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Severe Derecho Threat Looms Over Northern Plains

The <u>Storm Prediction Center</u> has issued a Level 4 out of 5 severe storm risk for parts of eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota, with hurricane-force wind gusts capable of causing widespread damage. A broader Level 3 zone, including Pierre and Sioux Falls, may expand eastward to reach the Twin Cities by Monday evening. A powerful line of thunderstorms is expected to form, potentially evolving into a derecho—a long-lived, fast-moving storm system known for producing extensive wind damage. This system could bring down trees, damage roofs, and topple power lines, with tornadoes also possible. By late afternoon, storms are forecast to rapidly intensify into a large cluster sweeping eastward into central and eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. At the time of reporting, much of eastern Minnesota, northern lowa, and western Wisconsin faced a Level 2 risk for scattered wind gusts over 60 mph. However, updated model data indicates the potential for stronger gusts of 60–80+ mph between 8 pm and 1 am. Residents in higher-risk areas should take precautions now, including securing outdoor items, staying away from windows, and preparing for potential long-term power outages.

EU, U.S. Reach Agreement on Tariffs, but Many Questions Remain

The European Union and the United States <u>reached</u> an agreement that will see a 15% tariff applied to nearly all goods entering the U.S. from the bloc. Neither side has released the official text of the deal as of this writing, but the broad outlines shared with the media describe a deal that averts the worst impacts of a possible trade war between the U.S. and its <u>largest trading partner</u> and provides some clarity for businesses following months of uncertainty. It also <u>avoids</u> widening existing fissures between

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Europe and the U.S., as many on the continent continue to regard Washington as key to any potential peace deal between Ukraine and Russia. However, with **concerns** that the tariffs will dampen growth in the EU and political figures from several countries already criticizing the agreement, an uptick in both demonstration activity and political instability appears likely.

While the headline numbers provide some relief, much remains to be worked out, and the deal must still be agreed upon by the 27 members of the EU—many of which will face varying impacts depending on their primary exports—providing ample room for continued negotiation and complications going forward. In particular, substantial questions remain for Ireland, a global pharmaceutical hub.. As of today, pharmaceuticals are not subject to additional levies, pending the outcome of a Section 232 investigation by the U.S. to determine whether such imports threaten national security. However, U.S. officials have indicated that they are also likely to be subject to a 15% tariff. Other major question marks remain around steel and aluminum, microchips, wine and spirits, lumber, copper, aerospace, and a variety of other goods.

British Hotels Targeted by Protest Activity Related to Immigration

A year on from the <u>Southport riots</u>, anti-migrant sentiment remains high across the United Kingdom. The latest wave of anti-migrant demonstrations began at the Bell Hotel in Epping, where an asylum seeker was living when he was <u>charged</u> with sexually assaulting a minor. Reporting from the <u>Independent</u> reports that two members of the far-right Homeland Party have been involved in organizing the Epping hotel demonstrations online.

Further demonstrations are expected, with at least one planned at the Thistle City Barbican Hotel in London on Saturday, following reports <u>alleging</u> that dozens of criminal charges have been brought against hotel residents. Anti-migrant group Patriots of Britain plans to gather at the hotel at 1 pm, while activist group Stand Up To Racism is organizing a counterdemonstration.

Additional demonstrations near hotels are likely in the coming weeks. The Great British National Protest group has called for peaceful, public demonstrations outside every single hotel across the U.K. that is housing illegal immigrants." The group is providing followers with a link to a website that purportedly allows them to find out if there is a "migrant hotel" near them. British authorities have <u>responded</u> to the wave of demonstrations by creating a new policing unit to monitor signs of anti-migrant disorder on social media.

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Thailand and Cambodia Agree to Ceasefire After Border Conflict Displaces Communities; Land Borders Remain Closed

Thai and Cambodian authorities agreed to an "immediate and unconditional ceasefire" that came into effect at midnight local time on July 28, ending five days of fighting that displaced over 300,000 people. The clashes followed a July 23 landmine incident that Thai authorities blamed on Cambodian soldiers placing explosives on Thai territory, which spiraled into a broader conflict that caused at least 36 deaths, saw the countries' shared land border closed indefinitely, and led to military strikes that damaged key infrastructure in both countries.

