

News Digest

TUESDAY . OCTOBER 20, 2026

The Brief Today's Headlines

01Elon Musk confirmed that Tesla and SpaceX have formed special committees to explore a potential merger aimed at combining resources for superintelligence development.

02US President Trump waived impending sanctions on Russia just days before enactment, drawing criticism from Ukraine and supporters despite recent diplomatic optimism.

03Major tech giants are accelerating AI hardware acquisitions and challenging Nvidia's dominance even as data center power shortages threaten deployment timelines.

04Defense contractor RTX raised its full-year outlook for the third consecutive quarter due to surging missile demand fueling a Western rearmament supercycle.

05Romania's prolonged political crisis has officially ended after Parliament invested the new government led by Prime Minister Luca Niculescu with a significant majority.

Finance 5 dispatches . 10 in brief

SpaceX and Tesla Explore Merger as AI Spending Surges

Elon Musk confirmed on Tuesday's earnings call that both SpaceX and Tesla have created special committees of independent directors to discuss a potential merger. Musk expressed his support for the idea, citing the benefits of combining the companies particularly in the area of superintelligence. The potential merger would require a 50% vote of all shares, which remains a high hurdle to clear according to Musk. SpaceX reported spending \$16.4 billion on AI-related capital expenditures in the third quarter, a significant increase from previous periods. The company's overall capital expenditures reached \$19.6 billion, aligning with Wall Street analysts' expectations. Musk stated that the main constraint to AI buildout is no longer chips, but power and cooling infrastructure. The company's AI revenue grew significantly

quarter-over-quarter to \$7.6 billion, surpassing analysts' estimates. CFO Bret Johnsen forecasts AI spending could balloon to \$35-\$40 billion in the current quarter. This significant investment is expected to yield returns quickly, with payback of less than a year at current pricing. The growth of SpaceX's AI segment has led to it surpassing its Starlink business in revenue. Investors are excited, with Tesla and SpaceX stocks rising in after-hours trading. Musk emphasized that the merger is not a certainty, citing the need for shareholder support. ZeroHedge reports a 66% chance of completion by the end of next year. The market is pricing in a significant probability of the merger, with shares up around 5%. This consolidation would further unite Musk's business empire often referred to as Musk Inc.

Sources Business Insider Business Insider ZeroHedge

Netflix Forecasts Slowing Growth Amid US Content Struggles

Netflix's third-quarter earnings report revealed that the company's US market is not growing as fast as expected. Co-CEO Ted Sarandos stated that the US needs to improve its execution regarding content. Despite this slowdown, global content including Latin America, Europe, and Asia is largely working. The US and Canada, Netflix's biggest market, generated 44% of the company's revenue but growth is slowing. Co-CEO Greg Peters expressed the company's goal to take its content slate from very good to great. Netflix has made significant changes to its leadership team including the departure of content chief Bela Bajaria. Film chief Dan Lin also departed as part of the restructuring efforts. The company has cut 1,000 workers, marking its largest staff reduction since 2022. The news has led to a 44% decline in Netflix shares over the last 12 months. Stock fell 6% in after-hours trading following the announcement. Wall Street is concerned about Netflix's engagement growth particularly as it competes with free streamers like YouTube. Netflix is projecting its fourth consecutive quarter of slowing sales growth. Sales are forecasted to decline for the first time in over a decade. The company attributes the shortfall to its struggling advertising business. The advertising unit is now expected to deliver \$300 million less than anticipated. This raises concerns about Netflix's performance and future growth prospects. The decline may impact Netflix's ability to invest in new content and expand services.

