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Headlining This Week's Brief

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Top Stories

Florida, Georgia, and Eastern Alabama Threatened by Major Hurricane Impacts

The [National Hurricane Center](#) initiated advisories and forecast packages for 'Potential Tropical Cyclone Nine' in the western Caribbean Sea. Steady to rapid intensification into a tropical storm or hurricane is possible before the center reaches western Cuba and the Northeast Yucatan late Tuesday into Wednesday morning. Thus, tropical storm warnings and hurricane watches have been issued. Forecast data supports continued rapid intensification across the Southeast Gulf of Mexico Wednesday through Thursday morning. Water temperatures are between 30-31C (86-88F). Atmospheric winds (wind shear) are expected to be light (conducive) for further strengthening. Major hurricane intensity may be achieved and maintained through landfall on Thursday afternoon on the U.S. Gulf Coast.

Residents and travelers between Panama City and Cedar Key, Florida, are most at risk for hurricane impact and less likely scenarios for a direct hit range as far west as Pensacola and as far east as Tampa. These are viewed as unlikely, though they stress the importance of vigilance and that further shifts in the track are possible in the days ahead. Additionally, coastal storm surges and tropical storm-force impacts will extend far from the center, especially east of the center track. Well inland locations, including much of Georgia and eastern Alabama, may be threatened by widespread tropical storms to localized hurricane-force wind gusts, extensive tree damage, numerous power outages, and scattered flooding Thursday night through Friday.

Catastrophic Flooding Imminent Across Oaxaca, Mexico

[Tropical Storm John](#) is becoming more organized and is expected to strengthen into a Category 2

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hurricane by Monday evening, with hurricane warnings along the coast. The storm is forecast to bring catastrophic impacts, including extreme rainfall of 500-760mm (20-30in), with localized totals exceeding 1015mm (40in), especially across southern Oaxaca. Life-threatening flash flooding, river flooding, and landslides are likely, cutting off many areas as highways become impassable. Coastal Oaxaca will face power outages, infrastructure damage, and potential evacuations. John is moving slowly, and while landfall is expected Tuesday, conditions will deteriorate by Monday night, with storm surges and rough seas threatening the coast. The storm is expected to linger near the coast, bringing heavy rain and continued flooding throughout the week, possibly extending into the weekend.

Over 270 Killed During Israeli Airstrikes on Lebanon as Fighting Intensifies

An extensive bombing campaign by Israel has [killed](#) at least 270 people and wounded more than a thousand in southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley, according to Lebanon's Health Minister. Israel [claimed](#) that the strikes were targeting more than 800 military sites, including Hezbollah weapon caches that were being stored in private residences and other civilian areas. Prior to the assault, Israel sent a [message](#) to thousands of Lebanese residents, warning them to evacuate areas that were located near the alleged arms depots. The aerial bombardment, which has [reportedly continued](#) into Monday evening and has included a strike on Beirut, follows a series of escalating attacks over the past week that began with the [detonation](#) of thousands of Hezbollah-linked communications devices across Lebanon, killing dozens and wounding thousands. That attack, which has been widely attributed to Israel, although Jerusalem has not officially taken credit, was followed by a [strike](#) on a building in southern Beirut that killed a senior Hezbollah commander, as well as several others.

Hezbollah [responded](#) over the weekend by firing more than 100 rockets, missiles, and drones toward northern Israel. Although damage was fairly limited, the strikes went deeper into Israeli territory than previous efforts, raising the possibility of further attacks directly targeting Haifa, a major city in the north. Such an attack would likely trigger an even greater Israeli response. When [asked](#) if Israel intends to conduct a ground invasion into southern Lebanon, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) spokesperson David Hagari said, "Today we are mounting a widescale aerial operation. We will continue to act according to plan. We have one mission - to return the residents in the north safely."

