

Daily



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MAX - Americas Region Daily Summary - May 13, 2024

Highlights of the Day

- **Argentina:** Five cars set on fire, threatening messages left against Bullrich, Pullaro in Rosario on May 12; intimidatory attacks to persist
- **Colombia:** Unionized taxi drivers to hold 24-hour strike, associated march in Bogota on May 14; allot for disruptions
- **Mexico:** Shots fired at car of mayoral candidate in Mexico City on May 11; incidents of political violence in city likely to remain infrequent
- **Venezuela:** Army deploys additional troops to Anacoco Island bordering Essequibo, per May 12 reports; direct military escalation unlikely

Actionable Items

Americas: Weather, evacuation alerts in multiple regions due to flooding, wildfire on May 13; remain cognizant of authorities' updates

Current Situation: In **Argentina**, the flooding of the Uruguay River has prompted cautionary warnings in Concordia, Entre Rios Province which remain in place on May 13, following evacuations of over 500 individuals from May 10 -12. **Brazil's** Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia has issued an orange alert, the second highest on a three-tier scale, for heavy rainfall for parts of Parana and Santa Catarina. Operations at Porto Alegre's Salgado Filho Aeroporto (POA) remain indefinitely suspended following flooding. In **Canada**, authorities have evacuation alerts and orders in place due to wildfires in parts of Alberta and British Columbia as of writing on May 13. Precise details on the locations and instructions can be found [here](#) for Alberta and [here](#) for British Columbia. The **US** National Weather Service (NWS) has issued [flood warnings](#) in parts of Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas for May 13. In **Uruguay**, the flooding of the Uruguay River prompted evacuations in parts of Paysandu, Treinta y Tres, Salto, Durazno, Cerro Largo, Artigas, Tacuarembó, Rocha, and Soriano as of May 13.

Recommendations: Those residing or operating in the aforementioned areas in the Americas on May 13 and the coming days are advised to remain cognizant of authorities' updates regarding weather related risks.

Argentina: Municipal workers' union to hold strike, protest in Santa Fe province on May 13; allot for disruptions

Current Situation: Federacion de Sindicatos de Trabajadores Municipales de la Provincia de Santa Fe (FESTRAM), a municipal workers' union, has called for a strike across Santa Fe Province on May 13. The strike is aimed at denouncing the alleged suspensions, delays, and interruptions in the services of Obra Social, a national government-run health insurance agency, and issues regarding provincial retirement and pension funds. An associated protest is planned outside Instituto Autárquico Provincial de Obra Social (IAPOS) located at Rivadavia 3452, Santa Fe city on May 13. The timing of protest is unconfirmed as of writing.

Assessments & Forecast: Based on FESTRAM's mobilization capabilities and strike across Santa Fe on May 10, the upcoming strike is expected to be widely adhered to, causing disruptions to municipal services, including non-emergency health services, across Santa Fe province. The precedent suggests that the protest in Santa Fe city is liable to draw a turnout in the mid-to-high dozens and transpire peacefully. Localized disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic can be expected in the vicinity of the protest location.

Recommendations: Those operating or residing in Santa Fe province on May 13 are advised to allot for disruptions to municipal public services due to the slated strike. Allot for disruptions to travel near the protest site in Santa Fe city.

Colombia: Unionized taxi drivers to hold 24-hour strike, associated march in Bogota on May 14; allot for disruptions

Current Situation: Hugo Ospina, the President of the Asociacion de Propietarios y Conductores de Taxi (APCT), a labor union has called taxi drivers for a 24-hour strike in Bogota on May 14 to demand regulation and stricter enforcement due to unfair competition from digital platforms. An associated march is slated at 10:00 (local time) from Parque Nacional to Plaza de Bolivar.

Assessments & Forecast: Based on the mobilization capability of the organizer, coupled with past strikes and protests, including an April 17 action, the slated labor action is likely to be widely adhered to, while the march is likely to draw a turnout in low-to-mid thousands. Based on precedent, the protest march in Bogota is likely to transpire largely peacefully, without any major instances of unrest anticipated. However, a bolstered security presence is likely to be deployed to monitor proceedings and regulate traffic, especially in the event that protesters block main roads in the city. In any case, the strike and planned blockades are expected to prompt significant disruptions to public taxi services and vehicular traffic across the city, potentially disrupting access to BOG Airport.

Recommendations: Those operating or residing in Bogota on May 14 are advised to allot for disruptions to taxi services throughout the day due to the slated labor action as well as to travel due to the associated march. Allot for disruptions to taxi services to access/depart BOG airport and allot for increased travel time to arrive to the airport.

Notable Events

Argentina: Five cars set on fire, threatening messages left against Bullrich, Pullaro in Rosario on May 12; intimidatory attacks to persist

Current Situation: On May 12, five cars were set ablaze in the Alvear and Parque Field neighborhoods of Rosario, Santa Fe. Threatening notes were left by the perpetrators directed at Santa Fe Governor Maximiliano Pullaro, Minister of Security Pablo Cococcioni, and National Security Minister Patricia Bullrich. The notes were signed by “Los Rosarinos.”

Assessments & Forecast The incident reflects a recurring trend of arson attacks targeting random vehicles to intimidate authorities in Rosario. This is evidenced by similar incidents reported on May 3, when three vehicles were set on fire and the burning of 13

cars on April 27. The incidents are likely part of the continued retaliation by Los Monos against tightening prison conditions for its imprisoned high-ranking members, presumably under the “Los Rosarinos” moniker to represent its three factions, with the gang being the most prominent in Rosario. Given the pattern and frequency of these incidents, similar attacks are likely to recur in the near-to-medium term. However, they are likely to remain intimidatory in nature and are not anticipated to pose an elevated threat to the government officials.