Sources Business Insider Bloomberg Markets

RTX Boosts Outlook Again As Missile Demand Fuels Rearmament Supercycle

RTX Corp., formerly Raytheon Technologies, has raised its full-year outlook for a third consecutive quarter. The move is driven by the Western rearmament supercycle currently underway. The company's third-quarter earnings exceeded expectations with adjusted earnings per share of \$2.26 beating consensus estimates. RTX's sales and free cash flow forecasts were also boosted significantly. Organic sales growth is projected at 10-11% for the period. Adjusted earnings are expected to range between \$7.65 and \$7.75 per share. The company's main operating units reported double-digit organic sales growth. Collins EBIT was up 21% and Pratt EBIT was up 10% during the quarter. The defense rearmament supercycle is seen as accelerating according to UBS analyst Gavin Parsons. The company's backlog reached a record \$340 billion recently. Commercial aerospace demand remains strong alongside defense contracts. RTX's shares rose 1.4% in early US cash trading. This occurred despite the broader defense sector facing pressure from rising odds of Democratic control of the Senate. The company's updated 2026 guidance includes adjusted sales of \$97.0-\$97.5 billion. Investors are likely to focus on the sustainability of aftermarket demand. The multi-year defense topline remains a key focus for the market.

Sources ZeroHedge

Related CME Launches Tungsten Futures Amid Missile Demand Shortage Fears

CME Launches Tungsten Futures Amid Missile Demand Shortage Fears

CME Group is launching the first tungsten futures contract to introduce exchange-traded forward pricing to the market. The contract is set to begin trading in early 2027. It will be settled against Fastmarkets' Western benchmark for ammonium paratungstate. This critical metal is used in advanced manufacturing and semiconductor technologies. The move aims to provide greater transparency and risk management opportunities for miners and manufacturers. Trading desks are seeking to hedge against supply constraints and price volatility. Key players involved include CME Group, Fastmarkets, and Almonty Industries. Western governments are focused on securing conflict-free materials amidst tensions. The new contract is significant as China's export restrictions and resource nationalism intensify. These factors are leading to a surge in demand for tungsten and a widening structural deficit. Almonty Industries presented an investor day with a constructive outlook and expansion projects. They are positioning themselves as a key supplier to the West. The launch highlights the need for transparent price benchmarks in the market. This is particularly relevant as the global rearmament cycle ramps up. The contract is expected to provide a forward-looking dimension to spot prices. Market participants will be able to better understand pricing months and years out.

Sources ZeroHedge

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Amazon Buys Billions in Nvidia AI Systems Amid Power Shortages

Amazon is accelerating its AI hardware acquisition process under a new Early Rack Receipt program. This is happening despite data center power shortages causing delays in deployment. The program aims to secure Nvidia's GB300 server racks at US facilities ahead of final deployment. Projected sales are roughly \$8 billion over the next few months. AWS teams have faced challenges in getting the incoming racks into data centers due to power supply issues. This has resulted in dark GPUs where AI chips and servers sit idle. The situation has put financial pressure on data center projects significantly. Investors are less willing to lend against these projects due to the delays. Amazon is pushing forward with its AI buildout which is putting pressure on its cash flow. The company expects roughly \$220 billion in capital expenditures this year. Amazon's free-cash-flow turned negative last quarter for the first time since 2023. It may stay negative for a while as investments continue. CEO Andy Jassy believes the technology is a once in a lifetime opportunity. He claims a clear line of sight to strong returns on investment. The Early Rack Receipt program is one part of Amazon's broader AI strategy. It is seen as a competitive advantage in the cloud market. The program's impact on Amazon's cash flow and investment strategy is being closely watched.

Sources Business Insider

Also in Finance

Japan's Electricity Prices Surge 25% As LNG And Coal Costs Soar

<https://www.zerohedge.com/energy/japans-electricity-prices-surge-25-lng-and-coal-costs-soar>

US Eyes India's Reliance to Refine Venezuelan Oil

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2026-10-20/us-eyes-india-s-reliance-to-refine-venezuelan-oil>

The Great Rare Earth Disconnect: Prices Up 23%, Miners Down 28%

<https://www.zerohedge.com/commodities/great-rare-earth-disconnect-prices-23-miners-down-28>

\$270 Million In Suspicious Student Aid Fraud Flagged By Treasury

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Meta's policy chief Joel Kaplan is leaving after 15 years

<https://www.businessinsider.com/meta-policy-head-joel-kaplan-is-leaving-2026-10>

Stocks Rise With US Futures on AI Trade, Oil Gains: Markets Wrap

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2026-10-20/stock-market-today-dow-s-p-live-updates>

