

July 1, 2024

Headlining This Week's Brief

Top Stories

Climate and Natural Hazards
Worldwide
Cyber and Regulatory
Infrastructure and Supply Chain
Health
Demonstrations and Industrial Action
Upcoming Events

Top Stories

Beryl Earliest Atlantic Category 4 Hurricane on Record, Entering Caribbean Sea

Hurricane Beryl rapidly intensified over the weekend, strengthening from a tropical depression to a major hurricane in less than 48 hours. Beryl strengthened to Category 4 intensity thanks to its relatively compact size and well-above-average ocean temperatures. With Beryl becoming a Category 4 hurricane on June 30, the storm became the earliest Atlantic Category 4 hurricane on record. As of 11:10 am (EDT), Beryl made landfall across northern Grenada with sustained winds of 150mph, making it an upper-end Category 4 storm. Major hurricane impacts will continue across Grenada, St. Vincent, and the Grenadines into this afternoon. Beryl's quick movement and small size will keep the most severe impacts across a relatively small area. Beryl will likely encounter unfavorable wind shear once over the central and western Caribbean Sea and is expected to weaken below major hurricane intensity. Nonetheless, Beryl will likely remain a dangerous hurricane near or just south of Jamaica on Wednesday. Uncertainty arises later in the week, though Category 1 to Category 2 impacts are probable along the Yucatan Peninsula by Thursday night and Friday. All interests within these regions should activate their hurricane preparedness plans. Additional watch and warning issuance is likely.

Tensions Continue to Rise Between Israel, Hezbollah

Tensions between Israel and Hezbollah intensified over the past week. Eighteen Israeli soldiers were **wounded** by a Hezbollah drone strike, triggering retaliatory attacks across southern Lebanon against Hezbollah's personnel and infrastructure. In response to the growing threat, northern Israeli hospitals have reportedly **increased** their readiness in preparation for a

potential conflict in the north, including accumulating enough supplies to operate independently for multiple days and preparing hospital employees for immediate recall.

In response to the escalating situation, several countries have taken precautionary measures to ensure the safety of their citizens in Lebanon. The United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, Australia, the Netherlands, France, and Kuwait have all urged their citizens to avoid travel to Lebanon or to evacuate if already there. The U.S. has also **deployed** the USS Wasp along with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit to the Mediterranean to enhance deterrence and prepare for a potential evacuation of American citizens from Lebanon. Members of Swiss International Airlines AG, including Lufthansa, Eurowings, and Swiss, have **suspended** night flights to and from Beirut until July 31.

U.S. Supreme Court Curtails Federal Regulatory Authority, Issues Several Other Major Rulings

On Friday, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its ruling in *Loper Bright Enterprises v Raimondo*, **upending** the 40-year-old doctrine known as “Chevron deference.” Under the doctrine, the courts would defer to federal agencies when interpreting and implementing aspects of a law that lacked specificity. Since it was first issued in 1984, the decision has become the **most cited Supreme Court** case in administrative law decisions. However, last week’s ruling will place more federal regulations within the ambit of the courts, potentially allowing for key aspects of the current regulatory system to be struck down. Without Chevron, regulations **governing** emissions, pollution, worker protections, drug testing, and approvals, how federal health programs are administered, and the tax code could all be subject to fresh legal challenges. In addition, it could also **limit** the ability of the federal government to respond to public health emergencies, including the ongoing H5N1 avian flu pandemic that has infected over a hundred dairy herds, nearly 100 million poultry, and at least four people in the U.S. since 2022.

Beyond Chevron, the Supreme Court also issued its ruling in *Trump v United States*, which sought to determine whether former President Donald Trump is immune from criminal prosecution for his alleged role in interfering with the 2020 election. In the **ruling**, released earlier today, the Supreme Court said that “a former president is entitled to absolute immunity from criminal prosecution for actions within his ‘conclusive and preclusive constitutional authority,’” but that “there is no immunity for unofficial acts.” The case will now be sent down to a lower court to **determine** which acts in the indictment are “official,” likely pushing the timeline for the case out past the 2024 elections.

