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Pattern of Unrest Continues Across Europe as Governments Struggle to Meet Organizers' Demands

Countries across Europe continue to face nationwide days of action over the cost of living, housing access, and other issues, resulting in widespread disruptions to business activities and daily life. The 20 November International Youth Strike Against War, which saw demonstrations in at least 20 countries, highlighted the growing coordination among youth mobilizations unfolding simultaneously across the continent. Alongside the youth actions, labor organizers also continue to stage sectoral and general strikes, disrupting transportation, education, government services, and other important functions. In France, where demonstrations by high school students earlier this fall sparked the current wave of unrest unfolding across the continent, turnout has declined from the highs seen in October. However, the most widely-observed nationwide days of action still attract tens of thousands of supporters to dozens of demonstrations held across the country. Interfac IDF, a collective of university and high school students in Paris, has called for another demonstration at the Bastille in Paris at 2:00 pm on Thursday, 26 November. They are also encouraging other student groups across the country to join them, although projected turnout is unclear as of this writing. This coming weekend, on 28 November, the Yellow Vests and Nous Toutes, a collective of women's rights organizations, are calling for nationwide demonstrations against gender-based violence, further highlighting the overlapping nature of various recent demonstration movements and calls to action. Shortly after that, a coalition of eight public sector unions has called for another national strike day on 01 December, bringing further disruptions ahead of...

Weekly Intelligence Briefing

November 23, 2026

US East Coast Storm to Impact Thanksgiving Travel Plans

Travel plans along the East Coast on Thursday and Friday around the Thanksgiving holiday could become severely impacted by a developing low pressure system that will strengthen as it tracks northwards along the coast. Ahead of the storm, persistent east to northeasterly winds will drive a significant coastal flood threat across the Carolinas and Georgia. The storm is forecast to intensify overnight, leading to strong winds and heavy rain in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia through Thursday morning. Weather conditions will deteriorate as the storm continues northwards on Thanksgiving, leading to widespread heavy rain, strong winds, and coastal flooding from the Carolinas through southern New York. Driving conditions on I-95 and other major East Coast highways between New York and North Carolina will be treacherous on Thursday, coinciding with one of the busiest travel holidays of the year. The most intense conditions will be near the coast, where isolated flash flooding, power outages, and dangerous coastal flooding are likely. Adverse weather conditions on Friday will peak across New England, especially in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. Heavy rain and strong winds will make driving difficult and could trigger delays at airports within the region. Dreary weather conditions with showers and breezy winds will likely continue over the Northeast US through Friday and into Saturday; however, limited disruptions are forecast over the weekend as many return home following the holiday. AlertMedia meteorologists are also monitoring the weather situation across the Pacific Northwest and Midwest for Thanksgiving. Another weak system in...

String of Far-Reaching Cyberattacks and Technical Failures Raise Concerns Over Single Points of Failure and Lack of Backup Systems

Amid a string of high-profile cyberattacks and technical failures, industry experts and others are growing increasingly concerned that many of the widely integrated systems critical to both government and private-sector operations may be insufficiently protected from the potential consequences of these incidents. In the past week alone, banking and other financial services, flights, government communications networks, and other web-based services such as the Microsoft 365 suite experienced disruptions that stranded travelers and prevented ordinary corporate and government operations. Simultaneously, far-reaching cyberattacks, increasingly aided by AI, have targeted hundreds of major organizations, sometimes with significant consequences for those companies and their consumers. The various technical failures at both private companies and government agencies that resulted in these disruptions, many of which have been blamed “on system misconfigurations, faulty updates, and technical errors,” had extensive impacts across multiple organizations or at a nationwide scale. This is driving many to question whether the business community’s growing reliance on a comparatively small pool of service providers is raising the risk of single points of failure driving widespread business and security disruptions. Chronic underinvestment in critical infrastructure and the lack of backup systems for critical functions have also been flagged as both factors in the failures seen recently and concerns going forward. At the same time, cybersecurity threats have grown increasingly complex, with the use of AI now enabling hackers to probe for vulnerabilities faster than ever. With the FBI warning that the new ARTEX AI platform could help malicious actors with reconnaissance, data exfiltration,...

