

Over 65,000 Evacuated as Wildfires Destroy 700 Homes in Washington



The remains of a house burned by the Old Trails Fire in Spokane, Washington, U.S., August 3, 2026.

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - More than 65,000 people have fled their homes in the U.S. state of Washington as multiple wildfires continue to ravage the landscape, obliterating hundreds of structures.

"As many as 65,000 people have had to evacuate," the American Red Cross confirmed on Monday. The organization noted that preliminary assessments indicate the flames have already consumed more than 700 homes, primarily within Spokane

County.

Spokane County Sheriff John Nowels told a news conference that authorities apprehended a man on a first-degree arson charge.

A 37-year-old suspect, Aaron F. Farinacci, was arrested Monday afternoon local time and is being held on a \$1 million bond, Nowels said.

The suspect is allegedly linked to the Old Trails Fire, one of several blazes currently threatening the area.

The Spokane Complex Fire Inci-

dent Management Team reported that more favorable weather is allowing crews to make progress on the fire lines.

Data from the interagency system InciWeb showed that the fires near Spokane and Stevens counties have scorched 8,026 acres (3,248 hectares) since Saturday. These fires currently remain at 0% containment.

Other parts of the state face even larger threats. The Sinlahekin fire has grown to 85,000 acres (34,398 hectares) since it was triggered by lightning on July 26. More than 820 personnel are battling that blaze, which also has no containment. Meanwhile, the Little Giant Fire northwest of Leavenworth has burned 51,298 acres (20,759 hectares) in the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest.

Washington Gov. Bob Ferguson said they have accounted for nearly everyone who called for help, but are still attempting to contact 14 people to verify their safety.

Ferguson said the 14 people are "not missing," but officials want to hear from them to make sure they are okay, according to CNN.

The governor noted there have been no confirmed deaths at this point.

South Korea Detains Eight Student Activists After Protest at U.S. Air Base



South Korean police arresting a student activist during a protest outside a U.S. military base in Pyeongtaek, south of Seoul on August 4, 2026.

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — A group of eight South Korean students were detained Tuesday for allegedly breaking into a United States air base while shouting anti-U.S. slogans, South Korean authorities said.

U.S. military personnel detained the four male and four female students after they allegedly entered Osan Air Base near the capital Seoul. They were later transferred to the custody of South Korean authorities, police said.

The students were being investigated under a law protecting military installations in South Korea, according to police, who said they all had invoked their right to remain silent during questioning.

Police said the students shouted slogans at the site including, "Let's smash U.S. 7th Air Force."

A U.S. military statement said the group attempted to unlawfully enter the base through the main gate and that "unauthorized attempts to access a U.S. military installation are taken

extremely seriously."

The incident will be addressed in accordance with applicable U.S. and South Korean laws and procedures, the military said.

The Korean Progressive University Student Union said in a statement on Facebook that those detained were members who were trying to protest what it called the U.S. military's opposition to a South Korean semiconductor cluster project.

South Korean police declined to comment on the group's statement, which was not addressed by the U.S. military.

Yonhap news agency reported the U.S. said it has important interests in a military airport set to be relocated over the semiconductor project.

The U.S. presence and its role in South Korea's turbulent modern history have been long-running sources of anti-U.S. sentiment among many in South Korea.

South Korean police arrested four students in 2019 who broke into the U.S. ambassador's residence in Seoul while protesting the Trump administration's demands for the country to pay more to help cover the costs of U.S. troops there.

North Korea Blames U.S.-Led Alliance for 'New Security Crisis' in Asia-Pacific

SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korea accused the U.S., Japan and South Korea of creating a "new security crisis" in the Asia-Pacific, warning that their expanding military cooperation threatens regional stability.

In commentary published Tuesday by the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), a military commentator said the three countries were enhancing their joint warfighting capabilities through large-scale military exercises, including the recent U.S.-led Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) naval exercises -- the world's largest international maritime warfare and joint naval drills.

The commentary claimed that this year's RIMPAC involved more than 30,000 personnel, over 30 warships, five submarines and nearly 190 aircraft, describing the exercise as a rehearsal for "aggression" and accusing Washington of seeking military dominance in the region with support from Tokyo and Seoul.

Pyongyang also criticized recent U.S.-South Korea air and logistics drills, plans to strengthen U.S. command structures in Japan, and the deployment of advanced U.S. missile systems in the region. It warned that North Korea would respond to "a threat of a new level with a deterrence of a new level."

Separately, North Korea's Foreign Ministry rejected recent U.S.-led accusations that Pyongyang poses a cyber threat, calling the allegations "groundless" and politically motivated.

A Foreign Ministry spokesperson accused the U.S. of militarizing cyberspace through cyber commands, joint exercises and artificial intelligence initiatives, arguing that the United States -- not North Korea -- was responsible for escalating tensions in the digital domain.

North Korea said it would continue to safeguard its national security and development interests against what it described as Western pressure.

Spanish PM Sanchez Fends Off Blistering Criticism Within EU Over Ceuta Crisis

BRUSSELS (AP) — Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's migration policies have weathered withering criticism as leaders from across the European Union met Tuesday following last week's rush of migrants to the Spanish territory of Ceuta in North Africa.

The sudden arrival of 72,000 migrants on Thursday and Friday sparked a humanitarian crisis in Ceuta and reignited the immigration debate in the 27-nation bloc, though most of the migrants soon went back. More than 80 migrants died, including some who drowned or were trampled in a stampede to cross a breakwater barrier, according to Spanish and Moroccan authorities.

Open letters from 22 EU leaders, and a quick retort from Sanchez, have exposed a roiling debate inside the EU pitting migration hawks against the progressive Spanish leader who has challenged consensus within the bloc on migration as well as NATO spending, Gaza and Israel.