How long the ceasefire will hold remains unclear. Thai authorities continue to accuse Cambodia of provoking the conflict, with Health Minister Somsak Thepsuthin **saying** that the shelling of a hospital in the Surin province should be considered a "war crime" and acting Thai Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai expressing doubts over Cambodia's sincerity. However, Phumtham later **expressed confidence** that the ceasefire would be carried out in good faith by both sides. Calls for peace from **China**, the **United States**, and other powers are also bolstering hopes for a durable halt to the fighting.

Despite the ceasefire, the two countries' shared border remains closed. A <u>meeting</u> of the Thailand-Cambodia General Border Committee is scheduled to be held in Cambodia on August 4, and meetings between military commanders from both sides are set to begin on July 29. The outcomes of these meetings, in addition to the continued durability of the ceasefire, will likely be taken into consideration before authorities reopen land border crossings. Additionally, many border communities remain <u>deserted</u>, with ordinary border region services unlikely to resume until displaced residents return. For further details on the impacts of the conflict, see AlertMedia's <u>Situation Report</u>.

Climate and Natural Hazards

• U.S. Heat Wave to Moderate by Late Week: Nearly half the country is under Heat Advisories and Extreme Heat Warnings. In Florida, while heat and humidity are commonplace, it is rare for actual temperatures to reach 100°F. Tampa reached the century mark for the first time on Sunday, and through Tuesday, more records will be challenged across Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, Alabama, and Mississippi. While much of the East has been sweltering, there are signs of relief. Between Wednesday and Sunday, a weak cold front will dip southward from the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes into the Gulf Coast. In response, daily high temperatures across the

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Great Lakes, Ohio Valley, and Northeast will drop into the 70s, while parts of the Southeast will see temperatures drop into the upper 80s and lower 90s.

- Pacific Tropics Stay Active; Atlantic Remains Quiet: The Gulf, Caribbean, and Atlantic look to remain quiet through the first couple of days of August. Historically, 91% of hurricane activity comes after this period. In the East Pacific, the Hurricane Center is tracking four systems, but none are expected to directly threaten land. In the West Pacific, Typhoon Krosa is turning out to sea. Tropical Storm Co-May is expected to make landfall near Shanghai on Tuesday. Flooding rainfall will be the biggest hazard, with localized areas likely to receive over 200 mm (8 in) of rain through mid-week.
- Catastrophic Floods Hit Northern China: Flooding and landslides across northern and central China have killed at least four people, with the death toll likely to rise. Record rainfall has hit northern Beijing and surrounding provinces, and at least 41 rivers have already overflowed. In Miyun, a suburban area of Beijing, over 4,400 residents were evacuated due to flash floods. Forecast data indicates the worst of the rain is likely over, though an additional 50-100 mm (2-4 in) of rain could impact Beijing and northeastern Chinese provinces through Tuesday, which will exacerbate hazards in areas already affected by flooding and landslides.
- **Europe Hit by Fires and Floods:** Over the last week, southeast Europe—including southern Italy, Greece, and Türkiye—has been hit by a record-breaking heat wave and subsequent <u>wildfire outbreaks</u>. Severe fire weather conditions are likely through mid-week across Greece and Türkiye, which set a record Friday for its <u>all-time highest temperature</u>. Wednesday through Sunday, temperatures will normalize from west to east, though elevated fire danger will remain. Meanwhile, areas farther west will be dealing with the opposite problem, as excess rainfall and scattered flash flooding are expected to threaten central and eastern Italy, the northern Balkans, and parts of Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland through mid-week.

Worldwide

• U.S. Lowers Planned Tariff on Japanese Goods to 15%: Just weeks after the Trump administration announced plans to charge a 25% tariff on goods imported from Japan beginning on August 1, that rate has been cut to 15% following further negotiations. The new agreement will also provide increased access to the Japanese market for U.S. automakers and rice traders, and requires Japanese investment of US\$550 billion into the U.S. economy. The reduced rate for an important supplier of imported cars, machinery, electronics, and other goods could help temper fears about the potential future impact of the new U.S. tariff agenda on the economy and

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raise hopes that other rates set to come into effect on August 1 could be reduced further as a result of ongoing negotiations.

