

March 31, 2026

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Top Stories

Trump Threatens to Attack Iran's Energy Sites Unless Strait Reopens 'Immediately'; U.S. Ground Operations Appear Increasingly Likely

Earlier today, U.S. President Donald Trump [threatened to attack](#) key Iranian energy sites if Iran did not reopen Strait of Hormuz "immediately." Trump has also threatened to "[take the oil in Iran](#)," a move that would likely involve the commitment of ground troops to seize Iran's oil export hub of Kharg Island. Such an endeavor would likely raise the human and financial costs of the conflict significantly.

Amid these threats, there are signs that a limited number of non-Iranian [vessels](#) have been able to safely cross the strait. Importantly, much of that traffic is [diverted](#) into Iranian waters, where authorities reportedly levy [fees](#) of up to \$2 million per voyage, although exact totals and the payment mechanism remain unclear. Potentially complicating matters further is the [late entry](#) of Yemen's Houthis. While the Houthis have thus far only launched one missile at Israel that was reportedly intercepted, their ability to threaten Red Sea shipping and the Saudi Arabian port of Yanbu, which has been used to divert oil shipments around the Strait of Hormuz, could further exacerbate the energy crisis.

As the damage to the global economy mounts, around 2,500 Marines [arrived](#) in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility on Friday, with [elements](#) of the 82nd Airborne Division deployed to the region and an additional Marine Expeditionary Unit [anticipated](#) to arrive in less than a month. The deployments may be preparations for impending ground operations in the country. While the objectives

of potential ground operations are still unclear, some U.S. officials [claim](#) that those under discussion could take anywhere from a few weeks to a few months to accomplish. Any ground invasion would likely result in Iran targeting more vital infrastructure across the region.

Flooding Threat from Southeast Europe to North Africa

A prolonged stretch of unsettled and potentially disruptive weather is expected across southern Europe and parts of North Africa this week. Conditions will begin to deteriorate in southern Italy Monday evening as a slow-moving low-pressure system develops. Periods of rain will start out lighter early in the week before intensifying midweek, when widespread heavy rainfall, strong winds, and thunderstorms are expected. Rainfall totals of 75–175 mm (3–7 inches) are likely through Friday, with the highest amounts expected across the southern Apennines, raising the risk of flooding, travel disruptions, and power outages. Elevations above 1,000 meters could see significant snowfall.

By Wednesday into Thursday, the system will shift east into [Greece](#), southern Bulgaria, and North Macedonia. Multiple rounds of thunderstorms and heavy rainfall, totaling 75–150 mm (3–6 inches), are expected and may lead to urban flooding and widespread disruptions. Strong winds along coastal areas could reach 70–90 km/h (43–56 mph), impacting travel, ports, and infrastructure. Conditions are expected to gradually improve late Thursday as the system exits the region.

Further east, western Türkiye will experience rounds of thunderstorms and heavy rain from Wednesday night through Friday. Rainfall totals of 75–150 mm (3–6 inches), combined with wind gusts up to 80–100 km/h (50–62 mph), will increase the risk of flash flooding, particularly near coastal areas such as Izmir, Antalya, and Muğla. Meanwhile, across northern Egypt, including areas between Cairo and Alexandria, an unusual round of rainfall Tuesday into Wednesday night (12–25 mm / 0.5–1 inch) could trigger localized flash flooding and water rescues, with isolated thunderstorms capable of producing gusty winds, hail, and frequent lightning.

Heightened Security Measures During Passover in Response to Attacks on Jewish Community

As the start of Passover approaches on April 1, officials worldwide are increasing security at sites associated with the Jewish community following a spate of attacks on synagogues and similar targets amid ongoing conflict between the U.S. and Israel and Iran. On March 25, Israel's National Security Council [released](#) a travel warning noting that they believe Iran will attempt to strike Israeli and Jewish targets abroad. The warning lists multiple examples of recent attacks and attempted attacks, including [several](#) in Belgium, the Netherlands, and the [U.S.](#)

A previously little-known group referring to itself as Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamia group has claimed responsibility for several of the incidents in Europe, although there is [disagreement](#) among analysts as to the exact nature of the group and its [possible connections](#) to Iran. Regardless of the actual

constitution of the group, the incidents, which have mostly been low-tech and unsophisticated, may inspire copycat attacks, especially during the Passover period.