Elon Musk says 'AI and robots' are the only way to solve America's debt burden

<https://www.businessinsider.com/elon-musk-ai-robots-only-way-solve-debt-2026-10>

The Wall Street Journal has been planning a big push into streaming TV, and courted Feed Me's Emily Sundberg for a show

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J. Crew's website went down — and an odd message said its 'generative AI backend' was 'healthy'

<https://www.businessinsider.com/j-crew-website-crashed-generative-ai-backend-message-discount-...>

Guvernul Luca Niculescu a fost învestit și a depus jurământul, punând capăt crizei politice

Romania's new government, led by Prime Minister Luca Niculescu, has officially been invested by Parliament, marking the end of a prolonged political crisis. The vote of confidence secured 280 votes in favor, significantly exceeding the necessary 233 votes required for approval. Despite this broad support, the government will function as a minority executive, relying on 126 parliamentary mandates held by the Social Democratic Party. The new cabinet is composed of 12 ministers from PSD and six independent technocrats, aiming to bring stability after six months of uncertainty. Members of the new executive swore their oath at Palatul Cotroceni late yesterday evening. Immediately following the ceremony, the government held its first official meeting to outline immediate priorities. The Bucharest Stock Exchange reacted positively to the news, rising by 0.36 percent in response to the political clarity. Major stocks such as BRD-Groupe Societe Generale and Electro-Alfa International showed gains following the announcement. Premier Niculescu has vowed to maintain dialogue with the opposition despite their critical stance. Opposition parties including PSD, AUR, and USR have formed a coalition to challenge the new executive. The government faces the immediate task of rectifying the budget and passing the 2027 budget law. Support agreements were signed with the National Liberal Party and the Union of the Danube Region to ensure validity. Premier Niculescu promised to take concrete actions rather than engaging in political bickering. The administration is expected to remain in office until the 2028 general election. Success will depend on balancing competing interests and navigating a slim parliamentary majority.

Sources Ziarul Financiar.Ziarul Financiar.Biziday

Provocările noului executiv și reacțiile oponentilor

Political analysts and opposition leaders have outlined significant challenges facing the newly invested government. Professor Cristian Pîrvulescu describes the situation as a double challenge involving necessary reforms and maintaining political stability. He warns that difficult decisions may be postponed until after the next elections to avoid political costs. The government must manage public expectations regarding administrative reform and salary increases. Opposition parties including PNL, USR, and UDMR have the opportunity to regroup and redefine their strategies. Former PNL president Crin Antonescu criticized the liberals for supporting the PSD government after criticizing them. Antonescu described the liberal position as equivocal and downright ridiculous regarding the vote. He also highlighted internal conflicts within the parties that must be navigated carefully. Meanwhile, PSD leader Sorin Grindeanu has demanded a clear financial situation report from the Ministry of Finance. Grindeanu estimates a need of over 30 billion lei to cover state obligations until the end of the year. This includes unpaid construction works and magistrates' salaries that require immediate funding. The Ministry of Finance must present a clear picture to avoid misinterpretations of the state's financial health. Moody's has praised the government formation but notes fiscal adjustment remains challenging. The deficit is estimated to decrease to 5.5 percent of GDP in 2027 if discipline is maintained. Ultimately, the government and opposition must navigate international economic trends influencing voter behavior.

Sources HotNews.ro Antena 3 Antena 3

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Nicușor Dan numește un nou consilier și mulțumește guvernului interimar

President Nicușor Dan has made key personnel changes within his administration following the government's inauguration. He appointed Cornel Olendraru as a new presidential advisor, bringing international automotive industry experience to the role. Olendraru is a 46-year-old former director of Dacia and vice-president at Renault. He previously oversaw up to 25,000 employees in factory and logistics roles. This appointment reflects the President's effort to bring fresh talent and expertise to the government. Olendraru will also take over the role of education minister according to recent reports. President Dan also publicly thanked Ilie Bolojan for leading the transitional government effectively. He stated that Romania functioned properly despite the challenges during the crisis period. Dan acknowledged the skills of Niculescu in forming the new government successfully. He expressed confidence in the new team's ability to balance the country's needs. The President emphasized the importance of maintaining economic growth and reforming policies. Niculescu thanked the President for the trust placed in him and his team. He assured that ministers from civil society are committed to making positive changes. These changes come as the ambassador to NATO is also being replaced by a new diplomat. The shifts mark a significant shake-up in the Romanian government structure.

