



TOP STORY • THE GULF

Riyadh's Airport Reopens as Houthi Attacks Go On and Oil Stays High

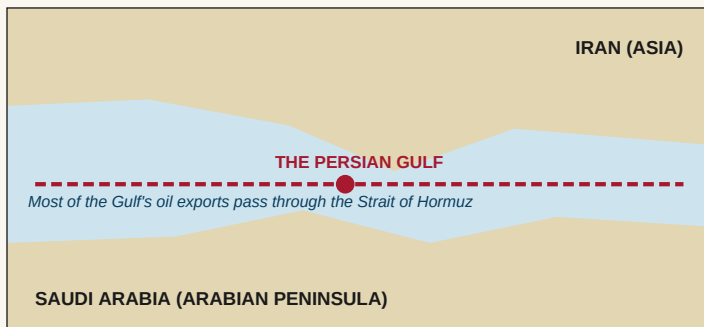
Brent crude settled at \$116.72 on Friday, its highest settlement since 29 April.

Written and fact-checked by AI • News Pebbles

Saudi Arabia reopened Terminals 1 and 2 at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh on Sunday 25 October, more than two weeks after strikes by the Houthis, an armed group from Yemen, put it out of service. Flight-tracking data showed that air traffic remained limited. The same day, Saudi military spokesman Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki said forces had intercepted and destroyed a Houthi-fired ballistic missile and a drone.

The Houthis did not stand down. Their spokesperson, Yahya Saree, warned airlines, airport staff and passengers that the airport was a military target and unsafe to use. Earlier in the week the group claimed attacks on Saudi Arabia's Defence Ministry, two airports and an Aramco oil facility in Yanbu. Two people died after attacks at Dammam airport. These are claims by the Houthis.

Those events reached your fuel bill through oil markets. Brent crude, the main world oil price, settled at \$116.72 a barrel on Friday 23 October, up \$3.55, and finished the week up about 6%. US crude (WTI) closed at \$103.27. Analysts said the price reflects the risk of disruption, because physical supply losses are not confirmed. Separately, Iran claimed that tankers were hit near the Strait of Hormuz, but no maritime authority has confirmed this, and President Trump accused Iran of inventing attack reports to push up oil prices before the US midterm elections.



Attacks on Saudi sites and claims about ships both move the oil price.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Saudi Arabia is a major oil exporter, so danger to its airports and oil sites, even when supplies keep flowing, moves prices that families pay around the world, India included.

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WORLD • SERBIA

Serbia Votes as Students Challenge Its Long-Time Leader

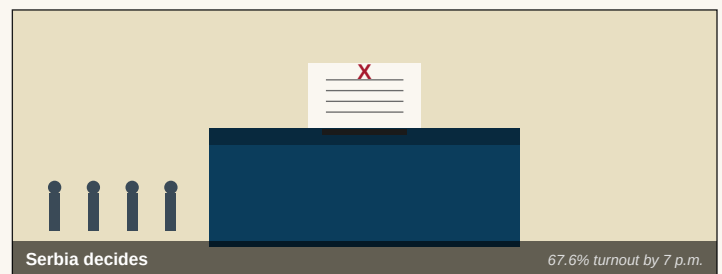
Turnout of 67.6% by 7 p.m. was described as the highest since 1992.

On Sunday 25 October Serbia held a snap parliamentary election, meaning one called earlier than planned. Its 6.4 million voters chose among 18 parties hoping to win seats in the 250-member Parliament. Results had not yet been published in the reports we read.

The race is a contest between two sides. One is the Serbian Progressive Party of Aleksandar Vucic, who resigned as president in September to run for prime minister. The other is a list backed by a student movement, led by cardiologist Ilija Srdanovic. The movement grew from protests over the November 2024 collapse of a railway station canopy in Novi Sad, which killed 16 people. Vucic has called the movement a foreign-funded coup attempt; the students reject that.

