

March 23, 2026

## Headlining This Week's Brief

### Top Stories

Climate and Natural Hazards

Worldwide

Cyber and Regulatory

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

Health

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

Upcoming Events

### Top Stories

#### **U.S. Postpones Strikes on Iranian Energy Infrastructure Amid Rumors of Talks Between Washington, Tehran**

United States President Donald Trump [announced](#) that he will be postponing planned U.S. military strikes on Iranian power plants and energy infrastructure for five days following what he said were “very good and productive” discussions with Iran. Tehran has [denied](#) negotiations with the U.S., saying that “there are initiatives by regional countries to deescalate tensions” and that Trump’s statements are part of an effort “to reduce energy prices and gain time to implement his military plans.” The five-day pause came shortly before the expiration of Trump’s earlier [ultimatum](#) threatening strikes on Iran’s electricity grid if the Strait of Hormuz was not opened to international shipping within 48 hours.

[Axios](#), citing an unnamed Israeli official, has reported that mediating countries are trying to arrange a meeting in Islamabad between speaker of the Iranian parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, and U.S. officials, including Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff, Senior Advisor to the President Jared Kushner, and possibly Vice President JD Vance. Iran has not confirmed any of these details, nor what Trump has claimed are points of agreement with Tehran, including commitments to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, abandon its nuclear program, stop all enrichment, and relinquish existing enriched uranium stockpiles.

Preceding Trump’s announcement, Tehran had strongly warned against any strikes on its power infrastructure, stating it would engage in a [tit-for-tat retaliation](#) by targeting Israel’s power plants as

well as plants supplying U.S. bases with electricity in the Gulf region. Iran's Defense Council [warned](#) that any attack on its southern coast or islands, including strategic locations like Kharg Island, would prompt a military response involving the deployment of sea mines and measures that could effectively close the entire Gulf to maritime traffic. On Saturday, [Iran](#) launched missiles targeting the U.K.-U.S. military base on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, with at least one missile intercepted and others failing to reach the target. The attempt demonstrates a willingness by Iran to strike targets outside of a previous self-imposed 2,000 km radius, implicitly indicating that Iran may seek to target sites within Europe, although such an effort appears [unlikely](#) at the current moment.

## **Difficult Global Economy, Loss of Tariff Tool Could Influence U.S. Approach to USMCA Review, Although Other Countries Face Renewed Tariff Threat**

With the first-ever formal review of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) [scheduled for July](#), [revisions](#) could impact trade within the world's largest free trade area by GDP. Faced with a global energy crisis, [analysis](#) suggesting that the agreement is broadly beneficial for all parties raises hopes that the Trump administration may adopt a more conciliatory approach to Canada and Mexico than [recent dealings](#) may otherwise suggest. [Preliminary negotiations](#) between Mexico and the U.S. began in Washington on March 18.

Meanwhile, despite having fewer options after the U.S. Supreme Court [ruled](#) against Trump's use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to impose sweeping tariffs on most of the globe, the White House appears [intent](#) on pursuing the implementation of tariffs under other legal authorities. Washington has announced that it will target key partners with [trade investigations](#) that could later be used to justify more legally durable (and potentially more costly) [new tariffs](#). This includes allies like the European Union, which [paused ratification](#) of a U.S. trade deal after the U.S. Supreme Court's tariff decision. Trade between the EU and the U.S., which reached a [record high](#) in 2025 despite U.S. tariffs, could be threatened by the move.

## **Extreme Rainfall Triggers Major Flood Threat Across Parts of the Middle East**

A high-severity flooding threat is in its early stages across the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and southeastern Saudi Arabia, with multiple rounds of heavy rain expected through Friday, March 27. Based on various forecast model guidance, rainfall totals may exceed what the region typically receives in an entire year, significantly elevating the risk of dangerous and potentially life-threatening flash flooding. Periodic heavy rain has already been observed since Sunday, with authorities already confirming at least [five flood-related deaths](#) in Oman. Oman authorities recommend [remote work](#) Tuesday. Residents are urged to closely follow official warnings as conditions worsen.

An increasingly active weather pattern will bring daily thunderstorms and intense rainfall, with localized totals of 50–100 mm (2-4 inches) per day and storm totals reaching 100–200 mm (4-8 inches) in parts of northern Oman and the UAE. Major urban centers, including Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al Ain, Sohar, and Nizwa,

are likely to be impacted. Given the region's arid terrain and poor drainage capacity, even short bursts of heavy rain can quickly trigger severe flooding. The greatest flood risk period is expected midweek and again toward Friday as saturated ground conditions compound impacts.