Climate and Natural Hazards

- **Rising Wildfire Danger, Temperatures Across Western U.S.:** CAL Fire officials are warning of a week of 'extreme fire behavior' fueled by well-above-normal temperatures, drying vegetation, and periods of elevated winds. As of Monday, **red flag (fire weather) warnings** were already in effect across northern California and Utah. Tuesday through

Saturday, model guidance is forecasting near-record temperatures across much of interior California, Oregon, and southwest Washington. Widespread afternoon highs between 105-115F are forecast across California's Central Valley and Southwest Oregon.

- **Flooding Prompts Evacuations Following Wildfires in Ruidoso, NM:** The South Fork and Salt Wildfires burned over 25,000 acres but are **84% contained** as of this morning. While the fires are under control, however, increased moisture has fueled slow-moving thunderstorms in recent days, which have prompted multiple **flash flood emergencies**, localized evacuations, and road closures. The pattern remains favorable for scattered thunderstorms and **flash flooding** through the rest of the week.
- **Alaska Wildfires Creating Dense Smoke in Fairbanks:** Large wildfire complexes in central Alaska have prompted localized evacuation orders, **poor air quality**, and **lowered visibility** in recent days. **Dense smoke advisories** remain in effect for Fairbanks and surrounding areas, though a pattern shift beginning this evening will bring increased winds, possibly leading to improved air quality. By Wednesday and through the rest of the week, **rain chances** will begin to increase.
- **Greece Wildfire Escalation:** Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis is warning of a long and dangerous summer due to **extreme weather and wildfire potential**. The situation has escalated over the last 24 hours **with large fire incidents reported near Athens**.
- **Evacuations in Japan Due to Flooding, Landslides:** Another disturbance has produced heavy rain and prompted evacuations across portions of western Japan since Sunday. Hiroshima Prefecture has been one of the most impacted, with evacuation orders issued for more than **350,000 people**. As of the time of publication, the **Japan Meteorological Agency** maintains red and purple-level emergency warnings for flooding and landslides. Weather conditions will begin to improve Tuesday as the boundary lifts north.

Worldwide

- **France's National Rally Inches Closer to Power, Prompting Demonstrations:** The National Rally (RN) party **secured** 33% of the vote in France's first round of snap legislative elections, prompting the nation's prime minister, Gabriel Attal, to proclaim that the "extreme right is at the gates of power." Demonstrations against the party's success were observed in several cities Monday, including **Paris, Lyon, and Nantes**. Further actions are likely in the coming days as the second and final round of voting on Sunday approaches, and spontaneous protest activity is expected that night if the RN makes further gains. Parties opposed to the RN, including President Emmanuel Macron's centrist alliance, are **banding together** and coordinating candidates in certain competitive districts in a last-ditch effort to avoid an outright parliamentary majority for the RN.
- **Bolivia Weathers Failed Coup Attempt:** Bolivia experienced what the government termed a "failed coup attempt" on Wednesday, June 26, when a group of soldiers led by General Juan Jose Zuniga briefly occupied the Presidential Palace in La Paz, according to **international media**. Ahead of forcing his way into the palace, Zuniga gave a speech, citing economic hardships and growing unrest in the country as reasons for his actions. However, Zuniga's forces withdrew after a few hours, and he was arrested. However, Zuniga later **claimed** that President Luis Arce ordered him to stage the coup in an effort to shore up

political support for the administration. The **current economic difficulties** have prompted several demonstrations and strikes over the past several months and caused the government to deploy the military to guard gas stations.