Turnout was a key question, because commentators suggested a turnout of 65% or more would favour the students. Pollsters CeSID and Ipsos put turnout at 67.6% by 7 p.m., described as the highest since 1992. An Ipsos poll had the Progressive Party on 47% and the students on 40%, while other surveys showed the opposition ahead. There were also reports of irregularities, including footage in the city of Nis that appeared to show ballots pre-marked.

Serbia is not the only Balkan country with students in the streets. In Albania, protests began on 13 October with a rally of a few hundred students outside the Ministry of Education in Tirana. They have grown into a movement against Prime Minister Edi Rama, with protesters citing poor university conditions and high tuition fees and calling for his resignation. Rama blamed 'foreign hands' for the unrest.



Official results were not yet available.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Civics: a snap election lets voters judge a government before its term ends. Geography: Serbia lies in the Balkans in south-eastern Europe, with Novi Sad in the north.

INDIA • WEATHER

Cyclone Arnab Is Due to Cross the Andhra Pradesh Coast on 28 October

Red alerts cover several states, and fishermen are barred from the sea.

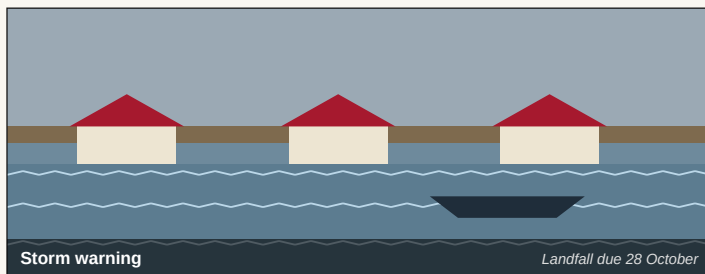
Cyclone Arnab is forecast to cross the Andhra Pradesh and Yanam coasts between Bapatla and Visakhapatnam around the forenoon of 28 October. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) expects sustained winds of 115 to 125 kmph, with gusts reaching 140 kmph, and says the track and strength may still change.

The IMD has issued red alerts, its highest level of warning, across Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Odisha, and extremely heavy rain is expected across parts of coastal Andhra Pradesh on 27 and 28 October. Authorities have strictly prohibited fishermen from going to sea. By a report published on 24 October, 29,952 of Andhra Pradesh's 30,043 fishing boats were back at their landing centres.

Odisha is preparing even though landfall is expected outside its borders. Schools, colleges and Anganwadi centres in five districts will stay closed on 28 and 29 October. In Ganjam, 100 cyclone shelters are ready and 1,000 temporary locations have been identified. The chief minister has told officials to move people from vulnerable areas, with extra attention to elderly people, patients and pregnant women.

The same weekend, Delhi's air and river were in the news. Stage 1 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), a set of rules that tighten as pollution rises, has been in force across the capital region since 21 October, when Delhi's daily average AQI reached 245. On 25 October the regional AQI was 168, with PM2.5 and PM10 as the main pollutants. Under Stage 1, coal and firewood in restaurant tandoors are banned and diesel generators are limited to essential or emergency use.

Thick white foam has also returned to the Yamuna near Kalindi Kunj, days after Delhi's government announced water and sewage projects worth nearly Rs 9,000 crore. Reports link the foam to pollutants such as surfactants in wastewater.



Track and intensity may still change.

WHY THIS MATTERS

A cyclone's wind and rain can flood homes and roads, so early warnings, shelters and keeping boats ashore are what protect people.

UNITED STATES • ELECTIONS

Early Voting Breaks Records in Georgia and Texas Before the Midterms

Georgia has passed 1 million early votes; polls point to a Democratic edge.

The midterm elections are on 3 November. They fall halfway through a president's term and decide who controls Congress, the body that makes the country's laws. Many people vote early, so some states already have large totals.