Significant disruptions are likely across transportation and infrastructure networks, including road closures, flight delays, and logistics interruptions. Flooding may prompt water rescues and evacuations, while dust storms and reduced visibility could further complicate travel. Additional hazards include landslides in mountainous areas and restricted access to industrial and construction sites, particularly in flood-prone corridors of northern Oman.

## Climate and Natural Hazards

- **U.S. Record Heat Far From Over:** Through Tuesday, the primary zone for [widespread daily record highs](#) will remain anchored over the West, where temperatures in Phoenix will continue pushing near 100°F. On Wednesday and Thursday, the core of this anomalous heat, running 25–30°F above average, will shift eastward into North Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, and Arkansas, with cities such as Dallas, Oklahoma City, Little Rock, Wichita, and St. Louis likely reaching the lower 90s. By Friday and Saturday, a strong cold front will sweep across the central and eastern U.S., bringing temperatures back to near or even below seasonal norms. The West, meanwhile, will see little relief as a persistent upper-level ridge reinforces a broad dome of high pressure and intensifying heat into next weekend.
- **Midwest U.S. Sees Severe Storm Threat Thursday:** [Severe thunderstorms](#) are expected Thursday afternoon and evening across northeast Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and far southeast Michigan. Warm, moist air moving into the region combined with a cold front will help storms develop and strengthen. Scattered damaging winds, hail, and isolated tornadoes are possible.
- **Hawaii Flood Watches Lifted:** The remaining [Flood Watch](#) for Hawaii's Big Island will expire this afternoon following days of severe rainfall and flooding. State offices and most public schools have [reopened](#). Storm damage is likely to [exceed \\$1 billion USD](#), according to estimates from the governor.
- **Cyclones Threaten Australia and New Caledonia:** [Cyclone Narelle](#) is forecast to strengthen into a Category Two hurricane equivalent as it remerges back over water before threatening [Western Australia](#) yet again Thursday into Friday. Dampier, Learmonth, southward to Geraldton and surrounding areas should monitor the storm's progress. Farther east, [Cyclone 28P](#), a much weaker system, may brush New Caledonia with minimal tropical storm-force winds and heavy rain over the next 12-24 hours before moving out to sea.
- **Global Temperature Rises Accelerating:** The [World Meteorological Organization](#) reports that climate warming is not just continuing but accelerating, driven by rapidly rising greenhouse gas concentrations and a growing energy imbalance in Earth's system. Recent data show that the rate of warming has increased significantly between 2001 and 2025, with more heat being trapped

than released, about 90% of it in the oceans. This imbalance has contributed to record-breaking ocean temperatures and intensified climate impacts beyond previous trends. The 2015–2025 period, the hottest on record, highlights how warming is speeding up rather than stabilizing.

## Worldwide

- **Donald Trump Threatens Action Against Cuba Amid Increasing Blackouts:** Cuba has suffered three [nationwide](#) blackouts in March alone as Washington has sustained its efforts to prevent oil from reaching the island nation. The resultant shortages have forced authorities to conserve fuel for essential services, driving unrest nationwide. [Statements](#) from Washington suggest that the Trump Administration does not foresee the Cuban regime achieving sufficient reform to satisfy U.S. demands, which could prove to be [sticking points](#) as talks proceed. Otherwise, a U.S. intervention, potentially to include the use of military force, cannot be ruled out following Trump's threat to "[take](#)" the country. Cuban authorities say they are [prepared](#) for any potential attack from the U.S. Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossío [stated](#) that while an attack is unlikely, the country must remain ready.
- **U.S. Continues Conditioning Foreign Aid on Policy Influence:** The Trump administration continues to [restrict](#) foreign countries and non-governmental organizations' access to aid, increasingly forcing recipients into quid pro quo arrangements where the U.S. government extracts a benefit in exchange for funding. This dynamic seems to be underway in various policy spheres, including resource management (where the Trump administration is [reportedly](#) considering conditioning HIV aid to Zambia on minerals access) and development efforts, such as [UN programs](#) on gender-related issues. Observers warn that the use of aid as a [bargaining chip](#) could carry significant consequences for foreign relations and global development long after the end of the Trump administration.
- **French Municipal Elections Reflect Political Polarization:** The results of France's municipal elections, held over the weekend, show a [fragmented political environment](#), with no single bloc dominating nationwide. The elections highlighted a three-way fracture in French politics [among](#) the Left (which performed well in major cities like Paris, Lille, Lyon, Marseille, and Nantes), centrist parties aligned with President Emmanuel Macron (which saw [unexpected wins](#) in Annecy and Bordeaux), and the Right. Far-right candidates lost in several major cities despite polling advantages, though the [National Rally party](#) performed well in the southern city of Nice and numerous smaller towns. The municipal elections were largely seen as a preview of the country's 2027 presidential elections, suggesting centrist parties may be in a better position than previously thought.
- **Middle East Conflict Indirectly Impacting the War in Sudan:** Iran's recent strikes on Gulf states appear to be [reshaping dynamics](#) in Sudan's civil war. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), which is reportedly backing the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), has been forced to [reorganize](#) supply routes into Sudan and the ongoing Iranian strikes on the UAE may impact its ability to continue support from the RSF. However, the U.S.' recent designation of the Muslim