- Rising Cartel Use of Drones Threatening U.S.-Mexico Border Region: United States
 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials warn that Mexican cartels are using drones to
 conduct surveillance and carry illicit shipments across the U.S. border, with one official warning
 that as many as 60,000 such operations were observed during H2 2024 alone. Administration
 officials also expressed concerns that cartels could use what they have learned from intergroup
 drone wars to target U.S.-based civilians or law enforcement officials in the border region. The
 threat has forced U.S. officials to invest in more robust and sophisticated defense systems at the
 border. However, despite these claims, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum insists that no
 significant increase in cartels' use of drones at the border has been recorded, with Navy Secretary
 Raymundo Morales Angeles adding that there are no confirmed cases of cartels using drones for
 criminal purposes at the border.
- Ukraine Hit by Drone Attacks as U.S. Imposes Two-Week Peace Deal Timeline: U.S. President
 Trump shortened the deadline for Russia to make progress on a peace agreement with Ukraine,
 threatening further sanctions and tariffs if progress is not made within two weeks. The
 comments, made during Trump's visit to Scotland, come after an overnight attack on a Kyiv
 apartment building injured eight people. On Sunday, Ukrainian drone attacks forced St
 Petersburg's Pulkovo airport to close and the city's Navy Day parade to be canceled over "security
 concerns."
- French Cities Impose Curfews Amid Surge in Drug Violence: Several French cities have imposed night- time curfews for minors to counter rising drug-related violence and the growing exploitation of youth by trafficking networks. In Nîmes, authorities issued a curfew for minors under 16 following multiple shootings, while Béziers and Limoges have expanded similar measures after continued unrest. The violence reflects the spread of gang activity beyond Marseille, <a href="https://limitstorically-instorical
- Mass Stabbing Attack Shakes Michigan Beach Town: Michigan authorities are investigating a
 mass stabbing incident that left 11 people injured at a Walmart in Traverse City. The suspect, a
 42-year-old man from Afton, Michigan, reportedly entered the Walmart approximately 30
 minutes before beginning to attack shoppers and staff in the checkout area with a foldable knife.
 The suspect now faces terrorism and assault charges. Grand Traverse County Sheriff Michael

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Shea <u>stated</u> on Sunday that the attacks were random and that the suspect acted alone. Traverse City, a small town on Lake Michigan's Grand Traverse Bay, is a popular summer tourist destination.

Cyber and Regulatory

- Microsoft Patches Critical SharePoint Vulnerabilities Exploited by Cyber Attackers: Microsoft issued an emergency fix on July 22 to address critical vulnerabilities in SharePoint software, including CVE-2025- 49706 and CVE-2025-49704, enabling unauthorized access to systems and remote code execution. The vulnerability affects SharePoint Server 2019, Subscription Edition, and earlier versions like SharePoint Server 2016, while SharePoint Online is not affected. Exploits have impacted over 400 organizations globally, including U.S. government agencies, with attackers deploying ransomware like Warlock and gaining access to SharePoint content. Microsoft is working on comprehensive updates, but is also urging businesses to apply mitigation strategies such as enabling AMSI and using Microsoft Defender. The situation may evolve with the discovery of new vulnerabilities, such as CVE-2025-53770, which adds further urgency to patching and ongoing monitoring for organizations.
- Chinese Hackers Target U.S. Nuclear Agency; Taiwanese Semiconductors Also See Uptick in Attacks: The recent Microsoft SharePoint breach appears connected to Chinese state-linked hackers, among whose targets were "critical infrastructure organizations," including the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration. Though no classified data was stolen, the intrusion underscored persistent risks to national security infrastructure. Simultaneously, Taiwan's semiconductor industry has seen a sharp rise in cyber espionage attributed to Chinese groups. Analysts say the campaigns reflect China's dual pursuit of technological dominance and geopolitical leverage across critical sectors.
- U.S. Imposes Flight Restrictions Amid Mexico Aviation Dispute: The Trump administration imposed new restrictions on Mexican airlines and proposed ending the Delta-Aeromexico partnership, citing concerns over Mexico's management of airport access in Mexico City. All Mexican passenger, cargo, and charter airlines are required to submit flight schedules to the U.S. Department of Transportation for approval until U.S. officials determine that Mexico's aviation policies comply with bilateral agreements. The dispute stems from Mexico's decision to move cargo operations and reduce passenger slots at Benito Juárez International Airport, directing traffic to the newer Felipe Ángeles International Airport. Delta and Aeromexico, whose joint venture supports nearly two dozen routes and an estimated \$800 million in economic activity,

