



May 27, 2025

Headlining This Week's Brief

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Top Stories

South Asia Hard-Hit by Early Onset of Southwest Monsoon

India is grappling with an unusually early and intense start to the southwest monsoon season, marked by record-breaking rainfall and widespread disruption. Worsening impacts are also anticipated within Bangladesh and northern Myanmar in the coming days.

Mumbai has recorded its wettest May since 1918, with [over 439 mm of rainfall](#) so far. The monsoon made its [earliest recorded arrival](#) on May 26, triggering severe flooding in parts of the city. One of the hardest-hit areas was the newly inaugurated [Worli underground metro station](#), where floodwaters forced a suspension of services. The deluge also caused widespread waterlogging, traffic congestion, and infrastructure damage. In a separate incident, a section of [Kemps Corner Road](#) in upscale South Mumbai collapsed, leading to road closures and further traffic disruption.

Through Thursday, western, central, and southern India are expected to see continued above-normal rainfall, accompanied by elevated flood risks. The [India Meteorological Department \(IMD\)](#) has issued widespread Orange and Red Warnings—the highest alert levels—for multiple areas.

From Wednesday to Saturday, the zone of greatest concern will shift to northeastern India, as well as neighboring Bangladesh and northwest Myanmar. A significant monsoonal disturbance moving inland from the Bay of Bengal ([satellite](#)) is expected to bring extreme moisture and heavy rainfall. The IMD has already issued localized Red Warnings across the region. Rainfall totals between 100–200 mm will be common, while some high-terrain and rain-prone areas may see localized accumulations exceeding 500–600 mm. Residents, especially those in urban flood zones or areas vulnerable to landslides, flash floods, or river overflows, are advised to remain on high alert.

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In its [latest long-range outlook](#), the IMD forecasts above-average rainfall for the 2025 southwest monsoon season. Total seasonal precipitation from June to September is projected to reach 106% of the Long Period Average (LPA), suggesting continued weather volatility in the months ahead.

Increased Security, Heightened Threat Environment During Pride Month

Organizers worldwide are expected to host numerous events celebrating June as LGBTQ Pride month. While predominantly peaceful, some past Pride events have drawn counterdemonstrators or have been forcibly dispersed by local authorities. Many are likely to also see heightened security amid increasing threats, rhetoric, and legislation targeting the LGBTQ community, both in the United States and internationally.

Last year, the FBI and DHS warned of potential [threats](#) to 2024 Pride events, citing past attacks like the 2016 Pulse shooting and a 2023 foiled Vienna Pride plot. While U.S. agencies have not issued a similar warning for this year, many of the same underlying factors that led to last year's warnings remain in place. In May 2025, Brazilian police [disrupted](#) a plot by an anti-LGBTQ group to bomb a Lady Gaga concert in Rio de Janeiro. In Europe, Hungary has seen [several consecutive weeks](#) of demonstrations following a ban on LGBTQ Pride events, while in the United Kingdom, thousands took part in [demonstrations](#) across the country following a ruling by the Supreme Court that defined a woman as someone born biologically female, excluding trans women. In the U.S., activists have expressed [concerns over security](#) around Pride events, and there have been some calls for counterdemonstrations. For more on Pride events planned during June, read AlertMedia's [Situation Report](#).

Assassination in Mexico City Raises Concerns Over Security Situation

Mexico has recently seen an increase in violence, headline by the assassination of public officials in Mexico City. On Tuesday, May 20, two aides to Mexico City Mayor Clara Brugada were [fatally shot](#) by motorbike gunmen in the Benito Juárez area. Prosecutors have thus far refrained from linking the attack to organized crime, but have [noted](#) the degree of sophistication displayed by the assailants. The last major attack to target public officials in Mexico City took place in [2020](#), when several gunmen ambushed the city's police chief, wounding him and killing a bystander and two bodyguards.