- **Increase in Violent Crimes Leads to State of Emergency in Belize:** The Government of Belize has issued a 90-day state of emergency order in certain parts of Belize City and the Cayo District amid surging rates of violent crimes associated with gang activity, according to **international media**. The current emergency order was initially introduced for a 30-day period, but the government has since increased it to 90 days. The order will impose curfews on youth and grant police the authority to detain suspects for 90 days and search homes without a warrant. Citing non-official criminal figures, the government opposition leader, Moses Barrow, has estimated a 45% increase in the murder rate since last year. This is the second state of emergency order issued in Belize in the last six months. The U.S. Embassy in Belize issued a **security alert** advising citizens to adhere to local restrictions.
- **Kenyan Police Officers Arrive in Haiti for Stabilizing Mission:** A couple of hundred police officers **arrived** in Haiti on Tuesday for a **U.N.-backed multi-national security mission** that will attempt to restore order and quell gang violence in the country. The Kenya-led force is expected to include around 2,500 security personnel from various countries eventually. Haitian gang leader Jimmy Cherizier has **vowed** to fight the newly arrived officers, promising further violence in the island nation before any security gains are likely to be realized.
- **U.S. Military Bases in Europe Placed on Heightened Alert:** As of Sunday, several U.S. military bases in Europe have **heightened** their security due to a possible terrorist threat. The military bases are now in Force Protection Condition (FPCON) level Charlie, the second highest out of a five-tier scale. The reason for the increased alertness has not been publicly released. Still, according to the **U.S. Army's thresholding**, it indicates "some form of terrorist action or targeting against personnel or facilities is likely." The **impacted bases** are in Germany, Italy, Romania, and Bulgaria. Europe has recently increased its threat levels due to ongoing concerns of terrorism-linked threats made towards the **Paris Olympics** and **Champions League**.

Cyber and Regulatory

- **Additional Consequential Supreme Court Rulings This Term:** In addition to the rulings described above, the U.S. Supreme Court issued several other significant judgments this term, including ones **blocking** the Environmental Protection Agency's "good neighbor" pollution rule, **rejecting** the Security and Exchange Commission's use of in-house judges when enforcing rules around securities fraud, **narrowing** the circumstances under which a federal corruption law can be applied, **reviving** a challenge to federal regulations covering credit card swipe fees, and **backing anti-camping laws** used by municipalities to limit where homeless people can sleep.
- **Biden Administration Rule on Overtime Pay Blocked in Texas:** A federal judge in Texas temporarily blocked a rule by the Biden administration that aims to extend mandatory overtime pay to an estimated four million salaried workers. The rule, which goes into effect

today, **mandates** that employers pay overtime to salaried workers making less than \$43,888 a year, up from the current ceiling of \$35,500. That number is scheduled to increase to \$58,656 a year on January 1, 2025. In his ruling, which only applies to certain state workers in Texas, U.S. District Judge Sean Jordan said that the rule could not be enforced since it based eligibility on pay and not job duties. Other legal challenges to the rule are also **making** their way through the courts.

- **China-Linked Hacking Group Targets Taiwanese Organizations:** Cybersecurity intelligence company. **Recorded Future** reported intensified cyberattacks by a suspected Chinese state-sponsored hacking group called RedJuliett. The group has been **targeting** Taiwanese organizations, particularly in sectors like government, education, and technology. These attacks were observed between November 2023 and April 2024, coinciding with Taiwan's presidential elections. RedJuliett exploited a vulnerability in the SoftEther enterprise VPN software to access the servers of 24 organizations, including government agencies in Laos, Kenya, Rwanda, and various Taiwanese entities. The Chinese Foreign Ministry dismissed the allegations, **accusing** Recorded Future of fabricating disinformation.
- **New U.S. Bill Would Mandate Assessment of Critical Infrastructure Resilience to Cyberattacks:** A new bipartisan bill introduced by U.S. Reps. Dan Crenshaw and Seth Magaziner mandated an assessment of how well **critical infrastructure** sectors can switch to manual operations during cyberattacks. The Contingency Plan for Critical Infrastructure Act requires CISA, FEMA, and other agencies to report to Congress on the risks and challenges faced during such transitions. The legislation emphasizes the need for **private sector involvement** in securing essential systems like water, energy, transportation, and communications. It calls for policy recommendations to ensure continuous operation during cyber incidents and updates to FEMA's Planning Considerations for Cyber Incidents. This initiative responds to increasing warnings about foreign adversaries infiltrating critical infrastructure networks.
- **Germany and China Sign Declaration to Facilitate Cross-Border Data Transfers:** Germany and China **signed** a declaration of intent to discuss cross-border data transfers, marking progress for carmakers needing to transfer data to Germany. This issue is particularly contentious for foreign firms operating in China due to security concerns from the EU and U.S. regarding Chinese technology. The declaration follows a previous cooperation deal on autonomous driving between the two countries. German minister Volker Wissing emphasized the importance of balancing free data flow with privacy and security interests, creating a basis for ongoing dialogue. Chinese regulators have shown some flexibility after previously tightening data rules for the auto industry.
- **Ransomware Targeting Indonesia's National Data Center Causes Multi-Day Public Services Disruptions:** More than 200 national and regional government agencies have disrupted services since a **cyberattack** on June 20. The Indonesian government is refusing