Brotherhood in Sudan as a "foreign terrorist organization" will also complicate efforts to support groups that back the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF).

- **Sinaloa Cartel Stockpiling Weapons as Mexican Forces Continue Targeting Leadership:** Mexico's Sinaloa Cartel is **bracing** for potential U.S. military action as Washington continues its push against drug smuggling organizations in the region. According to The New York Times, cartel members are **stockpiling** heavy weapons to reinforce defenses in their "territory," driven by fears of American strikes under the Trump Administration. At the same time, a surge of weapons is **flowing** from the U.S. into Mexico. Meanwhile, Mexican forces **raided** Culiacán, killing 11 suspects and capturing Omar Oswaldo Torres "El Patas", a senior leader of the Los **Mayos** faction, further decapitating cartel leadership amid internal fractures.

## Cyber and Regulatory

- **Ukraine Conflict Becomes Battle Over Computer Infrastructure:** The **growing** technological dimension of the Ukraine war will **hinge** on access to computer power, as losing connectivity could collapse its ability to **coordinate drones** and sustain rapid decision-making on the battlefield. Ukraine's early war shift to Western cloud systems preserved state functions but created dependence on vulnerable network links. Modern operations like drone swarms require high bandwidth and real-time processing that can fail under Russian jamming or cyber disruption. Russia is pursuing more resilient, sovereign compute infrastructure (including Chinese support), trading performance for survivability. Breakthroughs in edge **autonomy** or alternative communications, and even shifts in Starlink availability, could change this balance.
- **Millions of iPhones Exposed to Data-Stealing Malware:** Researchers **uncovered** "Darksword" spyware after detecting it on compromised Ukrainian websites, finding that it can infiltrate iPhones and steal sensitive data. The malware, which targeted devices running iOS 18.4 through 18.6.2 (released March to August 2025), was tied to global campaigns targeting users in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. Alongside a separate exploit known as "**Coruna**," the discovery signals a growing commercial market for advanced iPhone hacking tools once largely limited to state actors. Estimates suggest hundreds of millions of devices still run on affected iOS versions, though Apple has patched the vulnerabilities and blocked malicious domains. The scale of impact depends heavily on how quickly users install updates. However, rapid security updates or new exploit discoveries could quickly shift the overall risk exposure.
- **Semiconductor Testing Grows More Complex as U.S. Relaxes Some Restrictions on Chip Exports to China:** As semiconductor designs become more complex, companies involved in the testing supply chain are **ramping up** to accommodate the surge in demand, adding yet another chokepoint to the vital chip industry. The intricate chipsets needed to power AI applications can take more than 10 minutes to test, over 10 times longer than what was required in the past to test an application processor for a mobile phone. While key players in the chip testing ecosystem increase their capacities, the White House is **relaxing** some export restrictions on higher-end chips as President Donald Trump prepares for high-stakes trade talks with China; however, that

highly anticipated discussion appears to have been [put on hold](#) due to the conflict in the Middle East.

