



August 12, 2025

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Top Stories

First 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Likely This Week

A well-defined area of unsettled weather off the west coast of Africa has been upgraded to [Erin](#), the fifth named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season ([satellite](#)). Atmospheric and ocean conditions ahead of the system appear highly favorable, and forecast models strongly suggest it could intensify into the season's first hurricane by Wednesday or Thursday, August 13 or 14. Initial intensity forecasts from the [National Hurricane Center](#) indicate Erin could become a powerful Category Three storm by Friday. Historically, the first hurricane forms around August 11, so while this year is only slightly behind the average, the latter half of August typically marks a noticeable uptick in activity.

While Erin is something for the U.S. and British Virgin Islands to monitor, current model guidance keeps the potential major hurricane about 300–400 miles north of the nearest islands by Saturday, August 16. For now, the main impacts are expected to be increased waves and swells along local beaches. Longer-range forecasts are less certain, but some models indicate a possible weakness in the Atlantic high-pressure system that could allow the storm to turn northward, potentially near or just west of Bermuda, between August 18 and 20.

No immediate landfall threats are expected after this system passes. However, both historical trends and seasonal outlooks, which call for average to slightly above-average activity, suggest that this could be just one of at least two or more named storm threats before the end of the month.

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Federal Agencies, National Guard to Bolster Washington, D.C. Law Enforcement

U.S. President Donald Trump [took direct control](#) of the Metropolitan Police of Washington, D.C. and ordered the deployment of 800 National Guard troops to the city to address what he considers to be rampant street-level crime. The move follows a weekend operation in which 450 members of various federal agencies were ordered to assist in [security checks](#) and other patrol-based policing in the U.S. capital. About 120 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents have also been assigned to [nighttime foot patrols](#) in the city.

The deployment comes at a challenging time for Washington officials. Violent crime rates have hit a [30-year low](#) and other [crime metrics](#) have also improved, but persistent [youth criminality](#) has been difficult to rein in, [prompting](#) the city to introduce a curfew for minors. How impactful the planned deployment will be remains unclear, as potential [skillset mismatches](#) could limit the effectiveness of federal investigators conducting foot patrols.

The National Guard will likely be even more limited in its mandate, with members [not expected](#) to have the authority to make arrests. They are instead expected to function in a support capacity to allow qualified law enforcement to increase the security presence on the city's streets. The use of federal agencies, a related push to relocate unhoused individuals, and Trump's repeated suggestions of a [federal takeover](#) may also lead to an uptick in demonstration activity, with [reports of demonstrations](#) emerging almost immediately after the National Guard deployment was announced.

While announcing his decision to take control of the DC police, Trump also threatened to deploy the military to other locations that he claimed were experiencing high crime rates, including Chicago. Such efforts, both in Washington and elsewhere, are likely to lead to increased demonstration activity.

Climate and Natural Hazards

- **Rapid Wildfire Growth in Colorado:** The Lee Fire in Rio Blanco County, northwest Colorado, has become the state's [fifth-largest wildfire on record](#). As of early Monday, the fire stood at 113,378 acres with 7% containment, according to [local fire officials](#). The fire has forced several evacuations, including [Rifle Correctional Center](#).
- **Extreme Flooding Hits Japan:** Torrential rain in Japan's Kyushu region has triggered severe flooding and landslides, forcing evacuation advisories for over [three million people](#), including hundreds of thousands under the highest warning level. Kumamoto prefecture has received over

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379mm (14.9 in) of rain in a single day, with rivers overflowing, streets submerged, homes damaged, and [multiple people missing](#). Three additional people are [missing](#) in Fukuoka prefecture. Rescue efforts are ongoing, with landslide and flooding risks remaining high due to saturated ground despite a downgrade in the rain alert. The disaster has disrupted high-speed rail services during the busy Obon holiday travel period, with authorities urging residents to take immediate safety measures. The number of [Emergency Rain Warnings](#) has begun to decrease, but additional heavy rain will continue through Tuesday morning local time.