to pay the \$8 million ransom demanded by the hacking group. Samuel Abrijani Pangerapan, a director at the Communications and Informatics Ministry, reported that some services, such as immigration services at airports, have been restored. However, efforts are ongoing for other services and to break the encryption. Head of the National Cyber and Crypto Agency, Hinsia Siburian, **stated** that the initial stages of the investigation had detected samples of Lockbit 3.0, a new variant of the malicious software commonly used by the Lockbit hacking group. Indonesia has suffered multiple cyberattacks over the past few years, resulting in data leaks, though this is the first to cause multi-day disruptions to public services.

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- **The Rail Workers in Canada Vote to Reauthorize Strike:** Workers at CN and CPKC railways who are part of the Teamsters Union **voted** overwhelmingly to reauthorize a strike if they are unable to reach a negotiated settlement with the companies, the union announced on Saturday. Union members at both railways had originally voted to strike on May 1 but were forced to hold a second vote after the 60-day time limit on the vote expired. The hold is taking place while the Canada Industrial Relations Board **considers** whether the industrial action would disrupt “essential services” and cause an immediate threat to public safety. Industry bodies have **warned** that a strike could cost the country millions.
- **Strike by Canadian Airline Mechanics Called Off After Forcing Hundreds of Flight Cancellations:** Unionized airline mechanics at WestJet walked off the job ahead of the busy Canada Day weekend, **forcing** the cancellation of several hundred flights and impacting an estimated 100,000 passengers. The strike by the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) came despite Labour Minister Seamus O'Regan's decision to impose binding arbitration to resolve lingering bargaining issues between the AMFA and WestJet. The AMFA ended its strike late Sunday night after reaching a tentative agreement with WestJet. However, the airline said further disruptions are expected over the coming week as they seek to get aircraft and crews back in position.
- **Biden Administration Outlines Draft Plan to Limit Investment in Chinese Technology:** Last Friday, June 21, the U.S. Treasury Department **unveiled** its proposals for limiting the transfer of U.S. technology and capital to Chinese groups that work with the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The proposals are the result of an **executive order** issued by U.S. President Joe Biden in 2023. Under the regulations, some investments will be banned outright, while other transactions require companies to notify U.S. authorities. The new proposals are subject to a six-week public comment period.
- **Houthi Step Up Attacks on Shipping:** Houthi militants in Yemen have become increasingly **aggressive and ambitious** in their assault on shipping near the Red Sea. The group is **suspected** to be behind an attack on a merchant vessel close to Socotra Island,

further out from the Gulf of Aden than almost all previous strikes. The ongoing disruption to global shipping is having downstream effects at other ports, most notably in **Singapore**, the world's second-largest container port, where congestion is increasing to its highest levels since the COVID-19 pandemic. Further adding to shippers' worries are unverified reports that the Houthis have **developed** (or otherwise acquired) a long-range hypersonic missile.

- **Roof Collapses at India's Busiest Airport:** The collapse of an outdoor canopy following torrential monsoon rainfall **forced** the closure of Terminal 1 at New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, India's busiest. Multiple cars were **crushed**, and one person was killed. It's the most high-profile in a string of incidents that raise questions about the quality of India's infrastructure and its ability to stand up to the region's extreme weather. An outdoor canopy also **collapsed** at the airport in Rajkot, in the western state of Gujarat, and at Dunna Airport in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh. The issue hasn't been confined to airports. Over the course of 10 days, four bridges also **collapsed** in the state of Bihar.