Climate and Natural Hazards

- California to Face King Tides, Coastal Flooding, During Middle of the Week: Major coastal flooding with significant inundation is expected across central and northern California through Thursday as astronomical tides combine with high winds, pushing water levels near record highs. The greatest coastal flood risk will occur during the morning high tides from Tuesday through Thursday, peaking on Wednesday morning, when records may be broken. Coastal flooding will inundate low-lying roads, waterfront businesses, and shoreline communities, including areas that do not typically experience tidal flooding. Officials with the National Weather Service are warning of up to 2-3 feet of saltwater inundation above ground level, which could force localized evacuations in vulnerable areas along the coast. Dangerous surf will also develop on Tuesday, with breaking waves reaching 14-18 feet, increasing to 20-30 feet on Wednesday. Strong rip currents, sneaker waves, and hazardous marine conditions will pose significant risks along beaches. Gale-force winds and very rough seas may disrupt marine operations through Thursday. Residents will likely be advised to avoid all beaches.
- European Weather Pattern to Turn More Active During the Middle to End of the Week: After an active week of weather across Europe, conditions have temporarily settled for much of the continent. Drier conditions will be short-lived, however, as a developing storm system will drive renewed heavy rain and strong winds across southeastern France, Italy, the Balkans, and Greece from Tuesday night through the end of the week. Isolated power outages and rough seas are likely, but flash flooding will be the main concern across southeastern France and the west coast of Italy. The risk of dangerous flooding will peak during the second half of the week over Montenegro and Albania before the storm intensifies further over Greece from Friday through the weekend. While the forecast still comes with typical uncertainty at this stage, early indications suggest 6-8 inches of rain will be possible from Montenegro through western Greece.
- Strong System to Bring Flooding Threat to Portions of Cuba and the Bahamas: A strong low-pressure system developing in the Gulf will bring widespread heavy rain and storms to much of western Cuba and northern portions of the Bahamas Tuesday through Wednesday. Rain and storms will develop by Tuesday afternoon across western Cuba, and by Tuesday evening across the Bahamas. Storms will increase in coverage and intensity through the night across the entire region. The heaviest rainfall and most widespread storm activity is expected early Wednesday morning through the afternoon in Cuba, and through Wednesday evening in the Bahamas. Activity will diminish through Wednesday night. Expect widespread rainfall totals of 100-200 mm (4-8 in) across western Cuba, with localized totals approaching 300 mm (12 in) in spots. Havana and Matanzas are more likely to experience totals within 50-100 mm (2-4 in). Northern portions of the Bahamas, including Grand Bahama, Great Abaco, Eleuthera, New Providence, Andros Island, and Bimini, will likely experience 75-150 mm (3-6 in) of rainfall. Localized to scattered flash flooding is likely, especially in low-lying and urban areas. Landslides and road closures are

possible in steep terrain areas. Additionally, some storms may become strong to severe, capable of producing damaging wind gusts in excess of 80 km/h (50 mph), hail, and a waterspout or tornado or two. Isolated to scattered power outages, downed trees and power lines, and shipping disruptions are possible.

Worldwide

- Ratification of Denmark-US Security Agreement Over Greenland Likely to Raise Arctic Geopolitical Tensions: On 19 November, Denmark's parliament unanimously ratified an agreement characterized as a "defense partnership" with the US on Greenland, raising concerns over the potential implications of a greater US security footing in the Arctic. An agreement outlining the terms of shared security responsibilities for the strategic island was first reached in September, following months of intermittent attempts by the US to pressure Denmark into ceding security control (and perhaps even territory). Under the terms of the deal, the US will establish a missile defense system on the island and collaborate with the other two countries on security-related investment screening regulations, with the agreement also "reaffirming Danish sovereignty and Greenlanders' right to self-determination." The installation of a US missile defense system in closer proximity to Russia will likely raise concerns in Moscow and could inspire retaliatory acts ranging from similar missile system deployments in northern Russian territories to an increase in cyber, hybrid, or sabotage campaigns targeting US, Danish, or other Western interests globally.
- Military Buildup on Ethiopia's Border With Eritrea Renews Fears of Wider War: Ethiopia and Eritrea could be moving closer to a direct military confrontation, with both countries amassing troops along their shared border amid ongoing fighting between government forces and rebel troops in Ethiopia's Tigray region. An exchange of fire reported near the border town of Badme on 12 November included Ethiopian drone strikes on suspected Eritrean positions and Eritrean artillery fire, and was followed by further reports of clashing on 13 November. Eritrea has denied entering Ethiopian territory and accused Addis Ababa of spreading propaganda, while Ethiopia continues to accuse Eritrea of materially supporting Tigrayan rebel fighters. The military buildup is a likely indicator of preparations for further escalations in the region, and in conjunction with simultaneous security and political challenges in neighboring Somalia and Djibouti, threatens to worsen instability across the Horn of Africa.
- Haitian Support for Salvadoran Intervention Grows Despite Potential for Escalation: Thousands of Haitians marched across several cities on 17 November in support of El Salvador's deployment of more than 2,000 troops to Haiti, reflecting growing public frustration with persistent gang violence and the inability of successive international missions to restore security. The deployment followed the disappearance of four Salvadoran personnel from a UN-backed anti-gang operation in October, and was authorized under a separate bilateral agreement with Haiti. Protesters carried signs praising Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele and opposing armed gangs, and Haiti's government formalized its support for the Salvadoran operation the same day. However, analysts warn that the intervention could intensify violence across Haiti without clear command

arrangements, a strategy for the post-conflict scenario, or an exit plan for Salvadoran forces. Limited gains have been reported nearly a month into the operation, despite high-visibility operations that could play an outsize role in influencing public opinion. Armed groups have reportedly retaliated against residents suspected of providing information to security forces, and the introduction of another armed group into the volatile security environment raises the risk of civilians and businesses being caught in the crossfire. According to the UN, nearly 4,600 people have been killed in Haiti this year.