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have requested an extension to respond. The broader impact of these measures on U.S.-Mexico <u>trade relations</u> and ongoing <u>tariff</u> negotiations remains uncertain.

- Apple and Google Face Antitrust Scrutiny in U.K., Meta to End Political Ads in EU: Britain's
 Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is targeting Apple and Google with heightened
 antitrust scrutiny, proposing to label their mobile ecosystems with "strategic market status"
 under the U.K.'s new digital markets regime. The CMA highlighted concerns surrounding the U.S.
 tech giants' "effective duopoly" of their mobile platforms in the U.K. In a parallel move, Meta
 announced it will completely ban political advertisements across the European Union starting
 October this year. Citing legal complexity and uncertainty under the EU's new Transparency and
 Targeting of Political Advertising law, the company said this was a reluctant but necessary step.
- Allianz Life Insurance Latest Victim of Recent Wave of Cyberattacks on Insurance
 Companies: On Saturday, Allianz Life Insurance Company confirmed it suffered a breach on July
 16, compromising the personal information of the "majority" of its 1.4 million customers, financial
 professionals, and employees. The intrusion occurred via social engineering directed at a third party, cloud-based platform, not Allianz Life's internal systems. The company stated it notified the
 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and that the breach only involves Allianz Life in the U.S. and
 no other subsidiaries of its German parent company, Allianz SE. The breach was the latest amid a
 wave of attacks targeting insurance companies, including many that were attributed to the
 Scattered Spider group.

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- U.S. Automakers, Unions United in Dissatisfaction With New Japanese Car Tariffs: Both the United Auto Workers (UAW), the largest American auto workers' union, and the American Automotive Policy Council (AAPC), a U.S. automakers' interest group, have announced their dissatisfaction with the Trump administration's decision to reduce tariffs on imported Japanese cars to 15% from a previously- threatened 25%. The policy change will expose "cars made by U.S. companies with engines and transmissions that come from Canada and Mexico" to 25% tariffs, putting them at a disadvantage to Japanese imports built with no U.S.-made components. While the new trade deal also includes "incentives to open up the Japanese market to American cars," the American automakers expect to only see a limited increase in their overall sales.
- Australia Ends Restrictions on U.S. Beef Thanks to Improved Safety Practices: Australia will reduce longstanding restrictions on U.S. beef imports, ending a policy that U.S. President Donald Trump described as a "ban" imposed in 2003 after a mad cow disease outbreak. The decision follows a review that found that U.S. cattle farmers had strengthened their beef safety practices,

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though Australian opposition politicians believe the move could be an effort to reduce trade tensions with the U.S. The Australian government emphasized that national safety standards were not compromised. Despite the change, Australian demand for U.S. beef is expected to remain low due to several challenges, including a weak exchange rate and high prices for U.S. beef.