The IDF has specifically [warned](#) those in the Bekaa Valley of further attacks. The Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education has [canceled](#) classes across the country tomorrow as thousands have fled for northern Lebanon, joining the estimated 110,000 who were already [displaced](#). Schools have also been closed in Haifa, Nahariya, and other areas in northern Israel, where around 60,000 have been [forced to leave](#) their homes since fighting began in Gaza. The IDF has ordered other [restrictions](#) on gatherings as well. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has also reportedly [ordered](#) all civilian employees to leave with their families to safe areas north of the Litani River.

United Nations High-Level Week and General Debate Meetings Kick Off With Protests

As the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) High-Level Week and General Debate kicks off, activists are preparing to hit the streets of Manhattan. Thursday will see the bulk of protest activity, as pro-Palestine demonstrators plan to turn the area around the U.N. into a “frozen zone” ahead of an address by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is [expected](#) to arrive in New York Wednesday. Key gathering points Thursday include Bryant Park at the steps of the New York Public Library and Ralph Bunche Park. Amid the protests, bolstered security, and road restrictions, officials are [advising](#) residents to walk or take the subway all week due to anticipated congestion around the conference.

Several diaspora groups in New York City also plan to hold actions against certain heads of state. Tomorrow, the Association of Iranian Americans in New York plans to demonstrate near 2nd Ave and E 47th St at 10:30 am against Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. On the same day, Nigerian diaspora members intend to protest at 9 am at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza. On Friday, the Awami League plans to hold a demonstration near U.N. Headquarters against Bangladeshi Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus. Saturday, a protest by the Kashmiri community has been planned during the Indian delegate's address scheduled for 5 pm.

For further information on this year’s UNGA, please refer to our [Situation Report](#), which offers in-depth coverage of the event.

Climate and Natural Hazards

- **Major Rainfall Threat to Mumbai and India’s West Coast:** The [India Meteorological Department](#) has issued Red Level 3 Rainfall Warnings (maximum level) over the Konkan and Goa regions for Tuesday and Wednesday. Residents and travelers in and around Mumbai will want to be extra vigilant and aware of the potential for urban flooding—some significant—through mid-week. Based on Monday’s forecast guidance, a reasonable worst-case scenario involves localized rain totals over 500mm (20in), with most rain amounts across northern areas, including Mumbai, falling within two days between Wednesday and Thursday.
- **Extreme Rainfall Area Targeting Nepal, Northeast India, Northern Bangladesh:** A broad monsoonal disturbance will steadily advance northwest from the Bay of Bengal into central India through Thursday. Near and east of this cyclonic feature, a large influx of moisture will stream northward, focusing along the southern ranges of the Himalayas and surrounding regions. Northern Bihar, eastern Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim (India), much of Nepal, northern Bangladesh, and immediate adjoining areas are at risk of significant rainfall between

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Monday and Friday. Scattered flash flooding and landslides, some major and life-threatening, are probable.

