



US & CANADA

Newsletter

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US POLITICS

“Shutdowns, Sanctions & Showdowns”

- The United States federal government headed towards an [imminent shutdown](#) at the end of the month after Congress failed to pass a funding bill. The impasse reached a critical point when Senate Democrats rejected a [short-term funding](#) measure proposed by Republicans that would simply extend current spending levels and buy the government more time and are demanding a restoration of health insurance subsidies for low income Americans and an end to the unilateral executive cuts that have been trimming the federal budget. The Senate vote on the night of 30th September fell 55–45, short of the 60 needed to overcome a filibuster and pass the legislation, which would have extended federal funding for seven weeks. This is the first [shutdown](#) since 2018-2019 and would result in the [furlough of hundreds](#) of thousands of federal workers and the disruption of many government services. Lawmakers on both sides are now bracing for the political and economic fallout of a shutdown.

- On September 10, prominent conservative activist [Charlie Kirk](#) was assassinated while delivering a speech at Utah Valley University. Kirk, the founder of Turning Point USA and a leading voice in the American conservative movement, was fatally shot during the public event. His death sent shockwaves through the nation's political landscape, prompting widespread condemnation and tributes from across the conservative spectrum. Eleven days later, on September 21, a large-scale memorial

service was held to honor his life and [legacy](#). The event drew an immense crowd of over 90,000 attendees, reflecting his significant influence. Among those present was U.S. President Donald Trump, who paid his respects and spoke about Kirk's impact on political discourse in the United States.

- Former FBI Director James Comey has been [indicted](#) on charges related to his 2020 Senate testimony about the Russia investigation where he was accused of making false statements and obstructing a congressional proceeding. This legal action came after intense pressure from President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly urged the Justice Department to go after his political opponents, including Comey. Lindsey Halligan, who is leading this controversial prosecution, was appointed as the interim United States attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia on September 22, 2025. A former personal lawyer to Trump, Trump, she was appointed to the post despite having no prior experience as a prosecutor after her predecessor Erik Siebert was forced to [resign](#).

- The [U.S. Treasury Secretary](#) announced that the Trump administration will not apply new tariffs on China for purchasing Russian crude oil. However, this position is conditional; the U.S. will only reconsider imposing tariffs if European countries first enact steep duties of their own against China. Meanwhile, Beijing has strongly condemned the U.S. for attempting to rally its allies including the G7, EU, and NATO, to join in [retaliatory tariff](#) measures. China's Foreign

Ministry spokesman, Lin Jian, stated that Beijing will take "[strong countermeasures](#)" to protect its sovereignty. He defended China's energy trade with Russia, describing the cooperation as "[justified, legitimate and beyond reproach](#)."

INDIA-US RELATIONS

- The 21st edition of [Exercise Yudh Abhyas](#), the annual bilateral military drill between India and the United States, commenced on September 1, 2025, at Fort Wainwright in Alaska. This year's exercise was strategically focused on enhancing joint capabilities in high-altitude mountain warfare and mastering counter-drone tactics. The rugged Alaskan terrain provides a realistic environment for soldiers from both armies to train together in extreme cold-weather conditions. The exercise underscores the deepening defense partnership between the two nations, aiming to improve interoperability and share tactical best practices for complex operations.

- A rhetorical flare-up occurred between the U.S. and India, sparked by American criticism of India's continued purchase of Russian oil and its trade policies. The tensions escalated when U.S. President Donald Trump remarked that the United States had "lost India to China." New Delhi immediately pushed back on this assertion. In a public statement aimed at de-escalating the situation, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized that despite the disagreements, the bilateral relationship remains "[very positive](#)." His comments sought to reaffirm the strength of the U.S.-India strategic partnership.

- U.S. President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi publicly committed to revive stalled trade negotiations, signaling a diplomatic thaw after escalating tensions. Trump, via social media, said he was "[pleased to announce](#)" renewed talks aimed at resolving trade barriers and reducing tariffs. Modi responded by calling the U.S. "[close friends and natural partners](#)," expressing confidence that the negotiations would unlock the vast potential of their bilateral partnership.

- India and the United States resumed face-to-face trade [talks](#) on September 16, 2025, marking the first in-person discussions since the Trump administration imposed 50% tariffs on Indian goods, including punitive tariffs related to Russian oil imports. The meeting aimed to establish a roadmap for future trade negotiations, addressing trade-related challenges and uncertainties faced by exporters. India reaffirmed its firm stance on protecting vulnerable sectors such as agriculture and dairy, emphasizing that trade agreements must be mutually beneficial.

Subsequently, India's [Commerce Minister](#) Piyush Goyal led a delegation to Washington, D.C. to push forward a stalled India-U.S. trade agreement. They held meetings with U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, Ambassador-designate Sergio Gor, U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, and other officials, discussing tariff reductions, visa policy, and mechanisms to ease tensions over India's Russian oil imports. The Indian government described the

discussions as “[constructive](#),” with both sides agreeing to continue engagement toward finalizing a mutually beneficial deal.

- US President Donald Trump [announced](#) the imposition of a 100% tariff on imports of branded and patented pharmaceutical drugs starting October 1, 2025, unless manufacturers have begun building pharmaceutical plants in the United States. This move could severely affect India, which supplies 45% of generic and 15% of biosimilar drugs used in the US, with pharmaceutical exports to America totalling \$8.7 billion in FY 2024 and \$3.7 billion more in the first half of 2025.

