



April 14, 2025

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Top Stories

Severe Thunderstorms to Threaten Mid-Atlantic U.S. Monday

The Storm Prediction Center has issued a Level 2 out of 5 [severe thunderstorm risk](#) for today across central and eastern Kentucky, West Virginia, northern Virginia, Maryland, southwestern Pennsylvania, and southern Ohio. Scattered strong to severe thunderstorms are expected to develop late Monday afternoon and evening. The primary threats will be damaging wind gusts near 60 mph and hail, with the potential to cause downed tree limbs and utility lines, leading to isolated power outages. While the overall tornado threat is low, a couple of brief tornadoes cannot be ruled out, particularly near the Appalachian region.

Storm development is expected to begin over northern and central Kentucky and southern Ohio between 2 pm and 5 pm local time. The risk for severe weather will then shift eastward, peaking in eastern Kentucky and West Virginia between 5 pm and 8 pm. For areas farther east—including northern Virginia, Maryland, and the D.C. metro—strong thunderstorms may not arrive until between 7 pm and 11 pm this evening. A severe thunderstorm watch, along with localized warnings, may be necessary.

Changes to U.S. Immigration Policy Lead to New Requirements, Increased Security at Border Points

Immigration policy in the United States has been subject to a series of procedural and legal changes since the start of President Donald Trump's second term, including the revocation of visas, the [termination](#) of parole for those who entered via the Biden-era CBP One app, new rules around gender markers on

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official documents, and overall increased scrutiny at border points. The more rigorous vetting has led to some instances of international travelers being denied entry into the U.S. or deported. In response, some [attorneys](#), [companies](#), and [universities](#) are advising their constituents who are not American citizens against traveling outside of the U.S.

In addition, at the end of last week, an [interim final rule](#) went into effect requiring some categories of foreign nationals to undergo a new online registration process. The rule applies [primarily](#) to foreign nationals staying in the U.S. for more than 30 days, although there are exceptions. Per the [announcement](#) posted on the Department of Homeland Security website, those covered under its terms are required to comply immediately and to carry proof of registration at all times. DHS has said that it will prioritize enforcement of the law. For more on the recent changes to immigration policy, read AlertMedia's [Situation Report](#).

U.S. - China Trade Tensions Escalate, Importers Face Shifting Rules

Following the Trump administration's "Liberation Day" tariff unveiling, the U.S. has scaled back duties on most countries for 90 days, although a baseline tariff of 10% remains in place for all countries. These baseline rates do not include additional tariffs on specific goods, like steel or agricultural products. Canada and Mexico are also still [facing](#) a 25% tariff on goods not covered under the USMCA trade pact. The notable exception is China, where the U.S. is now imposing a 145% tariff on exports, prompting China to [respond](#) with a 125% tariff on U.S. goods. The U.S. has exempted tariffs on certain electronic goods from China, [including](#) smartphones and computers; however, those carveouts may be [short-lived](#) as the White House indicated it will [announce](#) tariffs on semiconductors over the next week. The administration has also said that tariffs on auto parts and pharmaceuticals are coming.

China has responded to the U.S. tariffs by strengthening its regional trade ties. South Korea, Japan, and China have all agreed to [promote](#) regional trade, while Vietnam [signed](#) multiple agreements with China during President Xi Jinping's Southeast Asia trip, with more deals likely as Xi visits Malaysia and Cambodia. At the same time, Vietnam plans to restrict Chinese transshipments and tighten controls on sensitive exports, according to [reporting from Reuters](#). Outside of the increased cooperation in the region, some companies have also opted to [remain in China](#) due to the greater stability of its economic policy.

The U.S.'s tariff measures have [resulted](#) in global economic uncertainty, with negative impacts to stock indexes, consumer confidence, as well as countries' capital spending plans. The rapid tariff measure

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changes have also led to confusion for importers and businesses in the U.S. Goods already in transit were exempt from the tariffs, with importers to incur the new costs over the coming days and weeks.