Worldwide

- **Attack on Colombian Military Personnel Hobble Peace Talks With Rebels:** Colombian President Gustavo Petro [stated](#) that peace talks between Colombia's government and the National Liberation Army (ELN) had effectively come to an end following an attack on Colombian military personnel. The assault in question targeted a military base in eastern Colombia, killing two military personnel and injuring at least 21 others. Colombian military officials have [blamed](#) the attack on the ELN, one of the largest rebel groups in the nation and one that the Colombian government has been engaged in conflict with for nearly five decades.
- **Political Unrest Flares in Bolivia During March to La Paz:** Thousands of demonstrators supporting former President Evo Morales [clashed](#) with counterdemonstrators and security forces during a march called the "March to Save Bolivia" from the small village of Caracollo to the capital, La Paz. Morales organized the march in opposition to current President Luis Arce. Although it began peacefully, violence erupted when counter-protesters blocked the way, throwing tear gas bombs and stones. This marks the second instance of violent escalation this week amid growing concerns of further unrest in the Andean nation.
- **Violence Flares in Mexico's Tabasco State:** Last week, Villahermosa, Tabasco, experienced a violent [outbreak](#) involving vehicle fires, robberies, and tire-puncturing objects on highways, attributed to a clash between two criminal groups. Seven commercial robberies, vehicle thefts, and armed assaults were reported across several neighborhoods. The Secretary of Security, Víctor Hugo Chávez Martínez, assured the public that the situation was under control, emphasizing the importance of the "[Tabasco Seguro](#)," an operation involving 1,500 security personnel focusing on maintaining peace and security and deterring criminality in the region.
- **U.S. Election Officials on High Alert Amid Warnings of Lone Attacks, Cyber Risks:** U.S. security and intelligence officials recently issued warnings over what they see as the top threats leading up to the presidential election. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas [noted](#) that lone offenders may target polling places and workers. More than 20 election offices [received or been sent](#) suspicious packages last week, triggering evacuations and raising tensions as early voting gets underway. Threats to the election are also taking shape in cyberspace, with a joint federal agency statement [releasing further details](#) of Iranian malicious cyber activity that aims "to stoke discord and undermine confidence in our electoral process."
- **Stabbing Incident in Shenzhen Strains Already Tense China-Japan Relations:** A 10-year-old Japanese boy was fatally stabbed in Shenzhen last week, marking [the second such attack near](#)

[Japanese schools in China](#) in recent months. The Japanese embassy urged the Chinese government to do its utmost to ensure the safety of Japanese nationals there. Officials in Shenzhen said they would “take effective measures to protect [...] everyone in Shenzhen, including foreigners.” These recent personal safety concerns threaten to complicate already strained bilateral ties. Japanese companies, including Toshiba, Toyota, and Panasonic, have told their staff to take precautions against violence; some firms offered their employees the option to relocate home at the company’s expense.

Cyber and Regulatory

- **Meta Bans Russian State Media Outlets:** Last Monday, Meta [announced](#) a ban on Russian state media accounts on its platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Threads, citing the outlets’ alleged “foreign interference activity.” The ban affects accounts related to media outlets like RT and Rossiya Segodnya. YouTube also reportedly terminated over 230 channels associated with state- controlled media outlets. The Kremlin, which classified Meta as an “extremist organization” and began blocking access to its platforms in 2022, condemned the decision, saying the actions were “selective” against Russian media. Meta’s ban came just days after the Biden administration [imposed](#) sanctions on Russian state media outlets for allegedly spreading disinformation online.
- **U.S. Regulators Announce New Merger Guidelines, Albertsons-Kroger Hearing Ends:** Under new federal guidelines announced last week, bank merger deals will [face](#) stricter assessments for their impact on consumers, competition, and the larger financial system. The merger policies may [complicate](#) Capital One’s pending acquisition of Discover, which would make Capital One the U.S.’s [largest credit card issuer](#). In other merger news, supermarket chains Albertsons and Kroger are expecting a court decision in the coming months after their merger hearing [ended](#) last week. The grocery chains and antitrust regulators from the Federal Trade Commission—who argued over the merger’s effects on competition, prices, and labor—must submit final written arguments by the end of the week.
- **Hong Kong Sentences Two for Sedition Under New Law:** At least two people have been sentenced to prison under Hong Kong’s Article 23 security law for acts deemed “seditious.” Chu Kai-pong was [arrested](#) and [sentenced](#) to 14 months in jail for an outfit bearing a protest slogan used during 2019’s [mass demonstration movement](#). Another person, Chung Man-kit, was [charged](#) and sentenced to 10 months in jail after pleading guilty to writing “seditious” graffiti on bus seats. Article 23, enacted in March, targets offenses like sedition and treason. Critics, including rights NGOs, have [condemned](#) the law as vague and regressive, while the government defends it as essential for national security.