- Commercial Shippers' Interest in Red Sea Route Grows, Alongside Houthi Threat: Maritime freight carriers' growing interest in the Red Sea route at a time when the Bab El-Mandeb Strait is particularly exposed to Houthi attacks could increase the threat to crew and cargo on the Europe-Asia route. The Houthi's current maritime campaign, which comes alongside a ground offensive against the Saudi-backed government in Yemen, focuses on Saudi energy exports, ports, and vessels. Amid the broader offensive, the group continues to make strategic territorial gains in western Yemen, forcing Yemeni government forces to withdraw from near the strait to support the defense of temporary capital Aden from Houthi attacks. The Houthi advances and Yemeni troop withdrawals will further expose shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden to Houthi attacks. While the Houthis currently target Saudi assets, vessels in the area carrying Saudi goods—or even those mistakenly identified as Saudi-affiliated—could also be at risk. Additionally, with tensions between Tehran and Washington rising again, Iran could push the Houthis (a proxy of the regime) to widen its targeting to US-affiliated vessels or all commercial traffic in the area in order to increase trade pressure on the US or the broader global community.
- Iran Repeatedly Targets US Military Installations in Bahrain Amid Reports of Planning for Potential Washington Attack: A two-month lull in the intensity of tit-for-tat strikes between Iran and US forces ended this weekend with a series of Iranian strikes that targeted US military communications infrastructure in Bahrain. Iran described the strikes as a retaliation for earlier US attacks on Iranian communications and drone infrastructure, but the resumption of a more intense state of conflict also comes as the USS Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group arrived in the Persian Gulf, becoming the third US aircraft carrier to support ongoing efforts to blockade Iranian ports and secure the flow of oil through the Strait of Hormuz. More US naval assets are currently deployed in the region than when the conflict began with Israeli support in late February. The Trump administration repeatedly flagged the potential for a resumption of hostilities after US midterm elections. With the incoming Democratic-controlled Congress expected to raise pressure to end the war effort, US officials could seek to intensify the conflict in an attempt to bring about a swift end before newly-elected legislators take their seats in January. The deployment of the Roosevelt strike group to the region is likely to be received as a significant step toward renewed aggression, which may in itself inspire increasingly large-scale Iranian operations in response as Tehran seeks to undermine US preparations for a potential return to open combat. These preparations could include further Iranian escalations, such as attacks targeting the US. A new CNN report claims that Iran could be evaluating options for targeting US officials in...

Cyber and Regulatory

- Hackers Target Third-Party Service Provider Used by Major Banks, Credit Card Issuers: Third-party service providers supporting the operations of JPMorgan Chase, Mastercard, Visa, and potentially other major card issuers were reportedly targeted in a cyberattack on 20 November that may have resulted in hackers gaining access to "some customer names and email addresses." While a JPMorgan statement claimed that client services were not disrupted as a result of the incident, the company intends to "contact affected customers directly and offer support, including complimentary credit monitoring." Visa confirmed that "no payments data such as card numbers were affected." The incident follows a technical outage that disrupted services for JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and other banks across the US for several hours, and comes amid a broader pattern of technical disruptions that have had far-reaching impacts on critical business and consumer services.
- European Commission Targeted By 'AI-Generated Cybercampaign': Officials confirmed that the European Commission (EC), the executive body of the European Union (EU), is investigating the impact of a cyberattack that targeted EC websites and other applications with the help of artificial intelligence (AI). The EC first detected the incident on 22 October and disabled access to several services as a precaution, most of which have since been restored. While spokesperson Thomas Regnier claimed that "there was no evidence of any data breach affecting Commission staff as a whole," a Politico report argues that "the incident has potentially compromised swaths of personal data" and "left staff unable to input salary and leave information" during the service disruption, which lasted at least 10 days. The attack is believed to be linked to the ARTEX AI-enabled tool public and private-sector entities including the FBI and Google recently warned about, raising fears that the rapid advancement of AI-enabled cyber campaigns could grow increasingly widespread, successful, and impactful.
- US Banking Outage Disrupts Transactions and Delays Payments Across Major Financial Institutions: Thousands of US customers experienced difficulties accessing online banking, checking balances, withdrawing cash, and completing transfers on 16 November after a software bug in JPMorgan Chase's on-premises hardware systems slowed transaction processing. The disruption triggered knock-on delays involving at least five other major banks, including Wells Fargo, Bank of America, US Bank, Truist, and Capital One, while some customers also reported delayed Zelle payments. Although the affected banks reported varying levels of disruption, the issue exposed the vulnerabilities associated with the interconnectedness of US payment systems, where a technical failure at one major institution can disrupt payments across the wider financial system. It also follows recent outages affecting Microsoft services and US air traffic control, intensifying concerns over the resilience of critical infrastructure, although no confirmed link has been established between the incidents.
- OPTIMJACK Supply-Chain Attack Exposes Users of 178 Organizations' Websites to Data Theft and Financial Fraud: A major software supply-chain attack dubbed "OPTIMJACK" compromised scripts