- New Trade Agreement Opens British Market to Duty-Free Indian Imports: Indian Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and British Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds signed a bilateral trade agreement that the two countries finalized in May, with the deal expected to increase bilateral trade by as much as US\$34 billion per year. The deal will provide "approximately 99% of Indian exports, covering nearly 100% of trade value" with duty-free access to the U.K. market, while India's average tariff on British imports will be reduced from about 15% to 3%. British clean energy, professional and financial services, and auto industry companies are among the most likely to benefit, alongside household brands and medical device manufacturers.
- Fiber Optic Cables Increasingly Important to Data Centers as Industry Grows: Advances in fiber optic cable technology allow cutting-edge cables to carry data 50% faster than traditional means, an increasingly desirable characteristic as data centers struggle to find suitable real estate. In an increasingly crowded industry that is experiencing its boom amid increased demand stemming from Artificial Intelligence, the ability to build further away from population centers without sacrificing performance is reinvigorating interest in fiber cable technology. One cable company CEO called the increased cost of the latest hollow-core fiber optic cable a "rounding error" when compared to the savings derived from "being able to turn a data center on six months to a year earlier" due to the increased flexibility.
- Inadequate Risk Preparedness Across Al Industry Could Lead to Technology's Abuse: Two recent reports warn that major Artificial Intelligence (AI) firms, including Meta and OpenAI, are operating with "worrying gaps on existential risk," raising concerns that such platforms could become involved in the planning of cyberattacks, bioterrorism, or other threats to the public. For example, just three (Anthropic, Google DeepMind, and OpenAI) of the seven firms evaluated in one study were found to be conducting "substantive testing for dangerous capabilities." In "an unregulated industry where competitive pressures...far outpace safety infrastructure and norms," concern is growing that a lack of sufficient self- policing could provide bad actors with access to powerful technology that helps to advance their goals.

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Health

- WHO Raises Concern About Mosquito-Borne Illness: A global surge in cases of the Chikungunya virus, which can cause debilitating pain and other symptoms that impact daily life, is inspiring the World Health Organization (WHO) to call for efforts to prevent an epidemic. The disease, spread by the same family of mosquito species that transmits Dengue and Zika, has been spreading rapidly in several of the same countries where a global <u>outbreak</u> originated in the mid-2000s. The WHO believes that about 5.6 billion people in nearly 120 countries are at risk of contracting Chikungunya, with countries across Africa and Asia already reporting epidemic-level local infections.
- New Court Opinion Supports Countries' Rights to Sue Over Climate Change: The International Court of Justice's (ICJ) July 23 advisory opinion, "Obligations of States in Respect of Climate Change," could pave the way for countries to hold one another legally responsible for the impacts of high greenhouse gas emissions and other practices that contribute to the warming of the planet. Lawyers interviewed by BBC News believe the non-binding development, which called climate change an "existential threat to humanity," could be used as early as in cases seeking compensation from the countries responsible for the greatest greenhouse gas emissions.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Reverses Decision Central to 'All Major Climate Regulations': The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reportedly submitted a proposal to the White House that could undermine the legal foundation for regulating everything from personal vehicles to manufacturers because their greenhouse gas emissions endanger public health. The proposal is said to challenge the "EPA's legal authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, not the scientific basis for it," and falls in line with EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin's belief that the organization has the "authority but not an obligation" to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. The Trump administration hopes to roll back several regulations enforced by the EPA and the Department of Transportation, which supporters consider to "hinder economic development."
- Measles Detected in Austin Area Wastewater as Texas Fights Outbreak: Amid Texas's worst
 measles outbreak since 2000, state health authorities have announced that traces of the disease
 were found in Travis County wastewater samples, suggesting that someone either living in or
 traveling through Austin could be infected with the highly contagious disease. At least 762 cases
 have been reported across the state since late January, leading to nearly 100 hospitalizations and
 two fatalities of unvaccinated children. Around two-thirds of cases have been reported in children
 under the age of 18, with most cases being reported in the vicinity of Gaines County in West

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Texas. Authorities <u>warn</u> that measles patients are infectious from four days before the onset of the characteristic measles rash to four days after.

• Long Island Faces 'Imminent Public Health Threat' From Rabies: Rapidly-rising rates of rabies in animals across Nassau County, New York—after going from 2016 to mid-2024 without reporting a single case—led public health officials to declare the disease an "imminent public health threat" due to the potential for transmission to humans. The disease, which spreads through bites and scratches from infected animals and for which there is no cure, has been found in raccoons and feral cats at 15 different sites across the county. Authorities are responding to the outbreak by distributing "medication pellets and packets that are designed to smell and look like foods" in places frequented by animals in hopes of bringing the disease under control, though a similar program in neighboring New York City was reportedly shelved, raising concerns about the problem spreading further.