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- **Biden Administration Urges Congressional Action on De Minimis Reform:** The administration [said that on Friday](#) it will take executive action to stop a trade surge under the de minimis exemption. This rule allows shipments valued at less than \$800 to enter the U.S. without duty and with little scrutiny. As e-commerce companies with roots in China employ the provision, the U.S. has seen the number of packages entering via the exemption this year grow to [more than a billion](#). Online marketplace operator Temu said its growth doesn't depend on the de minimis policy and is reviewing the new rules. Retail company Shein said it looks forward to working with stakeholders on de minimis reform.
- **Joint Cybersecurity Advisory Warns of Compromised Internet Devices:** The FBI, NSA, and Cyber National Mission Force co-authored a [Joint Cybersecurity Advisory](#) warning that People's Republic of China (PRC)-linked cyber actors have compromised thousands of internet-connected devices with the goal of creating a botnet positioned for malicious activity. Recommended mitigations include disabling unused services and ports, applying patches and updates, and monitoring for high network traffic volume. Only two weeks ago, the U.S. Select Committee on the CCP [issued a report](#) showing its investigation found potential threats to U.S. port infrastructure security from China. The report also outlines strategies for the United States to address the risks posed by the CCP's maritime activities.

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- **Port Operations in Shanghai, Ningbo Impacted by Consecutive Storms:** Wait times are mounting at the Port of Shanghai and the Port of Ningbo-Zhoushan as operators were forced to contend with both Typhoon Bebinca and Typhoon Pulasan in quick succession. Vessels had moved away from Shanghai's container terminals in [anticipation](#) of Typhoon Bebinca, the strongest typhoon to hit Shanghai since 1949. Ahead of Pulasan, which moved through over the weekend, Hapag-Lloyd was already reporting delays of 36-60 hours to berth in Shanghai and 24-48 hours to berth in Ningbo. Those impacts are expected to be exacerbated in Pulasan's wake.
- **Ukraine to Face Significant Power Shortfall This Winter:** A recent [report](#) from the International Energy Agency (IEA) estimated that Ukraine would face an electricity supply shortfall of around one-third of expected demand this winter. According to the Ukrainian energy ministry, the anticipated shortfall comes as Russia has continued to [bombard](#) Ukraine's energy infrastructure, leading to a loss of nine gigawatts of generating capacity this year alone. A gas supply transit deal with Gazprom is also due to expire at the end of the year, and access to coal could be disrupted since most mines are close to the front lines. Disruptions in neighboring Moldova could also impact supplies since the two countries share transmission capacity with the rest of Europe.

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- **China Threatens to Retaliate if U.S. Closes Hong Kong Trade Offices:** China has [warned](#) that American businesses will suffer following the approval of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) Certification Act by the U.S. House of Representatives. The measure, which still must clear the Senate, would shutter Hong Kong's three Economic and Trade Offices in the U.S. if America deems Hong Kong is no longer sufficiently autonomous from China. Officials in the U.S. have expressed alarm at the erosion of personal liberties in Hong Kong, pointing in particular to the passage of a new security law in March that has been used to suppress "seditious" speech, as described above in the Cyber and Regulatory section.
- **USPS Plans Large-Scale Network Changes:** The United States Postal Service (USPS) is [planning](#) large-scale network changes that will likely result in longer transit times for packages traveling from locations at least 50 miles from major processing facilities. Under the new plan, USPS would consolidate morning and afternoon drop-off and pickup activities at post offices at least 50 miles from a regional processing and distribution facility into a single morning transportation route. This will likely extend delivery times by a day for parcels originating from rural zip codes. The changes will go into effect in 2025.
- **Strike by U.S. Dockworkers Increasingly Likely:** Little headway has been made in negotiations between dockworkers on the East and Gulf Coasts, represented by the International Longshoreman's Association and the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX), setting the stage for a walkout when the dockworkers' contract expires on September 30. According to unnamed administration officials, President Joe Biden [does not intend](#) to block industrial action at the ports. Some container shipping lines, including MSC, have begun [announcing](#) disruption surcharges on cargo from Europe to the East and Gulf coasts and ports in the Caribbean, Mexico, and Canada. CMA CGM and Hapag-Lloyd have also announced surcharges. Among the industries [expected](#) to be most impacted by a strike are furniture, medicines, vaccines, and semiconductors.

