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Top Stories

Severe Weather Set to Escalate Across Central U.S. – Wednesday Poses Major Threat

Severe weather season is ramping up across the United States. After an active March, April is likely to top it based on historical averages combined with forecast data signaling a very active first week. Through early Monday evening, a <u>Level 2 to Level 3 risk</u> (on a 5-tier scale) will continue from New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania through the Carolinas and into eastern Georgia, with scattered damaging wind gusts and brief tornadoes possible.

On Tuesday, attention shifts to the central Plains. A <u>broad Level 2 risk</u> will stretch from Nebraska and lowa southward into Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and North Texas. Severe storms may fire up after 3 pm, especially in southern Kansas, Oklahoma, and southwest Missouri, where isolated tornadoes are possible into the evening.

Wednesday brings the most serious threat, with a significant outbreak of severe storms expected across the Lower Great Lakes, Mid-Mississippi Valley, and ArkLaTex. Damaging winds, very large hail, and strong tornadoes are likely—especially in the Mid-Mississippi Valley, where long-lived rotating storms could form. If current forecasts hold, this may be the most dangerous setup since the deadly March 14–15 outbreak. Storm timing and track remain uncertain, so residents in the path should remain weather-aware throughout the day and night.

In addition to severe storms, heavy rainfall may lead to widespread flooding from Wednesday through Friday. The Weather Prediction Center has issued a Level 3 out of 4 excessive rainfall risk for three straight days (<u>Wednesday</u> through <u>Friday</u>), with some areas potentially receiving over six inches of

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rain— and localized totals near a foot in parts of central and northeast Arkansas, southeast Missouri, and western Kentucky. Flash flooding, river flooding, and water rescues are possible, especially in low-lying or flood-prone areas. As the severe threat fades, flooding could become the dominant concern at the end of the week. In February, major floods killed at least 14 people in eastern Kentucky.

Death Toll Following Myanmar Earthquake Continues to Rise

The death toll from the 7.7 magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar on Friday continues to rise, with the official tally **edging past** 2,000 today; however, modeling from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) suggests that the total death toll could eventually eclipse 10,000. The full extent of the damage is still uncertain, as the ruling military government **controls access** to almost all media sources in the country. In addition to the **damage to infrastructure** that is hindering relief efforts, Myanmar is also in the middle of a long-running civil war. While the main resistance group, the National Unity Government, has **declared** a two-week pause on offensive actions in areas impacted by the earthquake, the government has **reportedly** continued its airstrikes, including in affected areas.

In neighboring Thailand, where the quake brought down a high-rise building that was under construction in Bangkok, at least 19 people are **confirmed dead**. While Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra has **said** that the "situation has largely returned to normal," many remain fearful, with reports of office workers **evacuating** buildings Monday morning after feeling shaking and finding what they believed to be new cracks, although these were all dismissed as false alarms. The Department of Public Works and Town and Country Planning has established **emergency hotlines** for building inspections and is providing **regular updates** on its progress on social media.

Additional information on the earthquake is available in AlertMedia's **Situation Report**.

Fighting Intensifies in Gaza as Israel Sees Renewed Anti-Government Protests

Over the weekend, Hamas <u>reportedly</u> agreed to a new ceasefire proposal that would see five additional hostages released in exchange for aid and a pause in fighting. Hamas' position comes as <u>hundreds of Gazans</u> took part in demonstrations against the group following the end of the previous agreement. Israel said that they submitted a counteroffer but have continued their renewed offensive in Gaza. Earlier today, the Israel Defense Forces <u>ordered</u> the evacuation of most of Rafah and, over the weekend, launched <u>airstrikes</u> that killed dozens. To the north, Israel <u>bombed</u> a Hezbollah drone storage facility in the Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh, the first time the Lebanese capital has been struck since a ceasefire went into effect, prompting concerns of renewed large-scale fighting.