While the motive of the Mexico City attack remains unclear, analysts worry that it could mark a shift in the broader security situation for the country, with cartels potentially increasing their targeting of Morena party officials as a mark of their displeasure with President Claudia Sheinbaum's [more assertive approach](#) to combating organized crime. Other violent episodes underline the broader crisis: [seven](#) were killed in San Felipe, Guanajuato, likely due to a Santa Rosa de Lima-CJNG turf war; six died in a

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[clash](#) in Puerto San Carlos, Baja California Sur; and a Navy [operation](#) in Huitzontla, Michoacán, left 12 suspected criminals dead.

Climate and Natural Hazards

- **Texas Restoring Power Following Severe Storms:** Statewide power outages peaked at over 250,000 early Tuesday morning, with around 100,000 customers still without electricity by midday. More than half of the reported outages have occurred in Harris and Montgomery Counties, which encompass much of the Houston metro area. Wind gusts exceeding 60 mph brought down trees and power lines, with the [Conroe](#) area among the hardest hit.
- **Unexpected Outage Sends Over 100,000 Louisianians in the Dark Amid Heat:** On Sunday afternoon, more than 103,000 customers across the New Orleans metro area [lost power](#) despite hot, sunny weather and no severe storms. The regional grid operator, MISO, initiated a [load shedding event](#)—an intentional, temporary shutdown of electricity to certain areas—to prevent a wider system failure caused by excessive demand and limited supply. The outage was triggered by a combination of soaring electricity use due to high temperatures and unexpected issues at power plants and along transmission lines. MISO is taking additional measures to stabilize the grid and is coordinating closely with utilities to monitor conditions and maintain reliability. Sunday's high at New Orleans International Airport reached 92°F, a temperature typical for the peak summer months of June and July.
- **Heat Wave Brewing for California, Nevada, Southern Oregon:** Extreme heat watches have been issued Friday morning through Sunday morning for much of interior California and southern Nevada, including the cities of [Redding](#), [Sacramento](#), [Fresno](#), [Bakersfield](#), and [Las Vegas](#). Afternoon highs in Las Vegas could peak near 108°F, while temperatures within California's interior valleys will commonly hit 103- 106°F, locally 109°F. A return to more typical, maybe even slightly below-average temperatures is likely between June 2-4.
- **First Tropical Storm of Eastern Pacific Season Imminent:** As of early Tuesday, the [National Hurricane Center](#) had given a tropical disturbance south of Mexico a high chance of tropical storm formation over the next 48 hours. All forecast data points towards this feature becoming Alvin, the first named storm of the eastern Pacific hurricane season, which began May 15. The overall threat to land is currently minimal, though there is some chance that indirect impacts or the storm remnants could overspread parts of Jalisco, Nayarit, Sinaloa, or Baja California Sur between May 30 and June 2.

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- **Entire Alberta Town Evacuated Due to Wildfire:** As of early Tuesday, wildfire [SWF076](#) remains out of control, having burned 2,266 hectares. A mandatory evacuation is in effect for the entire town of [Swan Hills](#), including over [1,300 residents](#). Highway 33 is fully closed in both directions near Onely Crescent and at the Highway 32 junction due to fire activity.