Health

- **U.S. Embassy in Peru Issues Alert Over Oropouche Virus Spread:** Last week, the U.S. Embassy in Peru issued a [Health Alert](#) over the spread of the Oropouche virus in the country and advised travelers to take steps to [prevent bug bites](#) as much as possible. The most impacted departments as of early September were Loreto, Madre de Dios, and Ucayali. Oropouche continues to impact multiple other countries in the Americas region, including Brazil, which has seen a [significant uptick](#) in cases compared to last year. Imported travel cases [have also grown](#) in the U.S. in recent weeks. The Pan American Health Organization's has issued a [report](#) on the situation.

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- **Los Angeles Reports More Local Dengue Cases, Other Arboviruses Continue Spread:** Los Angeles County has [recorded](#) two more cases of locally acquired dengue, bringing the total infections this year to three. While the number is small, and officials say the risk to the public from the virus remains low, they also indicate that the situation is “concerning,” as dengue has not previously been transmitted by mosquitoes in the area. The news from LA comes as other locations in North America continue to [report](#) cases of other arboviruses, including eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile virus.
- **U.S. Whooping Cough Cases at Highest Point in Decade:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [reports](#) that cases of pertussis, also known as whooping cough, have seen a more than fivefold increase between January and mid-September compared to the same period in 2023. Over 10,000 cases per year are typical for the U.S.; however, this year’s total is the highest since 2014, and some locations have seen particularly notable spikes, including Wisconsin, which has seen [infections jump](#) from 51 in 2023 to 625 this year already. Experts [emphasize](#) the need for vaccination, as some say post-pandemic vaccine fatigue is likely playing a role in the present spread.
- **WHO Updates on Mpox Spread, Study Questions Protection Duration of Key Vaccine:** In its latest situation report on mpox, the World Health Organization (WHO) [reports](#) that the deadly clade 1b strain continues to spread in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and an expanding outbreak in Burundi. In the latter country, where over 560 clade 1b cases have been recorded, officials are [reportedly](#) contending with resource issues and stigma surrounding the virus. Vaccines to fight mpox transmission have arrived on the continent, and inoculations have [begun](#). Still, widespread administration will take time, and [new research suggests](#) protection from the primary vaccine utilized against the virus wanes significantly within six to 12 months.
- **Other Health Stories the Global Intelligence Team Is Watching:** In consumer-focused news, the maker of Lactaid Milk has [recalled](#) select units of 96 oz milk containers across 27 U.S. states due to potential contamination with trace amounts of almond, which are not listed on labels. Consumer Reports [recently](#) conducted a deep dive into cinnamon powders, finding that a large number had high lead levels. In other U.S.-centric health updates, overdose deaths [have seen a significant drop recently](#), measles cases continue to [tick up](#), and COVID-19 activity is [trending down](#).

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- **Boeing Work Stoppage Continues as U.S. Car Manufacturers Face Strike Threats:** More than 30,000 unionized Boeing machinists and factory workers remain on strike this week. The

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aerospace company began [furloughing](#) thousands of non-union workers last week, and both sides are preparing for a [lengthy strike](#). Two of the Big Three automakers may face strikes over lingering labor issues despite signing contracts with United Auto Workers (UAW) a year ago. Ford may see more than 500 workers at its River Rouge Complex in Dearborn go on [strike](#) this Thursday over local contract issues. UAW will hold strike authorization votes for at least one Stellantis chapter, with UAW's president [alleging](#) that Stellantis violated its contract and had plans to move a production line to Canada.