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Domestic politics are also raising tensions. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to <u>fire Ronen Bar</u>, the head of Israel's internal security agency, amid an ongoing investigation into whether Netanyahu's aides received payments from Qatar, has <u>rekindled</u> a protest movement that had disrupted life across Israel for months prior to Hamas' attack on October 7, 2023. Over 100,000 Israelis took to the streets after Bar's dismissal. Similar demonstrations were seen as the Knesset <u>passed</u> a law overhauling the judiciary.

Climate and Natural Hazards

- Massive Ice Storm Hits Great Lakes, Canada: Hundreds of thousands remained without power
 as of midday Monday across Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Ontario, and Quebec following a
 spring storm that swept through the region over the weekend, bringing freezing rain, sleet, and
 damaging winds. Hydro One Ontario has cautioned that full power restoration could take
 several days. Hardest-hit areas of northern Michigan may have power restored by Wednesday.
 As of Monday afternoon, freezing rain warnings were still in effect, primarily north of eastern
 Canada's largest cities.
- Disaster Declaration After Floods Hit South Texas, Northeast Mexico: Texas Governor Greg
 Abbott issued a <u>disaster declaration</u> for Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy counties in South
 Texas following flash floods that impacted homes, businesses, and farmland on Thursday and
 Friday. <u>Three people were killed</u> in Hidalgo County, where some areas saw more than a foot of
 rain. A <u>fourth death</u> was reported in Reynosa, Tamaulipas, just across the border in Mexico.
- Interior Queensland Australia Ravaged by Floods: Interior rural Queensland has been hit by the worst rainfall and flooding since 1974, submerging towns like Jundah and isolating others for weeks. Hundreds of thousands of <u>livestock</u> have likely been lost, devastating local economies.
- Other Severe Weather Events: For a daily look at significant weather events around the world, read AlertMedia's <u>Daily Severe Weather Report.</u>

Worldwide

UN Warns South Sudan on Brink of New Civil War: The South Sudanese government's decision
Friday to place Vice President Riek Machar <u>under house arrest</u> for allegedly attempting to incite
a rebellion is the latest in a <u>series of provocations</u> that threatens to move the country towards
another civil war. The opposition has said that Machar's arrest <u>voids</u> a peace deal that ended the
last round of internecine conflict. Fighting has already broken out in the <u>country's north.</u> A new
civil war would further destabilize the region, which is already contending with a civil war in
Sudan, and <u>risks drawing</u> in neighboring Ethiopia and Uganda, which has troops stationed in the

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country. China is <u>urging</u> its citizens to depart, and both <u>Norway</u> and <u>Germany</u> have closed their embassies over security concerns. The <u>U.S.</u> has moved to minimal staffing.

- Burundi Accuses Rwanda of Imminent Attack, Sudan's Military Gains: Burundian President Évariste Ndayishimiye has accused Rwanda of planning an imminent attack on Burundi. Ndayishimiye cited "credible intelligence" and historical grievances, including an alleged coup attempt a decade ago, drawing parallels to the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In response, Rwanda's foreign minister rejected the claims as "surprising" and "unfortunate." Elsewhere in Africa, Sudan's army chief, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, declared "Khartoum is free" after the Sudanese Armed Forces retook the Khartoum International Airport and the Presidential Palace, which had been under Rapid Support Forces (RSF) control since the start of the conflict.
- EC Drafts Preparedness Strategy Over Rising Tensions Across Europe: The European Commission (EC)'s new Preparedness Union Strategy emphasizes the need for a proactive approach to threats like natural disasters, cyberattacks, and war, urging citizens to stockpile at least 72 hours worth of food. It proposed an EU-unified stockpiling strategy, increased collaboration between public and private sectors, and a crisis coordination hub to enhance Europe's resilience in response to evolving risks and crises. Recently, Poland's security chief stated its military can defend against an enemy for up to two weeks before NATO reinforcements arrive. Poland called for U.S. nuclear weapons to be positioned in the country as a deterrent against Russia amid rising tensions.
- Trump Threatens Tariffs on Russian Oil Over Frustrations With Peace Talks: President Donald Trump has expressed anger and frustration following Russian President Vladimir Putin's suggestion that the Ukrainian government be replaced with a UN-led entity. During an interview, Trump threatened a 50% tariff on countries buying oil from Russia if Putin didn't agree to a ceasefire. This threat follows Russian demands that some Western sanctions be lifted before a limited ceasefire in the Black Sea could go into effect, though officials state negotiations are ongoing. Meanwhile, a Russian drone attack killed four people and injured 21 in the city of Dnipro on Friday. A Ukrainian drone attack targeted an electrical substation in Russia's Bryansk region, causing power outages.
- Trump Administration Lists China, Fentanyl as America's Top Threats: The U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) <u>released</u> its Annual Threat Assessment, labeling China, among other state actors, as a top security concern, while <u>removing</u> climate change entirely. The report highlights expanding cyber capabilities as a significant threat to critical infrastructure and the necessity for diversified supply chains to avoid reliance on foreign adversaries. The assessment also indicates growing cooperation between China, Russia, and Iran. Additionally,