In response, several countries have deployed additional personnel and heightened security measures. Belgium [deployed](#) approximately 200 soldiers to safeguard various institutions, including Jewish schools and the Israeli embassy. Sweden has [designated](#) the area around the U.S. and Israeli embassies in Stockholm a "security zone," granting officers additional powers to search people and vehicles. The New York City Police Department has announced [increased security measures](#) during Passover as well. London has also [implemented](#) firearms patrols in the Golders Green area following an "antisemitic arson attack," while in Canada—as detailed in the Demonstrations and Industrial Action section—officials have [banned](#) protests in residential parts of the North York area where there is a large Jewish population.

Soaring Global Energy Prices Inspires Range of Measures to Curb Demand

The blockade of the Strait of Hormuz and attacks on critical energy infrastructure in the Middle East has led to soaring fuel prices and supply side shortages in several countries. [Brent crude](#) rose over 60% in March, the highest monthly rise ever recorded. Several governments have taken up a [wide range of measures](#) to curb demand, including mandating that government employees work from home, restricting fuel exports, and shifting to a four-day week. The [Philippines](#), which imports around 98% of its oil from the Gulf, has declared a national energy emergency as the government looks at additional steps it can take to preserve energy stability. [Japan](#) has begun the largest-ever release of oil from its strategic reserves. [China](#), which is heavily reliant on oil supplies from the Gulf but also has reserves of around 900 million barrels, has dialed back fuel price rises to soften the blow of rising petrol prices.

The pain hasn't been confined to Asia. Europe is also beginning to feel the impact of the fuel supply crunch. [Slovenia](#) has implemented fuel rationing, limiting purchases as some pumps run dry, while [Portugal](#) is moving closer to declaring an energy crisis as natural gas prices climb. European governments are in talks with energy companies as the situation is [likely](#) to worsen in late April or early May if the strait remains closed. Panic buying and cross-border [fuel tourism](#)—where buyers in one country travel to a neighboring country to take advantage of lower fuel prices—are adding to local shortages. In [Africa](#), countries like Kenya are seeing around 20% of fuel stations running short and warning of a broader crisis, while [Nigeria](#) faces sharp pump price increases that are raising transport and living costs.

Dozens Killed in Middle East Floods as More Storms Loom

Severe weather continues to impact parts of South and Central Asia, with deadly flooding reported in both [Pakistan and Afghanistan](#). Additional storms are expected to create worsening conditions in the coming days. AlertMedia meteorologists warn the situation remains highly unstable, with increasing risks of further casualties, infrastructure damage, and widespread disruption through early April as multiple storm systems move through the region.

In [Pakistan](#), heavy rainfall since late March has caused at least 17 deaths and dozens of injuries, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where many fatalities were linked to collapsing structures. Flooding and severe weather have also damaged infrastructure and agriculture in areas such as Harnai, where landslides and washed-out roads have disrupted transportation. While storms may briefly become less widespread, a stronger system is expected between April 1 and 5, bringing renewed rounds of rain, thunderstorms, and possible hail. The heaviest rainfall is forecast along the Afghanistan–Pakistan border and into central regions, increasing the likelihood of flooding and further disruptions.

[Afghanistan](#) has also experienced severe impacts, with at least 28 deaths, dozens of injuries, and hundreds of homes destroyed since March 26. More than a thousand families have been affected, alongside widespread damage to infrastructure, farmland, and transportation networks. Continued rainfall has led to repeated road closures and ongoing hazards. Meteorologists warn that additional storms through April 6 could bring above-normal rainfall totals, especially in already saturated areas. With ground conditions deteriorating and waterways elevated, the risk of intensified flooding and rising casualties is high.

