



US & CANADA

Newsletter

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US POLITICS

Power, Control, and Controversy centres Washington!

- President Donald Trump is advocating for an aggressive, mid-decade redistricting effort in states led by Republicans, starting with Texas. The primary goal is to [redraw congressional maps](#) to create more GOP-friendly districts, potentially flipping several U.S. House seats to Republican control in the upcoming midterm elections.

This initiative has been met with significant controversy. In Texas, [Governor Greg Abbott](#) has championed the plan, which could give Republicans up to five additional congressional seats. Democrats and voting rights groups have vehemently opposed the move, decrying it as a partisan "gerrymander" aimed at diluting minority voting power and entrenching Republican control. The situation in Texas has already led to political standoffs, with Democratic lawmakers leaving the state to prevent a vote on the new maps. The push for redistricting has also prompted a response from Democratic-led states like [California](#), which are now considering their own redistricting to counter the potential Republican gains. This [escalating battle](#) over political maps highlights the intense fight for congressional control and raises fundamental questions about fairness and representation in the democratic process.

- President Trump has authorized the deployment of [federal troops](#) and law enforcement to several U.S. cities, including Chicago and Los Angeles. This decision follows a period of increased federal presence in Washington, D.C., which the administration claims has led to a reduction in crime. The stated purpose of these new deployments is to address what the President has described as "out of control" crime in these cities.

The move has been met with strong [opposition](#) from Democratic leaders and civil liberties advocates. Critics argue that the deployment of federal forces infringes upon local governance and is an overreach of executive authority. They contend that crime is a local issue that should be handled by city and state authorities, and that a federal intervention is both unnecessary and a violation of constitutional principles. The situation has raised concerns about the potential for clashes between federal and local authorities and the militarization of domestic [law enforcement](#).

- President Trump signed an [executive order](#) significantly curtailing the collective [bargaining rights](#) of federal employees in agencies designated with "national security missions." Citing the need for a more responsive and accountable civil service to protect the nation, the administration argues that [procedural requirements](#) in federal labour relations can impede the swift implementation of critical policies.

The order affects a wide range of agencies, including parts of the Departments of Defence, State, and Justice, as well as NASA and the National Weather Service. Labor unions and Democratic lawmakers have fiercely condemned the move as a retaliatory attack on federal workers and an attempt to silence opposition. The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) has [vowed legal action](#), arguing the order is a thinly veiled union-busting tactic that disenfranchises patriotic civil servants, many of whom are veterans. Critics contend the administration is using national security as a pretext to weaken worker protections and consolidate executive power.

- The Trump administration is actively pursuing plans to rename the Department of Defence to its original title, the

"[Department of War](#)." President Trump has publicly advocated for the change, stating that the former name has a "stronger sound" and better reflects the nation's military capabilities, which he argues should encompass both offense and defence.

This move is being positioned by the White House as a [deliberate shift](#) away from what it terms "woke ideology" and a renewed focus on traditional military values and warfighting readiness. While renaming the department would typically require an act of Congress, the administration is reportedly exploring alternative methods to enact the change. The proposal has garnered some support within the Republican party, with a Florida congressman filing an amendment to the annual defence policy bill to facilitate the name change. The Department of War was [renamed](#) the Department of Defence in 1949, following a major reorganization of the U.S. military after World War II. Proponents of the reversion argue it would project a more formidable image of [American military power](#).

- The Trump administration is [unilaterally cancelling](#) \$4.9 billion in foreign aid previously authorized by Congress, sparking a significant constitutional conflict.

The White House is using a legally dubious manoeuvre known as a "[pocket rescission](#)." By proposing the cuts late in the fiscal year, the administration ensures the 45-day congressional review period will expire along with the funds, effectively cancelling them without a vote.

The administration claims this eliminates "[woke and weaponized](#)" spending, but the move has drawn fierce bipartisan condemnation. Lawmakers argue it is an illegal overreach that usurps Congress's fundamental "[power of the purse](#)." The

nonpartisan Government Accountability Office has previously deemed the tactic unlawful, setting the stage for a major battle over presidential authority.

- A [U.S. federal](#) appeals court has delivered a major blow to President Trump's trade agenda, ruling that most of his sweeping tariffs are illegal. The U.S. [Court of Appeals](#) for the Federal Circuit decided that the President overstepped his authority by using the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to impose broad duties on imports.