Worldwide

- **Tensions Rising in Bangladesh as Calls for Elections Grow:** The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and other groups have staged several protests across Dhaka and the rest of the country as they intensify their push for national elections. In Dhaka South City Corporation, public services have come to a [standstill](#) as supporters of BNP leader Ishraque Hossain demanded he be sworn in as mayor. Youth organizations affiliated with the BNP are also planning a mass [rally](#) in the capital on Wednesday. In addition, [public sector workers](#) and [primary teachers](#) have gone on strike to protest [reforms](#) that would make it easier to dismiss public servants. The growing unrest comes as the country's established political parties, led by the BNP, are pushing the interim government to hold elections by December. The caretaker government has said that greater reforms are needed, and that a vote may be possible by June 2026.
- **Officials Make Security Preparations Ahead of UEFA European Football Championship:** Following security [shortcomings](#) at the 2022 Champions League final in Paris, UEFA has implemented enhanced security protocols for the upcoming 2024-25 UEFA Champions League finals in Istanbul, Budapest, Prague, Eindhoven, and Munich. Security measures [include](#) a senior incident control group, increased security staff at venues, digital-only tickets, and dedicated supporter liaison officers, aiming to improve operational coordination and overall fan safety. The UEFA Champions League [final](#) between Paris Saint-Germain and Inter Milan will be held on May 31 at the Allianz Arena in Munich, Germany.
- **International Criticism of Israel Increases as Ceasefire Again Proves Elusive:** A [Palestinian official](#) claimed Hamas accepted a ceasefire proposal attributed to U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff, involving a 70-day truce, the release of 10 Israeli hostages, and a partial Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, in exchange for the release of Palestinian prisoners. However, both an Israeli official and Witkoff denied that the proposal originated from the U.S., with Witkoff calling the terms "completely unacceptable." Israel firmly rejected the proposal, stating no responsible government could accept it. Prime Minister Netanyahu expressed hope for progress on hostages and the conflict, but did not address the specific proposal. Meanwhile, Israel's renewed ground offensive in Gaza has led the U.K. to [suspend](#) free trade talks with the country and impose sanctions on West Bank settlers. Germany has also [increased](#) its criticism of Israel.

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- **Increase in Politically Motivated Crime in Germany:** German officials reported a 40% rise in [politically- motivated criminal offences](#) in 2024, with a total of 84,172 cases recorded. Authorities noted particular [increases](#) in racist, antisemitic, and Islamophobic incidents. The German government has [stated](#) that far-right extremist crimes, including hate speech, incitement, and physical assaults, rose nearly 50% to 42,788 cases compared to the previous year. Violent, politically motivated crimes also increased by 15-17%. In response, Federal Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt has [announced](#) a security offensive.
- **Mass Attacks Injure Dozens in England, Germany:** Europe experienced two mass attacks over the past few days, although authorities do not believe that either is connected to terrorism. British officials are investigating the motive behind a car collision that [injured](#) nearly 50 people during Liverpool FC's Premier League victory parade on Monday. Police [arrested](#) a 53-year-old white British man at the scene. Hundreds of thousands of people were in the area to [attend](#) the parade, which spanned 15 km through Liverpool. A few days earlier, Hamburg police [arrested](#) a 39-year-old woman after she allegedly injured 18 people during a stabbing attack at the city's main railway station. Police do not consider the attack to be politically motivated, and a judge [ordered](#) that the woman be sent to a psychiatric clinic.

Cyber and Regulatory

- **U.S. Halts Funding Under Digital Equity Act as Broadband Divide Worsens:** The U.S. appears to have [halted](#) funding authorized under the Digital Equity Act (DEA) after President Donald Trump posted on social media earlier this month that he would be ending the program "immediately." The \$2.75 billion program was dedicated to increasing digital skills among several populations, including older Americans, veterans, people with disabilities, anyone living in rural areas, and "members of a racial or ethnic minority group." The cancellation of DEA funding comes nearly a year after Congress [failed](#) to renew funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program, which aimed to increase broadband connectivity in rural communities. Since the end of the Affordable Connectivity Program, a study by internet speed site Ookla found that the internet connectivity rates between urban and rural areas [worsened](#) in 32 states.
- **Texas Poised to Enact Ban on Social Media Use for Minors:** Texas is [poised](#) to enact a ban on social media for minors. If enacted as [written](#), it would bar Texas residents under 18 years old from signing up for and using "a social media platform." It would also require companies to delete a minor's social media account if requested by a parent. If passed, Texas would join Florida, which earlier voted to prohibit children younger than 18 from using social media. Several other states are considering legislation around minors and social media, although they are all expected to face legal challenges.

