



Daily



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10:10 UTC

MAX - Americas Region Daily Summary - June 7, 2024

Highlights of the Day

- **Argentina:** Armed suspects rob nail salon in Palermo, Buenos Aires, as per June 4 reports; reflects trend of robberies targeting stores
- **Canada & USA:** Pro-Palestinian protests planned in Chicago, IL, Ottawa, ON on June 8; maintain heightened vigilance
- **Guatemala:** CJNG narcomanta displayed near severed body in Peten on June 4; reflects entrenchment of Mexican cartels in border areas
- **USA:** 36 fentanyl trafficking ring members arrested in California on June 5; drop in prices, corruption to sustain cross-border trafficking

Actionable Items

Canada & USA: Pro-Palestinian protests planned in Chicago, IL, Ottawa, ON on June 8; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation: According to reports, pro-Palestinian protests demanding a ceasefire amid the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict are slated in Canada and the USA on June 8. In **Ottawa, ON, Canada**, demonstrators are slated to gather at the Canadian Tribute to Human Rights on 220 Elgin Street from 13:00 (local time). In **Chicago, IL, USA**, a protest will be held at 151 E Wacker Drive between 11:00-13:00.

Assessments & Forecast: Based on pro-Palestinian protests held in recent weeks and social media estimates, the upcoming demonstrations in Ottawa and Chicago are likely to draw a turnout in the high hundreds to low thousands. Given heightened sentiments among pro-Palestinian activists over the conflict, demonstrations carry a credible potential for an escalation into localized unrest, roadblocks and scuffles between protesters, and security personnel. Ad-hoc counter-protests by pro-Israel activists witnessing a turnout in the high dozens-to-low hundreds remain plausible in the vicinity. Given this, a bolstered security presence can be expected near all protest sites to monitor proceedings and divert traffic. Additionally, disruptions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic can be anticipated near the protest locations during the slated timings.

Recommendations: Those operating or residing in the aforementioned cities in Canada and the USA on June 8 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of planned pro-Palestinian protests due to the potential for localized unrest. Allot for disruptions to traffic in the vicinity.

Canada & USA: PTI Canada, USA slated to hold protest in Toronto, ON, New York City, NY on June 8; allot for disruptions

Current Situation: The Canada and USA wings of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party has called for protests in Toronto, ON and New York City (NYC), NY on June 8. The protests are being held to demand the release of PTI leader Imran Khan and other party members imprisoned in Pakistan. In Canada, a protest is slated in Mississauga Square in Toronto, ON from 18:00 (local time). In the USA, a protest is slated in Times Square in NYC, NY at 19:00.

Assessments & Forecast: Based on precedent, including a rally in Toronto, ON held on April 28, the protest in Toronto, ON will likely witness a turnout in the mid-to-high dozens. Similarly, and based on social media traction, the protest in NYC, NY is also expected to draw a turnout in the mid-to-high dozens. Although both protests are anticipated to transpire peacefully, a bolstered security presence can be expected in the aforementioned protest locations, especially in Times Square, NYC, NY given its central location in the city. Additionally, disruptions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic can be anticipated in the vicinity of both protest locations.

Recommendations: Those operating or residing in Toronto, ON and NYC, NY on June 8 are advised to allot for disruptions near the aforementioned locations during the slated timings.

Chile: Pro-life protest slated at Plaza de la Ciudadania in Santiago at 10:30 (local time) on June 8; allot for disruptions

Current Situation: Civil society organizations including Equipo Patriota have called for a pro-life protest at Plaza de la Ciudadania in Santiago at 10:30 (local time) on June 8. According to a social media post, the pro-life protest is planned to denounce President Gabriel Boric's proposal to completely legalize abortion in the second half of 2024. Although abortion remains legalized in Chile since August 2017, free abortion has been opposed by several right-wing parties and the conservative section of the society, with legal abortion possible only on three-specific grounds.

Assessments & Forecast: Based on a previous pro-life protest on March 24, 2023, in Santiago, coupled with the social media traction on the announced demonstration, the slated protest is expected to draw a turnout in the mid-to-high hundreds. Precedent also indicates that the slated protest is likely to transpire peacefully. Although counter-protests by pro-choice activists are liable, instances of unrest are not anticipated. Regardless, heightened security measures can be expected near the protest location to monitor proceedings. Similarly, localized disruptions to vehicular and pedestrian traffic are anticipated in the immediate vicinity of the protest location.