- **Taiwan Typhoon Wednesday:** The [U.S. Joint Typhoon Warning Center](#) and [Taiwan Central Weather Bureau](#) expect Tropical Storm Podul to strengthen into a minimal typhoon (hurricane) before striking Taiwan's East Coast late Wednesday local time. Model guidance initially indicated a potentially stronger typhoon landfall last week, but this has since backed off. This is still a system to watch, with widespread impacts and disruptions likely by mid-week. Afterward, tropical storm conditions and intense rainfall will continue westward, likely impacting mainland China somewhere between Jieyang, eastern Guangdong, and Quanzhou, southern Fujian, on Thursday and Friday, August 14 and 15.
- **Western Europe Heat Wave:** [Southwest France](#) is enduring its second heat wave of the summer, with temperatures reaching 43°C in Charente and Aude, prompting France's highest [red alert in 12 departments](#) and orange warnings in 41 more, plus Andorra. In Aude, firefighters are monitoring a contained [wildfire](#) that burned 16,000 hectares and may smolder for weeks. The extreme heat, expected to last through the August 15 holiday weekend, has emptied café terraces, shuttered streets, and worsened air quality in several regions, including Marseille and Paris, triggering pollution alerts, traffic restrictions, and public health warnings to limit outdoor activity. While France is currently the epicenter, the broader regional heat wave is expected to continue from Portugal and Spain northward into much of the United Kingdom and eastward through Germany, Slovakia, and Hungary throughout the week.
- **Türkiye Hit by Strong Earthquake:** A [6.1 magnitude earthquake](#) struck near Bigadiç, Türkiye, on Sunday, causing significant damage in the Sındırgı District of Balıkesir Province. The shallow quake, at a depth of 11 km, was felt as far away as Istanbul, resulted in one death, 52 injuries, and destruction of 16 buildings across 68 neighborhoods, with additional collapses in Golcuk.
- **Historic Rain Amounts Hit Wisconsin:** Severe storms over the weekend brought over 10 inches of rain and severe flooding to [Milwaukee](#). [Water rescues](#) were conducted and officials declared a local state of emergency. There are no reports of casualties. Severe storms and flooding caused over 59,000 customers to lose power Sunday morning, with nearly 5,000 We Energies customers still without electricity as of Monday morning. Cleanup and damage assessments are ongoing.

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- **Florida's Sanibel Island Experiences Flooding:** Milwaukee wasn't the only area hit by extreme rain and [flooding](#) over the weekend, with [over 11 inches of rain](#) measured on Sanibel Island. Widespread [street flooding](#) was the primary impact.

Worldwide

- **Russian Drone Incursion Sparks Lithuania to Request NATO Assistance:** Lithuania's leaders are asking NATO for help enhancing air defense capabilities after two Russian drones [landed](#) on the Baltic state's territory in July. While Lithuanian Defense Minister Dovilė Šakalienė [stated](#) that they do not believe Russia deliberately launched the drones into NATO territory, the incursions could be used to test military readiness and provoke a reaction from NATO. Both drones [entered](#) Lithuanian airspace from Belarus, raising concerns of Belarus' increasing [integration](#) with Russia's military objectives ahead of the upcoming "[Zapad-2025](#)" Russian-Belarusian military exercises, which are scheduled for September. Meanwhile, Belarus is expected to pass a [bill](#) that would make it easier to impose martial law, according to [Ukrainian media](#).
- **New India-Philippines Strategic Partnership Seen as Challenge to China:** A new [strategic partnership](#) between India and the Philippines on defense, maritime cooperation, and trade is expected to lead to increased cooperation in areas such as tourism, space technologies, and the digital economy. It is also likely to lead to increased security cooperation in the [South China Sea](#), where the Philippines has been [struggling to defend](#) its claims to several disputed territories also claimed by China. The partnership with India, which is also engaged in a territorial dispute with China, is critically important as tensions with China [continue to rise](#) and the U.S. commitment to the region is [increasingly uncertain](#).
- **Tamaulipas Prosecutor Killed Amid Probes Into Cartel Fuel Theft:** In the border city of Reynosa, armed men [killed](#) Ernesto Cuitláhuac Vázquez Reyna, a delegate for Mexico's Attorney General's Office. Authorities [suspect](#) the murder was retaliation for his role in major fuel theft ([Huachicol](#)) investigations. It marks the latest in a [series of attacks](#) on public officials and business leaders across Tamaulipas state. The attack also [indicates](#) a strategic alliance between the Gulf Cartel's Metros factions and the Jalisco New Generation (CJNG), which the DEA had previously [identified](#) in its 2025 National Drug Threat Assessment. Vázquez's killing comes after U.S. President Donald Trump [reportedly](#) ordered the Pentagon to begin using military force against some Latin American drug cartels and as the U.S. and Mexico continue [negotiations](#) around a security deal.