Climate and Natural Hazards

- **Severe Storms Forecast in U.S. Great Lakes Region, Ontario:** A Level 2 of 5 (slight) risk for severe thunderstorms is outlined this [evening](#) between 5 pm and midnight. The focus is on central and eastern Iowa, northwest Illinois, and southern Wisconsin, where storms may produce scattered large hail and isolated damaging wind gusts. [Tomorrow](#), the threat shifts east into northeast Illinois, northern Indiana, Lower Michigan, northern Ohio, northwest Pennsylvania, western Upstate New York, and southern Ontario, bringing widely scattered damaging wind gusts and hail. While a brief tornado cannot be ruled out, the overall tornado risk remains low.
- **Worst Flooding in a Century Strikes Azerbaijan and Southern Russia:** Heavy rainfall across Azerbaijan (including Baku) and southern Russia, particularly Dagestan (Makhachkala, Buynaksk, Khasavyurt) and Chechnya, has triggered [widespread flooding](#), evacuations, and infrastructure disruptions, with additional rainfall expected to sustain impacts. More than 30,000 residents in Makhachkala remain without power, over 3,300 people have been evacuated in Dagestan, and approximately 2,000 homes were flooded in Chechnya, where a state of emergency is in place. In Baku, Azerbaijan, at least 450 people have been evacuated, where drainage systems were overwhelmed and large-scale cleanup operations are ongoing.
- **Vanuatu Struck by Earthquake:** A [magnitude 7.3 earthquake](#) struck near the Vanuatu Islands early today, resulting in moderate infrastructure damage. No immediate damage was reported, though impacts include temporary power outages and ongoing water supply disruptions in Luganville due to infrastructure damage. Some businesses have announced precautionary closures for tomorrow as damage assessments continue.

Worldwide

- **Baltic Airspace Incidents and Energy Disruptions Reflect Wider Impact of War in Ukraine:** Stray Ukrainian drones **entered** Estonian and Latvian air space from Russia last week, with one hitting a power plant chimney in Auvere, Estonia. Finland also reported at least one Ukrainian drone **violated** its airspace on Sunday. The incidents highlight spillover risks from the war in Ukraine, likely caused by Russian electronic jamming diverting the drones. Meanwhile, Moldova **declared** a 60-day state of emergency for its energy sector after Russian strikes on Ukraine disconnected a power line linking southern Moldova to Romania. Ukraine has intensified attacks on Russian energy infrastructure in recent weeks, disrupting at least 40% of Russia's oil export capacity, according to **Reuters**. The campaign is in response to a **mass daytime drone attack** on Ukraine and the easing of international oil sanctions in response to the conflict in the Middle East.
- **Expanding U.S. Military Campaign in Latin America Deepens Regional Tensions and Signals Long-Term Presence:** A senior Pentagon official has **indicated** that expanding U.S. military operations across Latin America are “just the beginning” of a broader campaign, reportedly dubbed Operation Total Extermination, that seeks to target alleged cartel infrastructure in nearly 20 countries. However, the operation’s credibility has come under scrutiny. An **investigation** by The New York Times found that a U.S.-backed strike in Ecuador, which authorities initially claimed resulted in the destruction of a drug traffickers’ training facility, had in fact hit a cattle and dairy farm. The campaign is also **exacerbating** regional tensions. A misfired or unexploded munition reportedly landed in Colombia, triggering a diplomatic dispute with Ecuador and briefly straining the fragile **Operación Espejo** bilateral security framework. Meanwhile, **planned** multinational naval exercises involving the USS Nimitz and 10 regional countries further signal a sustained and expanding U.S. military footprint across the hemisphere.
- **U.S. Embassy Reopens as Venezuela Sees Political Changes and Falling Crime:** The **reopening** of the U.S. Embassy in Caracas marks a major step in U.S. President Donald Trump’s **efforts** to stabilize and restructure Venezuela relations. After years of limited ties, Washington is now working directly with interim leader Delcy Rodríguez, who has consolidated power while opening the **oil sector** and reshaping the top brass of the military. In a high-profile personnel change, Rodríguez **removed** longtime defense minister Vladimir Padrino López and appointed General Gustavo González López, a former head of Venezuela’s intelligence services **sanctioned** by the United States and the European Union and widely **criticized** by rights groups for his role in detention and torture practices, to lead the armed forces. Meanwhile, despite political uncertainty, violent crime has **dropped** sharply and the U.S. Department of State has **decreased** the travel advisory level to 3 and removed several indicators, giving the country a boost as it prepares to welcome more potential foreign investment.
- **Deaths from Terrorism Increased in Africa Last Year, Despite Declining Overall:** Jihadist violence increased in Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2025 even as global