Sources HotNews.ro Antena 3

Related Guvernul Luca Niculescu a fost investit și a depus jurământul, punând capăt crizei politice

Pacientul cu cannabis medicinal confiscat din nou după câștigarea proceselor

A controversial legal case involving medical cannabis has highlighted ongoing issues with Romanian authorities. Giancarlo Cristea, a Romanian man, had his medicinal treatment confiscated at Bucharest's Henri Coandă Airport. This occurred despite him having valid prescriptions for cannabis treatment from the UK. Cristea and his wife arrived in Romania in July 2024 with the medication legally. After multiple court battles, Cristea finally received his treatment back following three court decisions. However, less than two hours later, a team of police officers confiscated the medication again. Cristea has waited 818 days to receive his treatment back initially. He and his lawyers have accused the authorities of harassment and injustice throughout the process. The case has sparked concerns about the treatment of patients with medicinal cannabis in Romania. Romanian authorities have acknowledged that introducing medicinal cannabis into the country is not illegal. Cristea has been vindicated legally but continues to face administrative obstacles. His story took a dark turn when he was arrested and had his treatment seized again. The situation underscores the challenges faced by patients navigating complex regulations. Legal experts suggest this case could set a precedent for future medical cannabis issues. Public reaction has been one of shock regarding the repeated confiscation.

Sources Antena 3

Un român pe lista conturilor latente din Elveția cu miliarde de dolari

A significant discovery regarding dormant bank accounts in Switzerland has identified a Romanian heir. Swiss banks are uncovering massive stashes of unclaimed funds known as conturi latente. Estimates suggest over 1.2 billion dollars in unclaimed funds are waiting to be claimed by rightful owners. The Swiss banking association created a platform to

publish names of account holders inactive for over 60 years. A Romanian man named Constantinescu Ilie figures on the list of unclaimed money. The deadline for claiming these funds is set between one to five years. After this period, the money will be transferred to the Swiss state permanently. So far, the Swiss state has received over 96 million francs from these accounts. Constantinescu Ilie has until December 2027 to claim his inheritance specifically. The discovery has spawned an industry of lawyers and genealogists tracing relatives. Swiss bank secrecy laws have long been a barrier to uncovering this hidden wealth. This recent development sheds light on the massive scale of dormant assets. Families of deceased account holders are urged to check the published lists promptly. The process involves verifying lineage and proving rightful ownership to the banks. This initiative aims to return wealth to heirs before state appropriation occurs.

Sources HotNews.ro

Also in Romania

Cum Germania și Franța încearcă să avanseze în cursa AI cu ajutorul gigantului tech american Nvidia

<https://www.zf.ro/business-international/cum-germania-si-franta-incearca-sa-avanseze-in-cursa-...>

Rusia își vinde rezervele de aur în cel mai rapid ritm din 1998, pentru a finanța războiul din Ucraina: 62 de tone vândute în 10 luni

<https://www.antena3.ro/externe/rusia-isi-vinde-rezervele-de-aur-in-cel-mai-rapid-ritm-din-1998...>

The Washington Post: Administrația Trump blochează livrările de rachete Patriot către Ucraina. Transferul rachetelor interceptoare din terțe țări către Kiev necesită aprobarea lui Pete Hegseth, secretarul american al Apărării, care întârzie să o acorde.

https://www.biziday.ro/373030-2/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=373030-2

Volkswagen recheamă în service peste 70.000 de mașini electrice. Ce probleme au fost descoperite în urma controalelor

<https://www.antena3.ro/economic/auto/volkswagen-recheama-in-service-pest-70-000-de-masini-ele...>

Alice Weidel prezintă miercuri planul AfD pentru UE. Va propune desființarea alegerilor pentru PE și tăierea atribuțiilor Comisiei