Cyber and Regulatory

- **Chinese Critical Mineral Export Limits Impacting Western Military Supply Chains:** China is [restricting](#) exports of critical minerals and rare earth elements vital to Western defense technologies, disrupting military supply chains. These tightened controls are creating production delays, price spikes, and concerns over [ongoing U.S. reliance](#) on Chinese suppliers. China processes around 90% of the world's rare earths, and many of the materials used by U.S. defense manufacturers are not economically viable to source elsewhere. China has previously [banned](#) sales of germanium, gallium, and antimony exports to the U.S.—materials used to harden lead projectiles and to build infrared sensors. The export controls highlight the still-limited global availability of critical materials.
- **Japanese Government, Businesses Increase Scrutiny of Cybersecurity Amid Increase in Cyberattacks:** Amid an increase in cyberattacks targeting Japanese companies, chipmaker Kioxia is [reassessing](#) contracts with suppliers showing weak security, warning that their performance must improve or they risk losing business. Kioxia's move is in step with a broader effort by Japanese companies to implement similar protocols. Earlier this year, the Japanese government [passed](#) the Active Cyber Defense Act. When it takes effect in 2026, it will empower authorities to intercept foreign digital threats, coordinate with industry, and neutralize hostile servers, shifting from a "passive" to a "pre-emptive" posture. The government also plans to roll out a program to rank companies by their cybersecurity measures, which could encourage further investments in cyber-defenses.
- **Newly Discovered Dell Laptop Flaws Could Let Hackers Bypass Windows Login:** Researchers have [discovered](#) serious security flaws in over 100 Dell laptop models that could allow hackers to [bypass](#) the Windows login screen, install malware, manipulate biometrics, or take full control of the system. The vulnerabilities affect Broadcom's ControlVault, a special security chip used in security-focused laptops, which are designed to protect sensitive data and verify users during login. In some cases, hackers can exploit the vulnerabilities to install malware that remains on the system even if the entire operating system is wiped and reinstalled.
- **Google Targeted in Salesforce Breach Impacting Smaller Businesses:** Google [revealed](#) that threat actors breached its Salesforce database containing information for small and medium-sized businesses, amid a broader campaign by ShinyHunters targeting major companies like Adidas, Allianz Life, Qantas, and Louis Vuitton. Google said threat group UNC6040 was responsible for the initial breach, while extortion activity was [linked](#) to UNC6240, operating under the ShinyHunters alias. The attackers accessed data briefly before being cut off, stealing mostly basic, publicly available information. ShinyHunters, known for social engineering and

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voice phishing tactics, has at times demanded bitcoin ransoms months after initial access. The group is suspected to have merged with Scattered Spider, and escalating tactics such as launching a public [data leak site](#) may intensify pressure on victims.

- **DaVita Confirms Massive Data Breach Impacting Over One Million Patients:** Kidney dialysis company DaVita [confirmed](#) a major data breach following an April ransomware attack on its dialysis labs database, in what researchers say is the third-largest ransomware breach in the U.S. so far this year. The cyberattack, linked to the Interlock ransomware gang, [compromised](#) the personal information of more than one million individuals. The exposed data includes names, Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, lab results, insurance details, and even scanned check images. The company publicly acknowledged the breach on August 1 and will provide affected

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- **U.S. Regulators Cut Red Tape to Unleash 'American Drone Dominance':** The U.S. Department of Transportation's new [proposal](#) to reduce limits on the operation of drone aircraft without a clear line of sight is expected to dramatically improve some business functions at the expense of potential safety risks. Paired with a June 6 Executive Order that could accelerate the timeline for the proposal to become law, the legislation has the potential to [significantly improve](#) a wide array of commercial and industrial functions thanks to the predictability of drone flight. However, the rapid growth in drone use that is likely to follow the change could increase the risk of public safety incidents due either to in-flight accidents or other malfunctions.
- **Turkish Authorities Close Key Waterway for Wildfire Response:** Turkish authorities were forced to [close the Dardanelles Strait](#), a [key maritime passage](#) connecting western Asia with the Atlantic, to allow firefighters uninhibited access to its waters for their effort to contain a wildfire in nearby Çanakkale. While the fire was [brought under control](#) on August 9, the strait did not [fully reopen](#) until August 11. The incident demonstrates the scale of disruptions that can stem from emergency responses to increasingly frequent extreme weather events or natural disasters. With Türkiye experiencing its [hottest July](#) in decades, the country could face further [fires](#).
- **Israeli Demonstrations Increasingly Disruptive to Travel:** The growing frequency and scale of demonstrations against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's administration are complicating travel in Israel. Protests against the government's [plans to occupy Gaza](#) drew thousands of demonstrators on [August 9](#), leading to blockages of major roads, including Tel Aviv's Ayalon Highway. Separately, the rising pressure on Israel's ultra-orthodox community, which is being