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fentanyl was listed as a top concern. The report <u>states</u> that China and India are the primary sources of the drug's precursor chemicals, while transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) facilitate the trafficking of these narcotics into the U.S.

Cyber and Regulatory

- Google Releases Chrome Patch After Malware Linked to Email Phishing Attempts: Google released a Chrome patch for Windows users last week, stating that they are "aware of reports that an exploit for CVE-2025-2783 exists in the wild." The Kaspersky cybersecurity company flagged instances of the vulnerability being exploited in mid-March, reporting that victims only needed to click a link that then opened in the Google Chrome web browser to become infected by malware. In other news, malicious cyber actors are using fake sponsored ads in Google search results for DeepSeek to spread malware.
- California, New York Attorney Generals Advise 23andMe Customers to Delete Data:
 23andMe reported login issues last week due to a surge in customers attempting to log into their accounts after the genetic testing company filed for bankruptcy. California Attorney General Rob Bonta issued a consumer alert to 23andMe customers advising them to delete their genetic data, with New York's AG issuing similar advice days later. 23andMe is expected to sell its assets, with consumer advocates warning that a new owner could change how user data is handled. The company reported that access issues due to increased traffic were resolved as of last Thursday.
- Al Copyright Cases Highlight Ongoing Issues in Chatbot Training Practices: A U.S. federal judge <u>ruled</u> last week that the New York Times copyright infringement lawsuit against OpenAl can proceed to trial. A trial date has not yet been set. The New York Times' case was opened last year over allegations that OpenAl violated copyright laws. The lawsuit could change how tech companies use news publishers' material to train Al chatbots. Meanwhile, a federal judge <u>denied</u> <u>an injunction</u> from music record label companies who are suing the Al company Anthropic over the use of copyrighted material. Both cases revolve around the interpretation of "fair use" of copyrighted material.
- U.K. Security Officials Monitoring Emerging Threats From Online Teenage Gangs: The United Kingdom's National Crime Agency (NCA) is warning of a rise in online networks where offenders, predominately teenage boys, commit crimes and "share sadistic and misogynistic material." NCA Director General Graeme Biggar is collaborating with law enforcement and tech companies to respond to what he calls "sadistic and violent online gangs" who commit a range of crimes on-and offline, including "cyber, fraud, extremism, serious violence, and child sexual abuse." Reports of abuse related to these networks have increased sixfold from 2022 to 2024 in the U.K. The NCA

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refers to the online communities as "Com networks" in its <u>2025 National Strategic Assessment</u>, an annual report that details serious and organized crime (SOC) threats.

Oracle Denies Cloud Data Breach as FBI Launches Patient Data Breach Investigation: The
FBI is investigating a cyberattack at Oracle after a hacker stole health customer data earlier this
year. The Oracle Health breach reportedly impacts multiple healthcare organizations in the U.S.
Recently, researchers with CloudSEK discovered a threat actor who claimed to have breached
Oracle Cloud servers and allegedly stole authentication data and encrypted passwords of six
million users. Oracle denied that the cloud breach occurred; however, BleepingComputer
confirmed with multiple Oracle customers that associated data samples shared by the threat
actor are valid. The reports come as Palo Alto Networks cybersecurity company recorded a 235%
increase in high-severity cloud security incidents in 2024.