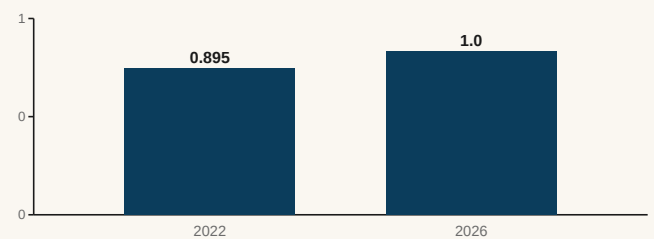
Georgia has passed 1 million early votes, compared with almost 895,000 at the same point in 2022. In Harris County, Texas, 104,000 people voted in person on the first day, beating the 2018 midterm first-day record of 63,188. Through four days, 384,304 had voted in person there, also a midterm record. Early voting in both states runs through 30 October.

Polls and forecasts point to a Democratic edge. One model gives Democrats an 88% chance of winning the House and 57% in the Senate, where they need a net gain of at least four seats. An average of polls puts President Trump's approval at 37%. But polling in recent presidential cycles has tended to underestimate Republican support, a reason for caution.

Numbers like these need careful reading. The Georgia comparison is with 'almost 895,000' votes at the same point in 2022, so the gap is best described as large, not exact. The Harris County figures count in-person voters only, and the sources say they beat earlier midterm records. Neither number says who those voters chose, which is why forecasters rely on polls and models as well.

GEORGIA EARLY VOTES

Millions, at the same point in each election



2022 is 'almost 895,000'; 2026 is over 1 million. Source: 11Alive.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Midterms decide who writes the nation's laws. Early votes show how many people are taking part, but not who will win.

THINK LIKE AN ANALYST

Why might early turnout be a weak guide to the final result? What would you want to know about the voters who have not yet voted? Why might forecasters be cautious about polls?

SCIENCE & TECH • SPACE

Europe's Euclid Telescope Discovers Its First New Comet

Comet C/2026 S1 (Euclid) is about 1.3 billion km from Earth.

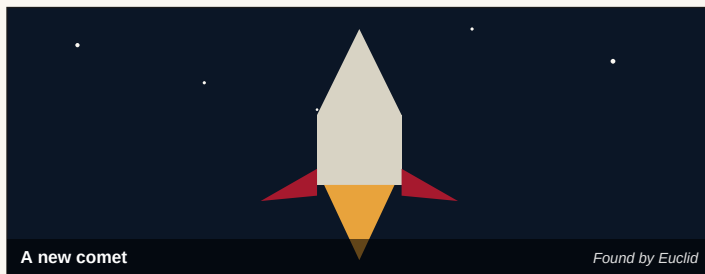
The European Space Agency's Euclid telescope has found a comet nobody had seen before, now named C/2026 S1 (Euclid). ESA announced the find around 19 October. Euclid took the images between 16 and 24 September 2026.

The first detection came from Mikko Pöntinen of the University of Helsinki. He used his own software, which flags fast-moving objects that show up as streaks. Checks against catalogues of known comets and asteroids found no match, so he reported the observations to the Minor Planet Center. It confirmed the object as a comet on 8 October, and ground-based follow-up observations confirmed its identity.

The comet is about 1.3 billion km from Earth and is a long-period comet, meaning its orbit lasts thousands of years. ESA says the find shows Euclid can spot comets while they are still far from the Sun. That could help identify future targets for its Comet Interceptor mission, although this comet is unsuitable for that mission.

Two other results made news this month. In a study in *Current Biology*, dwarf reedsnakes were filmed rolling like wheels to escape danger while keeping their heads facing forward. Their peak rolling speeds were 1.72 to 3.69 metres per second, about four times their peak speed when slithering side to side.

NASA's Perseverance rover reached 28.10 miles (45.22 km) on 11 October, passing the 28.06 miles (45.16 km) that Opportunity logged between 2004 and 2018. NASA credits autonomy: Perseverance has driven more than 90% of its distance using AutoNav.



Seen in images from 16 to 24 September 2026.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Finding a comet far from the Sun gives scientists more time to study it before it comes closer.

ECONOMY • PRICES

Prices Rise Faster in India and Britain as Fuel Costs Climb

India's rate was 5.54% in September; Britain's was 3.5%.