DIASPORA NEWS

- The Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C., in partnership with MY Bharat and India’s Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, staged the [Viksit Bharat Run 2025](#) in Maryland as part of the larger “Seva Pakhwada” drive. Diaspora communities in U.S. cities such as Chicago, Houston, and San Francisco participated with 3–5 km runs, pledges of service, and the “[Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam](#)” tree-planting initiative. The event aimed to celebrate India’s development journey, promote sustainability, and strengthen ties between the diaspora and the homeland.

- President Trump signed a proclamation imposing a \$100,000 one-time fee on new [H-1B visa petitions](#) filed after September 21, 2025, sparking outrage and uncertainty in the Indian diaspora, which holds over 70% of H-1B visas. India warned the move could lead to

“[humanitarian consequences](#)” by disrupting families and reducing remittance flows. Major U.S. tech firms, heavily dependent on Indian talent, are reassessing hiring strategies.

The White House later clarified that the fee would not apply to existing H-1B visa holders or renewals. However, analysts warn the policy could reduce monthly visa issuances by thousands, penalizing prospective Indian professionals and reshaping talent flows.

CANADA POLITICS

“Canada’s Balancing Act: Sovereignty, Security & Strain”

- U.S. President Donald Trump, addressing senior military leaders, referred to Canada as “[like America’s 51st state](#)” while discussing continental defense and missile shield cooperation. The remark sparked controversy in Canada, with critics calling it disrespectful to sovereignty. However, Trump also emphasized Canada’s importance as a security partner under NORAD, particularly regarding North American missile defense against Russian and Chinese threats. Ottawa officials downplayed the rhetoric but reiterated Canada’s independent foreign and defense policy.

- PM Mark Carney [unveiled](#) a comprehensive industrial strategy to bolster Canada's economic resilience amid escalating US trade tensions. The key measures include a one-year pause on the 2035 electric vehicle mandate to reduce pressure on automakers, a \$5 billion fund to support businesses affected by tariffs, and a

"Buy Canadian" policy prioritizing domestic suppliers in public procurement. It is also focused on enhancing housing construction, accelerating national projects, and investing in defence capabilities. This approach aims to strengthen Canada's competitiveness and reduce reliance on foreign markets amid global uncertainties.

- Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Transport and Internal Trade and a prominent figure Canadian politics, [resigned](#) from the Cabinet to become Canada's special envoy for Ukraine's reconstruction. A former journalist of Ukrainian descent, she previously served as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister under Justin Trudeau before being the first Minister to step down from Trudeau's cabinet in December 2024 due to policy disagreements. Freeland emphasized that she does not intend to run in the next federal election but will remain a Member of Parliament. Her appointment underscores Canada's dedication to Ukraine's future and reconstruction efforts.

INDIA-CANADA RELATIONS

- Canada's federal government officially listed the [Lawrence Bishnoi Gang](#) as a terrorist entity. Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree stated that the group had used murder, shootings, arson, intimidation, and extortion- targeting diaspora communities, businesses, and cultural figures- to sow fear. The designation [empowers Canadian](#) authorities to freeze assets, seize property, and apply stricter laws against anyone who finances or aids the gang. The move has been tied to past allegations linking the gang to the 2023

killing of Sikh activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia. Canada claims that the designation strengthens legal tools to counter transnational organized crime with diaspora implications.

- Canada's Foreign Minister Anita Anand met India's [External Affairs Minister](#) Subrahmanyam Jaishankar on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. The two ministers discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation across economic prosperity, security, and global governance. They also noted recent progress in the India-Canada relationship, including the reinstatement of [high commissioners](#) to promote trade, investment, and diplomatic dialogue.

- India and Canada held pre-Foreign Office Consultations in New Delhi on September 19, 2025, led by P. Kumaran and David Morrison, to [review](#) bilateral ties and advance the outcomes of the Modi-Carney meeting at the G7 Summit. Both sides welcomed the return of High Commissioners and reaffirmed their commitment to shared democratic values and sovereignty. They agreed to reactivate dialogue mechanisms across sectors including trade, defence, energy, civil nuclear cooperation, critical minerals, and agriculture, while also addressing capacity challenges at their diplomatic missions to strengthen people-to-people and economic linkages.

- NSAs Ajit Doval and Nathalie Drouin agreed to reset ties during their [meeting](#) in New Delhi on September 18, with discussions focusing on cooperation in intelligence exchanges, countering

terrorism and transnational crime, and restoring constructive diplomatic engagement for a stronger bilateral partnership.

DIASPORA NEWS

- Racist graffiti reading “[Indian Rats](#)” appeared near a children’s park in Mississauga, Ontario. The act sparked anger among Indo-Canadian residents and prompted community leaders to call for a police hate-crime investigation. Many said the incident reflects growing racism and insecurity faced by Indian immigrants, particularly students and workers.

- Canada saw a 50% year-on-year [fall in Indian student](#) study permits issued in the first seven months of the year, dropping from 188,255 in 2024 to just 52,765; whereas approval rates dropped from 51% in 2024 to 30% in 2025. Projected totals for 2025 suggest a 67.5 % fall as compared to 2023. This decline has been a result of stricter immigration and visa policies, longer processing times, rising financial barriers for students and intensified competition from countries like UK, Australia, and the US with feasible immigration pathways and better post-study opportunities.