Climate and Natural Hazards

- **Western Europe Turning More Active:** The U.K. Met Office has issued [Yellow Warnings](#) for locally heavy rain across Wales and western England from Tuesday into Wednesday. Tuesday through Thursday, the focus shifts to southeast France and south to central Italy, including Corsica and Sardinia, where models indicate several days of heavy rain, thunderstorms, and a growing risk of flooding and landslides. Widespread Orange or higher-level warnings for wind and rain are likely to follow.
- **China Hit by Widespread Severe Weather:** From April 10–14, a historic spring storm system generated hazards across much of the country. Northern areas, including Beijing and Hebei, were hit by [typhoon- strength winds](#) up to 150 km/h, leading to hundreds of flight cancellations and over 700 fallen trees in Beijing alone. Much calmer national weather is expected through Thursday. Scattered severe thunderstorms may return over eastern areas by Friday.
- **Kanlaon Volcano Under Close Surveillance:** The Philippines' Kanlaon Volcano is still at [Alert Level 3 of 4](#) due to high activity. In the past 24 hours, there were 33 volcanic earthquakes, high sulfur gas levels, and several [ash emission](#) events. The ground is also swelling, which means magma is rising. The national volcano monitoring agency is assessing three possible scenarios: a slow and prolonged lava flow, a sudden explosive eruption, or a complete slowdown or end to volcanic activity.
- **Southern Hemisphere Tropical Cyclone Update:** [Tropical Low 29U](#), north of Broome, may strengthen to a Category Two cyclone but is expected to stay offshore with limited land impact over the next few days. A second system near the Gulf of Carpentaria has a moderate chance of development. [Tropical Cyclone Thirty](#), near Vanuatu, will bring rain and gales to Vanuatu and New Caledonia before potentially strengthening and tracking toward New Zealand as a transitioning non-tropical system. From midweek, it may bring several days of [heavy rain and strong winds](#) to northern and eastern North Island, especially Northland, Auckland, Coromandel, Bay of Plenty, and northern Gisborne.
- **Other Severe Weather Events:** For a daily look at significant weather events around the world, read AlertMedia's [Daily Severe Weather Report](#).

Worldwide

- **Governor Declares State of Emergency in Albuquerque:** On April 7, New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham declared a [state of emergency](#) in Albuquerque due to strained police

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resources and emerging crime trends. This action follows a [request for support](#) from the Albuquerque Police Department, citing a fentanyl crisis and an increase in violent juvenile crime. The order will provide additional funding and personnel, including the deployment of approximately [60-70 New Mexico National Guard members](#) starting in mid-May. The National Guard will reportedly be restricted to administrative tasks, emergency response support, and general public services to help reduce the strain on civilian authorities, who will reallocate resources to enforcement activities. The plan has raised concerns among [civil rights groups](#).

- **Man Arrested Following Arson Attack at Josh Shapiro's Home:** Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro and his family were forced to evacuate the Governor's Residence in Harrisburg on Saturday following an [arson attack](#). Cody Balmer, a 38-year-old Harrisburg resident, was arrested for allegedly setting the fire using homemade incendiary devices. Authorities have not [specified](#) a motive; however, an affidavit [filed](#) by state police said that he had admitted to "harboring hatred" for Shapiro. The attack comes after a recent series of attacks that appear to be politically motivated, including several against [Tesla facilities](#) and the [New Mexico Republican Party headquarters](#). [Recent studies](#) have shown a rising acceptance of political violence among Americans.
- **Algeria and Mali Ban Flights Amid Diplomatic Crisis:** In late March, the government of Algeria reportedly downed a Malian drone near the border town of Tinzaouaten in what Mali has [called](#) a "premeditated hostile action." Following the incident, the countries [banned flights](#) to and from each other's airspace, while the Alliance of Sahel States (comprised of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, all of which are ruled by military juntas) [recalled](#) their ambassadors from Algeria. Mali also withdrew from the Algerian-backed regional military group, the Joint Operational Staff Committee (CEMOC). In addition to the impacts on aviation, the dispute also [jeopardizes](#) energy projects Algeria was developing with Niger, including the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline.
- **Israel Takes Control of Rafah, Establishing New Security Corridor:** Israel Defense Forces (IDF) announced on Saturday that it had [completed](#) the encirclement of Rafah, establishing another security corridor after resuming its offensive on March 18. The Morag Corridor, which separates Rafah and Khan Younis, [expands](#) the IDF's buffer zone to 20% of the Gaza Strip, stretching from the Egypt-Gaza border in the Philadelphi Corridor area to the outskirts of Khan Younis. The announcement comes amid continued airstrikes and the [evacuation](#) of approximately 400,000 people since the end of the ceasefire. Israeli forces also launched a strike that heavily damaged the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital, rendering the last fully functioning hospital in Gaza City non-operational.
- **Venezuela Heightens Military Alert Over Tensions with ExxonMobil in Guayana:** A long-running [territorial dispute](#) between Venezuela and Guyana flared up again in recent weeks. The