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[required to participate](#) in the draft for the first time, is leading to increasingly [disruptive](#) demonstrations. A [purported plan](#) for these groups to force a closure at Ben Gurion International Airport some time this week could have a significant impact on both domestic and international air travel, and a threatened August 17 [general strike](#) could further impact public transport and other travel-related activity across the country.

- **Italian Government Pushing Forward With Questionable Bridge Project:** The Italian government is reviving a controversial €13.5 billion (US\$15.73 billion) [project](#) meant to link the island of Sicily with the southern mainland region of Calabria by bridge. By treating the investment as a matter of national security, the project will count toward Italy's mandatory defense spending as a member of NATO. While it was originally intended to increase economic activity in some of Italy's poorest regions, the plan is drawing [opposition](#) due to concerns over its potential impact on other regional infrastructure, repeated delays and mismanagement, and the wisdom of the investment at a time when other long-needed infrastructure projects are left unfunded across the region.
- **Guinea Increases Control of Bauxite Resources:** Recent steps taken by Guinea to increase the government's control over the country's growing bauxite sector could impact global supplies of aluminum and gallium. With H1 2025 bauxite [exports surging 36%](#) over the same period of 2024, the country's [new mandate](#) that 50% of those shipments be carried on Guinean-flagged vessels will increase revenue and provides Guinean authorities with greater control over natural resource logistics. Meanwhile, the August 4 [revocation](#) of Emirati-owned miner GAC's operating license and nationalization of its assets is likely to draw legal challenges and spark concern among other investors in the sector, all potentially impacting bauxite exports.

Health

- **China Introduces Strict Measures to Battle Chikungunya Outbreak:** China is [ramping](#) up some of the same control measures used during the COVID-19 pandemic as it battles a growing outbreak of the mosquito-borne viral disease chikungunya in southern Guangdong province, particularly in Foshan city. Efforts include [draining](#) all standing water, sending those with the disease to [quarantine wards](#), [tracking](#) those who purchase certain medications (including ibuprofen), mass testing, and sharing of travel history. While there are no indications as of yet that Chinese officials are considering extensive lockdowns, those who do not follow regulations may face [fines](#) or criminal charges, and there has been at least [one report](#) of electricity cuts to households for noncompliance. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has [issued](#) a

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Level 2 Travel Health warning for the outbreak. Worldwide, approximately 240,000 cases have been [reported](#), with the CDC also [warning](#) of elevated risk levels in several other countries, including Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand.

- **HHS Cancels mRNA Vaccine Development Program:** The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [announced](#) it is “wind[ing] down” funding for messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine development programs, [halting](#) work on efforts to create vaccines targeting influenza, COVID-19, and H5N1 avian flu. HHS Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr said that instead, the department would prioritize the development of whole-virus vaccines, asserting that they are safer and more effective. Several public health experts have criticized the decision, saying that whole-virus vaccines can lead to adverse vaccine reactions and take much longer to develop and produce than those made via mRNA technology. A former HHS official commented that halting mRNA investment also [creates](#) a “national security vulnerability,” preventing the United States from responding quickly to other nations’ possible development of biological agents.
- **Shooting Attack on CDC Highlights Violence Targeting Healthcare Workers:** A man who was shot and killed during a shootout with police after [opening fire](#) on the Atlanta headquarters of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and a nearby pharmacy was [reportedly](#) “fixated” on the COVID- 19 vaccine and blamed it for his own physical ailments. The attack highlights an [ongoing global trend](#) of violence targeting healthcare workers. According to [data](#) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics released in 2018, healthcare workers are five times more likely to experience workplace violence than those in other professions, and [account for](#) “73% of all nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses due to violence.” [Polling](#) shows that such violence remains a key concern, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic and heightened skepticism around vaccine safety.
- **Zambia Dismisses U.S. Health Warning in Key Mining Region:** Zambia is [dismissing](#) claims of health risks in the Copperbelt mining province after U.S. Mission Zambia issued an [alert](#) for the region and withdrew personnel from Kitwe, Chambishi, and all areas along the Chambishi Stream and Mwambashi River. U.S. officials said that a waste spill from a Chinese-owned copper mine that [occurred](#) around six months ago has not only resulted in contaminated water and soil, but that the contaminants may also become airborne. Officials have thus far not provided the source indicating that contaminants are still present, and Zambia’s information and media minister [said](#) “the immediate danger to human, animal and plant life has been averted.” The spill was one of the country’s largest environmental disasters and comes as Zambia seeks to triple its copper output.