- **U.S. Regulators Propose Significant Changes to Bank Lending Rules, Capital Requirements:** Federal Reserve and other U.S. regulators [proposed](#) easing capital requirements for major banks, potentially freeing billions for lending, dividends, and buybacks. The plan, subject to a 90-day review, reflects a shift from stricter 2023 proposals and amount to some of the largest capital rule changes since the 2008 financial crisis. Expected reductions in common equity tier 1 capital range from 4.8% for large banks to 7.8% for smaller firms. Changes include Basel III adjustments, stress test revisions, and modified G-SIB surcharges tied to economic growth. The proposed changes have [prompted calls](#) for similar reforms in the EU. Supporters say the framework remains strong, while critics and credit rating agency Fitch [warn](#) cumulative easing could weaken resilience and erode buffers over time.
- **Hong Kong Institutes New Rules Allowing Police to Access Phone, Computer Passwords:** Hong Kong has [introduced](#) new rules requiring individuals to provide police with passwords or decryption methods for electronic devices in national security investigations. Those who refuse face up to one year in prison and a fine of HK\$100,000. The measure applies to suspects, device owners, authorized users, and anyone with relevant access credentials. Previously, refusing to unlock devices was not considered obstruction. Critics say that the amendment, enacted under Hong Kong's national security framework imposed after the 2019 protests, marks the further erosion of civil liberties in the city, while officials insist that the amended rules "will not affect the lives of the general public or the normal operation of institutions and organizations."

## Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- **Collision at LaGuardia Airport Prompts Closure, Cancellation of Hundreds of Flights:** A [collision](#) between an Air Canada regional jet and a fire truck on Monday killed two people, injured several others, and forced LaGuardia Airport, a critical regional hub in New York City, to close until at least 2 pm. Hundreds of flights were canceled as of this morning, as disruptions spread across the region, with Delta Airlines [facing](#) some of the most severe impacts. The incident marks the [third major commercial aviation accident](#) in the U.S. in the past 15 months, raising questions over the overall safety of the country's airways. While the ongoing partial government shutdown has led to long lines at airports, it has not impacted air traffic controllers; however, air traffic control facilities have been [understaffed](#) for years. Authorities will investigate what contributed to the crash, potentially leading to further changes in air traffic staffing and safety procedures in both the U.S. and Canada.
- **White House Deploys ICE Agents to Assist TSA as Budget Fight Continues:** The White House is [deploying](#) Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents to U.S. airports to assist the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) amid staffing shortages caused by a partial Department of Homeland Security shutdown. Agents reportedly deployed to [several major airports](#) across the country, where they will handle limited support roles rather than specialized

screening tasks, raising questions as to how much ICE agents will actually be able to help alleviate the long lines that have snarled airport travel in recent weeks. The move is also tied to a broader political standoff over federal funding and voting legislation and would mark a significant expansion in duties for ICE, whose tactics during immigration enforcement actions originally prompted the budget standoff. With President Donald Trump now tying passage of the highly controversial "SAVE America Act" to a budget deal, the standoff appears still far from resolution.

- **Asian Countries Rush to Secure Russian Oil Following Relaxation of Sanctions:** On March 13, the U.S. [announced](#) a 30-day waiver on sanctioned Russian oil and petroleum products that were already at sea in a bid to help control surging global oil prices. This has triggered a scramble among Asian economies to secure supplies amid fuel shortages impacting their domestic markets. Asian buyers [including](#) Singapore, Malaysia, China, and India have moved quickly to capitalize, and regional demand for Russian fuel is set to [hit record highs](#), already reaching over 614,500 barrels daily. New entrants such as [South Korea](#) are also contemplating purchases, highlighting how the waiver has reopened a critical supply channel for Asia.
- **Samsung Workers Vote to Strike:** Samsung Electronics workers Union [voted](#) on March 18 to hold an 18-day strike from May 21, with 93% of over 66,000 unionized workers voting in favor. The disaffection is primarily driven by disputes over wages and bonus structures. If the strike proceeds as planned, it could disrupt output at key semiconductor complexes, pushing up chip prices and impact industries ranging from consumer electronics to automotive manufacturing at a time when AI-driven demand is already high. The strike could result in [estimated](#) losses of up to 10 trillion won according to union members. The [risk](#) of a parallel strike at Samsung's Chennai plant also remains elevated due to ongoing disputes over worker terminations, threatening to add increased pressure to regional supply chains if it coincides with disruptions in South Korea.
- **Conflict in Middle East Disrupt Subsea Cable Project, Poses Broader Risk to Regional Connectivity:** Work on Meta Platform's ambitious [2Africa subsea internet cable project](#), one of the world's largest planned fiber-optic systems, has been stalled in the Persian Gulf due to the ongoing conflict as contractors have declared force majeure due to the escalating hostilities and deteriorating security environment. The halted Pearls segment was intended to connect landing stations across Oman, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Pakistan, India, and Saudi Arabia; however, the installation vessel is now stranded, and work has paused as landing stations remain incomplete. The situation [exemplifies](#) the broader risks of the conflict to critical submarine internet infrastructure, where damages caused by lingering vessels and halted repairs [could trigger](#) widespread outages and slowdowns, disrupting services, communications, and financial systems across the Middle East, South Asia and Africa.
- **China Launches Ship Inspection Wave of Panama-Linked Vessels:** China has [intensified inspections](#) of Panama-flagged vessels at its ports, a move widely seen as economic and political pressure following Panama's decision to void a long-standing port concession held by Hong Kong-based CK Hutchison. The action comes amid broader tensions involving U.S. concerns over Chinese influence in the Panama Canal. The surge in detentions—28 ships in one week—has disrupted shipping operations and could prompt companies to reconsider Panama registration