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Venezuelan military raised its [alert level](#) following the alleged discovery of a U.S. plot to [fabricate](#) an incident by the Venezuelan government against ExxonMobil infrastructure in the Essequibo region, which is currently administered by Guyana but claimed by Venezuela. Earlier this year, Venezuela conducted a naval [incursion](#) into Guyana's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), approaching an oil facility operated by ExxonMobil. Relatedly, Venezuela [announced](#) intentions to elect a governor for what it calls "Guayana Essequiba" in April 2025, following its 2024 law designating Essequibo as a Venezuelan state.

- **Ukrainian President Confirms Troops Operating Inside Russia as Russia Launches New Attacks:** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky publicly [confirmed](#) that Ukrainian troops are operating inside Russia's Belgorod region. Zelensky emphasized that the operation is to protect Ukraine's border regions amid Russia's new spring offensive targeting Ukraine's Sumy and Kharkiv regions. The advancement of Ukrainian troops in another region of Russia and an escalation in attacks, including a Russian-launched missile [strike](#) in central Sumy that killed at least 34 people and injured over 117 others, have cast doubt on further [ceasefire](#) talks. Zelensky also [claimed](#) that Chinese citizens are fighting for Russia in Ukraine.

Cyber and Regulatory

- **Cyberattacks Target Organizations in Australia, Morocco:** Authorities are continuing recovery efforts and upping scrutiny of Australia's \$4.2 trillion superannuation industry's cybersecurity environment after various funds were [targeted](#) by a cyberattack last month. The attack, which caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in retirement savings losses, affected several funds, including Australian Retirement Trust, AustralianSuper, HostPlus, Rest, Insignia Financial, and Cbus. In a separate incident, an unprecedented [cyberattack](#) hit Morocco's National Social Security Fund and [Ministry of Employment](#) last week. The attack was linked to Algerian hackers who leaked data of around 500,000 companies and two million employees.
- **Microsoft Issues Patches, Including for Vulnerability Exploited in Ransomware Attacks:** Microsoft [released](#) a security update addressing 126 vulnerabilities, including a critical zero-day flaw (CVE-2025- 29824) in the Windows Common Log File System (CLFS) driver. This vulnerability, already exploited in ransomware attacks, allows attackers to [gain](#) system-level privileges and deploy ransomware across various sectors. Microsoft [confirmed](#) that targets included "organizations in the information technology (IT) and real estate sectors of the [U.S.], the financial sector in Venezuela, a Spanish software company, and the retail sector in Saudi Arabia."
- **U.S. Justice Department Disbands Crypto Regulator Unit:** Last week, the U.S. Justice Department [disbanded](#) its National Cryptocurrency Enforcement Team, which was responsible for investigating cryptocurrency-related crimes. Todd Blanche, Deputy Attorney General, stated in

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a memo that the department is “not a digital assets regulator” and **instructed** the prosecutors to focus instead on cases that involve matters like immigration, scams, fraud, and drug and trafficking-related crimes. Blanche **criticized** the unit’s approach during the administration of former President Jos Biden—which formed the unit—describing it as a “reckless strategy of regulation by prosecution.” The move appears to be in line with U.S. President Donald Trump’s wider promotion of the crypto industry.