Prices are rising faster in two countries your family may know well. A rise in the general level of prices over a year is called inflation. In India, consumer prices were 5.54% higher in September than a year earlier, up from a revised 4.83% in August. Food prices rose 7.74%.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had raised its repo rate, the rate it charges banks, by 0.25 percentage points from 5.25% to 5.50% on 7 October. It said further cuts were no longer appropriate, and its next decision is listed for 4 December.

In Britain, consumer prices rose 3.5% in the 12 months to September, up from 3.1% in August, with a surge in petrol and diesel costs behind it. The Bank of England's rate is 3.75%. On 17 September its committee voted 6 to 3 to hold the rate, with three members wanting a rise of 0.25 percentage points. Markets are pricing in four rate rises, though one economist, ING's James Smith, considers that unlikely.

Money is also on the agenda in London. Chancellor John Healey will deliver the Autumn Budget on Wednesday 28 October, the first of the government led by Prime Minister Andy Burnham. One estimate puts the gap in the public finances at about 12 billion pounds, while the Institute for Fiscal Studies has said it could be as high as 20 billion pounds. Rises in income tax, National Insurance and VAT rates are ruled out, so commentators expect changes to thresholds, allowances and reliefs, though many items are speculation.



Yearly rise in consumer prices to September.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When prices rise faster than earnings, the same money buys less, which is why central banks raise interest rates to slow prices.

ONE-LINE BRIEFS

- **Ukraine:** Russia has agreed in principle to restart three-way talks with Ukraine and the US, to begin after 10 November, a Kremlin adviser said.
- **North Korea:** Leader Kim Jong Un crossed the new New Yalu River Bridge into Dandong, China, on 24 October, and the two sides agreed to expand trade.
- **United Kingdom:** Chancellor John Healey will deliver the Autumn Budget on Wednesday 28 October, with commentators expecting little room for new tax rises.
- **Delhi:** White foam has returned to the Yamuna near Kalindi Kunj, and Stage 1 of the Graded Response Action Plan has been in force since 21 October.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

Words that unlock today's news

Turnout

The share of eligible people who actually vote in an election. Today: Serbia's turnout was put at 67.6% by 7 p.m.

Repo rate

The interest rate at which a central bank lends to banks. Today: the RBI raised it to 5.50% on 7 October.

Cyclone

A large storm that spins around a low-pressure centre, bringing strong wind and heavy rain. Today: Cyclone Arnab is due to cross the Andhra Pradesh coast on 28 October.

Intercept

To stop something before it reaches its target. Today: Saudi forces said they intercepted a Houthi missile and drone over Riyadh.

DID YOU KNOW?

Dwarf reedsnakes can escape danger by rolling like wheels, at peak speeds about four times faster than their fastest slithering.

EXPLAINER

What is a repo rate?

A central bank is the institution that manages a country's money. One of its main tools is the repo rate, the interest rate at which it lends to banks. When this rate goes up, borrowing becomes more expensive for banks, and so for businesses and families too.

Higher borrowing costs tend to slow spending, which can slow price rises. That is why the RBI raised its rate to 5.50% as prices climbed, and why the Bank of England is weighing a rise of its own.

QUIZ

Five questions on this issue

1. What did Brent crude settle at on Friday 23 October?
(a) \$96.72 (b) \$116.72 (c) \$136.72
2. How many seats are in Serbia's Parliament?
(a) 150 (b) 250 (c) 350
3. Where is Cyclone Arnab due to cross the coast on 28 October?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Gujarat (c) Kerala
4. How many early votes had Georgia passed?
(a) 1 million (b) 5 million (c) 100,000
5. What did the RBI raise its repo rate to on 7 October?
(a) 4.50% (b) 5.50% (c) 6.50%

Answers. 1 (b): \$116.72. 2 (b): 250. 3 (a): Andhra Pradesh. 4 (a): 1 million. 5 (b): 5.50%.

DISCUSS

DISCUSS

Why might danger to one country's airports change the price of fuel in another?

Why might a high voter turnout matter in an election like Serbia's?

What could help a coastal community stay safe when a cyclone is forecast?

"Numbers tell a story, but you have to ask who is counting and why." — The Editor

You are not just reading the news — you are learning to think about it. See you in two days.