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- **U.S. Senate Votes to Roll Back California's Ban on New Gas-Powered Vehicles:** The U.S. Senate, using the Congressional Review Act, [voted](#) to block California's plan to ban the sale of new gas-powered vehicles by 2035. The Senate also voted to repeal a rule that half of all new trucks sold in the state be electric by 2035, as well as another limiting the amount of nitrogen oxide emitted by cars and trucks. The move affects 11 other states that had followed California's lead, which combined account for 40% of the auto market. President Donald Trump is expected to sign the repeal. The ruling could hinder EV adoption nationwide. It may also establish a precedent for how the parties may look to roll back future legislation when they're in power.
- **China Enacts First Law Dedicated to Supporting Private Enterprise:** On May 20, China [enacted](#) the Private Economy Promotion Law (PEPL), its first legislation dedicated to supporting the private sector. The law aims to curb arbitrary enforcement practices, such as unwarranted fines and cross-jurisdictional crackdowns by local authorities. It also introduces legal safeguards to protect private firms and hold officials accountable for misconduct. While the PEPL is seen as a positive signal toward improving the business environment, experts caution that its effectiveness depends on consistent implementation and addressing entrenched issues like biased lending and excessive regulation.
- **U.K. Food Logistics and Production Firms Hit by Escalating Cyberattacks:** Peter Green Chilled, a U.K. logistics firm and supplier for major U.K. supermarkets including Tesco, Sainsbury's, and Aldi, [experienced](#) a ransomware attack on 14 May, [disrupting](#) order processing. Transport operations continued, with one supplier reporting that thousands of perishable goods were at risk due to delays. While the company has not confirmed ransom demands or data breaches, the incident highlights increased cyberattacks on the supply chain. Similar attacks recently affected M&S, Co-op, and Harrods, causing service disruptions. The U.K.'s National Crime Agency is investigating possible links between the incidents across the food distribution sector. Separately, Arla Foods [reported](#) a cyberattack at its Upahl, Germany, location, which disrupted production operations and caused severe delivery delays.

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- **Operational Challenges at Newark Liberty International Airport Continue:** Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) [faced](#) significant operational disruptions in May 2025 due to air traffic control issues. A radio frequency outage on May 19 at Philadelphia TRACON, which manages EWR's airspace, lasted two seconds without impacting operations; however, it followed three prior outages since late April, some of which disrupted radar and communications. Severe [staffing shortages](#) and runway construction also worsened delays and cancellations, prompting airlines like United to [cut](#) flights. The FAA issued ground delays to address safety concerns.

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- **U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Highlights Tariff-Driven Supply Shock Risks for 2025:** Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell warned that the U.S. economy may face increased "[supply shocks](#)" due to the Trump administration's tariff policies. Speaking at a Washington, D.C. conference on May 15, Powell noted that the tariffs could lead to higher inflation and potential inventory shortfalls for U.S. companies. Additionally, he indicated that the Federal Reserve is adopting a cautious approach, maintaining the federal funds rate at 4.25% to 4.50%. The warning comes [amid](#) ongoing tariff-induced supply chain disruptions, which have caused inventory shortages and reduced container shipments from China to the U.S. by as much as 60%.
- **U.S. Delays 50% EU Tariff to July Amid Trade Talks:** Following a call with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, U.S. President Donald Trump has [delayed](#) a 50% tariff on EU imports to July 9. This followed Trump's May 23 [announcement](#) of the tariff, [rejecting](#) an EU proposal to remove industrial tariffs, expand U.S. agricultural access, and cooperate on AI, shipbuilding, and energy. In response, the EU has [prepared](#) tariffs on \$23.9 billion of U.S. goods, with potential escalation to \$95 billion. Additionally, Trump [proposed](#) a 25% tariff on foreign smartphones, targeting Apple and Samsung in particular.
- **Vietnam Intensifies Food Safety Enforcement Campaign:** Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Environment [launched](#) a campaign targeting food safety violations, focusing on growth stimulants in fruit production and chemical overuse in food processing. The initiative addresses smuggling, commercial fraud, and [counterfeit goods](#), with inspections targeting high-risk areas. Additionally, a bribery [scandal](#) involving former food safety chief Nguyen Thanh Phong [revealed](#) systemic issues, with officials detained for enabling fake supplement production, undermining consumer safety.
- **EU Plans Russia Sanctions, Poland Flags Baltic Sea Infrastructure Risks:** The European Union is [considering](#) sanctions against Russia, including disconnecting over 20 banks from SWIFT, lowering the G7 oil price cap to [\\$45](#), banning Nord Stream [pipelines](#), and imposing €2.5 billion in trade restrictions. The EU aims to phase out Russian fossil fuels by 2027. These measures, backed by [Germany](#), seek to curb Russia's revenue and technology access. In related news, Poland, a key NATO member, has raised alarms over Baltic Sea [infrastructure](#) risks after a Russian ship's suspicious maneuvers near a Poland-Sweden power cable.