hosted by website optimization platform Optimizely on 16 November, enabling attackers to inject malicious JavaScript into websites operated by at least 178 organizations. Affected brands include CNN, BBC, Zoom, Salesforce, GitLab, IKEA, HSBC, and Equifax, exposing visitors to malicious code delivered through otherwise trusted third-party scripts without necessarily compromising the organizations' own networks. The attack exploited Optimizely's Web Experimentation platform to insert malicious code into customer projects, which was then automatically executed by visitors' browsers. The payload was designed to replace cryptocurrency wallet addresses with attackers' addresses, steal payment-card details (including CVVs), and exfiltrate accessible browser cookies and screenshots. Optimizely subsequently said it had fixed the vulnerability, removed the malicious code, and secured affected accounts. The incident highlights the systemic risks of third-party software dependencies given that compromising one trusted service can expose customers across multiple sectors, bypassing individual organizations' security controls, and creating widespread financial, data-security and reputational risks.

- Social Media Use Restrictions Intensifying Worldwide Amid Growing Tech, National Security Concerns: Following Australia's landmark ban on children's use of social media, similar restrictions and proposals are under consideration across Europe and Asia, including in Denmark, France, Indonesia, and Malaysia, signaling a broader shift toward the regulation of age verification practices and a greater degree of platform accountability. Italy is preparing legislation to ban social media access for children under 13 and require guardian-managed accounts for those aged 13 to 15, with parliamentary approval expected by the end of 2026. However, the enforcement of such laws remains challenging, with Australian authorities continuing to investigate platforms over concerns that underage users are circumventing restrictions. Separately, Jordan and Iraq have moved to block Telegram over national security concerns, citing the dissemination of extremist and illegal content and the platform's failure to comply with local regulations. Jordan's decision follows a recent deadly church attack and a wider security crackdown in the country, while Iraq has given Telegram 30 days to address non-compliant content, having previously blocked the platform in 2023.
- California Intensifies Scrutiny of AI Companies, Workplace Applications: California is increasing regulatory scrutiny of the artificial intelligence (AI) industry, with Attorney General Rob Bonta filing a lawsuit against OpenAI on 16 November accusing the company of misleading the public and developing advanced AI models without adequate safety safeguards. The lawsuit cites at least 80 cybersecurity incidents, including a July event in which OpenAI's autonomous AI agents escaped a testing environment and conducted a cyberattack against AI platform Hugging Face. The state alleges that inadequate oversight exposed third-party networks and critical infrastructure to cybersecurity risks, and seeks to hold the company accountable under consumer protection and public nuisance laws. Separately, Governor Gavin Newsom signed four new workplace AI laws on 30 September, introducing restrictions on automated employment decisions, AI-driven workforce reductions, and employee surveillance. The measures require human oversight of AI-assisted disciplinary and termination decisions, additional disclosures when technology contributes to mass layoffs, and restrictions on AI-powered employee

monitoring, including surveillance of employees' emotional states or neural data. Most provisions take effect on 01 January 2027, increasing compliance obligations for employers and technology providers while potentially setting a regulatory precedent for other US states.

- Meta Faces Growing Scrutiny Over Content Moderation in India and Africa: Meta has adjusted Instagram's recommendation algorithms in India to reduce the visibility of sexually suggestive and violent content, following an October advisory from the IT Ministry urging platforms to prevent algorithmic amplification of misleading or inflammatory material. The company said users are now reporting recommended content around half as often as a year ago, although it did not disclose supporting figures. The changes reflect growing regulatory pressure on social media companies to strengthen content moderation and take greater responsibility for material promoted by their algorithms, potentially increasing compliance costs, operational scrutiny, and legal exposure. Separately, Meta is opposing the introduction of new evidence in a Kenyan court case alleging that Facebook amplified hate speech contributing to violence against Tigrayans during Ethiopia's 2020–2022 war. The petitioners link inflammatory posts identifying lecturer Meareg Amare as Tigrayan to his killing in November 2021 and are seeking an apology, stronger African-language content moderation, algorithm changes, and a restitution fund. The case could set a precedent for how legally liable social media companies could be for the real-world consequences of algorithmic recommendations and inadequate moderation. The outcome could potentially expose Meta to further litigation and pressure to expand its oversight of content across Africa.
- UK Sanctions Eight Israeli Construction Companies Supporting Settlement Efforts in West Bank: Israel's perceived refusal "to clamp down on illegal settlement" and encouragement of further construction is driving the first-ever British sanctions effort targeting the finances of Israeli companies supporting the buildout of new settler housing in the West Bank. United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband announced fresh sanctions targeting "Israeli construction, property development and architectural businesses that have helped to plan, build, supply or market housing and public infrastructure in Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank," as well as at least one settler group accused of extremism. The sanctions were announced just ahead of tenders for Israel's E1 settlement project, which threatens to cut off the West Bank from East Jerusalem and could further impact hopes for a future two-state solution, which Miliband described as the "North Star" of British policy on the conflict. Recent British moves have further soured the relationship between Israel and the UK. In September, Israel threatened to close the British consulate in East Jerusalem after UK authorities announced trade sanctions targeting Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Infrastructure and Supply Chain

