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UK

Farewell Jeffery Archer

Celebrated novelist Jeffery Archer has passed away, leaving behind a remarkable literary legacy of 31 novels and multiple short stories and plays. In a statement, Archer's publisher HarperCollins said the author died 'suddenly and peacefully at home' **between writing sessions**. His final work, *Adam & Eve*, was published on October 6, just a day after his death. In his **five-decade writing career**, Archer has sold more than 300 million copies, his most popular ones being 'Clifton Chronicle' and 'Kane and Abel'.



SWEDEN

Nobel for brain tool

Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann, and Georg Nagel have won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their discovery of neuroscience tool called optogenetics. It uses light-gated ion channels from algae to **turn specific brain cells on or off using precise light pulses**. Developed to decipher complex brain functions, optogenetics enables scientists to study living neurons and trace the root causes of conditions like depression, autism, addiction, and schizophrenia. The research paves the way for highly targeted therapies and shows promise as a future treatment to restore sight in cases of blindness.



RUSSIA

Plague anxiety

The death of a 28-year-old lab worker at the Irkutsk Anti-Plague Research Institute in Siberia has sparked global concerns about a suspected pneumonic plague outbreak. Authorities **have not confirmed that she had plague**, but hospitals have introduced precautionary steps such as screening people for its symptoms. Nearly 200 people have also been put under medical observation. Downplaying the incident, Russia's health watchdog, Rospotrebnadzor, attributed the death to 'pneumonia of unknown origin' and stated that no high-threat pathogens were detected. The WHO has currently assessed the global risk as very low.



USA

New space milestone

NASA astronaut Jessica Watkins **became the first Black woman to lead a crew into orbit as four astronauts reached the ISS in a record-breaking US flight**. The crew arrived aboard SpaceX's Dragon capsule just 7 hours and 55 minutes after launching from Florida, breaking the previous US record which took over 30 hours. Watkins, a geologist who previously worked on NASA's Mars rover Curiosity, is making her second trip to the station. The astronauts will spend 6 months aboard the ISS.



FRANCE

Students up in arms

The country is struggling to contain its biggest student demonstrations in decades. Over 250,000 protesters, including students, teachers, and members of different unions, have taken to the streets to demand education reforms such as replacing absent teachers, resolving overcrowded classrooms, and upgrading dilapidated facilities. Amid escalating clashes, PM Sébastien Lecornu has suspended high school classes. Over 6,500 people have been arrested since mid-September.



INDIA

Medal rush

India concluded its campaign at the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya with 85 medals, including 21 gold, 27 silver, **and 37 bronze, finishing fourth overall** after a campaign marked by dominant performances in team sports, historic **individual triumphs, and several first-time podium finishes**. Though the tally fell short of the historic 106-medal haul at the Hangzhou Asiad in 2023, the performance remains India's second-best ever, achieved with a 25% smaller athlete contingent.



AUSTRALIA

Hottest September

The country recorded its hottest September for night-time temperatures since national records began in 1910. Average temperatures were 2.71°C above the 1961-1990 average, making it the second-hottest September overall. In Kosciuszko National Park, snow depth fell to zero for the first time since records began in 1954. Scientists said climate change and El Niño had caused the unusually hot and dry conditions. Australia has not recorded a cooler-than-average September since 2004.