terrorism deaths fell to their lowest level in a decade, according to the [Global Terrorism Index](#). Nigeria saw the largest increase worldwide, with deaths rising 46% to 750, driven by established groups such as Boko Haram, emerging factions, and broader insecurity from militias and bandits. The DRC also recorded a sharp rise, largely due to attacks by the Islamic State-linked Allied Democratic Forces. Deaths from terrorism in the West also rose, with the U.S. reporting 28 people killed in terror attacks, the most since 2019. Globally, deaths dropped 28% overall. The report also highlights growing instability in the Sahel, evolving militant tactics, and increasing threats from lone actors and youth radicalization.

- **Arrest of Former Prime Minister in Nepal Sparks Demonstrations:** Over the weekend, Nepalese authorities [arrested](#) former Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli and former Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak in Kathmandu for their alleged involvement in the deadly “Gen Z” anti-corruption protests of September 2025. The arrests came a day after Balendra Shah was sworn in as prime minister and followed a government-appointed panel’s recommendation to prosecute former officials for negligence in failing to prevent the violence. The detention [sparked large demonstrations](#) by supporters of Oli and his Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) in central Kathmandu and across the valley, with activists denouncing the arrests as politically motivated. Further demonstration activity is likely, especially if there is the perception of political bias or retribution in the way the investigation into Oli and others is perceived.

Cyber and Regulatory

- **U.S. Adopts More Aggressive Cyber Strategy and Deterrence Approach:** The Trump administration has [introduced](#) a new [cyber strategy](#) emphasizing proactive [defense and offensive](#) capabilities, [signaling](#) a shift in U.S. cyber posture that could reshape how threats are deterred and managed as cyberattacks continue to disrupt public services and critical infrastructure. The strategy prioritizes deterrence, federal network modernization, infrastructure protection, and investment in emerging technologies like AI and quantum, alongside expanded public and private sector coordination. Recent incidents, including a [ransomware attack](#) in Foster City, CA that [disrupted](#) municipal services and a Los Angeles Metro [breach](#) affecting payment systems, highlight ongoing vulnerabilities. While experts say there are early signs of better coordination and a more proactive government approach, the plan remains broad and its effectiveness will depend on how well it is carried out, funded, and adjusted to evolving threat activity.
- **FCC Bans Foreign-Made Router Imports Over Security Concerns:** The FCC has [banned](#) imports of new foreign-made routers, citing national security risks, and signaling potential disruption to U.S. technology supply chains and cybersecurity policy. The decision has raised [concerns](#) that the move could impact businesses, trade dynamics, and the availability of critical networking equipment. China supplies [roughly 60%](#) of U.S. home routers, and policymakers have increasingly targeted firms like [Huawei](#) and TP-Link over security concerns. Officials argue

foreign routers have been exploited in cyber campaigns, though past breaches often involved **vulnerabilities** in Western-made systems. The rule allows case-by-case exemptions, creating uncertainty and potential regulatory complexity. Legal challenges, implementation hurdles, or shifts in trade policy could alter or delay the rule's impact.