- Indian Regulator Flags Popular Drinking Water Brand as Unsafe Amid Rising Regulatory Scrutiny of Sector: India's Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) has declared Bisleri packaged drinking water—India's top brand—unsafe, citing bromate levels exceeding safe limits and the presence of

polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Bromate can form as a result of the water disinfection process, but both it and certain PAHs are considered potential carcinogens, raising concerns about the impacts of long-term exposure to tainted products. The FSSAI subsequently opened the door for legal action against Bisleri and announced plans for further testing across both Bisleri's facilities and those of competing brands. Bisleri disputed the FSSAI's findings, maintains that its products are safe, and says it has not received an official notice from the government regarding these findings. The FSSAI classified packaged water as a high-risk food category and introduced mandatory periodic testing requirements in 2026. The decision to test other manufacturers' products following the Bisleri incident signals that the FSSAI's scrutiny of manufacturing hygiene, water sourcing, chemical contamination, labelling, and quality-control procedures is likely to extend to other packaged food makers, especially those selling bottled water.

- Japan Partners With Southeast Asian Peers, International Organizations to Bolster Regional Energy Security: Japan is working with partners across Southeast Asia to advance the Partnership on Wide Energy and Resources Resilience Asia (POWERR Asia) regional framework, which Tokyo hopes will bolster energy security amid disruptions to global fossil fuel supplies driven by the war in Iran and other geopolitical factors. At the 4th Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC) Leaders' Meeting in Manila on 17 November, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi proposed the establishment of an Asian oil security task force with the help of the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA). The task force will collect and analyze regional stockpile data, strengthen preparedness, and coordinate emergency responses, including potential oil releases and transfers. Japan also proposed making idle storage tanks at its refineries (including facilities at closed refineries) available for other Asian countries to store oil, in coordination with the Philippines-led ASEAN Regional Joint Stockpiling scheme. The initiative aims to address Southeast Asia's limited domestic storage capacity and vulnerability to supply disruptions, while simultaneously reducing the cost and time required for countries to establish their own strategic reserves. Japan and the IEA are also working toward a joint Oil Security Hub for Asia, based in Tokyo, to support stockpiling efforts, energy market information sharing, and coordinated crisis responses. The framework could improve regional resilience by enabling faster access to stored supplies during emergencies, although its effectiveness will depend on participating countries' agreement on funding and storage arrangements, as well as rules governing the release…
- US Export Curbs Disrupt AI Chip Supply Chains, Threatening Southeast Asia's Data Center Boom: The US is tightening restrictions on advanced AI chip exports to China and Southeast Asia, requiring export licenses for shipments to Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand amid concerns that Chinese firms are accessing US technology through regional data centers. The restrictions also require overseas data centers supplying significant computing capacity to Chinese-headquartered companies to obtain US licenses, potentially limiting their ability to provide developers in China and elsewhere with remote access to advanced chips. Separately, Nvidia has stopped shipping US-approved Hopper AI chips to China, with interim CEO Colette

Kress confirming that no further shipments are planned. The restrictions threaten to disrupt semiconductor supply chains, discourage data center investments, and increase compliance costs across the region, particularly for Southeast Asian operators dependent on Chinese customers. The announcement triggered a selloff in regional technology stocks, with Malaysia's MN Holdings and Critical Holdings falling 20% and YTL Power falling nearly 10% as chip suppliers and related companies in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan also notching declines. Stricter licensing and customer verification requirements could delay chip deliveries, impacting project rollout timelines and weakening Southeast Asia's appeal as an AI infrastructure hub. Exemptions for US-owned data centers operating in the region could shift any lost businesses toward those companies, at the domestic tech ecosystem's expense.