- **Nearly Half of U.K. Businesses Report Cyber Incidents in Past Year:** The U.K. **released** its 2025 Cyber Security Breaches Survey, where it noted that 43% of businesses and 30% of charities reported a breach or attack in the previous 12 months. Researchers **state** that the number of incidents targeting medium or large businesses remained consistent with the previous year. The impacted organizations stated that phishing attacks were the most time-consuming due to the volume of such attacks and the training of their staff to identify them, coupled with attempts becoming more sophisticated through AI impersonation. The survey also **found** that while small businesses had improved their cyber resiliency, large charities had decreased their capabilities due to budget constraints.
- **U.S. Treasury Department Reports Major Breach:** The U.S. Treasury Department’s Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) disclosed a breach that **permitted** attackers to access more than 100 email accounts and 150,000 emails for over a year. The OCC **stated** that emails containing highly sensitive financial information were monitored after the hackers gained access to an administrative account, calling the breach a major incident. The independent office is investigating to **determine** the full extent of the breach. In its first disclosure to the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the OCC stated that the breach has not had an impact on the financial sector.

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- **U.K. Takes Ownership of British Steel After Emergency Parliamentary Sitting:** King Charles **granted** royal assent to keep the British Steel plant in Scunthorpe open. The emergency bill, pushed through in Parliament in a rare Saturday session, keeps the country’s last primary steel-making facility in production, giving the U.K. government **control** of the Chinese-owned plant after negotiations over support failed. The situation reflects a trend of declining manufacturing in Europe and concerns by policymakers over-reliance on other countries, particularly **China**, for steel.
- **India Revokes Transshipment Capabilities for Bangladesh:** Exports from Bangladesh that were previously routed through India’s land customs stations to third countries will now need to change course. India’s customs authorities rescinded a 2020 order allowing transshipment

through land border stations en route to Indian ports and airports. Indian officials cite [backlogs](#) and logistical delays to India's own exports in the decision to change policy. Bangladeshi exports that are shipped directly will not be affected by the change, though air freight rates may increase. The change could also indirectly impact regional trade flows with Nepal and Bhutan.

- **U.S. Postal Service Changes Upcoming:** The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is implementing changes that will affect customers nationwide. The USPS began [adjusting](#) service standards for first-class mail, marketing mail, package services, and periodicals at the start of the month. All first-class mail will be delivered within the existing one-to-five-day range, with 11% having a slower standard and 14% having a faster standard than before. The price of a First-Class Forever stamp is also expected to increase from 73 to 78 cents effective July 13, pending approval from the Postal Regulatory Commission. The changes aim to improve efficiency and reduce costs, though they will potentially slow down delivery for some customers.
- **U.S. Encourages Investment in Alaska LNG Project Amid Tariff Tensions:** The U.S. is [pushing](#) for countries to [invest](#) in a \$44 billion LNG project in Alaska and increase LNG purchases to mitigate tariffs. Taiwan's state-owned CPC Corporation signed a preliminary agreement earlier this year to invest in the Alaska LNG project to enhance energy security and reduce trade tensions, and Taiwan's president is [seeking](#) a zero-tariff regime with the U.S. Multiple countries are likely to pursue energy deals with the U.S. to relieve tariffs. Taiwan is dependent on LNG for electricity and is vulnerable to supply disruptions. In early April, China conducted military exercises near Taiwan and possibly [blocked](#) an LNG carrier, though Taiwan disputes the claims.
- **Rare Earth Supply Chain Shifts in Response to U.S.-China Trade Tensions:** Europe is [expanding](#) its rare earth processing plant in France in a move to bolster the continent's self-sufficiency on critical materials. Solvay, a Belgium-based company, is aiming to supply 30% of Europe's processed rare earths demand by 2030. The move comes after China [added](#) six U.S. companies to a blacklist and [imposed](#) export controls on additional rare earth elements as part of its retaliation against U.S. tariffs, including samarium, gadolinium, terbium, dysprosium, lutetium, scandium, and yttrium-related items. China [produces](#) the majority of the world's rare earths, which countries rely on for production in the electric vehicle, energy, electronics, and defense industries.