- **Public Sector Workers in France Expected to Strike on October 1:** One of France's largest unions, the CGT, is [calling](#) for a nationwide strike on October 1 over a range of issues, including the appointment of Prime Minister Michel Barnier, pension reform, and austerity measures. CGT represents public sector workers across a range of industries in France, and other unions and youth organizations have expressed support for the day of action. Demonstration activity in major cities can be expected in conjunction with the strike, with unions organizing a demonstration at Paris' Place Denfert-Rochereau at 1:30 pm.
- **French Overseas Territories, Departments See Uptick in Unrest:** Authorities in the French overseas department of Martinique [prohibited](#) demonstrations and implemented a curfew late last week after an outbreak of [violent protests](#); however, demonstrators defied the ban Saturday night and [gathered](#) on Fort-de-France ring road. At least six police officers were [injured](#) during violent clashes last week, which were prompted by demonstrations over the high cost of living. Instances of arson [targeting](#) businesses and cars were also reported. In the Pacific territory of New Caledonia, political tensions between the Indigenous Kanak population and French authorities have escalated since May. Two people, who were allegedly linked to the unrest in May, were [killed](#) during a police operation last week. Meanwhile, people in the Pacific department of Guadeloupe have been without power due to a [strike](#) by power plant employees.
- **Protesters Set to Welcome Mexico's First Woman President Next Week:** President-elect Claudia Sheinbaum is set to take office on Tuesday, October 1. The swearing-in ceremony is [scheduled](#) for 9 am at the San Lázaro Legislative Palace. Over 100 foreign representatives will be [present](#), including 16 heads of state. While security preparations are [underway](#), numerous social, civic, and political groups are planning a large-scale [march](#) against the incoming president in Mexico City. The march is scheduled to begin at 9 am from the Monumento a la Revolución and conclude near the Ángel de la Independencia.
- **Other Activity the Global Intelligence Team Is Watching:** Over 1000 hotel workers in San Francisco [walked off the job](#) on Sunday with the Unite Here union, which was behind widespread hotel strikes in early September, warning that more strikes could begin soon. Belgium will face a strike by security, cleaning, and food service workers next Tuesday, October 1. Impacts are expected at airports, with Brussels Airlines already [announcing](#) cancellations, and in Brussels' European Quarter during a union-led demonstration that afternoon. In other industrial action news, Samsung workers in Chennai, India, are [nearing](#) their third week of protest.

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Approximately 1,500 workers at one of the company's two factories in India have gone on [strike](#) and are calling for their union's recognition, higher salaries, and improved working conditions.

Upcoming Events

- September 10-30: UN General Assembly (New York City, NY)
- September 27: Second Round of Legislative Elections (Czechia)
- September 29: Legislative Elections (Austria)
- September 30: East Coast Dockworkers' Labor Contract Expires (United States)
- October 1: Pchum Ben (Cambodia)
- October 1: Vice Presidential Debate (New York City, NY)
- October 1: Defender of Ukraine Day (Ukraine)
- October 1: Mexico Presidential Inauguration (Mexico City, Mexico)
- October 6: Municipal Elections (Brazil)
- October 6: Presidential Election (Tunisia)
- October 6-11: ASEAN Summit (Laos)
- October 7: One-Year Anniversary of Israel-Hamas Conflict (Global)
- October 9: General Election (Mozambique)
- October 9-11: G7 Health Ministers' Meeting (Ancona, Italy)
- October 11-12: Yom Kippur (Global)
- October 13: First Round of Parliamentary Elections (Lithuania)
- October 13: Durga Puja (India, Bangladesh)
- October 16: EU-Gulf Cooperation Council Summit (Brussels, Belgium)
- October 20: Presidential Election, Referendum on EU Membership (Moldova)
- October 21-26: IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings (Washington D.C.)
- October 21 - November 1: United Nations Biodiversity Conference (Cali, Colombia)
- October 22-24: BRICS Summit (Kazan, Russia)