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- **Immigration-Related Demonstrations to Continue Across English Towns:** Several actions in support of and against accommodations for asylum seekers are planned in Braintree, Falkirk, Maidstone, and Norwich this weekend, with more likely to be announced in the coming days. Last Friday, Norwich saw several hundred demonstrators and approximately 80 counterdemonstrators [gather](#) outside the Brook Hotel; the gathering, like many others that took place over the weekend, remained peaceful. Waterlooville, which [saw](#) 1,000 people protest in late July, will see another gathering this Wednesday despite the government [abandoning plans](#) to house 35 people in the town after the site was deemed “unsuitable.” The U.K. government’s promise to end the practice of hotels housing asylum seekers by 2029 is unlikely to deter future protests.
- **Air Canada Flight Attendants Hold 'Day of Action' at Toronto Airports Amid Strike Threat:** Today, August 11, Air Canada flight attendants, represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), are [staging](#) a “Day of Action” at Toronto Pearson International and Billy Bishop Airports, alongside other major Canadian airports in Montreal, Vancouver, and Calgary. This follows a 99.7% strike mandate vote, with a potential walkout as early as August 16. The union is pushing for improved wages and compensation for unpaid work, while Air Canada emphasizes [ongoing negotiations](#) and efforts to [prevent service disruptions](#).
- **Uruguay Faces Nationwide General Strike:** On August 12, Uruguay will [experience](#) nationwide disruptions as the PIT-CNT, the Confederation of State Employee Organizations (COFE), and other unions stage a 24-hour general strike. The main demonstration will feature a march from the University of the Republic esplanade to Plaza Libertad beginning at 10 am, with similar mobilizations planned across the country. The education sector will halt for 24 hours, affecting universities, secondary schools, and others. Public health services (ASSE) will operate only for emergencies. Transportation will function normally despite union support. Public enterprises, ministries, judicial services, and border operations will face disruptions, with COFE ensuring widespread participation across state services.
- **India Prepares for Nationwide Day of Demonstrations Against Trump Tariffs:** The Central Trade Unions (CTUs), other labor federations, and the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) are calling on people across India to [“join the nationwide day of resistance”](#) this Wednesday, August 13 to protest proposed U.S. tariffs and a trade deal with the U.K. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi responded to the tariff threats by [promising](#) that “India will never compromise on the interests of the country’s farmers, fishermen, and livestock breeders,” while the leader of India’s largest

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opposition party, Rahul Gandhi, also condemned the levies. Mass actions, including [vehicle rallies](#) and other demonstrations, are likely to be organized at the local level ahead of Wednesday.

- **West Bengal Sees Heightened Calls for Justice One Year After Trainee Doctor's Rape, Murder:** Medical professionals and civil society groups are organizing demonstrations across West Bengal state on Thursday, one year after a trainee doctor was [raped and murdered](#) at the RG Kar Medical College & Hospital in Kolkata. The Abhaya Mancha forum has called for "[Reclaim the Night](#)" marches on Thursday night, with a heightened police presence likely throughout Kolkata. A demonstration organized by the trainee doctor's parents and political party leaders on Saturday saw police intervention, [resulting](#) in approximately 100 people being injured. Hotspots for protest activity this week include the RG Kar campus, the Nabanna building in Howrah, and the Hazra crossing near the residence of Chief Minister

Upcoming Events

- 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 25: Day of Songun (North Korea)