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WORLD

Monitor developments amid reports of the monkeypox virus spreading to Asia, Africa, and Europe. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared monkeypox (mpox) a global public health emergency for the second time in two years on 14 August. The initial endemic strain known as ‘clade 1’ began in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). However, a new more easily spread variant known as ‘clade 1b’ has spread to neighboring countries, including Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Nigeria, and Uganda. One case of the ‘clade b’ variant was identified in Stockholm (Sweden) from a traveler who recently visited Africa and at least three cases have been identified in Pakistan.

Monkeypox spreads through bodily contact and is usually mild but can lead to rare cases of death. The new variant is believed to be more transmissible, causing higher rates of severe illness and a higher chance of death. In 2024, 511 monkeypox deaths and over 14,000 cases have been reported thus far, primarily in the DRC. Travel to hotspots in central Africa should be carried out with stringent prevention measures.

AMERICAS

Venezuela: Expect disruptions over the coming weeks following the election results and subsequent dispute by the opposition. Demonstrations have persisted following the disputed 28 July presidential election, which saw Nicolas Maduro declared the winner, in an election that has been criticized as lacking transparency by international observers. The European Union, the United States, and most Latin American countries have refused to recognize the election results, which is liable to encourage further opposition protests. More than 2,400 people have been arrested and at least 24 have been killed amid ongoing nationwide protests, including in the capital Caracas, which have been called for by



opposition leader Maria Corina Machado. Security forces loyal to Maduro are highly likely to crack down on dissenting protestors with heavy-handed tactics, potentially impose short-notice curfews, or cut telecommunications services.

United States: **Expect disruption in Chicago (Illinois state) through at least 22 August due to large-scale protests slated to take place targeting the DNC.** Civil society groups have organized pro-Palestine protests targeting the Democratic National Convention (DNC), which starts on 19 August. This follows a series of other disruptive incidents by pro-Palestine protestors at Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris political rallies. Tens of thousands of protestors are anticipated to converge on Chicago, some of whom have not been granted permits, suggesting unplanned protests or deviations from approved protests will take place. Therefore, these protests are liable to lead to transportation disruption or clashes with counter-protesters or police in the vicinity of the DNC, which will be held at the [United Center](#) and [McCormick Place](#).



EMEA

Israel: Ben Gvir's visit to the Temple Mount heightens the domestic terror risk over the short term. On 13 August, National Security Minister, Itamar Ben Gvir, accompanied by fellow party member Yitzhak Wasserlauf visited the Temple Mount (Al-Aqsa compound) in Jerusalem for the Jewish holiday Tisha B'Av. The holiday commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temple, making the timing of the visit of the far-right, hawkish ministers symbolic. Video evidence shows several hundred religious pilgrims who accompanied Ben Gvir, praying at the site, which has been strictly forbidden for Jews since the establishment of Israel. This will be viewed as both a provocation towards the Palestinians and the broader Middle East. This, in turn, elevates the risk of a lone wolf or Hamas-affiliated attack being carried out in Israel, or more likely Jerusalem. In the past, heightened tensions over the status of the Temple Mount have fueled civil unrest or sparked an uptick in terror attacks. A failed terrorist attack took place on 18 August in Tel Aviv, after an improvised explosive device (IED) prematurely detonated, killing the would-be attacker. Widespread criticism of Ben Gvir's visit by regional political leaders, domestic politicians, and close allies of Israel underscores the sensitivity surrounding the status quo of the holy site and its influence on inter-communal and regional sentiment.

Lebanon: Anticipate disruption over the coming days amid ongoing partial power outages. According to Lebanon Electricity Corporation, the Zahrani power plant, the last functioning power plant in the country, was shut down on 17 August due to a lack of fuel. The power plant supplies most of the country's power and prompted a halt of power supply, disrupting key infrastructure. This reportedly included Rafik Hariri International Airport, the Port of Beirut, wastewater treatment facilities, and drinking water pumping stations. As of 19 August, at least one of the power production units has since restarted, resuming power supply to mainly critical infrastructure. Officials announced power would



continue to gradually return once new fuel supplies were obtained, with Algerian authorities announcing intentions to provide fuel. The ongoing power outages may prompt operational disruption.

Turkey: The risk of wildfires will remain heightened over the coming days in northern and western provinces due to an elevated risk. On 17 August, the General Directorate of Forestry warned of a high risk of wildfires (70% higher risk) across 12 northern and western provinces over a day ten-day period. This follows 131 forest fires recorded in the week prior, with ongoing wildfires in the Izmir, Aydin, Manisa, Karabuk, and Bolu provinces. Nearly 4,000 people have been evacuated across western provinces, as of 18 August. Travel to northern and western provinces of the country should be carried out with enhanced precaution.

Greece: Recent wildfire in Attica region underscores heightened wildfire risk created by climate change during the summer season. A wildfire broke out on 11 August in [Varnavas](#) (Attica), prompting evacuation orders for thousands of people across at least 12 towns in the region. The wildfire rapidly grew, burning 25,600 acres and reaching the [Chalandri](#) neighborhood, Athens (Attica) before being brought under control. One person was killed and 18 people were injured during the wildfire, while damage from the fires caused to some infrastructure remain in disrepair. This follows a recent pattern of large wildfires impacting the Attica region and the wider country, such as the more devastating 2023, 2021, and 2018 wildfires. Heatwave conditions, accelerated by climate change, are producing more intense, faster-developing wildfires during the summer season, which pose an ever-growing risk to the capital Athens.



APAC

India: Anticipate and avoid further nationwide protests related to the sexual assault and death of a female doctor. Civil society and political groups are organizing protests across urban centers to decry the sexual assault and killing of a student doctor, which took place the week prior at a state-run hospital in Kolkata (West Bengal state). The victim's death has ignited demands for an end to violence against women, which remains a sensitive issue in the country. Doctors at some state-run hospitals went on strike nationwide, refusing to perform non-life-saving surgery. Similar incidents in past years have birthed large nationwide demonstrations, some of which have turned violent, including in Hyderabad, Mumbai, Pune, and the capital Delhi. Further protests are likely to take place in Kolkata, the city where the incident took place.

East Asia: Anticipate travel disruption during the passage of Tropical Storm Jongdari. According to the Korea Meteorological Administration (KMA), the weather system is currently 180 miles southwest of [Okinawa](#) (Japan) and will weaken to a tropical depression before making landfall near [Chuncheon](#) (South Korea) during the early morning hours of 21 August. Jongdari is expected to bring heavy rainfall to portions of South Korea and is liable to cause subsequent short-notice flight disruption across the region.

Bangladesh: Business travel for foreign nationals should be carried out with precaution amid government uncertainty. On 5 August, several weeks of intense civil unrest led by students, prompted the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who fled to India. During this period, more than 450 people were killed, thousands were injured during clashes with security forces, and much of the country's economic, governing, and transportation activity was brought to a standstill. Muhammad Yunus was sworn in as



interim leader government leader on 16 August, with a mandate to stabilize the country and produce democratic reforms. Civil society and political groups have demanded elections take place three months after the country has stabilized. This comes amid limited persistent disruption to economic activity and government services. As well as, isolated reports of protests, and violence targeting Awami League (AL) supporters, which is the party of the late, departed prime minister. The ongoing government uncertainty is liable to lead to sporadic protests over the coming weeks by individuals who felt marginalized by the former government and the growing resentment of AL supporters.