Health

- **West Nile Virus Reported Across U.S., Israel:** Colorado **reported** its first confirmed case of West Nile virus-related illness this year. Authorities expressed concern over how early the case came and how rising temperatures and storm activity may influence mosquito activity. Colorado is among the **eight states** that have confirmed human cases of the virus, which include Arizona, Arkansas, Kansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Maryland, and Michigan. Outside of the U.S., health officials in Israel are **grappling** with a surge in cases as well, reporting at least 100 human cases of the virus. The cases are primarily concentrated in central Israel, and at least eight people have been hospitalized in intensive care units.
- **Authorities Worldwide Warn of Increase in Dengue Cases:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued an **alert** over an "increased risk of dengue virus" in the U.S. With over 9.7 million recorded cases, instances of the virus have more than doubled in the Western Hemisphere since last year. While most cases in the continental U.S. **originate** from travel abroad, and there is no evidence of an outbreak, officials warn that transmission from local mosquitoes still poses a risk. In Puerto Rico, authorities have declared an epidemic, and Latin America remains the region most afflicted by dengue. Outside of the Americas, countries like Australia, Malaysia, **India**, and **Israel** have all reported a surge in dengue cases.
- **Mpox Continues to Spread in Africa, More Fatal Strain Detected in the DRC :** The World Health Organization (WHO) is calling for **urgent action** to address the mpox surge in Africa. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where 24 of the country's 26 provinces are affected by the outbreak, authorities report the presence of a more dangerous strain of the virus. The strain has a fatality rate of around 5% for adults and 10% for children. While the current outbreak has spread mainly through sexual contact, authorities now **worry**

that the new strain may be transmitted through skin-to-skin contact. It also seems to cause miscarriages. In South Africa, at least 13 mpox cases have been **reported**, prompting officials to implement a screening process for travelers “at all ports of entry.” The measures include health declarations and temperature checks.

- **Uptick in Bird Flu Prompt Quarantine Measures in Peru, Finland Rolls Out New Vaccine** : As bird flu cases multiply worldwide, Finnish health authorities have begun rolling out a **vaccine** program for humans. The vaccine will be offered to about 10,000 people who face “an increased risk” of transmission due to work or other circumstances. In Peru, health officials **imposed** a 30-day quarantine for a major street in Cusco, where various stores that sell poultry are located, due to a reported outbreak. Authorities began offering vaccine treatments to the local population and have deemed the situation to be now under control.
- **COVID-19 Cases Rise in U.S., Some U.K. Hospitals Reinstate Mask Mandate**: As temperatures rise during this summer season, COVID-19 cases are following suit. At least 38 states are **seeing** probable surges in infections, particularly in the west and south, where hotter and more humid weather is driving transmission. Two new variants of the virus—KP.3 and KP.2—**account** for over 50% of all cases. The variants, collectively known as “FLiRT,” seem to **better evade** immune defenses and are more infectious than previous strains detected earlier this year. Data from the CDC **shows** “low” levels of the virus in U.S. wastewater, but the numbers are trending upwards, as are hospitalizations and deaths. In the U.K., some hospitals are **reinstating** mask requirements for workers as a “precautionary measure” amid a possible **surge** in cases.

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- **Notable Climate Demonstrations This Week**: Extinction Rebellion activists intend to blockade the A12 highway in The Hague, Netherlands, on Saturday, marking the latest in a series of actions on the roadway that have led to significant disruptions and clashes with authorities. In Germany on the same day, multiple environmental groups, including Letzte Generation, will hold a mass demonstration and kick off a “camp” on Rügen island to protest a **new LNG terminal**. Meanwhile, in the U.S., demonstrators targeting CitiBank in Manhattan with a campaign dubbed the “Summer of Heat” intend to shift gears momentarily and join a demonstration against Vanguard at their HQ in Malvern, Pennsylvania, on Wednesday.
- **Healthcare Sectors in Various Nations Experiencing Strike Action**: While today marks the final full day of a **junior doctor strike** in England, unrest in South Korea’s healthcare sector is continuing, and striking junior doctors there will **reportedly** see solidarity action by professors at Korea University-affiliated hospitals on July 12. In Morocco, a coalition of the main unions in the country’s health sector **has called for** three rounds of strikes in July, with the first starting on Tuesday. Lastly, while public sector doctors in Cyprus were set to

begin a major **two-day strike** this week, the **first** in two decades, a **last-minute agreement** has staved off the action.