- **Data Centers Emerge as Key Midterm Issue:** Data centers are **emerging** as a key issue in U.S. midterms, with candidates debating regulation versus expansion as voters face potential increases in utility costs. The rapid growth of AI infrastructure is increasingly linking **economic** development to rising **household** energy costs. Candidates in Michigan and Georgia are proposing measures ranging from stricter regulations and subsidy rollbacks to temporary construction holds. Data centers are quickly expanding due to AI demand but require **significant** electricity and water, raising environmental and cost concerns. While proponents cite job creation and tax revenue, critics argue consumers ultimately bear higher utility costs. While the policy direction may shift depending on election outcomes, arrangements with tech companies or how effectively cost-control measures are enforced could ultimately determine whether the economic benefits outweigh the long-term costs to consumers.
- **Iran Conflict Disrupts Chip Supply and Costs:** European companies are experiencing delays and increased delivery costs on imported **semiconductors** since the Iran conflict began, raising near-term risks to **supply chains** and production continuity across industries. Semiconductors are critical inputs for sectors like automotive and electronics, making even the shortest of disruptions economically significant. Air freight operations through the Middle East have reduced global cargo capacity by roughly 9%, forcing longer routes, higher fuel use, and increased shipping costs. Many firms are paying premium rates to secure supply, while some shipments face delays of several days. Risks to materials and energy supply and regional instability could further strain semiconductor production and costs globally, or further delay plans by firms like Amazon, Microsoft, and Nvidia to expand AI infrastructure in the Middle East. While short-term impacts remain manageable, escalation affecting key routes or infrastructure could further intensify disruptions.
- **Meta, YouTube Held Liable in Landmark Lawsuits:** In New Mexico, a landmark jury verdict found Meta **liable** for violating consumer protection laws by misleading users and failing to protect children from harm, including exposure to predators and harmful content. The company was ordered to pay approximately \$375 million in penalties, marking one of the first successful state cases against a major tech company for platform-related harms. Additionally, a California jury found Meta and YouTube **liable** for designing addictive social media platforms that allegedly harmed a user's mental health and were ordered to pay \$3 million in damages. Together, the cases signal growing legal pressure on social media companies and could shape future regulations nationwide.

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- **Airport Operations Normalizing as U.S. Government Shutdown Continues:** Some major U.S. airports **reported** that operations were normalizing after President Donald Trump directed the Department of Homeland Security to pay Transportation Security Administration (TSA) security officers amid a partial government shutdown. However, some airports continued to report **strained operations**. Despite the hopeful stabilization of TSA staffing levels, chief border official Tom Homan said that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents could remain at airports, dependent on how long it takes for airport operations to return to “100%”. The ICE involvement has sparked demonstrations at some airports. Meanwhile, employees at other agencies within DHS continue to work without pay as the partial government shutdown becomes the **longest** in U.S. history, with **little prospect** of a deal to end the impasse.
- **USPS Proposes First-Ever Fuel Surcharge for Packages:** The U.S. Postal Service will **introduce** its first-ever package surcharge—an 8% fee starting April 26—to offset rising fuel, transportation, and operational costs. The temporary measure, pending regulatory approval, is set to run through January 2027 and excludes letter mail. Officials say the surcharge aligns with industry practices and remains lower than competitors’ fees. The move reflects mounting financial strain driven by high fuel prices, costly service mandates, and declining revenue, due in part to a reduction in Amazon shipments using the service. Postal service leaders warn that the agency could run out of funds within a year, positioning the surcharge as a short-term step toward more flexible, market-based pricing.
- **Thieves Target Remote Rail Corridor in U.S.’s Mojave Desert With Sophisticated Tactics:** Organized cargo theft in the U.S.’s Mojave Desert is **targeting** freight trains and containers, with gangs looting high-value goods and moving them through warehouses and illicit resale networks. In one case, authorities recovered \$13 million worth of stolen goods from a single warehouse, highlighting the scale and sophistication of these operations. The remote terrain and presence of key rail corridors make the desert an ideal environment for cargo theft, allowing thieves to operate undetected for extended periods with minimal immediate interference from security personnel. Law enforcement faces significant challenges due to jurisdictional gaps, limited resources, and the geographic spread, which slows response times and complicates investigations. Tackling the problem will likely require industry-wide reforms, including better cargo tracking, stronger verification systems, improved coordination between rail companies and authorities, and the adoption of technology to detect tampering earlier.
- **Explosion at Texas Refinery, Other Disruptions to Energy Facilities Compound Supply Shock:** An **explosion** at Valero’s Port Arthur refinery, one of the largest in the U.S. with a capacity of about 380,000 to 435,000 barrels per day, forced a full shutdown at the plant. The lost refining capacity following the explosion has tightened supplies of gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel at a time when global markets are already strained due to the conflict in the Middle East. During seasonal changes like spring break travel and the transition to summer fuel blends, **demand** for gasoline typically rises, making energy market volatility appear stark. While Valero has begun to **restart**

operations at the refinery, they are reportedly proceeding cautiously. The explosion, as well as impacts to [liquefied natural gas plants in Australia](#) that were forced to curb production due to a cyclone, demonstrate the increasing precarity of energy supplies as the conflict in the Middle East continues.