<https://www.antena3.ro/externe/alice-weidel-va-prezenta-planul-afd-ului-pentru-ue-miercuri-va-...>

CNN: Democrații visează la o mare victorie împotriva lui Trump la alegerile pentru Congresul SUA din noiembrie. Ce spune realitatea

<https://www.antena3.ro/externe/cnn-democratii-viseaza-la-o-mare-victorie-impotriva-lui-trump-l-...>

Pagina verde. Când una dintre piesele de puzzle lipsește. Ce se întâmplă când seceta lasă o zonă fără apă: „Dispariția apei din peisajul cultural înseamnă dispariția unei localități“

<https://www.zf.ro/economia-verde/pagina-verde-cand-una-dintre-piese-de-puzzle-lipseste-ce-se...>

Michael Dell îl depășește pe Mark Zuckerberg și devine al cincilea cel mai bogat om din lume

<https://www.antena3.ro/high-tech/michael-dell-il-depaseste-pe-mark-zuckerberg-si-devine-al-cin...>

Marea Britanie trimite avioane de luptă pentru a apăra Arabia Saudită de atacurile houthi

<https://www.antena3.ro/externe/marea-britanie-trimite-avioane-de-lupta-pentru-a-apara-arabia-s...>

Președintele celui mai mare producător de aur din Africa promite să oprească exporturile de minereuri brute în următorii patru ani

<https://www.antena3.ro/externe/presedintele-celui-mai-mare-producator-de-aur-din-africa-promit...>

Technology 5 dispatches . 10 in brief

SpaceX Reports Record Earnings Driven by AI Segment

SpaceX has reported a massive surge in revenue for the third quarter of 2026. The company posted a 161% year-over-year growth totaling \$14.6 billion. This financial jump was primarily driven by its Super Intelligence segment. The Connectivity business also contributed significantly to the quarterly results. The Super Intelligence segment alone reported \$7.6 billion in revenues. This represents a staggering 830% increase compared to the same period last year. Elon Musk highlighted the potential for Starlink to generate huge annual revenue. The Connectivity business posted \$5.2 billion in revenues during the quarter. Starlink now boasts 13.6 million consumer subscribers globally. Musk also discussed a possible merger with Tesla during the earnings call. The company recently closed a significant \$60 billion acquisition deal. This earnings report marks the second call since the company's IPO in June. President Gwynne Shotwell previously outlined plans for a terrestrial mobile network. This network aims to compete directly with major existing carriers. Analysts predict Starlink will play a major role in future success.

Sources The Verge

SpaceX Prepares Historic Starship Catch Attempt

SpaceX CEO Elon Musk plans to attempt a historic recovery maneuver next month. The company will try to catch both the Starship and its booster for the first time. This effort involves the two-stage system of the Super Heavy booster. The Starship spacecraft is powered by SpaceX's advanced Raptor engines. Musk believes that success is likely despite the inherent risks involved. The recovery could revolutionize the space industry by reducing launch costs. It would significantly lower the complexity of future orbital launches. Previously the Starship upper stage was intended to splash down in the ocean. This new method aims to achieve a fully reusable orbital launch system. Engineers and technicians are preparing the launch site for the attempt. Success would mark a significant technological achievement for the company. It paves the way for more cost-effective launches in the future. Making space travel more accessible is a key goal of this initiative. The attempt follows a busy quarter that included 13 Starship launches. This technical goal

complements the strong financial results reported recently.

Sources The Verge

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Japan Begins Historic Mission to Retrieve Samples from Mars Moon

Japan has successfully launched the Martian Moons eXploration mission. The spacecraft is designed to study Mars' two moons, Phobos and Deimos. This mission aims to answer whether the moons were captured asteroids. Alternatively, it will test if they formed from a giant impact event. The MMX spacecraft was developed by JAXA and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries. It was launched on a H3 rocket from Tanegashima Space Center. The spacecraft is scheduled to arrive in Mars orbit in August 2027. It will land on Phobos to collect samples for return to Earth. The samples are expected to return to Earth in 2031. This mission involves collaboration between Japan, France, and Germany. Phobos is expected to shed light on decades-old mysteries in astrobiology. The mission is crucial for understanding the history of Mars itself. The spacecraft will spend three years operating in the Martian system. It will perform a series of flybys of Deimos before returning. This marks Japan's first sample return mission from Martian moons.