- **Demonstrations Over Fuel Subsidy Cut to Seize Ecuador on Thursday:** Widespread demonstrations can be expected across Ecuador on Thursday after the United Workers Front (FUT), an umbrella confederation made up of Ecuador's main trade unions, called for a "national mobilization" that day to protest the government's **decision** to phase out subsidies on low-octane gas. The head of a national educators' union **said** Thursday's day of action would include "marches, sit-ins and other demonstrations." In the capital, Quito, union organizers are **calling** on supporters to gather at the Institute of Social Security at 4 pm.
- **Highlighted Demonstrations Connected to Middle East Conflict:** As Israel's Gaza offensive persists, so too do demonstrations calling for a ceasefire, with a number of notable actions planned for this week. After **disrupting** the Wimbledon Championships this morning, activists in London intend to hold their next "National March" on Saturday in Central London. Switzerland will see major actions on Saturday as well, with demonstrations planned in the Bundesplatz in Bern, Geneva's Parc des Crochettes, Place St-François in Lausanne, and Zurich's Helvetiaplatz. In the U.S., some groups intend to utilize the Fourth of July holiday to hold demonstrations, including in Denver, where they plan to assemble at the City of Cuernavaca Park, and in Chicago, where activists will gather at the corner of Michigan Ave and Ida B Wells Dr. Within Israel, protests against the Netanyahu-led government from various factions are expected to persist. A Supreme Court ruling requiring the military to **conscript** ultra-Orthodox men **touched off** violent demonstrations in Jerusalem on Sunday. Major actions from other anti-government groups are expected next weekend, with organizers **calling** for nationwide strikes and the "biggest protest" seen in the country since October 7.
- **Kenya's Anti-Tax Protests Escalate:** Kenyan President William Ruto accused criminals of **hijacking** anti-tax protests and said he would deploy all available resources to counter the perceived threat to national security. The protests, sparked by a controversial finance bill, led to the deaths of at least 23 people during clashes with police. Activists, dissatisfied with Ruto's response and his withdrawal of the finance bill, are now calling for his **resignation** and are organizing further strikes and sit-ins. Fliers circulating online are calling for nationwide strikes and road blockades on Tuesday and Thursday, as well as a series of smaller vigils and other actions across the country.
- **Other Events the Global Intelligence Teams Is Watching:** A **strike** in local public transit is planned across Italy on Sunday. Public transport is also expected to be disrupted in London this month, with workers on the city's tram network **planning** multiple days of action. Staying in the U.K., Bristol will see a protest Tuesday against an event featuring activist **Posie Parker**, whose past gatherings have resulted in confrontations and increased

Weekly Intelligence Briefing

July 1, 2024



- security presence. Demonstrations in response to a pair of fatal police shootings were recorded last week in the U.S. cities where those events occurred: **Utica**, New York, and **Fort Wayne**, Indiana. Further actions connected to these shootings are possible in the coming days. All related activity has remained peaceful.

Upcoming Events

- June 14-July 14: European Football Championship (Germany)
- July 1: Canada Day (Canada)
- July 4: General Election (United Kingdom)
- July 4: Independence Day (United States)
- July 7-8: Hijri New Year (Global)
- July 7: Rath Yatra (India)
- July 7: Legislative Election (France)
- July 9-11: NATO Summit (Washington, D.C.)
- July 14: Bastille Day (France)
- July 15: General Elections (Rwanda)
- July 15-18: Republic Party National Convention (Milwaukee, WI)
- July 17: Ashura (Global) - Tentative Date
- July 26-September 8: 2024 Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games (France)
- July 28: Presidential Elections (Venezuela)
- August 19-22: Democratic Party National Convention (Chicago, IL)