Health

- **Brazil Reports First Bird Flu Case at Poultry Farm Amid Concerns Over U.S. Bird Flu Reporting and Surveillance:** The world's largest poultry exporter, Brazil, [confirmed](#) its first case of bird flu at a poultry farm, prompting major buyers like China, the European Union, and South Korea to suspend imports temporarily. The outbreak was identified on a farm that supplies Vibra

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Foods, which is backed by the U.S. company Tyson Foods. Meanwhile, the U.S. has [reported](#) no new human cases in over three months, despite rising concerns about the spread of bird flu. Experts worry that targeted surveillance and voluntary testing participation by farm workers, a [significant number](#) of whom are immigrants, have dwindled amid the recent [mass layoffs](#) at U.S. health agencies and deportation concerns.

- **FDA Introduces COVID-19 Booster Approval Requirements:** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will [require new clinical trials](#) before approving annual COVID-19 vaccines for healthy people under the age of 65. The policy change effectively limits COVID-19 boosters to people at high risk of serious illness and may impact future vaccine access, as additional studies will be needed for children and most adults. Earlier today, the U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary also [announced](#) that the CDC will stop recommending routine COVID-19 vaccinations for pregnant people and healthy children. The CDC's immunization schedule directly influences insurance coverage for vaccines. Meanwhile, in consultation with the FDA, Moderna [withdrew](#) its licensing submission for a combined flu and COVID-19 vaccine as it awaits "vaccine efficacy data."
- **COVID-19 Cases Rise Across Asia, Prompting Renewed Restrictions in Some Countries:** A resurgence of COVID-19 cases is [sweeping](#) across Asia, prompting health authorities to promote up-to-date vaccinations and boosters for certain populations. Singapore [reported](#) a spike in cases and hospitalizations. Hong Kong saw rates of the virus climb to the highest levels in a year, with a significant number of cases resulting in emergency room visits and hospitalizations. India is also seeing increased cases, with states like [Delhi](#) and [Andhra Pradesh](#) issuing advisories urging mask usage and limiting gatherings, while instructing hospitals to maintain adequate availability of beds. Within the U.S., the CDC has recently [detected](#) cases in multiple states of the same COVID-19 variant circulating in Asia.
- **U.S. Salmonella Outbreak Linked to Cucumbers:** As of May 23, a salmonella outbreak linked to cucumbers from Bedner Growers Inc., distributed by Fresh Start Produce, has [sickened](#) 26 people across 15 states, with nine hospitalizations. The affected cucumbers were sold to [retailers, restaurants, and cruise ships](#) between April 29 and May 19. Bedner Growers initiated a voluntary recall to address the outbreak, which followed a similar [incident](#) in 2024. The onset of the illness usually occurs between 12 to 72 hours after consumption, with symptoms including diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps. The [FDA advises](#) consumers to discard cucumbers of unknown origin and sanitize surfaces that may have been contaminated.
- **CDC Reduces Social Media Engagement and Public Health Alerts:** In recent months, public health officials have voiced concerns about the lack of communication from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC has [significantly reduced](#) its social media presence and external communications, including [Health Alert Network](#) (HAN) advisories, which

have not been distributed since March 2025. Underlying factors, like proposed [budget cuts](#) and [shifting priorities](#) from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), are being cited as potential reasons for the limitation on timely public health information. Critics argue this could [hinder responses to outbreaks](#) like bird flu, measles, and other imminent public health concerns.