Recommendations: Those operating or residing in Santiago on June 8 are advised to allot for disruptions to travel in the vicinity of Plaza de la Ciudadania due to the slated protest during the morning hours.

Mexico & USA: Pride parades slated in multiple cities, including in Guadalajara, NYC, LA, on June 8-9; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation: LGBTQ+ pride parades are scheduled in multiple cities in Mexico and the USA on June 8-9. In Guadalajara, Jalisco, **Mexico**, a pride march is slated from Glorieta Minerva till Glorieta de los Desaparecidos at 14:00 (local time) on June 8. In **Los Angeles, CA**, participants will march from Highland Boulevard and move towards Hollywood Boulevard and south Cahuenga Boulevard at 11:00 on June 9. In **Brooklyn, NYC**, the parade is slated on 5th Avenue and Lincoln Place, along 5th to 9th Street at 19:30 on June 8.

Assessments & Forecast: Based on the previous pride marches in Guadalajara, the slated parade will likely draw a low-to-mid tens of thousands and is expected to transpire peacefully. Given precedent, the parade in Los Angeles is expected to witness, low-to-mid hundreds-of-thousands, while New York City is anticipated to witness a turnout in the low millions. While precedent LGBTQ+ parades have transpired peacefully in the USA, the June 5 official report on potential attacks by ISIS terror group against LGBTQ+ community

reflects potential for discriminatory violence. Significant disruptions to traffic are likely along the parade routes.

Recommendations: Those operating or residing in the aforementioned cities in Mexico and the USA on June 8-9 are advised to maintain heightened vigilance near the slated pride events.

Notable Events

Argentina: Armed suspects rob nail salon in Palermo, Buenos Aires, as per June 4 reports; reflects trend of robberies targeting stores

Current Situation: Per June 4 reports, suspects robbed a nail salon, while holding two employees and one customer at gunpoint on Teodoro Garcia Street in the Palermo neighborhood of Area Metropolitana de Buenos Aires (AMBA). Per the report, data from the prosecutor's office revealed that 7,500 crimes targeting stores, including armed robberies and thefts, are recorded every day in the AMBA.

Assessments & Forecast: Although crime, and particularly violent crime, is relatively low in AMBA compared to other cities in the country, evidenced by the city only accounting for 3.4 percent of the crime in the country despite containing over 30 percent of its population in 2023, the incident reflects the persistent trend of commercial robberies. Furthermore, the incident and recent data align with May 14 reports of a 'crime wave' in AMBA in 2024 driven by an increase in robberies and cell phone and auto part thefts. While the majority of these incidents do not result in violence against the victims, use of firearms in the June 4 incident further suggests that the latent risk of escalation remains and is increased if victims resist.

Guatemala: CJNG narcomanta displayed near severed body in Peten on June 4; reflects entrenchment of Mexican cartels in border areas

Current Situation: On June 4, authorities discovered a dismembered corpse and a narcomanta (threatening message) allegedly displayed by members of the Mexico-based Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generacion (CJNG) in Villa Hermosa, La Libertad, Peten. The message was directed towards a criminal group to end cattle thefts in Villa Hermosa.

Assessments & Forecast: Mexican cartels usually operate discreetly in the Peten and Huehuetenango departments of Guatemala, without any notable conflict with local groups. Therefore, this incident serves as an anomaly, potentially marking one of the initial

occurrences where Mexican-based organized criminal entities directly confront with perceived adversaries. This simultaneously also underscores their entrenchment along Guatemalan borders, as seen in the threats directed towards archaeologists by alleged drug cartel members to build clandestine roads for drug trade in protected areas in Peten, per May 17 reports. Besides, the passage to the 'Golden Poppy Triangle' area, vied by cartels for its vast poppy seed cultivation, in the San Marcos department, 20 kilometers from Chiapas, Mexico, makes Guatemalan border towns susceptible to further encroachment by Mexican cartels, with similar instances likely to recur frequently.

Mexico: LFM launches drone attack in La Palma, Guerrero on June 6; reflects recurrent use of narco-drones as LFM expands

Current Situation: Fuerza Guerrerense, La Familia Michoacana's (LFM) armed wing, dropped explosives from drones at a residence in La Palma, Petatlan municipality, Guerrero on June 6. No casualties have been reported.