Sources Slashdot.Ars Technica

Google Challenges Nvidia Dominance with New AI Chip Strategy

Google has announced the availability of TorchTPU to developers. This is an open source version of PyTorch designed for their hardware. The move aims to break Nvidia's stranglehold on the AI industry. PyTorch is currently used by 85% of AI applications globally. Google joins Amazon in trying to offer alternative hardware options. TorchTPU lets AI apps run on Google's Tensor Processing Units. It makes it easy to move existing PyTorch apps to Google Cloud. Amazon has released a similar tool called TorchNeuron for Trainium. Both companies aim to loosen Nvidia's hold on the software stack. They want to provide more open and flexible options for developers. Google worked closely with popular AI development tools on this. They launched a dedicated TPU agent suite to assist migration. This move could significantly impact the AI industry landscape. It provides more competition and options for users and developers. The strategy highlights the growing importance of open source efforts.

Sources TechCrunch

Robotics Startup Eka Valued at \$1.45 Billion Following AI Breakthrough

Eka Robotics has closed a \$150 million Series A funding round. This investment values the company at \$1.45 billion post-money. The startup was founded by MIT professor Pulkit Agrawal. Co-founder Tuomas Haarnoja is a former Google

DeepMind researcher. They have made a breakthrough in robot manipulation architecture. The robot uses a force-sensitive gripper and a new deep-learning model. It can adapt to different objects without requiring retraining. The system can pick up 1,500 objects in a single hour. Experts believe it will soon achieve superhuman performance in many tasks. Raghu Raghuram from a16z praised the company's potential. The robot exceeds superhuman performance in certain specific tasks. It is currently working with industrial customers on wire manipulation. Professor Kris Hauser described the demo as having a wow factor. The company uses a physics simulator and reinforcement learning. This breakthrough has the potential to revolutionize the robotics field.

Sources TechCrunch

Also in Technology

Netflix is telling investors not to worry, even though you're watching less and less

<https://www.theverge.com/streaming/1014826/netflix-earnings-q3-2026-viewing-time>

Figma co-founder Dylan Field thinks MCP is not a perfect protocol

<https://techcrunch.com/2026/10/20/figma-co-founder-dylan-field-thinks-mcp-is-not-a-perfect-protocol/>

Judge dismisses Sam Altman's sister's sexual abuse lawsuit

<https://www.theverge.com/ai-artificial-intelligence/1014976/sam-altman-ann-altman-lawsuit-dismissed>

Does anyone actually want to win the medium-lift race in the United States?

<https://arstechnica.com/space/2026/10/does-anyone-actually-want-to-win-the-medium-lift-race-in...>

Polestar tries to quantify what it's like to drive a performance car

<https://arstechnica.com/cars/2026/10/polestar-tries-to-quantify-what-its-like-to-drive-a-perfo...>

Quantum error correction goes well beyond breakeven

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2026/10/quantum-error-correction-goes-well-beyond-breakeven/>

Google Support Pages Start Defaulting to AI Chatbots

<https://tech.slashdot.org/story/26/10/20/199206/google-support-pages-start-defaulting-to-ai-ch...>

Meta Muse Exposes Users' Personal, Business Secrets When They Share Conversations

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Meta drops the word "train" from its commercial TOS after AI backlash

<https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/10/meta-drops-the-word-train-from-its-commercial-tos-...>

Eric Schmidt reportedly owns about half as much of Anthropic as CEO Dario Amodei

[https://techcrunch.com/2026/10/20/eric-schmidt-reportedly-owns-about-half-as-much-of-anthropic...](https://techcrunch.com/2026/10/20/eric-schmidt-reportedly-owns-about-half-as-much-of-anthropic-...)