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- **Valencia to See Strike, Demonstration Against Government on Thursday:** Multiple unions are [calling](#) for a general strike across Valencia this Thursday, May 29, in an escalation of monthly demonstration actions demanding the resignation of Carlos Mazón, President of the Valencian Government. This week marks seven months since [widespread flooding](#) in late October resulted in the deaths of more than 200 people. In conjunction with the strike, unions and a range of other associations are [organizing](#) a demonstration and march from Town Hall Square to Plaza de la Virgen beginning at 7 pm. Previous related demonstrations have seen large crowds, with attendance [ranging](#) between 80,000 and 130,000.
- **Canada Post Strike Postponed Amid Ongoing Talks, Overtime Ban in Place :** Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) continued negotiations on Sunday, though progress has remained limited. Unionized postal workers refrained from full strike action that was slated to begin last Friday, instead opting for a less disruptive overtime ban. Meanwhile, UPS has [adjusted](#) its services to manage the increased volume during the negotiations, with FedEx also [maintaining](#) its contingency plan. Canada Post [reported](#) late last week that it had experienced a drop in mail and parcel volumes, which they attributed to uncertainty from the labor dispute.
- **Lisbon Airport to be Targeted in Demonstration Against Aviation Industry:** Disruptions are likely at Humberto Delgado International Airport (LIS) and surrounding roadways this coming Sunday during a demonstration against the aviation industry and its impact on climate change. The Climáximo climate justice activist group is calling on supporters to gather at the Rotunda do Relógio at 3 pm before conducting a "[peaceful airport sit-in](#)" during "[peak flight times at Lisbon Airport](#)." An activist [affiliated](#) with Climáximo delayed a short-haul flight between Porto and Lisbon earlier this month.
- **Nationwide Two-Day Strike in Colombia Over Stalled Reforms:** Colombia's Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) and other unions are [calling](#) for a general nationwide strike this Wednesday and Thursday. The strike is in response to Congress not passing a referendum on labor and healthcare reforms. The industrial action aims to pressure Congress to approve these measures, and the unions are also organizing in support of President Gustavo Petro's administration more

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broadly. Demonstration activities are likely in major urban areas in conjunction with the strike. CUT union leadership confirmed they may hold another nationwide strike on June 11.

- **Other Stories We're Watching:** In Mexico, the "Domingo Negro" movement has called for demonstrations across the country on Sunday, June 1 against judicial elections, with the first phase of elections scheduled for the same date. As part of [judicial reforms](#) passed in 2024, the country is transitioning from an appointment-based system to direct elections for federal and state judges, including approximately 1,600 federal positions and nine Supreme Court justices. In **Argentina**, the capital city of Buenos Aires will see another weekly anti-government gathering this Wednesday near the Plaza del Congreso. Security forces cracked down on last week's retiree-led demonstration, and at least 82 people were [injured](#). Police arrested four people, including a photojournalist for Amnesty International, who was later released.

Upcoming Events

- May 26-27: ASEAN Summit (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)
- May 31: UEFA Champions League Final (Munich, Germany)
- June 1: Judicial Elections (Mexico)
- June 1: Presidential Election Run-Off (Poland)
- June 3: Presidential Election (South Korea)
- June 5: General Elections (Burundi)
- June 4-9: Hajj (Mecca, Saudi Arabia)
- June 8-9: Abrogative Referendums (Italy)
- June 14 - July 13: FIFA Club World Cup (United States)
- June 15-17: G7 Summit (Kananaskis, Canada)
- June 24-26: NATO Summit (The Hague, Netherlands)