Health

- **"Cicada" COVID-19 Variant Detected in U.S., Multiple Other Countries:** A highly-mutated COVID-19 variant—BA.3.2, nicknamed cicada—is being monitored after detection in the United States and at least 22 other countries, according to a [study](#) published last week in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. The variant is genetically distinct from previously dominant strains, underscoring ongoing viral evolution and raising concerns about potential immune escape and reduced antibody neutralization. However, its clinical severity and transmissibility remain unclear. Health authorities emphasize continued genomic surveillance to assess its public health impact and determine whether it could contribute to future increases in COVID-19 cases. While the variant has only been [detected](#) in a few cases in the U.S., it has [reached](#) around 30% prevalence in Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands.
- **HHS, CMS Announce Members of New Healthcare Advisory Committee:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Administrator Mehmet Oz [unveiled](#) a new Healthcare Advisory Committee last week tasked with making recommendations to modernize the U.S. healthcare system. The 18-member panel includes several healthcare executives whose firms specialize in mental health, primary care, and value-based care, as well as motivational speaker Tony Robbins, and is overall notable for the absence of people more closely associated with the Make America Healthy Again movement. When the panel was first announced in 2025, observers [speculated](#) that recommendations were likely to focus on deregulation, such as changes to CMS's physician quality reporting program.
- **DRC Cobalt Mine Allegedly Linked to Negative Health Impacts:** A recently published [Environmental Investigation Agency](#) (EIA) report found that the Tenke Fungurume mine in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) exposed residents to [sulfur dioxide](#), leading to "respiratory illnesses". The local healthcare workers reported seeing patients in the area with [chest pain](#) and nosebleeds. The Tenke Fungurume mine is controlled by the world's largest [cobalt producer](#), the CMOG Group, which [supplies](#) cobalt for electric vehicle lithium-ion batteries for automotive companies like BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Stellantis, and Volkswagen. Further health impacts are possible throughout the DRC, as regulators and investigations attempt to outpace the expanding cobalt mining and production.

- **U.S. Women’s Health Conference Signals Possible Shift in Birth Control Policy:** The inaugural Health and Human Services (HHS) National Conference on Women’s Health featured a panel where several doctors raised concerns about the widespread use of [hormonal birth control](#) as a treatment for women’s health conditions. This “birth control skepticism” aligns with arguments found in a Heritage Foundation [report](#) that focuses on the declining birth rate in the United States and points to the use of birth control pills and legalization of abortion as two main causes. While no policy changes have been announced, the overlap in messaging suggests that oral contraceptives could become a target of future policy decisions within the Trump administration.
- **Other Outbreaks the Global Intelligence Team is Monitoring:** Authorities in **Kiribati** have issued a red alert status for rotavirus, with over 4,500 cases [reported](#) as of March 15. Elsewhere in the Pacific, health officials in **American Samoa** [issued](#) a public health advisory for rising cases of leptospirosis. Both [Japan](#) and [Australia](#) are seeing rising rates of measles, with cases in the former significantly outpacing last year’s tally. Elsewhere, the **Trinidad and Tobago** Ministry of Health issued an alert for [yellow fever](#) after the disease was detected in a dead red howler monkey. And authorities in the **U.K.** are [cautioning](#) that the meningitis outbreak in Kent may worsen in the coming days, although the risk of widespread contagion remains remote.