Health

- **Clade I Mpox Detected in U.K. Individual With No Travel History or Connection to Other Cases:** Officials in the United Kingdom are [investigating](#) a case of clade Ib mpox detected in an individual in northeast England. It is the first case detected in the U.K. so far in an individual without any travel history or known connection to previous cases. The country had earlier

declared that it no longer considered clade I mpox a “high consequence” infectious disease due to its low mortality rate and availability of interventions. Within Europe, clade I has also been detected in [Switzerland](#), where a case was reported last week in a traveler returning from Africa, as well as [Germany](#), France, Sweden, Ireland, and Belgium. Hong Kong officials have issued a warning [urging](#) the public to stay vigilant following the latest cases.

- **WHO Issues First-Ever Reports on Lack of Tools to Combat Fungal Diseases:** The World Health Organization (WHO) [issued](#) its first-ever reports highlighting the lack of medicines and diagnostic tools for invasive fungal species, with only four new antifungal drugs approved in the last decade. The warning comes as hospitals are seeing an [increasing number of cases](#) of once-rare fungal diseases, some with mortality rates as high as 87%. Cases of *Candida auris*—a relatively new, drug-resistant yeast that spreads easily in hospital settings—has seen cases grow by nearly 9000% between 2016 and 2023. The Georgia Department of Public Health has [recorded](#) an uptick in cases in recent months, and the Jackson Health System in Miami [published](#) a study noting that cases have “rapidly increased.”
- **Cuts at HHS Include Workplace Safety Research Agency:** Around 90% of the workers at the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a research agency [dedicated](#) to “the study of worker safety and health, were [reportedly](#) cut during the recent reduction in force at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The agency, which is being [folded into](#) the new Administration for a Healthy America, was charged with identifying workplace hazards and coordinating with employers and OSHA to craft appropriate laws and regulations. The cuts are [expected](#) to impact the [National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory](#), responsible for ensuring products like respirators meet standards, as well as the miner safety and health branches. The cuts are expected to go into effect June 30.
- **U.S. Records Most Measles Cases in a Single Week Since 2019:** More than 90 measles cases were [reported](#) in the U.S. last week, the most in a single week since 2019. The [current tally](#) of confirmed cases for 2025 now stands at 712, with Arkansas, Hawaii, and Indiana joining the list of 25 states with reported cases. Outside of the epicenter in West Texas and New Mexico, states with [active outbreaks](#) (defined as three or more cases) include Kansas, Indiana, Ohio, and Oklahoma. Recent cases at a [Lubbock daycare](#) and an exposure alert at [Lubbock Christian University](#) indicate that the virus is moving into more populated areas, potentially allowing for greater spread.
- **Bird Flu Fatality Reported in Mexico, New Detections in Livestock:** Mexico [recorded](#) its first human case of H5N1 avian influenza as well as its first fatality when a three-year-old girl who had recently been hospitalized with the virus passed away. It marked the second fatal H5N1 case in North America this year. On the animal side, the U.S. has now [detected](#) at least 1,000 cases of

H5N1 in dairy cattle since March 2024. Additionally, in March, the Mississippi Board of Animal Health [reported](#) a case of the H7N9 bird flu strain, which hadn't been seen in poultry in the U.S. since 2017. Surveillance of the virus may become more difficult in the future, as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is [suspending](#) efforts to improve testing of milk, cheese, and pet food.