General 5 dispatches . 5 in brief

Elon Musk says Tesla-SpaceX merger being considered

Elon Musk has expressed interest in merging Tesla and SpaceX, two of his notable companies, with a potential deal in the works. Musk's comments, made during a call with financial analysts, indicate that the merger is under consideration but not yet finalized. The special committees of both companies have been formed to examine the move, which would involve Tesla's \$1.5 trillion valuation and SpaceX's \$2 trillion valuation. A merger of the two companies would be one of the largest in history. The deal would also bring together SpaceX's profitable Starlink internet and cloud computing businesses, which generated \$7.5 billion and \$5.2 billion in revenue, respectively. Musk believes that a merger would enable greater synergy between the companies' work in areas such as artificial intelligence, software, and chip manufacturing. This move would also follow Musk's recent efforts to consolidate his companies under a smaller number of banners. Shares of SpaceX rose 8% in after-hours trading, while Tesla shares rose 2%. The merger would matter for investors and the tech industry, as it would potentially create a more efficient and innovative conglomerate. The deal's success would also depend on the support of shareholders and the ability to overcome the complexities of integrating the two companies. Regulatory hurdles remain significant given the size of the entities involved. Analysts suggest this could reshape the landscape of both automotive and aerospace industries. Critics worry about the concentration of power in a single individual. However, proponents argue it could accelerate innovation in sustainable energy and space exploration. The financial implications are vast for current shareholders of both entities. Market reactions have been largely positive so far following the announcement. Future updates are expected as the special committees proceed with their reviews. This potential consolidation marks a significant shift in Musk's corporate strategy.

Sources BBC News

Trump and Zelensky appear at loggerheads despite Oslo optimism

US President Trump has waived sanctions on Russia, just two days before they were set to take effect, in a move that has been criticized by Ukraine and its supporters. The sanctions were part of the Graham Act, named after Senator Lindsey Graham, who is a vocal supporter of Ukraine. Trump's decision has been welcomed by Russian officials, who see it as a sign of renewed US support for Russia. This move has further strained US-Ukrainian relations, with former US ambassador to Kyiv William Taylor describing it as inexplicable and saddening. The waiver comes as Russia's drone and missile attacks on Ukrainian cities continue to escalate. Ukraine's President Zelensky has expressed frustration over the lack of advance warning provided by US satellite intelligence, which has been lacking during recent ballistic attacks. The US has denied any pause in intelligence sharing, but Ukrainian officials have reported issues with accessing US satellite internet services, including Starlink. The White House has denied ordering any restrictions on Ukraine's use of Starlink.

This move has fueled concerns of a widening trust gap between the US and Ukraine, with roots in Trump's long-standing mistrust of Ukraine and Zelensky in particular. The situation has significant implications for global security and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Diplomatic channels are working overtime to clarify the position of the United States. Allies in Europe are watching closely to see how this affects NATO cohesion. The timing of the waiver has raised questions about the administration's strategic goals. Zelensky remains committed to securing victory despite these diplomatic setbacks. Intelligence sharing remains a critical component of Ukraine's defense strategy. The controversy highlights the fragility of international alliances in times of conflict. Observers note that this could embolden Russian aggression in the region. The administration maintains that the waiver serves a broader diplomatic purpose.