- Tensions Between German Industrial Union and Manufacturers Threaten Business Environment for Manufacturers Nationwide: IG Metall, a German industrial union counting some 3.7 million workers across various manufacturing and trade roles, confirmed plans for a day of 24-hour strike action across "hundreds of businesses in the steel, auto and other sectors" nationwide on 20 November. The day of action is IG Metall's second mobilization amid an ongoing dispute with these companies over wage increases this year, following a multi-day campaign earlier in November that resulted in intermittent walkouts at companies including Audi, Mercedes-Benz, and Tata Steel. While IG Metall is demanding a 5% wage increase effective immediately, employers are offering one-time 1%-of-salary payouts and a 1.3% salary adjustment to roll out through 2028. The disruptions have driven significant tensions between the union and the industrial firms that form Germany's economic backbone, with Mercedes-Benz reportedly considering closing facilities in the country due to the current operating environment, which is also pressured by macroeconomic challenges and a slump in automotive sales.

Health

- US Army's Plans to Detonate Munitions Paused Again Following President's Intervention: The schedule for the planned detonation of several tons of degraded lead azide in Middletown, Iowa has been jumbled yet again after US President Donald Trump said that he was halting the exercise until the Eighth Circuit US Court of Appeals and governor-elect Rob Sand had a chance to weigh in. The detonation, which was originally set for Friday, 20 November, had been pushed to Monday, 23 November and then Wednesday, 25 November due to concerns and legal action from environmental groups before Trump's intervention. The Iowa Environmental Council, Sierra Club, and others feared that winds could carry toxic lead particles and other contaminants far from the site of the operation and lead to long-lasting soil contamination. While the US Army had been set to proceed with the operation on Wednesday after securing an emergency exemption to an administrative stay issued by the court while it considered the lawsuit, it is now unclear when the detonation will go forward. The Army had cautioned that preparations made ahead of the initial detonation date and anticipated large temperature swings had made the stockpile even more

unstable, heightening the risk of an uncontrolled explosion. Nearby residents have already taken precautions such as sealing their windows and doors and officials had earlier advised those in certain neighborhoods to vacate the area during the detonations. The US Army is posting updates on its plans on its website.

- Resurgence of Measles Exposes Widening Gaps in Public Health Efforts Across Americas: The loss of measles elimination status by the United States, Mexico, and Bolivia underscores the growing disparity in the quality and effectiveness of public health and vaccination campaigns across the Americas. On 17 November, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) confirmed that all three countries had experienced uninterrupted transmission of the same measles virus strain for at least 12 months, reversing years of progress in disease control. All three countries are now required to submit corrective action plans. The broader regional outbreak has escalated sharply, with 58,213 confirmed cases and 82 deaths reported across the Americas by 13 November 2026, compared with 12,806 cases during the same period in 2025. The PAHO attributes the resurgence to falling vaccination rates, gaps in healthcare access, misinformation, and weak disease surveillance efforts. The setback also exposes broader weaknesses in healthcare governance, particularly impacted countries' failure to sustain routine immunization programs, reach underserved communities, or respond quickly to emerging outbreaks.
- US Officials Warn of Growing Dependence on Chinese Biotech: A US congressional commission has warned that China's expanding biotechnology industry could erode American competitiveness and create a long-term dependence on Chinese pharmaceutical supply chains. Analysis of 57 licensing deals since early 2023 found that Western pharmaceutical companies are directing a growing share of capital, research expertise, and industry information towards Chinese firms, attracted by faster clinical trials, lower development costs, and the pace of innovation in the Chinese market. The trend risks diverting investment and R&D activity away from US biotech startups, weakening domestic innovation and giving Chinese companies greater control over global drug production and pricing. The commission also advised the US to add biotech to Comprehensive Outbound Investment National Security (COINS) Act "to out-innovate strategic competitors before it's too late." However, Novartis CEO Vas Narasimhan has warned that proposed US restrictions on investment in Chinese biotechnology could slow drug development by limiting the transfer of technologies and research between the two countries. Contradictory to the commission's concerns, Narasimhan argued that access to Chinese biotech innovations is increasingly important for multinational pharmaceutical companies to develop new treatments and manufacture medicines for US patients.
- Expansion of US Data Center Industry Raising Concern Over Emissions, Air Pollution: A new study estimates that 403 of the largest US data centers generated approximately 25.7 million metric tons of CO_2 between May 2024 and April 2025, exceeding the annual emissions of all of Denmark. The facilities consumed around 82 terawatt-hours of electricity, equivalent to approximately 1.8%

of total US electricity consumption, with 54% of their power generated from fossil fuels. The findings are particularly concerning as demand for AI compute drives accelerating investment in the sector, with plans for up to 2,000 additional data centers expected to increase electricity demand, emissions, and pressure on water resources. A separate MIT study published on 19 November estimated that data center-related electricity demand contributed to approximately 650 premature deaths in the US during 2023, as a result of the fine particulate matter and smog pollution generated in fossil fuel-burning power plants. The impacts were particularly pronounced in Midwestern states, including Kansas, Iowa, Nevada, and South Dakota, despite the highest US concentration of data centers being found in Virginia and Texas.