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- **Nationwide Demonstrations Continue in U.S. Against Trump Administration Policies:** This Saturday, the 50501 movement [plans](#) to hold its next nationwide day of action. The group has stated they hope for a similar turnout as their previous "[Hands Off!](#)" day of action earlier this month, which drew hundreds of thousands of demonstrators in cities across the U.S., although it is still unclear if this action will see the same response. Demonstrations organized by the group so far have been peaceful and non-violent. Meanwhile, demonstrations against Tesla are also [continuing](#), with pickets outside of Tesla showrooms. Most events have taken place on Saturdays and have been peaceful. However, there have been reports of [counter-demonstrations](#) at some locations.
- **Anti-Western Protests Target KFC, Pizza Hut, and Bata in Bangladesh and Pakistan:** Recent demonstrations in Bangladesh [targeted](#) Western businesses like KFC, Pizza Hut, and Bata as demonstrators protested perceived ties to Israel. Several demonstrations turned violent in Bangladesh, with outlets vandalized in cities like Dhaka, Bogra, Sylhet, and Chittagong. In Pakistan last Tuesday, a [KFC](#) in Karachi was ransacked by around 40-50 people, resulting in 10 arrests. More demonstrations are planned over the coming weeks. The Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan has called for marches in Multan on April 18 and Islamabad on April 20, followed by a nationwide [shutter down strike](#) on April 22. More are also likely in Bangladesh as [Nakba Day](#) approaches on May 15, which in the past has seen demonstrations worldwide.
- **Protests Across India Against Waqf Amendment Act Intensify Ahead of Key Hearings:** Demonstrations against the Waqf (Amendment) Act have intensified following President Murmu's [assent](#) on April 5. Clashes turned deadly in West Bengal's [Murshidabad](#), prompting internet curbs and central deployments. Protests over the weekend saw major turnouts in Kolkata, Mumbai, Patna, Chennai, and Tripura. The [Supreme Court](#) is set to hear petitions challenging the Act on Wednesday, likely setting the stage for further unrest. The [Indian Union Muslim League](#) (IUML) will hold a major rally in Kozhikode on April 16, which is expected to draw large crowds from Kerala's Malabar region. On April 18, the [Karnataka Ulema Coordination Centre](#) will lead a mass protest in Mangaluru, while [AIMPLB](#) will hold a protest meeting in Hyderabad on April 19. Further unrest is likely in West Bengal, Tripura, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh.

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- **Nationalist Group Calls for Large Demonstration in the Dominican Republic:** The Ancient Dominican Order, a nationalist group in the Dominican Republic, is organizing a large march on Thursday, April 24, in Santo Domingo to demand stricter policies against illegal immigration, particularly from Haiti. The demonstration, themed “Pa'l Palacio!” (To the Palace!), will take place near the National Palace. A recent demonstration by the Order in late March **escalated** into clashes with police in Hoyo de Friusa, resulting in 32 detentions. The Dominican Republic deported more than 276,000 people in 2024 alone under strict immigration policies.
- **Serbian Students Cycle to Strasbourg Amid Ongoing Protests:** On April 3, about 80 Serbian **students** began **cycling** 1,300 kilometers from Novi Sad to Strasbourg, aiming to reach the European Parliament by Thursday to submit letters highlighting Serbia’s corruption issues. Their journey underscores ongoing anti-government protests sparked by a deadly train station collapse in Novi Sad in November that many have blamed on corruption. Protests have spread **across** 400 cities over the past four months. Meanwhile, on April 12, thousands **rallied** in Belgrade **supporting** President Vučić’s government, accusing student protesters of foreign-backed destabilization. The dueling demonstrations reveal Serbia’s political divide amid demands for accountability and transparency.

Upcoming Events

- April 12-20: Passover (Global)
- April 13-16: Thingyan (Myanmar)
- April 13-15: Songkran (Thailand)
- April 14-16: Cambodian New Year (Cambodia)
- April 17: Maundy Thursday (Global)
- April 18: Good Friday (Global)
- April 20: Easter (Global)
- April 25: Constitutional Referendum (Marshall Islands)
- 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)

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- May 15: Nakba Day (Israel, West Bank, and Gaza)
- May 18: Presidential Election (Poland)
- May 18: Parliamentary Election (Portugal)
- May 25: Parliamentary Election (Suriname)
- May 25: Parliamentary Election (Venezuela)
- May 25-26: Jerusalem Day (Israel, West Bank)