Assessments & Forecast: The incident reflects the continued threat of drone attacks by LFM to intimidate civilians as LFM expands outwards from the Tierra Caliente region of Michoacan, including to Cocula in the east and Petatlan along the Pacific coast, with the areas being a key transit point for drug shipments to the USA. Similar instances include 33 explosives being dropped from drones in El Caracol in August and 5 individuals being killed from drone attacks in Heliodoro Castillo on January 6. Further, the incident was likely in retaliation to the June 5 security operation in Petatlan when police seized explosive devices and other equipment from the group's camp. Regardless, with these areas having inadequate law enforcement owing to the geographical terrain, LFM's attempts to expand will continue to prompt inter-cartel clashes as well as attacks on civilians, particularly using narco-drones which are easier to navigating geographical barriers and difficult to intercept.

USA: 36 fentanyl trafficking ring members arrested in California on June 5; drop in prices, corruption to sustain cross-border trafficking

Current Situation: Authorities arrested 36 members linked with a Cartel de Sinaloa (CDS) fentanyl-and-methamphetamine distribution network in Imperial Valley, Imperial County, CA on June 5.

Assessments & Forecast: The cross-border fentanyl supply chain extending from fentanyl synthesis in Sinaloa, Mexico to Imperial valley and its neighboring towns in Imperial County, was evidently facilitated by collusion between law enforcement and cartels, supported by the arrest of a US Border Patrol agent (one of the 36 detainees) for alleged methamphetamine trafficking on June 5. Besides, the low prices for fentanyl pills,

which dropped from 1.75 USD in 2021 to 45 cents in 2024 is likely to have created more demand for fentanyl, with Imperial County recording a 41 percent surge in opioid-related overdose deaths primarily attributed to illicit fentanyl from 2021-2022. Consequently, state efforts combatting cross-border trafficking will remain heightened. To this end, the California National Guard increased the number of deployed members at the California-Mexico border by 50 percent on September 7, 2023, while a 1066 percent increase in [fentanyl seizures](#) was recorded in California from 2021-2023.

USA: Three shot dead at grocery store in Montgomery, AL on June 4; likely during attempted robbery

Current Situation: On June 4, unidentified suspects shot dead three individuals at a small grocery store in Montgomery, AL. Two victims were store owner's family members, and the third deceased was a customer. Mayor Steven Reed said, "the city will use every available resource to find the suspect and those who have been targeting Latino, Hispanic businesses all across this community."

Assessments & Forecast: Considering Reed's statement, the shooting possibly escalated following an attempted robbery at the store. This is because several armed robberies have been recorded at Hispanic-owned businesses in Montgomery in recent weeks, including one at a Mexican restaurant on Malcolm Drive on May 21 and at an ice-cream shop on Bell Road on May 27. The ice-cream shop was reportedly targeted for the second time in less than two months, with its employees indicating that Hispanic-owned stores in the city are targeted by thieves more often than other businesses. That said, there is currently no indication that the incidents were racially motivated. The trend is possibly because of the potentially higher prevalence of cash-based transactions at Hispanic-owned stores than electronic payments.

Other Developments

- In **Brazil**, authorities on June 6 conducted an operation leading to the arrest of 49 of 208 suspects, following orders by Supreme Court judge Alexandre de Moraes, as part of investigations into the alleged coup in Brasilia on January 8, 2023.
- **El Salvador's** Legislative Assembly on June 6 voted 57-3 in favor of approving the 27th 30-day extension of the ongoing state of emergency, effective from June 10. Over 80,000 suspected gang members have been arrested since the introduction of emergency measures in March 2022.
- On June 6, the **Cuban** Foreign Ministry citing "historically friendly relations" announced that **Russian** naval vessels, including a nuclear-powered submarine, are slated to make port in Havana between June 12-17, as part of a joint military exercise.
- The **US** Treasury on June 6 unveiled sanctions against the **Ecuador**-based Los Lobos drug-trafficking organization, and its leader, Wilmer Geovanny Chavarria Barre, alias Pipo. The sanctions follow similar measures against the Los Choneros drug gang on February 7.

Notable Dates

20 JUL	Colombia Holiday: Independence Day
23 JUL	Peru Holiday: Air Force Day
24 JUL	Ecuador & Venezuela Holiday: Simon Bolivar's Birthday
25 JUL	Costa Rica Holiday: Guanacaste Day
25 JUL	Cuba Holiday: Revolution Anniversary
28 JUL	Peru Holiday: Independence Day