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- U.S. Announces New Auto Tariffs: Last week, the Trump administration <u>announced</u> new tariffs of 25% on foreign-made passenger vehicles, light trucks, and auto parts. The tariff on vehicles is set to go into effect on April 3, with the tariff on auto parts set to follow at some point before May 3. Imported cars that comply with the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) will be <u>exempt</u> from the new tariffs until the government establishes a process to apply the levies to the value of their non-U.S. content. In 2024, the U.S. <u>imported</u> \$246 billion worth of passenger vehicles, primarily from Mexico, Canada, Japan, South Korea, and the EU. Trump has indicated that the tariffs will be "permanent."
- Trump Unveils 25% Tariff on Imported Copper and Related Products, Venezuelan Oil: The
 U.S. plans a 25% tariff on nations purchasing Venezuelan oil set to take effect on April 2. The
 new tariffs will affect countries like China and India, two key purchasers of Venezuelan oil. China
 and India may also be disproportionately impacted by the U.S.' threats to impose secondary
 tariffs on purchasers of Russian oil following snags during peace talks surrounding the UkraineRussian conflict. In other tariff news, copper prices have surged 30% due to looming U.S. import
 tariffs and tight supply. Additional tariff announcements are expected from the U.S. on
 Wednesday, which is what President Trump is calling "Liberation Day." though the specifics are
 vague.
- U.S. Adds Dozens of Chinese Firms to Export Control List; China Introduces Environmental Regulations: Last week, the U.S. added 80 companies to its export control list, 50 of which are based in China, citing their alleged threat to "U.S. national security and foreign policy." Six subsidiaries of China's largest cloud-computing firm, Inspur, were listed due to their reported involvement in the development of artificial intelligence (AI) and supercomputing capabilities for

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the Chinese military. The move <u>angered</u> Beijing, which said that the designations "unjustly suppress Chinese enterprises" and threaten the global supply chain. Firms listed under the U.S. Export Control Reform Act are subject to special licensing requirements and policies. In a separate development, China <u>tightened</u> its environmental regulations and is reportedly advising companies to adopt semiconductor chips that are compliant with the new regulations. If strictly enforced, the new rules may hamper sales of Nvidia's H20 chip, which is in high demand from the Chinese tech sector. China is Nvidia's fourth largest market and accounts for around \$17.1 billion of the company's revenue.

- U.S. Rejects Mexico's Request for Water Shipment: In a first, the U.S. rejected a recent request by Mexico for a special water shipment. The U.S. State Department affirmed the move, citing the "decimating" effects that "Mexico's continued shortfalls in its water deliveries under the 1944 water- sharing treaty" is allegedly having on American agriculture. Mexico attributes its inability to meet the stipulated water payments to an ongoing drought in the north of the country. Mexico's requested water shipment would have gone to the border city of Tijuana, which is grappling with an extreme drought. Around 90% of Tijuana's water supply comes from the Colorado River, which is also experiencing a historic, extended drought.
- U.K. Implements Ban Following Foot-and-Mouth Disease Outbreaks in Hungary, Slovakia: The foot- and-mouth disease (FMD) epidemic in Central Europe has intensified, with Hungary and Slovakia experiencing major outbreaks after over 50 years without the disease. Hungary reported its first case this month on a cattle farm near the Slovakian border, followed by a second outbreak, leading to the culling of thousands of animals. Slovakia confirmed multiple cases shortly after, declaring a national emergency and implementing strict containment measures. On March 8, the U.K. banned the importation of cattle, pigs, sheep, deer, and untreated products from Hungary and Slovakia in an attempt to prevent the spread of FMD. At the time of this writing, no cases of FMD have been reported in the United Kingdom.