Sources BBC News

[Related](#) Elon Musk says Tesla-SpaceX merger being considered

Woman says she 'couldn't speak or breathe' during alleged rape by Russell Brand

Russell Brand, a 51-year-old entertainer, is on trial for seven charges of rape, sexual assault, and indecent assault related to allegations made by six female complainants. The allegations span a 10-year period between 1999 and 2009 and include multiple incidents of alleged rape, sexual assault, and indecent assault at Brand's home in Hampstead, London. The complainants claim that Brand met them at his comedy shows, invited them back to his home for drinks, and then allegedly assaulted them without their consent. One woman told a police officer that she felt unable to speak or breathe during an alleged rape, while another woman described a frenzied and violent encounter at the Choice FM radio studios in central London. The alleged attacks allegedly involved physical force, touching, and kissing, and one woman said she felt dirty after the encounter. Brand denies all the charges and has a reputation as a comedian and entertainer. The trial has already heard testimony from multiple women who claim to have been victims of Brand's alleged abuse. The case matters because it highlights the issue of sexual assault and rape in the entertainment industry and the importance of believing and supporting survivors of sexual abuse. The trial is expected to conclude with a verdict on Brand's guilt or innocence. Prosecutors argue that the pattern of behavior indicates a systematic abuse of power. Defense attorneys maintain that the encounters were consensual throughout. The proceedings have drawn significant media attention due to Brand's public profile. Survivors' groups are monitoring the case closely for its potential precedent. The legal process underscores the challenges faced by victims coming forward years later. Public opinion remains divided as the trial progresses through the courts. The outcome could influence how similar cases are handled in the future. Testimony continues to emerge as the weeks go by. The court must weigh the credibility of multiple accounts against the denial.

Sources BBC News

BBC Three, BBC Scotland and Radio 4 Extra broadcast channels to close

The BBC has announced plans to close BBC Scotland and BBC Three, two networks aimed at young audiences, as part of a £500m cost-cutting effort. The BBC is attempting to save 1,800-2,000 jobs, or around 10% of its workforce, to address significant financial pressures. The closure of BBC Scotland's nightly programme Reporting Scotland: News at

Seven will be replaced by BBC Scotland's wider news offering, including Radio Scotland Breakfast and Scotcast. Entertainment trade union Equity has expressed concerns about the BBC's ability to meet its duties to the fullest, while Director of BBC News Rachel Jupp announced further savings of £5.5m, including the closure of around 100 roles. The BBC has also cancelled several high-profile TV series, including RuPaul's Drag Race UK and Celebrity Mastermind, as part of its restructuring efforts. The BBC's decision affects BBC Scotland and BBC Three, which broadcast a variety of programming including news, sport, documentaries, and entertainment. The networks currently only broadcast TV programming in the evenings, although BBC Scotland simulcasts BBC Radio Scotland during the day. The BBC's cost-cutting measures come after a 30% revenue loss over the past 10 years. The network's decision has raised concerns about the future of public service broadcasting in the UK. Critics argue that this reduces diversity in programming available to viewers. Supporters claim it is a necessary step to ensure the broadcaster's survival. The shift towards digital-only platforms is part of the broader strategy. Staff morale has reportedly been affected by the announcement of job losses. Viewers are concerned about the loss of specific regional content. The government has been urged to review the funding model for public broadcasting. Industry experts warn this could lead to further consolidation in the media sector. The changes are expected to be implemented over the next fiscal year. Management insists the core mission of the BBC will remain intact.

Sources BBC News

Schools should recognise antisemitism as distinct form of harm, review says

Jewish schools in the UK are taking increasingly extreme measures to ensure student safety due to heightened concerns about antisemitism. Yavneh College in Hertfordshire, which was recently given rare access by the BBC, is one such school, with high gates, fences, security cameras, and four full-time security staff. The school's executive headteacher, Spencer Lewis, said security is an innate part of his role and that staff and pupils are used to these measures, even as young as Year 6 pupils. The issue of antisemitism in schools matters because it highlights the need for increased awareness and action to prevent harassment and hate crimes against Jewish students. The government is expected to encourage schools to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism, which has been adopted by 47 countries. The Board of Deputies of British Jews supports this definition, citing its ability to deepen understanding of contemporary antisemitism. The review is part of a broader effort to address antisemitism in schools and ensure that Jewish students feel safe and included. Key people involved include Spencer Lewis, the headteacher of Yavneh College, and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, which is advocating for increased action to address antisemitism. Educators are calling for more resources to handle incidents effectively. The psychological impact on students living under such security is significant. Community leaders emphasize the importance of education alongside security measures. Reports indicate a rise in incidents across the country recently. Policy makers are reviewing current guidelines to strengthen protections. The goal is to create an environment where learning is not disrupted by fear. Collaboration between schools and local authorities is increasing. Training for staff on recognizing hate speech is being prioritized. The situation reflects broader societal tensions regarding religious tolerance. Long-term solutions require addressing the root causes of hatred.

Sources BBC News

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