Sanchez's government has dismissed the attacks as politically motivated, saying most of the migrants were pushed back from Ceuta within hours in "close coordination with the Moroccan authorities and with very little support from other European states."

Trump Administration Sued by 25 States Over New Tariffs on Trading Partners



U.S. President Donald Trump delivers remarks on tariffs in the Rose Garden at the White House in Washington, DC.

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Twenty-five U.S. states, nearly all led by Democrats, sued U.S. President Donald Trump's administration over wide-ranging tariffs, arguing that the president had exceeded his authority in imposing the new levies on dozens of countries.

The states filed suit at the U.S. Court of International Trade in New York, asking that judges halt the implementation of the tariffs, declare them unlawful and order the government to issue refunds.

"There is no rational fit between the purported problem of forced labor in international supply chains and the blanket global tariffs the USTR imposed," the coalition of states argued in a court filing, referring to the U.S. Trade Representative's office.

The challenge is related to Trump's latest salvo of tariffs of between 10 and 12.5 percent imposed against 60 trading partners -- forming the bulk of U.S. imports -- last month.

The tariffs were imposed after probes by the USTR's office over allegations of "forced labor", conducted under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974.

Since taking office for his second term, Trump has upended global trade by imposing wide-ranging tariffs -- at sometimes eye-watering levels -- against Washington's friends and foes alike.

Trump has argued that U.S. trading partners have been taking advantage of the world's largest economy, and has sought to use tariffs as leverage to strike new trade deals.

On Monday, the White House hit back at the latest challenge to Trump's tariffs, arguing the government move was legal.

"The United States is using its law-

ful authority to obtain the elimination of unreasonable acts, policies and practices that burden U.S. commerce," said Kush Desai, a White House spokesperson, in a statement.

"Section 301 tariffs have proven to be a legally durable tool since the President's first term, and they remain so now."

Trump's first round of tariffs, imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in February.

He replaced those with a 10-percent global levy, which expired in July.

The new Section 301 tariffs replaced that levy, taking effect as the 10-percent tariff expired on July 24.

Of the 25 states in the suit, 23 have Democratic governors while two -- Nevada and Vermont -- are led by Republicans.

In their court filing, the states argued that the Section 301 probes were "a pretextual and unlawful effort to exert unfettered tariff power".

The document lays out a timeline of Trump administration officials' statements, arguing that the investigations were rushed and prejudged when they were initiated.

"The Tariff Action is arbitrary, capricious, and contrary to law," the complaint says.

"The Plaintiff States oppose forced labor in all its forms and support protections for workers around the globe. But the Administration cannot use forced labor as a pretext to continue its illegal tariff scheme."

Trump's separate sector-specific tariffs -- imposed under different legal authorities on steel, automobiles and other goods -- have been unaffected by recent legal challenges.

News in Brief

NEW YORK (WABC) - A fire on a subway work train filled the Astor Place station with smoke early Tuesday, injuring eight MTA workers and six firefighters. The southbound train caught fire on the express tracks at the station just before 2:30 a.m. The fire spewed heavy smoke through the station in the East Village, sending commuters on the platform level to the street. "A lot of heavy smoke, not only at street level but also at the station level," FDNY Assistant Chief Tom Currao said. At the same time, a northbound train arrived at the station and discharged its passengers. Firefighters helped them to safety and made sure none were injured. The fire started in a four-car vacuum train, used to clean up debris and litter off the tracks.

TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan's government is portraying its accelerating military buildup not only as a way to protect the country but as a route to greater prosperity, arguing in its latest defense white paper that arms production can support economic growth. The white paper "stresses that investment in defense benefits the wider economy and people's lives", according to a Defense Ministry presentation document. That message aligns with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's broader use of strategic state spending in an effort to drive economic growth. The pitch is reinforced by the document's anime-style cover, which depicts a smiling family in a gleaming cityscape rather than the troops, weapons and military insignia featured on many previous editions.

WASHINGTON (The Guardian) - An immigrant being held at a New Jersey ICE detention center died on August 1, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced on Monday. Edwin Lopez-Cornejo, 41, is the 22nd person to die in ICE custody this year, according to agency data. Lopez-Cornejo, who is originally from El Salvador and first came to the U.S. in 2006, was arrested by ICE agents in Plainfield, New Jersey, on June 18 and sent to Delaney Hall detention facility to await deportation. Less than two months later he suffered an unspecified "medical emergency", and was later pronounced dead by University Hospital in Newark, New Jersey, ICE said.

PARIS (AFP) - Long-range attacks have killed at least five people in Russia and four in Ukraine, according to local officials, as escalating long-range missile and drone attacks kill a mounting toll of civilians. A Ukrainian drone struck a warehouse in the Moscow region, killing five people and injuring 10, regional Governor Andrei Vorobyov said on Tuesday. The strike was one of three overnight attacks on warehouses across Russia. A warehouse belonging to e-commerce giant Wildberries was also struck by drones in the Tver region, northwest of Moscow. Wildberries confirmed that a blaze broke out after another of its warehouses near St Petersburg was attacked.

Paris (AFP) - Guatemala has declared its second-highest emergency alert level and evacuated two villages after a major eruption of Fuego, Central America's most active volcano, which the country's Institute of Volcanology warns is "moving towards a more explosive phase". Disaster agency Conred said on Monday the orange "danger" alert applies nationwide. The volcano is just 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the capital, Guatemala City. Footage released by the emergency services showed the powerful eruption turning clouds red and lava flowing down the slopes of the 3,763-metre-high (12,346-foot) volcano. Huge plumes of ash spewed about six kilometres (four miles) into the air.