Colombia: EMC-FARC attacks national army using drones in Guaviare, per May 12 reports; attacks against security units sustained

Current Situation: According to May 12 reports, alleged members of Estado Mayor Central faction of Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (EMC-FARC) dissidents launched three explosive devices using drones on the army in El Retorno municipality, Guaviare. The army denounced the attack, citing it violates the ceasefire with EMC-FARC that is slated to expire on July 15.

Assessments & Forecast: The incident is indicative of sustained attacks targeting security forces by EMC-FARC in Guaviare, evidenced by the attack near a police station in Calamar on May 1 and the attack leading to injury of two soldiers in San Jose del Guaviare, as of April 13. The frequent attacks against security units in Guaviare suggests the resonance of EMC-FARC’s “pistol plan” beyond stronghold regions, with the plan likely being triggered by the government suspending ceasefire with the group in Cauca, Narino, and Valle del Cauca on March 17. With EMC-FARC leader Ivan Mordisco withdrawing from dialogue table on April 16, coupled with recurring violence in Guaviare, as well as Huila and Tolima, the potential for ceasefire suspension before July 15 in all departments cannot be ruled out.

Ecuador: Three out of 10 companies were extorted in 2023, as per May 10 reports; shows rising threat of extortion, trend to persist in 2024

Current Situation: As per May 10 reports, a study by Observatorio de Crimen Organizado observatory revealed that three out of ten companies in Ecuador were extorted in 2023, and that extortion is perceived as the main security issue by nine out of ten businesses. Moreover, 75 percent of victims were reportedly targeted multiple times, yet 70 percent did not report the crime due to distrust in institutions.

Assessments & Forecast: The report highlights the rising threat of extortion targeting businesses in Ecuador, which has prompted mass closures of restaurants, bars, and other

local businesses in 2023, as owners struggled to pay extortion fees. This can largely be attributed to gangs such as Los Choneros, Lobos, and Tiguerones, who in recent years have increasingly turned to extortion as an alternative source of financing, moving beyond drug trafficking. Therefore, given authorities' inability to reduce the incidence of extortion and some businesses being reluctant to denounce such threats, extortion threats against businesses will continue at elevated levels. These will mostly target small-to-medium businesses as well as distributors and logistics companies serving large multinationals, given precedent.

Mexico: Shots fired at car of mayoral candidate in Mexico City on May 11; incidents of political violence in city likely to remain infrequent

Current Situation: On May 11, the Cuauhtemoc mayoral candidate for the opposition right-wing coalition, Alessandra Rojo de la Vega, denounced that shots were fired at her vehicle while traveling in Mexico City. The candidate was unharmed.

Assessments & Forecast: Based on the modus operandi and the recurring trend of political violence ahead of the June 2 elections, the incident was likely politically motivated and carried out by members of local criminal groups. Considering that the victim already received threats in 2023, it is likely that the same criminal group opened fired at her vehicle to intimidate her. Thus far, instances of political violence have been mainly recorded in states with ongoing turf wars between cartels, especially in the states of Chiapas, Guerrero, and Michoacan. Therefore, this incident is notable considering that instances of political violence have been quite rare in Mexico City during this electoral campaign. Based on this pattern, such attacks in the capital are likely to remain infrequent. If further attacks manifest, they are likely to remain targeted in nature and will most likely not pose a high threat to bystanders.

Venezuela: Army deploys additional troops to Anacoco Island bordering Essequibo, per May 12 reports; direct military escalation unlikely

Current Situation: Per May 12 reports, the Venezuelan army reinforced its presence on Anacoco Island, the border region with Essequibo, which is disputed with Guyana. Multiple light tanks, armored vehicles, and supply vehicles have reportedly been deployed. Troops were deployed using a makeshift bridge constructed over Cuyuni River.

Assessments & Forecast: Although troop deployment on Anacoco Island has occurred gradually following the Caracas-conducted referendum over Essequibo, evidenced by February 9 reports, the reinforcement likely comes in response to two US combat aircrafts

flying over Georgetown on May 9, perceived by Caracas as provocative. This is supported by Venezuelan Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez's announcement of air patrols on May 10. However, a direct military confrontation between Venezuela and Guyana remains unlikely in the near-to-medium term, largely due to Washington's military support for Georgetown deterring potential Venezuelan aggression. Moreover, the Venezuelan troop build-up potentially appears to be an attempt to boost President Nicolas Maduro's domestic public image ahead of the July 28 presidential election. Thus, political rhetoric can be anticipated to continue, exemplified by Maduro promulgating a law for the 'defense of Essequibo' on April 3.

Other Developments

- In **Canada**, Toronto police arrested and charged a fourth individual, an Indian national, with the killing of Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar on May 11.
- According to May 11 reports, **Peru** and the **USA** agreed to promote investments in Peru's mining sector and to strengthen bilateral trade. Additionally, both countries began negotiations for an MoU on Critical Minerals Cooperation.
- In the **USA**, a shootout between the suspect of a shooting at a shipping fulfillment facility and the police left the suspect dead and an officer injured in West Jefferson, OH, on May 12.

Notable Dates

4 JUL	Puerto Rico (USA) Holiday: Independence Day
4 JUL	USA Holiday: Independence Day
5 JUL	Venezuela Holiday: Independence Day
7 JUL	Haiti Holiday: Death anniversary of former President Moise
9 JUL	USA Politics: North Atlantic Treaty Alliance 75th Anniversary
9 JUL	Argentina Holiday: Independence Day