The court reasoned that the IEEPA, a 1977 law, does not grant the president the explicit power to levy tariffs, an [authority the Constitution](#) largely reserves for Congress. The ruling specifically targets the "reciprocal" tariffs imposed in April 2025 and other duties on goods from China, Canada, and Mexico.

In response, President Trump sharply criticized the decision, calling the court "[highly partisan](#)" and a "total disaster for the country." The administration has announced its firm intention to appeal to the Supreme Court. The tariffs will remain in effect until at least mid-October to allow time for the appeal process.

INDIA-US RELATIONS

- The Trump administration has imposed steep tariffs on [Indian goods](#), escalating trade tensions over New Delhi's continued purchase of Russian oil. The move effectively places a 50% tariff on a wide range of Indian products, a combination of a 25% "reciprocal" tariff and an additional 25% levy directly linked to the Russian oil trade.

The White House cited national security concerns, arguing that India's energy imports [indirectly finance](#) Russia's war

[efforts in Ukraine](#). The tariffs, which took effect in late August, are projected to impact tens of billions of dollars in Indian exports, hitting labour-intensive sectors like textiles, gems, and leather goods particularly hard.

India's government has decried the move as "[unfair and unreasonable](#)," vowing to protect its national interests. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stated India will bear the pressure, while trade bodies warn the "strategic shock" could devastate key export industries and lead to significant job losses.

- India has suspended nearly all [postal services](#) to the U.S., a decision made in response to new U.S. customs orders. The U.S. recently issued an Executive Order eliminating the "de minimis" exemption, which previously allowed goods valued at under \$800 to enter the country duty-free. While gifts valued up to \$100 were initially exempt, India's Department of Posts has now completely halted all categories of mail, including letters and documents.

The suspension stems from a lack of clarity in the new U.S. regulations regarding how carriers and "[qualified parties](#)" are supposed to collect and remit customs duties. Citing this regulatory uncertainty and the inability of [air carriers](#) to transport U.S.-bound mail, India's postal service has halted deliveries. The move affects many businesses and individuals, highlighting significant [logistical disruptions](#) between the two countries. Customers with undelivered items are eligible for postage refunds.

- Donald Trump has [nominated](#) Sergio Gor, a loyal aide with minimal diplomatic experience, as U.S. ambassador to India and special envoy for South and Central Asia.

The move has sparked concern due to India's sensitivity about being grouped with Pakistan, especially amid tense regional dynamics. Gor's close ties to Trump may help bypass bureaucratic hurdles, but critics warn of a steep learning curve. His past includes political fundraising, publishing pro-Trump books, and a controversial clash with Elon Musk who called him a [snake](#).

- Trump trade advisor Peter Navarro continues to make waves for his highly controversial statements targeting India. Over the past month, he has accused India of functioning as a "[laundromat for the Kremlin](#)," labelled the Ukraine conflict "[Modi's war](#)," framing India's energy dealings as indirectly sustaining Russian aggression, and dubbed it as the "[Maharaja of tariffs](#)". In his latest invective, he invoked caste in his rhetoric—claiming that "[Brahmins](#) profiteering at the expense of the Indian people". These remarks triggered a backlash over their divisive and casteist tone.

DIASPORA NEWS

- India has significantly expanded its consular services in the U.S. by inaugurating eight new [Consular Application Centers](#). These centers, located in key cities like Boston, Dallas, and San Jose, are designed to better serve the large Indian diaspora of 5.4 million people. The move, announced by India's Ambassador to the U.S. Vinay Kwatra, aims to streamline and improve access to essential services such as visas, passports, and Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) applications. A notable feature of the expansion is that all 17 Consular Application Centers across the U.S. will now operate on Saturdays, providing greater convenience for applicants. This initiative is part of India's broader strategy to strengthen ties and

enhance engagement with the [Indian-American community](#), underscoring the importance of people-to-people connections in the bilateral relationship.

- U.S. Congresswoman [Marjorie Taylor Greene](#) has sparked concern within the Indian community after a social media post demanding an end to "Indian H-1B visas replacing American jobs". Greene's comments, posted on August 4, 2025, on X, came in the context of rising U.S.-India trade tensions and a broader political debate on immigration and labour.