Health

• No "Specific, Credible" Terror Threat Against U.S. Hospitals: The FBI has concluded that "there is no specific, credible terror threat" against U.S. hospitals. The assessment followed a March 18 alert from the American Hospital Association (AHA) and Health-ISAC about a viral X (Twitter) post claiming ISIS-K planned multi-city attacks using vehicle-borne explosives and hostage scenarios. Authorities emphasized that foreign terrorist groups rarely publicize attack plans and found no corroborating intelligence. Hospitals were advised to maintain standard vigilance, including visible security measures and reporting suspicious activity to law





enforcement. Although the threat was not deemed credible, the American Hospital Association (AHA) and Health-ISAC <u>issued</u> a bulletin out of an abundance of caution and to raise awareness.

- PAHO Raises Alarm as U.S. Measles Cases Climb: The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) issued a high public health risk assessment as measles cases in the Americas continue to climb. As of March 24, 507 confirmed cases were reported region-wide, a 5.5-fold jump from 2024. In the U.S., Texas sits at the epicenter, with 400 confirmed cases, although outbreaks are also ongoing in New Mexico, Kansas, Ohio, and Oklahoma. Cases are also increasing in Europe, driven by a prolonged crisis in Romania. The eastern European country has recorded 31,000 cases and 22 deaths since 2023, a trend driven by vaccine skepticism, a faltering healthcare system, and misinformation. Experts fear Romania's situation could trigger outbreaks in other European countries.
- New Avian Flu Cases and Emerging Trends: Cambodia recorded its third fatal human H5N1 avian flu case of 2025, a three-year-old boy who was likely first infected after being exposed to sick chickens. Elsewhere, H5N1 avian flu has been detected in a sheep in Yorkshire, a first for the U.K. While the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs has urged livestock owners to remain vigilant, they state there is no increased risk to U.K. livestock. In Bangladesh, the country reported its first bird flu outbreak since 2018 at a farm in Jessore, where 1,900 of 3,978 birds died. The remaining were culled. In the Americas, bird flu has spread across 19 countries since 2022, with approximately 4,713 animal outbreaks, according to the Pan American Health Organization. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced \$100 million in funding for bird flu vaccine research as part of broader efforts to combat the virus and stabilize rising egg prices.
- U.S. Implementing Cuts to Public Health: The Trump administration is significantly reducing public health funding, terminating 68 grants totaling nearly \$40 million that supported LGBTQ health research, such as studies on HIV prevention, cancer, youth suicide, and bone health. Additionally, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) canceled over \$12 billion in federal grants to states, which had been allocated for monitoring infectious diseases, mental health services, and other critical health programs. In a related move, HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. defended the administration's decision to cut 10,000 jobs at the department, with plans to shed another 10,000 positions through severance packages, buyouts, and early retirements, reducing the workforce by a quarter.
- West Virginia Issues Food Dye Ban: In one of the most comprehensive bans of its kind in the
 U.S., West Virginia has <u>outlawed</u> foods that contain seven synthetic food dyes, citing health
 concerns such as behavioral issues, endocrine disruption, and potential carcinogenic effects.
 Governor Patrick Morrisey <u>signed</u> House Bill 2354 into law last week. The ban prohibits the dyes

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in school meals starting August 1, 2025, and in all food and drugs sold in the state by January 1, 2028. The move aligns with a broader "Make America Healthy Again" initiative championed by Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., aimed at eliminating harmful synthetic additives in the U.S. food supply. West Virginia's action follows a similar law in California and could signal further action by other states.