- Evidence Linking Polystyrene Consumption With Colon Cancer Reinforces Concerns Over Microplastics: A recent study's findings linking a heightened risk of colon cancer with exposure to polystyrene, a synthetic polymer commonly used in a variety of consumer applications including disposable cutlery and food or drink containers, could drive regulators to crack down on the use of the material in circumstances that could lead to ingestion. During the study, two groups of mice were exposed to a carcinogen known to cause colon cancer, with one group also fed polystyrene particles. The test group "were afflicted with both more tumors and more severe tumors," raising concern about the potential that particles of polystyrene and other microplastics may increase the likelihood of disease by eroding the colon's natural lining, "allowing toxins and harmful microbes to reach the wall of the colon." In the US, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr has previously taken on the issue of potentially harmful microplastics, launching a "$144 million program on measuring, understanding, and removing micro- and nanoplastics" from the body and the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is also working to raise awareness of the issue by including microplastics on its Contaminant Candidate List. Taken together, these measures suggest that further US efforts to limit microplastic pollution and consumption could lead to regulatory changes impacting the consumer electronics, food service, garment, and other sectors.

Demonstrations and Industrial Action

- Europe to See Widespread Demonstrations Against Gender-Based Violence on 25 November: Population centers across Europe will see demonstrations on Wednesday, 25 November marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, with feminist organizers, women's rights groups, and other civil society organizations mobilizing supporters to demand stronger action against gender-based violence. Previous years' mobilizations have been well-attended, suggesting that turnout will be robust, especially in cities with ongoing demonstration activity or a history of hosting large-scale demonstrations surrounding the event. In November 2023, hundreds of thousands demonstrated across Italy, with organizers estimating 500,000

participants in Rome alone, while 2025 observances in France drew thousands of supporters to events in dozens of cities. Strong turnout could impact access to commercial districts, public transport, and vehicular and pedestrian movement in impacted countries, particularly around major squares and other sensitive sites. Security is likely to be bolstered, especially in light of the broader wave of unrest impacting countries across Europe. Noteworthy gathering places include the Place du Parc in Mons, Belgium; Herrfurthplatz in Berlin, Germany; Orleansplatz in Munich, Germany; Piazza Pia in Rome, Italy; Plaça de la Universitat in Barcelona, Spain; and Bahnhofsstrasse in Zurich, Switzerland. In Madrid, Spain, the Feminist movement is organizing the fifth annual march through the city center to Plaza de España at 6:30 pm, and the 8M commission has called protesters to gather at Neptune Fountain at 7:00 pm. In France, a march is planned in Paris on Saturday, 28 November from Panthéon (5th arrondissement) to Place d'Italie (13th arrondissement) at 2:00 pm.

- Demonstrations Over Agricultural, Political Issues Threaten to Disrupt India's Constitution Day Commemorations: When India celebrates its Constitution Day national holiday on Thursday, 26 November, farmers' protests and demonstrations organized by the Indian National Congress (Congress) party are likely to cause localized disruptions in Delhi and other population centers across the country. The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella organization of farmers' unions that previously led disruptive mass demonstrations over industry issues, plans protests in Delhi and dozens of other communities. The group seeks to denounce the government's purported failure to honor commitments on crop prices, labor laws, and trade policy made during negotiations that ended a 2021 mobilization under similar circumstances. Meanwhile, the Congress party, which initially planned a Delhi rally on 26 November, will instead hold Constitution Day marches in state capitals including Guwahati and Vijayawada in solidarity with ongoing unrest over electoral roll revisions that have seen over 130 million voters deregistered to date. Temporary road closures, diversions, and heightened security are expected around these demonstration venues on Constitution Day.
- Chile Faces Widening Unrest Over Proposed Budget, Cost of Living: Chile faces an ongoing wave of unrest that is increasingly tied to the Kast administration's proposed 2027 budget and concerns over included cuts to social spending and public services. Education funding is a particularly significant grievance, alongside the rising cost of living in the country, with fuel prices recently becoming a flashpoint for demonstration activity in their own right. Fuel prices began rising sharply in March of this year following changes to the fuel price stabilization mechanism (MEPCO), leading gasoline and diesel prices to rise approximately 26% and 53% (respectively) since the beginning of 2026. The rising cost of fuel resulted in a days-long truckers' strike that drove nationwide transport demonstrations beginning on 10 November and lasting at scale until government concessions made by 13 November, though individual demonstrations continued for several days at a much smaller scale. More recently, the focus has shifted to an escalation in an

ongoing series of student demonstrations and rising broad-based social unrest, with plans for demonstrations through the coming week. In Temuco, students at the University of La Frontera (UFRO) and the Catholic University of Temuco first mobilized on 02 November over internal university issues and concerns about education funding, calling for an indefinite nationwide university strike. Separately, Confech organized nationwide demonstrations on 11 November, with protests reported in Santiago, Valparaíso, Coquimbo, and Concepción as part of a broader campaign against the proposed 2027 education budget. Meanwhile, the Central Unitary of Workers (CUT), together with student and social organizations, including the Confederation of...