While her statement does not represent an official policy change and is a personal opinion, it has heightened uncertainty for Indian students and professionals who rely on the [H-1B visa program](#) for employment in the U.S. The H-1B program is a critical pathway for many Indian graduates to work in the U.S. tech sector, with Indian nationals receiving nearly 70% of all H-1B visas in fiscal year 2024. The rhetoric, although not legally binding, adds to the growing scrutiny of skilled migration programs and fuels concerns about a potentially more hostile environment for the Indian diaspora.

- The BAPS [Swaminarayan Temple in Greenwood](#), Indiana, has been vandalized, prompting a strong condemnation from the Indian Consulate in Chicago. The Consulate has urged local authorities to take swift action and ensure the safety of religious sites. This marks the fourth such incident targeting a BAPS temple in the U.S. in less than a year, with a similar act of vandalism having occurred at a BAPS temple in Chino Hills, California, just six months prior. The repeated attacks have raised serious concerns within the Indian diaspora and community groups, who are calling for greater vigilance and

accountability for what they are describing as hate crimes.

CANADA POLITICS

Diplomacy, Defence, and Domestic Strains in Ottawa's Political Reset!

- The [Bank of Canada](#) will not revisit its 2% inflation target during its 2026 policy framework review, according to Governor Tiff Macklem. In a speech, Macklem stated that while the central bank is adapting to a more uncertain [global environment](#), including new U.S. tariffs and supply disruptions, the long-standing 2% target will remain the cornerstone of its policy. He emphasized that this target has successfully anchored inflation expectations for decades, helping to maintain price stability. The governor noted that the upcoming review will instead focus on how the bank can better manage supply shocks and how housing [affordability](#) interacts with monetary policy.

- Prime Minister Mark Carney [launched](#) a new Major Projects Office to fast-track national infrastructure projects, like ports, energy corridors, and clean energy projects, aimed at boosting the Canadian economy and building national capacity. The government also [rolled](#) out major housing measures, setting an ambitious goal to double the pace of homebuilding to approximately 500,000 new homes a year over the next decade. This policy was part of a broader effort to address affordability and supply issues in the housing market.

- Over 10,000 Air Canada flight attendants, represented by the [Canadian Union of Public Employees](#) (CUPE), went on a strike in mid-August, demanding better wages and compensation for "unpaid" ground work. The walkout, which began on

August 16 and lasted three days, led to widespread flight cancellations and travel chaos, affecting over 130,000 passengers daily during the peak summer travel season.

INDIA-CANADA RELATIONS

- Canada and India have appointed [new high commissioners](#) to each other's capitals, a significant step toward mending [diplomatic ties](#) strained since the 2023 Hardeep Singh Nijjar affair. Christopher Cooter will serve as Canada's High Commissioner to India, while Dinesh K. Patnaik has been named India's High Commissioner to Canada. The [appointments](#) follow a commitment made by Prime Ministers Mark Carney and Narendra Modi at the G7 Summit in June to restore diplomatic services. Both countries had expelled their top envoys in a tit-for-tat move last year. This diplomatic reset is seen as a "[step-by-step approach](#)" to restore stability and facilitate necessary services for citizens and businesses in both nations. While Canada appointed [Jeff David](#) as its new Consul General in Mumbai.

DIASPORA NEWS

- North America's tallest [Lord Ram statue](#) has been inaugurated in Mississauga. The 51-foot-tall statue, which took four years to construct, is located at the Hindu Heritage Centre. The statue was fabricated in Delhi and then assembled in Canada,

with an engineering design to withstand winds of up to 200 km/hr. It is strategically placed to be visible to flights landing at Toronto Pearson International Airport, symbolizing the growing cultural presence and pride of the Indian diaspora. The inauguration drew thousands of devotees and dignitaries, marking a significant cultural milestone.

[Del Manak](#), Victoria's first [Indian-origin Police Chief](#), retired on August 27 after a 35-year policing career. The City of Victoria honored his distinguished service by officially declaring "Del Manak Day" on the date of his retirement. Manak, who was also the first person of color to lead the [Victoria Police](#) Department in its 168-year history, was celebrated for his leadership, community engagement, and commitment to police wellness initiatives. His departure marks the end of a notable era, symbolizing the [growing diversity](#) and representation within Canada's public service and law enforcement. He is succeeded by Fiona Wilson, who is the first female police chief of Victoria.