJP governs Rajasthan, and these results are the second major test for Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma's government. Former chief minister Ashok Gehlot of Congress called them a message from rural voters, farmers, workers and women against "government neglect and unfulfilled promises". BJP spokesperson Ramlal Sharma said the party's performance was "below expectations" and that it would review its shortcomings and work to improve.



Counting in four districts, Kota, Baran, Karauli and Sri Ganganagar, was postponed to 17 December.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Panchayats run local services in villages and districts, so these results show how rural voters feel about the state government, and how India's three-tier local democracy gives them a say between state elections.

ECONOMY • MARKETS

Wall Street Slides Into a ‘Correction’ as AI Shares Lead a Week of Losses

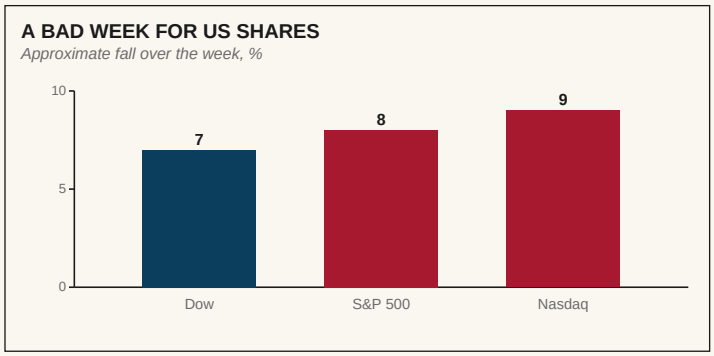
By midday Friday the Standard & Poor’s 500 index was about 10% below its October record; Nvidia and newly listed Anthropic were among the hardest hit.

Stock markets have a name for a fall of this size. When an index closes more than 10% below its record, it is called a “correction”. On Friday 20 November the Standard & Poor’s 500 index fell about 2% by midday, leaving it about 10% below its 6 October record, and both it and the Dow Jones Industrial Average entered correction territory. The tech-heavy Nasdaq wiped out all its gains for 2026. The index was heading for a seventh straight daily loss, the longest streak since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020.

Artificial-intelligence companies led the slide. Anthropic’s share sale a day earlier was the largest ever: its shares rose about 17% on their first day, Thursday, then fell 12.4% to $85.16 on Friday, still above the $83 IPO price, the price at which the shares were first sold to the public. Chipmaker Nvidia dropped more than 12% after a Reuters report that the US Securities and Exchange Commission is examining possible accounting issues at the company.

Analysts pointed to several causes: doubts about AI spending, expectations of more US interest-rate rises to fight inflation, and leadership turmoil at Nvidia after Jensen Huang’s departure as chief executive. Charles Schwab’s Kevin Gordon described “dual forces” hitting the market: a hawkish Federal Reserve, meaning one inclined to raise rates, and the AI and tech slump. Over the whole week, CNBC’s Friday-afternoon tally had the Dow down about 7%, the Standard & Poor’s 500 almost 8% and the Nasdaq about 9%.

The selling spread well beyond New York. On Friday Japan’s Nikkei 225 fell 5.06% and South Korea’s KOSPI 5.21%, while India’s Nifty 50 bucked the trend and rose 1.06%. The losses also reach ordinary families: NBC News noted the downturn is especially hard on households relying on 401(k) retirement accounts and pensions, which hold shares.



CNBC’s tally on Friday afternoon, 20 November; approximate figures before the close.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Many families save through pension and 401(k) retirement funds that own shares, so a fall of this size makes those savings worth less; it also shows how worries about interest rates and AI spending can move markets around the world.

THINK LIKE AN ANALYST

Why might expectations of higher interest rates push share prices down? India’s Nifty 50 rose on the same day that Japan’s and South Korea’s markets fell sharply: what information would you need to explain the difference? Is one week of falls enough evidence to judge whether doubts about AI spending are justified?

SCIENCE & TECH • SPACE

Voyager 1 Is Now One Light-Day From Earth, 49 Years After Its Launch

A command now needs a day to arrive and a day for the reply, and engineers are working out why the probe has sent no data since 14 November.

Space is so vast that distances there are often measured in time. NASA’s Voyager 1 is now one light-day from Earth: the probe passed that mark at 2:16 a.m. Pacific time (5:16 a.m. Eastern) on 18 November. A light-day is the distance light covers in a day, about 16.1 billion miles or 25.9 billion km, and light moves at about 186,000 miles (299,000 km) every second. Sunlight reaches the Moon in about 1.3 seconds and Neptune in about four hours; it needs roughly 20 more hours to get as far as Voyager 1, the most distant object people have ever built.

Talking to the probe is now a two-day job. NASA’s Deep Space Network, which uses large antennas at three sites around the world, needs 24 hours to get a command out to Voyager 1, and the answer takes another 24 hours to come back. The team at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in California heard from the probe 24 hours later. “We listen to Voyager 1 every day,” said NASA’s Suzanne Dodd, “and send commands to the spacecraft weekly.”

There is a problem, though. No science or engineering data have arrived from Voyager 1 since 14 November. The probe still sends its carrier signal, the radio wave that normally carries those data, and engineers used it together with calculations of the spacecraft’s path to confirm the milestone while they work out what has gone wrong. Ageing hardware has caused trouble before, including clogged thrusters and a faulty computer, and earlier this year engineers replaced three devices on the probe with lower-power alternatives.

The mission began in 1977, when both Voyagers were launched to take advantage of a rare line-up of the planets. Voyager 1 passed Jupiter in 1979 and Saturn in 1980, photographed Earth as the “Pale Blue Dot” in 1990 and in 2012 became the first spacecraft to enter interstellar space, beyond the heliosphere, the bubble of particles and magnetic fields made by the Sun. It moves at about 38,000 mph (61,155 kph).