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- **Coordinated Agricultural and Transport Strikes in Mexico Raise Risk of Nationwide Disruptions:** The Movimiento Agrícola Campesino (MAC) has called for a nationwide mobilization on April 6, urging farmers, transporters, and consumers to call for reforms to food distribution systems. The Asociación Nacional de Transportistas (ANTAC) has also [announced a strike](#) for the same day, citing concerns over highway insecurity, extortion, and rising fuel prices. The convergence of agricultural and transport sector grievances significantly increases the likelihood of disruptive action. Coordinated or parallel participation could amplify impacts beyond localized protests, particularly through [highway blockades](#) and freight disruptions.
- **‘No Kings’ Protests Sweep U.S. as Activists Eye May Day for Next Nationwide Mobilization:** Over the weekend, organizers [estimated](#) that over 8 million people participated in the third “No Kings” protests, spanning more than 3,300 events across all 50 states and some international locations. If confirmed, it would make it one of the largest single-day demonstrations in American history. Protesters framed the gatherings as nonviolent resistance against Trump administration policies, including ICE immigration enforcement, and perceived executive overreach. New York, Chicago, Washington D.C., Boston, and the flagship Twin Cities event featuring massive but primarily peaceful crowds, although isolated unrest did occur in [Los Angeles](#), [Dallas](#), and [Portland](#), where clashes with police and federal agents led to tear gas deployment and dozens of arrests. Looking ahead, organizers are pointing to [May Day](#) (May 1) as the next mass

mobilization date, with calls beginning to circulate for strikes to accompany demonstrations.

- **Toronto Police Ban Residential Protests in North York:** Toronto Police Service announced a [ban](#) on protests on residential streets near North York, citing a “changing security landscape” and community security concerns. Demonstrations remain permitted at major intersections like Bathurst Street and Sheppard Avenue West, but violators may face arrest if they enter restricted residential zones. The move follows recent synagogue shootings in the Greater Toronto Area and ongoing protests tied to the Middle East conflict. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association criticized the policy, arguing it risks violating freedom of expression and assembly. This policy signals a shift toward more restrictive, location-based protest management in Toronto, and, while it is likely to reduce immediate tensions in residential areas, it will drive demonstration activity towards central intersections.
- **Conviction of Anti-ICE Demonstrators Signals Major Shift in Prosecution of Protest Activity:** Earlier this month, a federal jury [convicted](#) eight anti-ICE demonstrators on terrorism-related charges in the Prairieland trial, while another was convicted for transporting zines and pamphlets. The trial focused on a shooting incident that took place outside the Prairieland Detention Center in Texas after a July 4, 2025, noise demonstration. Prosecutors described the demonstrators as a coordinated “Antifa cell” and argued all nine defendants were involved in the shooting. This is the first case in which federal terrorism charges were successfully applied to individuals labeled as “Antifa.” Experts [warn](#) the verdict sets a precedent that could allow the government to crack down on activists by applying a “terrorism” label. As anti-ICE demonstrations continue nationwide, including at the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX) later this evening, the ruling signals a more aggressive federal response to demonstrations against the current administration. Sentencing will begin in June, though the defendants are [appealing](#) their convictions.
- **Heightened Climate-Related Demonstrations Expected in France, Germany, and Sweden:** More than 20 French organizations are organizing a [major march against pesticides](#) in Paris this coming Saturday under the slogan “Noisy Spring” (*Printemps Bruyant*), a play on the title of Rachel Carson’s 1962 environmental book on the consequences of insecticide use. Demonstrators will gather at Grands Boulevards station at 2 pm on April 4, and localized traffic disruptions are likely. To the east, the Swedish environmental campaign group Restore Wetlands (*Återställ Våtmarker*) will kick off a campaign of Saturday slow marches in Stockholm beginning on April 11. Previous protest actions have [resulted](#) in arrests. In Germany, climate activists with the Fridays for Future campaign are calling for street protests in Berlin, Cologne, Hamburg, and Munich on April 18 and in cities across the country on April 24.

Weekly Intelligence Briefing

March 31, 2026



Upcoming Events

- February 18 – April 2: Lent (Global)
- 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)
- May 1: Provisional Date to Apply EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement (Global)
- May 1: International Workers' Day/May Day (Global)