due to delays and reputational risks. Additional measures, including suspended services by Chinese-linked carriers, signal escalating friction, with potential ripple effects across global shipping given Panama's major role as a vessel registry.

## Health

- **Conflict in Middle East Threatens Drug Supply Chains:** The ongoing conflict in the Middle East is threatening drug supplies, especially [generic medicines](#). Nearly half of the U.S.' generic prescriptions originate in India, and producers there rely on petroleum-based products that transit the Strait of Hormuz to create finished medications. Other inputs also transit Gulf logistics hubs before finding their way to India. The tighter margins of generic medications place them at particular risk of shortage if the conflict drags on, especially as companies [contend](#) with higher freight costs. As concerns over the drug supply chain grow, U.S. lawmakers are also noting the critical role that [China](#) plays in the global pharmaceutical market, warning that it could join rare earths, solar panels, and EVs as sectors where Beijing can exercise disproportionate influence.
- **Meningitis Cases Decline in U.K. Following Kent Outbreak:** Confirmed meningitis cases in Kent, England, have [begun to decline](#) following a recent outbreak among students at the University of Kent that prompted public health concern. Officials attribute the drop to rapid intervention measures, including contact tracing, antibiotic distribution, and targeted vaccination efforts among close contacts and at-risk groups. The outbreak, linked to meningococcal group B, had resulted in several serious cases and at least two deaths. Health authorities continue to monitor the situation closely while maintaining preventive measures to limit further spread. Despite the improvement, officials stress the importance of recognizing symptoms early and ensuring vaccination uptake, noting that students who travel home from Kent could "incubate" the virus, resulting in "small household, sporadic clusters" in other parts of the U.K.
- **U.S. Congress Weighs Safeguards for Health Cyberattacks:** Congress is [planning bipartisan legislation](#) to strengthen cybersecurity across the U.S. healthcare sector following the disruptive 2024 Change Healthcare cyberattack. The proposed bill, approved by the Senate Health Committee and coming in the wake of the hack of medtech company Stryker by Iran-linked [Handala](#), aims to improve coordination between government agencies and healthcare providers, require stronger safeguards like encryption and multi-factor authentication, and establish grants for cyber preparedness and response. While the measure has gained industry backing, earlier disagreements over stricter regulations persist, and a crowded legislative calendar ahead of midterm elections could delay final passage.
- **Children's Vaccine Policies in Limbo After Judge Halts Changes:** U.S. District Court Judge Brian Murphy [paused](#) the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) decision to [overhaul](#) the childhood vaccine schedule. Murphy further ruled that U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s decision to **dismiss** all 17 original members of the ACIP and **appoint** 14 new members did not follow federal legal procedures, leaving the current state of ACIP unclear. Amid the confusion over federal vaccine recommendations, state policy regarding childhood vaccinations will likely continue to **deviate** federal guidelines.

- **Iranians Face Health Impacts from “Black Rain” caused by Strikes on Oil Facilities:** Public health officials are warning of impacts from harmful chemicals released following strikes on Iranian oil facilities, notably in **Tehran**. “Black rain” or rain contaminated by pollutants, leaves those exposed with burning eyes and lungs, potential long-term respiratory and heart issues, and increased risk of **cancer**. The World Health Organization (WHO) has **advised** residents “to remain indoors” and wear masks as the pollutants can remain in the atmosphere for **“three to seven days”**. As strikes continue, the chemicals released have the potential to pollute drinking water and waterways.

## Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- **Nationwide No Kings Protests Planned for Major U.S. Cities:** Disruptions are expected across the United States on Saturday, March 28, as the **No Kings** coalition, including Indivisible, 50501 Movement, and Declaration for American Democracy, organizes nationwide marches, rallies, and public gatherings to protest various federal policies. Previous nationwide days of action have drawn large, mostly peaceful crowds, though tensions may rise this weekend amid heightened political polarization. The flagship rally will take place at the Minnesota State Capitol in St Paul, with **more than 80,000 people** expected to attend. Other notable gatherings are planned in Atlanta (march from Memorial Drive Greenway to the Georgia State Capitol at 10 am), Austin (900 W Riverside Drive at 1 pm); Chicago (Grant Park at 1:30 pm), Los Angeles (City Hall at 1 pm), New York City (Central Park West and W 61st St at 1 pm), Washington, D.C. (Frederick Douglass Bridge at 1:30 pm), and San Francisco (march from Embarcadero Plaza to Civic Center at noon).
- **Europe Sees Heightened Demonstration Activity Against War, Right-Wing Extremism:** Major cities across Europe will see heightened demonstration activity this Saturday coinciding with the No Kings demonstrations in the United States, which activists are calling a Global Day of Defiance. Notable gatherings are expected in England and Italy. In Rome, the **Italian No Kings** collective will hold a **national procession** from Piazza della Repubblica to Piazza San Giovanni at 2 pm. In London, the **Together Alliance** is organizing a major march from Park Lane to Whitehall at noon. The alliance is **comprised of** over 140 organizations and thousands of individuals, with organizers **expecting** the gathering to be “Britain’s largest protest against the far right and Islamophobia.” Gatherings are also being planned by organizations affiliated with the U.S.’s Democratic Party in Germany, Spain, and Switzerland. match, speeches, and a self-managed market, with calls to symbolically “close” Calzada de Tlalpan. Organizers oppose the World Cup’s urban impact, citing

concerns over gentrification, displacement, tourism pressure, and unequal economic benefits. The protest coincides with the reopening of Banorte Stadium and related events. Given the scale and timing, a heightened presence of Mexican security forces is likely in surrounding areas, potentially increasing access restrictions and traffic disruptions.

- **Demonstration Activity, Direct Action Targets Sites Associated with Israel's Military:** The group Palestine Solidarity Campaign UK is calling for "[Arms Factory Protests](#)" this Wednesday in Bristol, London (Hayes), Newcastle, Shenstone, and Towcester. The demonstrations, expected to be static gatherings, are meant to draw attention to what organizers call Britain's active participation "in Israel's genocide and apartheid against Palestinians." Meanwhile, several recent incidents highlight the threat of direct action against businesses associated with Israel's military offensives. A pro-Palestine activist group reportedly vandalized a security company's office in Harrow, England last week that works with Elbit Systems, Israel's largest arms manufacturer. Authorities in Czechia are [investigating](#) what they believe was a deliberate arson attack against defense firm LPP Holding, with a pro-Palestinian protest group [claiming](#) responsibility. Last month, a British court [ruled](#) that the ban on direct action group Palestine Action should be overturned. Significant developments related to the Middle East are likely to prompt both non-disruptive demonstrations and direct action.
- **Other Stories the Global Intelligence Team is Monitoring:** In **Australia**, journalists and technical staff with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) voted to strike this Wednesday for the first time in two decades. Programming disruptions are expected; however, exemptions will be in place to [ensure](#) emergency broadcasting continues during the 24-hour strike. In **Spain**, thousands of financial sector workers with CaixaBank are expected to [strike for 24 hours](#) on Friday over what they call "excessive sales pressure" and a "deteriorating work environment." Union organizers [reported](#) "massive turnout" during two partial work stoppages in recent weeks, and striking bank workers will [gather](#) in Valencia to demonstrate outside the bank's Annual General Meeting. In **Senegal**, the country's football federation is [appealing](#) to the Confederation of African Football (CAF) after it reversed Senegal's win from January and [awarded](#) the Africa Cup of Nations title to Morocco. The title revocation may catalyze protest activity at future games.

# Weekly Intelligence Briefing

March 23, 2026



## Upcoming Events

- February 18 – April 2: Lent (Global)
- March 24: General Election (Denmark)
- March 26: Ram Navami (India)
- March 26-29: World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference (Yaoundé, Cameroon)
- March 30: Land Day (Israel, West Bank, and Gaza)
- March 31: Hanuman Jayanti (India)
- March 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility (Global)
- April 1-9: Passover (Global) April 5: Easter (Global)
- April 10: Presidential Election (Djibouti)
- April 12: Orthodox Easter (Global)
- April 12: Presidential Election (Benin)
- April 12: Parliamentary Election (Hungary)
- April 12: General Election (Peru)
- April 19: Parliamentary Election (Bulgaria)