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- Anti-Trump Organizations Announce Nationwide 'Rage Against the Regime' Protests: The
 activist group 50501 (short for "50 Protests, 50 States, One Movement") has announced a new
 National Day of Action titled "Rage Against the Regime." scheduled for Saturday, August 2.
 Targeting the Trump administration, the event includes 260 demonstrations planned so far
 across nearly every state, with more likely to be announced over the coming days. Protest
 materials, including fliers denouncing Trump and ICE, reflect widespread frustration with
 immigration policies and perceived assaults on civil liberties and democratic norms. Following
 major mobilizations like "No Kings" and "Hands Off," which drew millions nationwide, 50501
 continues to stress non-violence, although past events have led to incidents such as a fatal
 shooting in Salt Lake City.
- Nationwide Brazilian Demonstrations Target Lula, Moraes, and the Supreme Federal Court: On August 3, Brazil will see nationwide demonstrations organized by various groups. In Cuiabá, the "Reaja Brasil" movement led by Councilman Ranalli will gather at 4 pm at Choppão Square to support former President Jair Bolsonaro and express concerns about the current administration of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the Supreme Federal Court (STF), and Prosecutor General Paulo Gonet. In Maceió, the Reforma Brazil Movement will gather at 9:30 am in the Jaraguá parking lot to demonstrate against STF Justice Alexandre de Moraes. Manaus will also see a demonstration against Moraes in Ponta Negra at 4 pm. Sparked by recent judicial refusing to grant permission. Bąkiewicz criticized the decision not to permit his march as politically motivated, and has since announced that the march will go ahead, raising concerns





that it will turn into a "counter-march." The Ruch Obrony Granic, another group that Bąkiewicz is affiliated with, has been holding demonstrations against immigration and their own "border patrols."

- Ukraine Reverses Course on Legislation After First Major Demonstrations Since Russian Invasion: Changes to Ukrainian anti-corruption legislation that detractors argue will undermine the independence of important democratic institutions have inspired thousands of demonstrators to attend protests in Dnipro, Kyiv, Lviv, Odessa, and other cities across the country over the past week. The legislation also caused the European Union to withhold approximately US\$1.7 billion over concerns about the likely impact on the country's corruption-fighting capabilities, with the combined backlash likely influencing President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's attempt to roll back the changes. The country's legislature (the Verkhovna Rada) will now decide the fate of the controversial legislation. Debate is expected to begin by Thursday. orders and political tensions, additional demonstrations are likely across the country on Sunday and in the near future.
- Imran Khan Supporters Prepare for Upcoming Demonstrations in Pakistan, Across Diaspora: Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party is calling for protests to take place across Pakistan on August 5. The United Kingdom chapter of the PTI is also organizing a protest outside 10 Downing Street on August 3 to demand Khan's immediate release. Previous demonstrations by Khan's supporters have attracted large crowds, with Pakistani authorities suspending mobile and internet services, blocking highways, and banning gatherings to deter protesters from marching on Islamabad late last year. Next week's demonstrations are not expected to reach the scale of last year's march to Islamabad; however, the awareness campaign launched ahead of August 5 could result in increased participation in both Pakistan and across the wider diaspora.
- Warsaw Uprising Commemorations to Take Place Friday, Independence Rota Association Plans March :

Poland marked the 80th anniversary of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising last year, with official events scheduled for this year's commemoration. The Independence Rota Association, led by activist Robert Bąkiewicz, is organizing a march beginning at the Dmowski Rondo at 5 pm, despite Polish authorities

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Upcoming Events

- July 3-August 9: Amarnath Yatra (India)
- July 28-29: Fiestas Patrias (Peru)
- July 28-30: Taxi Drivers' Strike (Angola)
- July 31: United Nations ECOSOC Session (New York City, NY)
- August 1: New Tariffs Become Effective (United States)
- August 5: July Mass Uprising Day (Bangladesh)
- August 5: Opposition Protests (Pakistan)
- August 14: Independence Day (Pakistan)
- August 15: Independence Day (India)
- August 17: Independence Day (Indonesia)
- August 17: General Elections (Bolivia)
- August 21: Ninoy Aquino Day (Philippines)
- August 24: Independence Day (Ukraine)
- August 24-September 7: U.S. Open Tennis Tournament (New York City, NY)
- August 25: Day of Songun (North Korea)