- Georgian, Albanian Capitals to Host Demonstrations on Sensitive 28 November Anniversaries: On Saturday, 28 November, organizers are planning large-scale demonstrations in the capitals of Albania and Georgia to commemorate significant occasions amid ongoing unrest. In Albania, organizers behind a monthslong series of large-scale demonstrations denouncing perceived corruption and other issues pertaining to a controversial luxury resort project are expected to rally supporters outside Prime Minister Edi Rama's office in Tiranë beginning at 10:00 am. The date marks Albanian Independence Day (Dita e Pavarësisë), suggesting that turnout will be especially robust at a time when security forces have responded increasingly aggressively to the ongoing unrest and setting the stage for potential clashes or other escalations. police deployed tear gas near the Prime Minister's Office on 19 November, with arrests reported the following day. Meanwhile, in Tbilisi, Georgia, the second anniversary of pro-EU membership demonstrations could see large crowds gather in Freedom Square at 7:00 pm to participate in a march organized by the Opposition Alliance, a pro-Western coalition of political groups opposed to the country's pro-Russian administration. While demonstrations have continued intermittently since the pro-EU movement began in 2024, a recent resurgence in agitation over the current administration's efforts to ban opposition parties from participating in government could create the conditions for the event to spiral into unrest. In the event that clashes occur between participants and security forces, a wider crackdown on the event cannot be ruled out, though this would likely escalate tensions between the Opposition Alliance and the government and increase the risk of clashes at future demonstrations.
- Labor, Political Unrest Prompt Widening Security Response in Bangladesh: Dhaka is suffering worsening business and transport disruptions amid ongoing labor and political unrest that threatens to destabilize the government, weaken the economy, and increase security threats to civilians and businesses nationwide. Ongoing unrest surrounding former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's plans to return from exile in India and her party's broader exclusion from the political process in the country has prompted a nationwide security response, with the government deploying hundreds of paramilitary personnel on 18 November ahead of a planned "nationwide lockdown" by Awami League supporters on 19 November. Police have reported dozens of crude bomb blasts and vehicle arson attacks across at least 28 districts in recent days, alongside attacks

on political figures and at least 37 Grameen Bank offices. Authorities have arrested 71 people linked to banned organizations in Dhaka. Meanwhile, the garment industry continues to experience factory closures as a result of repeated worker demonstrations, strikes, and clashes with authorities and company leadership over wages and working conditions. The situation has deteriorated further following the postponement of a garment sector minimum wage board meeting, which triggered fresh demonstrations on 17 November in Gazipur and other industrial areas. Thousands of workers clashed with police, who used tear gas and stun grenades to disperse protesters. The wage dispute remains unresolved, with factory owners threatening further shutdowns under the 'no work, no pay' provision. The next wage-board meeting is scheduled for 23 November, creating another potential flashpoint. Textile industry federations have threatened indefinite factory closures over the untenable operating environment,...

Upcoming Events

- Upcoming Events - Week of 23 November: AlertMedia is tracking a series of demonstrations, holidays, labor actions, and other events scheduled to take place over the coming weeks. 23 November: Labor Thanksgiving Day Public Holiday (Japan) 25 November: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Global) 26 November: Thanksgiving Day (United States) 28 November: Municipal Elections (Taiwan) 29 November: International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (Global) 29 November: Snap Legislative Elections (Spain) 30 November: Bonifacio Day (Philippines) 30 November: St Andrew's Day Public Holiday (Scotland) 02-03 December: Eid Al Etihad National Day Celebrations (United Arab Emirates) 03-04 December: 33rd Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Ministerial Council (Lugano, Switzerland) 04-12 December: Hannukah (Global) 05 December: Presidential Election (The Gambia) 05 December: National Day (Thailand) 05-06 December: Doha Forum (Doha, Qatar) 06 December: Constitution Day Public Holiday (Spain) 06 December: Independence Day (Finland) 09 December: Anti-Corruption Day (Uganda) 10 December: International Human Rights Day (Global) 12 December: Jamhuri Day Public Holiday (Kenya) 13 December: Commemoration of Nanjing Massacre (China) 14-15 December: G20 Leaders Summit (Miami, United States) 16 December: Day of Reconciliation Public Holiday (South Africa) 16 December: Victory Day National Holiday (Bangladesh) 17-18 December: European Council Summit (Brussels, Belgium) 18 December: International Migrants Day (Global) 18 December: National Day (Qatar) 22 December: General Elections (South Sudan) 25 December: Christmas Day (Global except Orthodox countries) 26 December: Boxing Day (Commonwealth Countries) 31 December-01 January: New Year's Eve/Day (Global) 06-09 January: Consumer Electronics Show (CES) 2027 (Las Vegas, Nevada) 16 January: General Elections...