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- **50501 Movement Prepares for New Nationwide Demonstrations**: The 50501 Movement, Indivisible, and other activist groups are planning nationwide demonstrations against the Trump administration for Saturday, April 5. The primary rally will take place in Washington, DC, where **participants** will gather at the Sylvan Theater near the Washington Monument at 1 pm. Attendance at the demonstrations is expected to vary, with some rallies drawing only a few dozen participants while larger gatherings may exceed a thousand. In addition to the groups mentioned above, those affiliated with other causes, particularly the pro-Palestine movement, are planning to host actions as well. Previous demonstrations have remained peaceful, primarily causing traffic disruptions, although there is a risk of counterdemonstrations.
- South Korean Unions Launch Weekly General Strike: The Korean Confederation of Trade
 Unions (KCTU) has called for a general strike each Thursday until the Constitutional Court
 announces a date when it will render its verdict on whether to uphold President Yoon Suk Yeol's
 impeachment. Around 100,000 people nationwide are <u>estimated</u> to have taken part in the first
 walkout last week, while simultaneous rallies were held throughout the country. As the wait for a
 verdict continues, demonstration activity by both the pro and anti-impeachment camps
 continues to grow, with several hundred thousand <u>reportedly</u> gathering over the weekend in
 Seoul.
- Hundreds of Thousands Rally in Istanbul as Turkish Opposition Looks to Maintain Momentum: Over the weekend, hundreds of thousands attended a rally by Türkiye's opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) in Istanbul, demanding the government free detained opposition leader, Ekrem Imamoglu. Since Imamoglu's arrest, mass demonstrations have taken place across the country. During Saturday's rally, CHP leader Özgür Özel called for weekly actions and a boycott on all goods and services associated with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. There are also some indications that Türkiye's labor unions may become more involved in the protests. The government has cracked down on the demonstrations, arresting at least 2,000 demonstrators and, in some places, deploying tear gas and water cannons. Authorities appear to also be hoping that an extended Eid al-Fitr holiday will blunt the movement's momentum.

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- Activist Groups Announce Plans for Demonstrations in London: The pro-Palestine group Youth Demand has announced more details on a month-long demonstration campaign in central London. The group plans to organize actions every Tuesday and Saturday throughout April, beginning with a rally tomorrow at 6:30 pm at Senate House Library (Malet St), followed by a "swarming" and road blocking action on Saturday at Lincoln's Inn Fields at 11 am. Meanwhile, climate activism group Just Stop Oil said that they will host their final action on April 26 in Parliament Square. Just Stop Oil's pullback comes as climate groups worldwide face growing legal pressures. In Germany, Letzte Generation activists are facing charges of "forming a criminal organization," while Greenpeace USA is staring down bankruptcy after a jury ruled against them in a case related to the Dakota Access Pipeline protests.
- Other Actions the Global Intelligence Team Is Monitoring: In Hungary, demonstrators plan to gather on Erzsébet Bridge in Budapest tomorrow at 5 pm to protest a new law that bans LGBTQ+ Pride events. Across the Atlantic, South America will see at least two nationwide actions in the coming days. In Argentina, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) plans to call its third general strike since Javier Milei became president on April 10. Past strikes have seen participation across several sectors and have been accompanied by widespread demonstrations. And in Brazil, former President Jair Bolsonaro has called for a demonstration in São Paulo on April 6. Last week, Brazil's Supreme Court ruled that Bolsonaro would stand trial for allegedly organizing a coup after losing the 2022 presidential election to Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Upcoming Events

- March 31: Eid al-Fitr (Global) Date varies by location
- April 2: U.S. to Impose "Reciprocal" Tariffs (Global)
- April 2: U.S. to Impose Tariffs on Countries Importing Venezuelan Oil (Global)
- April 3: U.S. to Impose Tariffs on Auto Imports (Global)
- April 4: Independence Day (Senegal)
- April 4: Qing Ming Jie/Tomb Sweeping Day (China, Taiwan)
- April 6: Ram Navami (India)
- April 9: Constitution Day (Kosovo)
- April 12: General Election (Gabon)
- April 12: Hanuman Jayanti (India)
- April 12-20: Passover (Global)
- April 13: Presidential Election Run-Off (Ecuador)
- April 13: EU Tariffs on U.S. Goods to Take Effect (Global)
- April 17: Maundy Thursday (Global)

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- April 18: Good Friday (Global)
- April 20: Easter (Global)
- April 28: Federal Election (Canada)
- April 28: General Election (Trinidad and Tobago)
- April 30: General Election (Cayman Islands)
- May 1: Labor Day/May Day (Global)
- May 3: Federal Election (Australia)
- May 4: Presidential Election (Romania)
- May 11: Parliamentary Elections (Albania)
- May 12: General Election (Philippines)
- May 15: Nakba Day (Israel, West Bank, and Gaza)