How much longer it can go on depends on power. Its generator turns heat from decaying plutonium into electricity, and both probes lose about 4 watts a year; NASA expects them to keep their current science instruments running until at least their 50th launch anniversaries next summer. Voyager 2 should reach the one-light-day mark in 2035.

A TWO-DAY ROUND TRIP

1. A command leaves Earth through the Deep Space Network
2. It takes 24 hours to reach Voyager 1
3. The reply needs another 24 hours to come back

How long a message to Voyager 1 and its answer now take, at one light-day from Earth.

WHY THIS MATTERS

A spacecraft launched in 1977 is still sending signals from beyond the Sun’s bubble, a test of long-lived engineering, and the two-day wait for a single reply shows just how enormous space is.

ONE-LINE BRIEFS

• Ukraine: Overnight into 20 November Russia fired more than 400 drones and 110 missiles, damaging three bridges over the Dnipro in Kyiv and killing at least eight people; Poland's prime minister, Donald Tusk, called the entry of three Russian objects into Polish airspace "an intentional provocation".

• Climate: The COP31 summit in Antalya, Turkey, missed its 20 November deadline; the latest nine-page draft has no explicit reference to fossil fuels, and Panama says it will formally object to any deal that leaves them out, which under the UN's consensus rule could delay adoption.

• Nepal: Prime Minister Balendra Shah makes a state visit to India on 22-23 November at Narendra Modi's invitation, his first bilateral trip abroad since taking office on 27 March, months after a border row between the two neighbours.

• Health: The Pan American Health Organization said on 17 November that the US, Mexico and Bolivia have lost measles-elimination status because the virus spread without a break for at least 12 months; the US had held the status for 26 years.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

Words that unlock today's news

Genocide

Acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. Today: the ICJ ruled 9-6 that Myanmar committed genocide against the Rohingya.

Inactivated vaccine

A vaccine made from a virus that has been killed or made harmless, so it cannot multiply but still trains the immune system. Today: India's new H5N1 vaccine for chickens is inactivated.

Correction

In stock markets, a fall of more than 10% from a recent record high. Today: the Standard & Poor's 500 and the Dow entered correction territory.

Light-day

A unit of distance: how far light travels in 24 hours, about 25.9 billion km. Today: Voyager 1 reached one light-day from Earth.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Peace Palace in The Hague, where the International Court of Justice sits, was built with money from the Scottish-American businessman Andrew Carnegie and opened in 1913.

EXPLAINER

The World Court and the Genocide Convention

The International Court of Justice was created in 1945 by the UN Charter as the United Nations' main judicial body, and it sits in The Hague, in the Netherlands. It settles legal disputes between states; it does not put individual people on trial, which is the work of a separate body, the International Criminal Court.

The Genocide Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948. It defines genocide as acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, and it obliges the states that join it to prevent and punish genocide. States that have joined can take disputes about the Convention to the ICJ, which is how The Gambia could bring its case against Myanmar. The court's judgments are binding, but it has no police force: under Article 94 of the UN Charter, if a state ignores a judgment, the other side may turn to the UN Security Council.

QUIZ

Eight questions on this issue

1. By what vote did the ICJ judges find Myanmar committed genocide?

(a) 9 to 6 (b) 15 to 0 (c) 8 to 7

2. Which country brought the genocide case against Myanmar?

(a) Bangladesh (b) The Gambia (c) The Netherlands

3. Where do about 1.2 million displaced Rohingya live in camps?

(a) Rakhine, Myanmar (b) Dhaka, Bangladesh (c) Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

4. Which German leader said "At Yalta, Europe was divided up"?

(a) Friedrich Merz (b) Donald Tusk (c) Pyotr Tolstoy

5. What kind of vaccine is India's new H5N1 vaccine for chickens?

(a) A live virus vaccine (b) An inactivated (killed-virus) vaccine (c) A DNA vaccine

6. Which tier of Panchayati Raj works at block level?

(a) Gram Panchayat (b) Zila Parishad (c) Panchayat Samiti

7. What is a stock market 'correction'?

(a) A fall of more than 10% from a record (b) A rise of 10% in a week (c) A single day's 2% fall

8. How long does a signal from Earth now take to reach Voyager 1?

(a) 24 minutes (b) 24 hours (c) Two weeks

Answers: 1-a, 2-b, 3-c, 4-a, 5-b, 6-c, 7-a, 8-b

NEXT WEEK'S WATCHLIST

• New Delhi, 22-23 November: Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah, on his first bilateral trip abroad since taking office on 27 March, leads a 34-member delegation, including Finance Minister Swarnim Wagle and Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal, for talks with Narendra Modi on development cooperation, energy and connectivity. He will also call on President Droupadi Murmu.

• Antalya, this weekend: whether COP31 agrees a final text after missing its Friday deadline. The latest draft names no fossil fuels and drops a proposal to raise yearly adaptation funding for developing countries to at least $120 billion by 2035. A third draft was expected; Panama's environment minister Juan Carlos Navarro says Panama will formally object to any deal that leaves out fossil fuels, and Australia's Chris Bowen, who leads the talks, says he will keep working "for as long as it takes".

• Rajasthan, 17 December: postponed counting for panchayat seats in Kota, Baran, Karauli and Sri Ganganagar, the last districts still to declare. Watch whether Congress's lead holds, and how the BJP, which called its showing below expectations and promised to review its shortcomings, responds before the next big test of Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma's government.

You are not just reading the news — you are learning to think about it. See you next week.